

Outline for a Study on Lokavidya Samaj

GSRK (18Dec2023)

The study is aimed at understanding the present state of the Lokavidya Samaj, that is the Samaj which largely lives by the knowledge, skills, ideas, values, norms that are non modern, non western, and not obtained through University education. One may also define the Samaj as largely non English knowing and /or only vernacular knowing Samaj.

By their present status we mean both the material and non material status. The material status is measured by their income, style/ standard of living, which would include food, clothing, housing, gadgets, other possessions.

By non material status we mean their norms, ideas, attitudes, aspirations, values, etc.

Data on their material condition is proposed to be collected through their school / college going sons/ daughters. This short cut is likely to be simple, time saving, as reliable as the usual method of going house to house and speaking with elder respondents. It has not been tried so far in any study . But it is felt by us to be as effective in obtaining reliable data. In fact this methodological innovation may prove to be more reliable than the direct contact of households. One big advantage of this new way of data collection is that one can obtain large amount of data within a very important short time. The cooperation of teachers for administering the questionnaires to students is likely to ensure more reliable data.

Qualitative data would be obtained by meeting with across section of the members of the Samaj by well trained investigators who are largely known to us as research students- cum -teachers. There will be no standard schedule or structured questions. Talking freely to several Lokavidya Samaj members to obtain some insight into their thinking, feelings , with a view to understand their reasons for their actions, or non actions is considered very crucial to know the changes that are in the offing.

The time frame for obtaining data through questionnaires administered to students is likely to be a couple of months, say three months. We may be able to analyse the data with softwares, etc., available today and with professional help.

Qualitative data, in the nature of narratives, will take more time, say about six to nine months at least.

The whole study should get completed in about a year.

Quantitative data is proposed to be collected on the following:

Students would be asked to give the education, occupation of their parents, grandparents on both father and mother's side. Also, details of siblings' education, occupation wherever applicable. Data about father's and mother's siblings would also be collected to the extent possible. All this information will be collected in a tabular form with only minimum writing required by the respondents.

Data on the material conditions of the student respondents will be similarly collected in a tabular form requiring the respondent to say 'yes' or 'no', or just tick the appropriate boxes etc. A lot of information on living conditions, house, amenities, possessions, would be collected.

Questions like "What is your Kula kasabu (occupation of one's Kula) would be asked to find out how much of these terms, concepts, etc still make sense or known to the present generation.

Some questions about their attitudes, aspirations, are also proposed to be included.

The difficult part of the study would require extensive conversations with a cross section of the Lokavidya Samaj to know their knowledge, skills, their adaptations to changes in the external situations. Their response to events, situations etc. How they view the demands from the external forces, especially technological changes. For instance, it may be interesting to know how they look at EVs becoming more popular and the prospects of petrol vehicles getting out altogether. Those of them who have acquired knowledge to repair, service, two wheelers that run on petrol

may face some crisis if EVs replace them. Such situations can be imagined for a variety of products. Just as the leaders in technology anticipate the coming changes, how do lokavidyadhars anticipate the new, novel, changes in life situations? Take polythene bags and plastic revolution. How did they receive them when they were introduced and is there resistance to them, now when they are being told they must stop using them, etc.

There are thus no set of standardized questions in our conversations. Depending on the respondents we will pose such questions that would help us gain an understanding of how confident they feel to face changes that may be coming in a variety of aspects. For example, one would like to know how they look at the fact that now one has to carry a bottle of water to work place, in travel, etc.