

Audio file: [audio-19Dec2023-GSRK.mp4](#)

Transcript

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2

GSR ... Your note I had sent to everybody, so I think they would have seen it.

GSRK (CORRECTED) Speaker 1 00:02:22

Yeah. Yeah, I think mostly there isn't much in that note except some broad indication of what we intend to do. And I think it has two parts. One is the collection of data from a sort of unusual way that we thought we would do. Not so much because in itself it is something very significant. But this is one simpler, easier way I thought we would gather data about the kind of Lokavidya Samaj that we have. What is their knowledge and what is it that they were doing earlier for at least 2-3 generations? If we can gather some data about them from the students, you know of colleges and high schools ... maybe that ... I mean, we have teachers, and we can administer a simple questionnaire. In which all that they would be required to fill in in some tabular form of data, what is their father's occupation? Mother? What is she doing? So also other grandparents both sides you know, father's side, mother's side ... and things like are there siblings and so on. If we can gather enough data from each of the student about 8/10/20 people of that family that would go a long way in trying to give us some picture of what is this Lokavidya Samaj that we have and what is the state of knowledge that they have, what is it that they were doing. Supposing, you know, we find that even in the grandfathers' or great grandfathers' generation they had not been doing anything like what we call as the traditional kind of crafts artisanal things or whatever occupations, then in that sense, you know, because if they had shifted from the traditional to whatever that was available to them. That itself is an indication of what is the state of this Lokavidya Samaj today and so on. So, we thought we would gather that kind of data from administering a questionnaire to students with the help of some of our teachers, whom we have

in various colleges and schools, and it may not be a very difficult task because if we are able to design it properly and give it to them, they will be able to bring us the returns, you know, in a matter of a week, or maybe 10 days, or at the most one month. The question would be how we tabulate and analyze them later that we will have to do with the help of some professionals or ourselves, etcetera. That will be one part of the study.

The most difficult part of the study would be when we have to go and engage in some kind of a conversation with the Lokavidya Samaj, whom we identify in various places, small towns, villages, maybe even in the cities and if we can engage in conversations running into, say, couple of hours and even more if we have people who can do this - 8 or 10 or 20 people, whom we know, I mean our own friends, colleagues and people whom we know and with whom we can share these ideas. If they can do this, then it might mean valuable data from whole lot of people who are representatives of this Lokavidya Samaj and their thinking, their ideas, their attitudes too, apart from what they are doing actually at present in terms of occupation ... the level ... the standard of living, all sorts of things, you know, we have not listed them out in exhaustive detail because it will take some time for us to prepare a very exhaustive list of all the things that we would like to. Or it may not get covered by each one of us who go about doing this conversation because it may not happen that way. We will cover part of it. Some others will cover some part of it. But overall, if we have some hundreds of people contacted and then conversations with them running into a few 100 hours or thousand hours, that will give us valuable, very rich data about what is happening to this Lokavidya Samaj. So that is the whole idea and for that I think we have enough people to do this job of conversations and gathering data, recording them, analyzing them. It will not be all standard format for everyone because there will be deviations depending upon the person who you contact the conversation, the way it goes about, sometimes it will be very lengthy conversation ... sometimes it can end up in one hour or less than an hour, and it all depends on the way we are able to establish a kind of a rapport with them - the way they respond, you know, if they cut you short, if they are not interested,

if they think that we are wasting their time, then it may not continue for a longer duration. But we hope we will be able to have this conversation established with some of these people and carry on. May not be in one sitting, maybe in 2-3 sittings. That is also quite likely. So, if that can be done over a period of 6 to 8 months, then we will have a very rich kind of data that will give us an insight into the Lokavidya Samaj. We just know this is basically in order to enable us to understand this society, how it is functioning, what the future is likely to be and how they look at their own society and life around, etcetera. It is to gain that kind of knowledge, which I suppose we don't have, or at least I don't think I have enough understanding of their conditions, and not material conditions alone - maybe the way they look at various events surrounding them and how they respond to them, their optimism, or how hopeful they are about future, their aspirations, etcetera. A whole lot of questions you know with a view to more or less constructing the world view of these people. Which may tell us as to how one can go about, maybe even if one wants to organize them or to contact them, or to even appeal to them, expect certain actions from them even without our own effort, if we expect certain things to happen in their society, in terms of what they intend to do or how they are going to respond to various challenges or events ... That would give us some idea about what is it that we can expect from this Samaj. How energetic or how positive they are, how you know, optimistic about life in the future, their children or how do they look at society at large, you know? Is it that it is they think that it is better now than what it was earlier like in father's time, grandfather's time. Or is it that they are facing, you know, kind of situation which is seen as something going from bad to worse because there is always this feeling in the Society that this is Kaliyuga and therefore everything is going to dogs. Is that something that is shared by all these people, or is it said only as a routine by most people, but they are not feeling that way, that they think that society ... I mean things are very bad today in every respect, you know... Or do they think they get better things to eat or better, you know, life comfort, various other things, you know. And their attitude to what is being given to them from outside, maybe technology, tools, possessions, gadgets, everything you know, we have no idea. How do they look at some of these

things? And therefore, you know, this would be very useful ... I mean something which we have not done. I do not think anybody has really written about it as to what is the real feeling on this, about everything around them. You know, it may be politics, it may be simple things, it may be sanitation. It may be, I don't know, the kind of attitude towards the changes in climate and conditions of living, etc. I mean, for instance, do they get so very alarmed about the kind of changes that we have been seeing in climate, the flooding of cities and the kind of unusual changes in, you know, weather conditions or rain or whatever? Or do they not? You see it that way. Is it only the middle-class that is worried about it? Or is it that they are too? Also, they may get affected in a certain sense more we don't know we have. I have no idea how they view some of these things. You know. So, it would be one way of trying to get a certain feel about what is happening around our own Lokavidya Samaj, and it is a firsthand kind of. This would be very educative to us all, I mean to us at least more than anybody else. So, if we ultimately gather all this. In a year or so, then we may be able to write it up or present it in various places or understand ourselves as to how do we think we can proceed further. I will stop here. I can only request you to give us some input as to what you think can be done for. That we have not exhaustively listed all the things that you want to do. We have a whole lot of things in mind. We may have to do it systematically, listing them out and then present it to you again at which time we may even have a longer kind of discussion on whether this is needed that is needed, whether it can be done, how it can be done, when all that has to be thought about. But this is a very initial kind of statement and therefore we would ... I would at least ... request you to give your immediate reactions and some input as to how do you think we can go about it. You stopped it.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 00:13:47

Suresh, you want to add something to this?

SURESH Speaker 3

Yeah, I'm sorry. Yeah. No, no, I ... I don't have anything to add to this.

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED)

Speaker 4 00:14:19

Krishnan, I am sorry because suddenly a phone call came. I got slightly delayed in joining. So, from the write-up that you have sent. I can see but. So there is this initial thing where you look at some quantitative understanding, talking about or finding out about the material aspects and then get into different types of conversation. To elaborate on that, can you please just a little bit elaborates it again How you plan to go about it or what are your suggestions regarding that? I missed that part, I apologize.

GSRK (CORRECTED)

Speaker 1

00:14:59

This data quantitative thing will be collected in the form of a tabular. I mean tabular form by asking questions like I mean list your fathers, grandfathers you know on on both sides father, mother side and things like occupation. If they have information, if they don't have it, then at least occupation what they were doing, whether they were following, I mean from that we can get some idea about whether they were doing some traditional occupation, if they were, we can also find out from the caste or that if they can give us. And therefore that would be one type of information. And education both sides, you know, especially women you see, I mean their mother, grandmother. Were doing anything ... economic activity other than housekeeping, I mean we have this feeling that whole lot of women in India, I mean especially Lokavidya Samaj women who are engaged in very productive activity etcetera. Let us find out from these boys and girls now, whether ... I mean they may not even know or they may not want to report it in that sense, I don't know ... It's all very difficult sometimes. You know, if they were doing something ... but we will have to explain it to them before administering some of these. So it will take some effort on our part to go and tell the boys and girls that we want this data for understanding this society, how it has been changing or not changing in the last so many years. So, we will get some idea about how it was, let us say some 70-80-100 years ago. The condition of these people ... because if we get information about their grandfather, father, and if one can even think of great grandparents

and so on, this will give us at least an idea about the movement and mobility as we call it in terms of occupation, education, this that etcetera, I mean whether they have moved from villages to cities, the towns, etcetera. So that would be one kind of data. And one would be putting some questions to these students, whether there is still this memory as we call it of some of the things that, for instance, when we were looking at this caste census - the old census - data analysis, we were struck by kind of data that we obtained in this 1871-72 of Punjab province, which showed something like 1,00,000 castes being listed by the census officials. 1,00,000 castes listed names are given and the list runs into several 100 pages in the census volume. I think about 200-300 pages in three columns. You know in the sheet the names were ... of course, I mean, some of many of the names were repeating and all that, but these were names of castes that were listed by the census officials. We were quite taken aback because we could never imagine 1,00,000 castes in the whole of Punjab area. So we thought as to what could be the names of these. I mean are they castes, are they sub-castes? What are they? And the population ... we had, you know, the figures and we simply made a division of this - population by number of castes - and we could get an average of only about 2-3 hundred people. If that is equally divided, each caste would represent just about 2-3 hundred, 400 people. And interestingly, the census data also gave us some idea about the geographical location of these castes. I mean, those days I think the census operations were little more efficiently done with the result that they would indicate in the Census Report. these castes occupy these, these areas, you know, and we found from working it out, with certain difficulty we could get some idea about what is the geographical, you know, range of occupation of each caste, you know, it did not go beyond a few km. So, each caste occupied a radius of some five 10/15/20 kilometers. So we were trying to guess as to what could be the names you know if they are not really castes because you can't imagine 1,00,000 castes and they could not be even sub-castes that occur somewhere, you see. Could this be some kula type of thing, say, gotra. But then gotra also has a problem, I mean, gotra is not something that is common to all the castes, you see, in our society. This is usually the gotra names are known only to some upper caste. It's not generally

the practice in the lower castes etcetera. So, we could only hit upon hypothesis that this could be Kula. But then today, nobody remembers what a Kula is. I mean it is used here and there in some literature. What is your? I mean, even today in conversations, Karnataka or elsewhere, they would say our we have to guard our Kula pride or whatever. They don't say caste pride. It is usually set in vernacular as Kula ... Kula-gaurava as they call it. And when somebody marries outside your caste, it is usually considered as violating the Kula Dharma or Kula. You know the rules of the Kula, not as much as caste, you know. I mean, this caste is much recent. This usage of the term caste. It is not called inter-caste marriage, and very often they say that this you have married outside the Kula. You have violated the norms of the Kula. So we would like to know from our present generation whether they still have some of these vague ideas, or do they even know anything about the Kula. Have they heard about it or do they still use it? Suppose I ask them "What is your Kula?", would they be able to respond or would they simply ask me what is a Kula? You know, have they heard it in conversations, in their families or elsewhere, you know, in kinship circles, do they still use these words? Kula, Kula-gaurav. But I mean, for instance, in Kannada, it is usually said you have spoiled the name of the Kulaby doing things, you know, ... not necessarily marrying outside Kula, but even doing things which are not expected of a particular Kula. So, we would like to know from our present generation whether any of these things are still there in memories because we keep talking about some of these being still in our memory and therefore can come back at some point. Is it so, I mean, if we suggest these names, terms, etcetera do they respond? Some of these things are my own interest in terms of curiosity of whether some of the things that we have been talking about as memories of our people ... are they still there, really strong somewhere, at a deep, subconscious level and so on. Is it true? Or is it that we are just imagining these? Or have they disappeared completely? So we would like to or have other terms replacing them because the modern discourse of on caste and jati have maybe taken away some of these older terms and so on. Some stuff, for instance, you know, in films, etcetera, you find this Kula, and Vamsha and Kula being sometimes used synonymously. But is that Vamsha as is is called,

you know, in various languages, is it still in their consciousness or has it all gone away and It is only in some movies and some of these writings that you find it here and there, you know, but otherwise people don't respond to this. So we would like to know some of these things. And therefore this would be a kind of data that we would collect from them. Basically, in a form which is easy for them to respond without taxing their patience in terms of asking them to write, you know, just tick. That's sort of the boxes and so on. That's the way we would like to design it.

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4 00:24:12

My take would be that Vamsha and Kula, perhaps at least in Bengal, are more or less the same thing. It is the extended family. There's a family tree which can be constructed and within that the Vamsha or the Kula, whatever it is. So you can have within a particular caste many Kulas or Vamshas. But then how is all this going to give us ideas about the current status (of the Bahujan Samaj)?

GSRK (CORRECTED) Speaker 1 00:25:00

You know, one would be quantitative data in terms of education, occupation, their living conditions, their houses and what material things that they have, etcetera, that sort of thing. But additionally, we will also have some for instance we use in, I mean at least in South India - that is a kuladaivata, there is a god for each Kula, and we are supposed to ... our family, or whatever ... So, apart from various temples, etcetera, the physical prayer ... all that there is some compulsory requirement in most of the families that when a child is born you have to take the child first time to your kuladaivata and pray there, especially the giving of the air the first time when you know tonsure etcetera. It has to be done. Maybe it was done in the case of some of us. For instance, I remember. But then, by the time my children and others, the next generation, we have forgotten ... and it is somewhere in Tamil Nadu which I have not visited after I was taken when I was a young boy and I ran away because I knew that they were going to shave off my head and they caught me and then put me. And yeah, yeah. And then there was a pond there. So dirty, etcetera. We have to take a dip there. And

that goddess ... it's a goddess ... is there even today, I mean, now it has become famous. It seems that the temple ... it was a very small temple, but no great patronage in those days. Only our people would visit. That only once in a way, not regularly. If there is some child born or some such thing, you have to go there, you know, but is that still there in the practice of many of our people today, the present generation or in the previous generation, or is it all being forgotten? Do they even know what their Kula is? Suppose we ask this question: What is your Kula? Do they know their name? The goddess? Or the location. My son's sons will not know what the Kula is, where is it located, etcetera, etcetera. So, there is this big change that has taken place. Has it happened all over or is it only in some places or is it with regard to the castes? You have become urban and modern, etcetera. Is it true of most people? So, some such kind of questions will be put and then we can gain some understanding of what is happening in terms of some of these older things and whether they are all going away or still lingering. Is it confined to some people or not. So that is all the idea is not so much. So, this will give us some, yeah, some idea about whether these terms ...

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4 00:27:57

Yeah, I understand this. Yeah, so my query was of course directed in a different direction. This is something which may be interesting. I personally know, in Bengal it is that we have some families which have the Kula devatha and the Kula guru and it is more like an extended family. And there it is. Given that the family structure, the larger family structure - is slowly breaking down and units are formed and so and so forth. So with that, the thing has slowly decayed. That is what my interpretation would be, and it may be a good idea to look into those I was asking because you were talking or there is mention about. Finding out details about the different material aspects objects, whether they are there or not.

GSRK (CORRECTED) Speaker 1 00:28:54

Yeah, yeah, that would be a step. There could be a standard format which we use generally in all these kinds of studies.

So I have some, you know problems with that, not problems but. I mean, I feel that that might be a trap in the sense we know that the other type of things are qualitative. The narrative and other details that you have spoken about, and which would take a longer duration. And it is more difficult and more complicated to collect. This is the simpler one, but then I am afraid that this effort might lead us into once again get into the development trap. Just think about it, because it's very difficult to get out of the development trap when the material things are considered and we know that possessing something and which is required for some sort of need that is there and actual fulfillment of the need. These two are, you know, very different things. In the sense that you possess books doesn't mean that you have knowledge. I mean, I'm just telling in a very crude format so. So that is 1 issue. If we try to do that, my take would be that is there any way of getting into or cutting into the research from an angle which actually takes the positive aspects of the lokvidyadhar or the (what is that called ?) Bahujan Samaj's life and the living and I point at or I recall the discussion that The Budhey has initiated that can we go and find out some way that 'what can these people do to the society?' I mean it cannot be found out by directly asking the question. And it cannot be done in a meta fashion, but perhaps going into some depth before formulating what we can do. For example, we know that human endeavor occupies broadly 5 dimensions. One is at the level of education and living: Shiksha Sanskara that is. The other is Health and regulation: Swasth and sanyam. Then justice and preservation: Naya and Suraksha. Utpadan and Karya: Production and work. Vinimay and Kosh: exchange and storage. So, these are different dimensions and in different ways Bahujan Samaj people participate to different extents. Even today life goes on, living goes on because of their participation. They may not be economic activities. All of them. The Dadi of the House also participates, and the young child also participates, the Super senior Baba participates. The young people also participate in different extents. They have some understanding and in this all their ideas when we say that the two aspects that we talk about. We have spoken about not wanting to differentiate between manual and physical. So here there

is an understanding they have an understanding. Can we grasp it? Can we see how much? What is there? How much is there? And the fact is that that at least I personally have a definite feeling that society would not be going on if. Actually, people did not participate in these dimensions working. And this is about, you know the understanding comes in the form of understanding of the different relationships (note added in proof: there are four levels) that are existing in life. A person's relationship with oneself, a person's relationship with one's close family and friends, the relationship with the larger society, the relationship with nature. You know they're engaged in a process of, you know, nurturing these relationship and protecting this relationship. In adding to some mutual fulfillment through these relationship. I mean clear distinction when we talk about, say, exchange (Vinimay). So, one is exchange for 'profit motive' and the other is exchange for 'mutual fulfillment in relationships'. When we talk about storage. One is storage for 'right utilization' in the near future or in a later future and the other is 'hoarding'. I mean these are two distinct types of things that come when you try to so. So these are aspects in which these people are engaged. So can we start discussions, narratives, and where we try to get a feeling from where? You know, we also have an idea that what, knowledge, what understanding these people possess, what they can do, what they are doing for the society. I mean, we have been saying that, you know, everybody contributes. Everybody has knowledge. Everybody contributes to the running of life. Everybody contributes to the society. But what? I mean, I mean, one has spoken about that Avinash, last day talked about what knowledge I mean this is the knowledge and the knowledge there you don't distinguish between you know theory and activity or theory and application. It is an understanding which is there and which is in... with this they engage with life, they engage with people, they engage with nature. They engage with society. And the society runs on. Society moves on in spite of all the, you know, atrocities that have been dumped on to them. So, can we? Can we try to formulate something where these things are taken into consideration? This is just a suggestion. I'm just ... after a long time I could do a little bit of sitting down and thinking and this is what I can suggest at this point. I mean what you have suggested when you separate out the

easy part of it and the difficult part of it, then the easy part of it very is I mean it can very easily you know I know that all the things that you have said and then you are definitely aware that one has to go through the other aspects but the material. And the understanding wise ... or the knowledge wise - the aspects, the, the attitude wise, the aspects, those, those things are very, very important. 'Only material' thing is not important but then it is if you just start with that and focus on that, there is a danger. That is the only thing that I would like to suggest. That's it. That's my remark.

GSRK (CORRECTED)

Speaker 1 00:37:21

Yeah, that is ... I think we should thank you for elaborating on something which is very interesting. But then when we talk about knowledge, I think we should make it slightly clear as to what we try to understand when, at least I and Suresh mean when we have been discussing. We would like to see whether there is knowledge even now. Or, you know, do they have some clear knowledge - to make a living out of that knowledge. It is not just anything else. Also, because everything is knowledge, but this knowledge that they possess - is it enabling them to make a living? What do they do to live, you know, in order to earn a life, you know, their bread? That knowledge, you know, we are more interested in that. What is that knowledge that they have that enables them to make a living. If that knowledge that they had is today more connected to this, whatever modern technology or things of that kind, or even that necessary so that they become mechanics or some kind of electricians, plumbers, various other things that are jobs that they do. That is one type. Or do they still have their own whatever is called the Kula kind of activity that they were doing earlier as we were our carpenters or this or that etcetera or even services. Like being a washerman or a barber and things of that kind. Do they? I mean, they may come from the caste of barbers or washerman and so on, but they may have given it up for a variety of reasons, and that it is not very useful. Or is it not paying them? They may have switched over to ..., which is fine. So, their present state economic activity which is connected to their knowledge. And what do they, how do they get this knowledge that they use to make a living? Is it through ..., I mean,

obviously not books and colleges and universities. You see they may have picked it up from somebody as an opportunity. By going to some, you know, workshop to pick up the nuts and bolts of this ... mechanism of scooter or whatever ... and in that process, you see, they have been doing this job of mechanic making a living out of this etcetera. So, it is this kind of activity which you would more or less confine our attention. The rest is supposed to be in terms of their attitude, how do they look at life and their philosophical view of things around etcetera. That is all very great knowledge, but that is itself a vast thing that we can keep on trying to, you know, explore for the rest of our lives. But that would take, I don't know, ... it may take us a long time to understand in that sense. You know, what is Lokavidya philosophically, and their attitude, their approach, their world, how do they construct the world, how do they look at the world, how do they relate themselves to others ... the larger society, people around them, etc. All this knowledge that they have, they are obviously living that kind of life with this knowledge and so on. But that is not something that can be easily grasped now. To the extent we can, we will try and get it, but we would like to make it more or less restrict to this economic activity or activity that is related to their living, making living possible for them. That activity, what is it that they are doing and what changes have taken place in that from their father's and grandfather's time to now and what do they hope to do further. Are they ... I mean, because if these children are in colleges and schools, do they hope to somewhere relate to their father's and grandfather's activity, or are they aspiring for ... obviously they would be aspiring for something. So, that is not the point. The point is not whether their aspirations are about a different life altogether, but this whether there is a continuity from the father's, grandfather's time to these people, or what do they think about these activities, and is it that they think they should continue with this. Given return is better, etc. are they prepared to? There's a stigma attached to it and things like that, that that's also a part of the inquiry. Do they feel that they have stigmatized their activity? Is so stigmatized that you would like to give it up, even if it means, you know, it gives you a better return today? Or if it can give you a better return, even then they would like to give it up because they would not like to continue with this stigma.

So we would like to know whether they are aware of some of these things. Barber ... why would he want to... I mean, he may want to be called a hairdresser or something else and then make it very modern. Some new terms are coming, you know where they do this, hairdressing in a very attractive way and make it appeal to ... Maybe they are the same people who are doing it, or maybe they are very different kind of people who are taking it up. Washing and dry cleaning itself ... it has become ... Is it because it is called dry cleaners or gardeners, and that new terms that are used are more respectable, or is it they are the old washerman etc. So, we would like to know whether there is a shift or whether there is no shift. What is their activity? How do they make a living? Is it still something giving them some return? Or is it they are just managing, somehow surviving? So, this is all that we would like to know in terms of what shift has taken place because we have a feeling ...

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED)

Speaker 4 00:43:47

I understand what you are you are trying to push forth and it does have the strength because today if they don't have a way of, you know, having or providing for their very basic amenities, then they are living a life of deprivation and we know that a large section of the population - a significant section of the population is in that state. But then there are people who are living and they are pursuing different types of activities and in many cases they are engaged in activities which are not connected in any way with what their strengths are. They are connected, they are being used as manual labor, they are being used as people who are supposed to perform just, you know, errand running duties at the beck and call of people who are controlling the society, controlling the economics and so on and so forth. So that is the situation, that is the state, there is no doubt about it. I was trying to talk about (that) can we try to document or try to find out what their positions of strength are and a concern from which I think would they raise the question? Can we find out what they can do in any place you ask that what is it that you can do. And what you 'can' do or what you 'do' do? It may be social work. It may be protecting nature. It may be, you know, there are so many things which are not economically gratifying, sort of a thing,

and people do that and there are large number of people, they are not advertised, they don't appear in the newspapers. People don't write essays about them, but they are there. If you are, at least I can see in Bengal that there are many small groups, small organizations in different villages. People are organized. People are concerned. And as I tried to mention that there are broadly 5 dimensions of human activity. 1. Education and living (Shiksha-Sanskar) 2. Health and regulation (Swasth and Sanyam) 3. Justice and preservation/protection (Nyay and Suraksha)

4. Production and Work (Utpadan and Karya) 5. Exchange and storage (Vinimay and Kosh). So what we are talking about - what we just now discussed about - that is about the production and work. That part of it. Only one out of the five dimensions of living. And each individual - they participate in different ways in all these dimensions. When we talk about, say, exchange and sorry, if we talk about Nyay and Suraksha. (preservation). 'Nyay' that we have been talking about Nyay - Tyag - Bhaichara that maybe the human human justice. And so protection of each other. Nurturing each other so that is a part of the 'Nyay'. And Suraksha means protection of human - nature relationship. So, this is the dimension in which people do work. And these are not immediately, they cannot be turned into something which is pecuniary, which is monetarily viable, and so on and so forth. But if it is recognized as work - as something as an activity in which somebody can contribute, somebody can participate then - the society in earlier times, I think used to - in today's time also there must be some way by which they also should be, you know getting a sustenance or getting what is that called income or whatever it is. So, these have not been recognized as income generating things just like you just now said that 'apart from household work'. So, these are all can be termed broadly as household work, but that is not insignificant household work. Today people have realized that it is far more enormous than the type of activity that a person engages in bringing some cash flow in the thing. So, the household work has got so many things to do which are essential to all these dimensions of living. And if we do not pay due importance in setting up our search, setting up our inquiry into these aspects, then we will

fall into the trap of what goes on today. And at the end of the day, they will say that if you can't document the type of activity, it has got no financial reward. See, right now in terms of technology, there are competitions in different places in farming, for example, in healthcare there is for example, there is things that there's a modern medicine and there is Ayurvedic medicine and then there is modern agriculture and there's the traditional agriculture. There are other things. So that tussle is there that will go on. But then there are other aspects which are related to how humans interact with nature for the production and nurturing of the soil of the crop and other things. The way they go about and including the saving of water resources, saving of human life. Living of human health and all these aspects which are which go into considerations. So these are all part of it. That it is complicated that we do not understand all the detailed things about it. Is obviously a problem, but that is what we have to address. And the research into of the of the type that is being envisaged has to take serious considerations of these aspects. I mean, because it is difficult, we can't neglect it. If we neglect it, and if you fall into other side that I feel that we are in the danger of getting trapped into the (what is that called?) What is the status quo? What is going on? And then and that already, you know, has determined what people will do and what people can do and. So on and so forth. This is the fear that I have. It may be not founded properly. But I have a strong feeling that we have to go into and examine the whole aspect from the point of view of what are the strengths of the people by which today we, life still goes on. Still there is spirit, still there are movements. And when the movement springs up, still there are people gathering with all their life force and jump into it and you can see their internal inner, you know, sort of hopes and imaginations and whatever things which come. The Kisan Andolan brought it. And there are other aspects in in different they may be small things where in terms of you know, protection of nature, protection of river protection. There are so many things which are happening, and they are happening almost everywhere. It is only that these are not advertised. These are we don't see. We only see sometimes. Sometimes these are nipped in the bud. Sometimes they interfere with the local goons or the politicians and people are murdered and they're they're just they. They go off

the field. But then that that that spirit is there. And it is this spirit that has to come up. The future lies in this spirit. Then I think I have spoken too much, but I've been thinking about it and the more I have been thinking these things have been, you know, coming up in my mind. So I thought that I will put that in front of all of you.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 00:52:00

OK. No Abhijit, if you have some very specific suggestions about the design of the whole thing, then maybe it will be better if you put it down on paper. That will be better, I suppose. Because, yeah, ... no, no ... particularly, particularly because ...

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4

Of course, it will be better! But that is not an easy task. That is not an easy task because I am I am alone, I am alone. I don't have anybody to discuss this with. So, I have only discuss with myself. So that is the major issue I will try. I will try to put as much as possible but then. Not being in in it not do. Doing it and not even having anybody to, you know, immediately, you know, knock out my ideas. These are small, unformed ideas that I have. So putting that into a into a cogent aspect is, I mean it. I don't think it is. It is really a serious effort. It is. Immediately, but then I will try and as as and when I come up with some semblance of ideas as they grow, I will try to knock it out. I may send it to individuals also to get their feedback and then think on. My problem is only that the I am unable to put in continued effort on any direction because of my some problems in the family which keeps on cropping up and there is suddenly a break in the whole all activities. So, I will try the next 2-3 days four days I will. I will once again see if I can make something more. I didn't, but I don't know. It's quite unlikely that something realistic will come up. So I thought that I, the major concern is that we need to start from the points of strengths that are there, try to evaluate them and it cannot be only with one aspect of life. If we go to only the production and work aspect and talk about the skills. Then I don't think we

will be able to grasp, you know, the whole part of it. We will not be able to go there.

I just wanted to add one more thing. I wanted to add one more thing regarding the thing about the Ayurveda. What Suresh was talking about. Ayurveda and Western medicine and so on and so forth. I think one of the major differences there, what I thought is that in Ayurveda one is talking about Swasth and Sanyam. And it is about the well-being of the swasth of the human, whereas in modern medicine it goes in terms of, you know, which disease. And which medicine? So Ayurveda doesn't talk in terms of that 'this disease' and 'this medicine'. It talks about 'this human condition' and 'this way of life'.

And there are some 'Anupaans' there. So, what I'm saying is that differentiating distinguishing that way may not lead us to the, understanding that we are trying to get. Yeah, sorry, I I cut the to what you were trying to say. I have understood that I have made my point and then I you want me to write something more concrete and put it forth in terms of what could be done. That is all that is I will try.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 00:56:23

No, no. I was saying this, Abhijit, just because, you know the the the non-material part of the survey, as GSR has called it, is not described in too much detail and it is in the preparation stage, so to say. And much of what you said, tends to actually address how to do that. So if you can put it down ... what kind of interaction you have in mind with the Lokavidya Samaj ... then it would be helpful to, you know, fill up that part of it. That is the reason I was asking you to ...

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4

OK. Yeah. I I I understand now what you mean. Yeah, yeah, I'll do that. I'll. Try to do that.

GIRISH (CORRECTED)

Speaker 2 00:57:19

OK. No, yeah. Naresh, you want to say something? Ohh ... before that I'll ... just just one minute. See, I just wanted one small clarification, this material part and non-material part as you are calling it, they are done in different ways and the the the people who are addressed in the two may not be the same, although although ... they may be, of course, ...

GSRK (CORRECTED)

Speaker 1 00:57:51

Yeah, that is a problem. No, there is a problem if you are looking at it in a very academic sense of how to when we publish it etcetera, it will be raised. You know you have contacted one set of people to collect material data and you have contacted others you know for this, but I thought since we are more interested in gaining and understanding of the situation, not so much in trying to publish it or, you know, make it a kind of discussion at the academic level this is fine. I mean because we have no way of collecting data from this very same kind of people, because when we go to the students ... students I thought of it as some kind of a novel way of overcoming this problem of contacting every house and collecting this kind of bits and pieces of this information. Because not very reliable information is always collected, and it is such a time-consuming, very difficult job of getting around. You know now you have to make a sample and size of the sample that ... all that is there. There are rules and various ways of going about it. So, unless you make it a very small micro level kind of a study of 1 village or two villages. Then all this can be done if we are thinking of a large area of let us say the entire state as many people as we can ... the Lokavidya Samaj, which is so wide. You know, there's no point in nearly trying to concentrate on one or two villages, or not too small places. So we thought we would take a cross section that can be done only through, I mean some kind of a novelty, by that we mean some shortcut. You know, students who come from various places. If they are in various colleges, etcetera. If we have some of them, you know, I mean we respond to this, you know, some hundreds or thousands of them, we might get some kind of an idea of what is going on. It is not very

scientific, not maybe scientific within court. It may not be very correct to ... I mean, you can't even claim that you have understood all this properly, where there will be challenges, contests that this is not a sample which is scientific enough. It doesn't reflect the real position, etc etc. But then this is basically for our understanding. So, this is one way. Secondly, of course, we thought it is not enough that material ... that is only to see whether things have changed in the last 30-40-50 years, as Suresh and I have been discussing it, we have a feeling – a gut level feeling - that there is a very big improvement in certain basic things - like there is no abject poverty that we see, at least when we go around etcetera. There is a lot of ... I mean there are huge inequalities and all that is true. But in terms of food and availability, and things like that, you know basic food and availability of food, it seems there has been a big change in the last 30-40 years. You know, for instance, I don't see beggars in Bangalore the way I used to see them when I was young. Nobody comes to your house nowadays and asks for food, etcetera, which used to be routine. In those days. I mean, there will be one set of people in the night or evenings coming and asking for food, but that has all gone. I used to see a whole lot of lepers, etc around market areas in Bangalore. I am saying Bangalore, because I have been in Bangalore for the last 60 years. I used to see as a student a whole lot of lepers at the railway stations, bus stands, etc. begging. I don't see them at all now. I guess they have all been taken out of these places to some far-off place - that is possible - in some bigger colony or whatever. But I have a feeling that things have improved. Leprosy has actually been controlled, you know, to a great extent, in especially the Southern states that were notorious for leprosy. They have, either through modern medicine, or that kind of thing that they have done, the governments, leprosy has more or less gone. There are still lepers around, but then I don't think it is as bad as it was some 40-50 years ago. Things like that, you know. So we have a gut feeling that things have changed in the last 40-50 years for a whole lot of people, even at the bottom, which means, you know, they are able to feed and clothe, especially clothing for instance. I mean, nobody takes the old clothes, you know from you, I mean all that is gone. Nobody wants to take from anyone old because textile, whether you call it as profit, making money or not, it's a failure or

modern textile. There is so many textile products all around. There are no buyers, you buy one and you get three or two free or all sorts of shops around. You know, if I see it, at least in Bangalore and nearby places, textile products, footwear for instance, it was such a costly thing in my days to buy a pair of shoes. Now it is available all over the place, you know from the cheapest ₹40-50 to maybe a few ₹1000 and so on. So that's sort of ,, there's a glut in the market of footwear or textiles or things like that, which gives us an impression that there is a big change in consumption and availability of things for making a living ... it is not only food and ... I mean, for instance, take non-vegetarian food. I never used to see the kind of non-vegetarian food - this chicken and eggs - all over the place. In Bangalore, now you find every small shop has 3-5-10-20 trays of eggs. You know all the time somebody is buying it and somebody is consuming it. It's not there just for ... how can there be such a big supply of eggs all around the place if people are not consuming it? So there is a certain impression that we have, maybe we are completely wrong. This is only confined to some major cities and so on. But then this feeling ... it has to be tested and verified and checked. One way is to ask students in colleges and schools what do they consume, what do they eat? What do they ...? How do they live? What is it that they have, etcetera. Their possessions? It will give us some indication of whether we are completely wrong or we are somewhat right, etc, etc. This is one reason why we did this kind of approach to collect data from a variety of students, you know from all over as many as possible from various colleges and schools.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:05:34

Another thing I just wanted to say at this stage is that the proposal which one has in mind should be prefaced with some kind of statement of purpose. Other than just trying to sort of find out exactly how things are ... I mean, this is sort of bland ... That is why probably this tendency to think ... which Abhijit is talking about ... that it gives an impression of the kind of surveys which are done otherwise. Maybe it will be good to add some very definite kind of, you know, direction other than just saying that one wants to know the state in which Lokavidya Samaj finds itself today. I don't know if I am really making myself

clear, but I think it needs something more than that to become something different from the survey of any other type.

Ok, Naresh? Unless ... unless ... let me just ask. Suresh, you wanted to leave? You want to add something before that? Suresh?

SURESH

Speaker 3

Not really, except that you know, in response to Abhijeet's line. There are many suppositions one can make about village society, and that is precisely what is going to be inquired into in the qualitative part. That is, what kind of belief system do they have? How do they resolve disputes? How do they do this and that? How do they actually come together for various, for example, village festivals, this, that, and so on and so forth. All that will has been left unexpanded here because we haven't reached that point. And those are the things which we will actually look at without any presupposition. One has to look at what their practices are in order to arrive at their strengths. The idea is not to ask them or, you know in some ways sort of try to gain their confidence to tell us their strengths are what they want and so on. That is going to be a result. That's not the premise of the exercise. Finding that they have some strengths and so on is not the beginning point of the exercise. That's the end of the exercise. It's in putting together all the data about their activities, their beliefs and their attitudes, their thinking and so on. That one may arrive at what one might think are the strengths of these people. To presuppose that or to sort of, impose that on them beforehand is to put the cart before the horse, so, but then. Sort of in line with what Abhijit was saying, it is quite right that such questions must be asked and they will be. That's one part, and I'm not too sure if I got girish's point about preface and so on. Obviously at the point where this gets more and more rounded, there has to be some rationale for it to be when you actually administer the quality quantitative part to the. Young children. That will have to be very properly written so that it makes them comfortable about, you know, one part is the mechanical part of making them comfortable with answering. So they don't sort of from, you know, take it either too casually or try to sort of

dream up answers and so on for what they don't know. The other part is to actually, you know. Engage their minds so that the questions and the answers to the questions also would be more forthcoming from them. You know very well what would you say, the truthful kind of fashion? The last one, the third intent of the questionnaire, would be to convince ourselves as to what we are doing. You see, typically if you look at National sample survey kind of you know surveys of various kinds, they'll be focused on specific things. For example, you know it would be on nutrition, it would be on food there. A very detailed question on nutrition, what they eat, what do different members eat and so on and so forth, which form a certain kind of a larger. Picture of India's you know, status of women or children and their nutrition, how they actually eat and so on and so forth. Or it could be about income or it could be about the effectiveness of the Mandrake, a program or something. They all have something very specific for which they actually work together. For this we will have to actually look at. How to describe it? Especially because it's horizontal. It cuts across various elements of life lifestyle. And as well as beliefs and attitudes and actions and so on, so that that part needs to be done obviously. And I quite agree with you that there needs to be a certain timing statement statement which covers all this in the part of the intent for doing this to help us understand this process ourselves as. We go.

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4

I would like to quickly respond to the first two points that Suresh you have made. Girish, can I go ahead? Can you hear me?

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:11:40

Yes I can hear you, but just because I had asked Naresh to ... OK go Ahead, go ahead.

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4

Yeah, yeah, just two brief comments and Suresh can respond later. The first point is regarding the premise and conclusion. I think that the all of us who are

on board here today. We have as our premise that all human beings have knowledge. And we hear we believe that the knowledge that the Lokvidyadhars possess is their strength. The purpose of what we are doing to in my understanding is to find out 'WHAT' these strengths are. 'That they have strength' we are not going to find out. We don't want. I don't think we are doing an exercise to find out whether they have strength or not. That is my first point. Suresh, you may respond later. The second point is regarding initial statement. I fully agree. Because it is very much in tune with what I have in mind and what Marx had said that philosophers or throughout the history or something of that sort, have interpreted what is going on - state of affairs. The point, however, is to change it. And I think our whole exercise. To change it. So these are. The two quick points and I think Naresh can. Take over, yeah.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:13:12

Yeah, sorry Naresh please go ahead.

NARESH (CORRECTED) Speaker 6 01:13:17

OK. Can you hear me? And I would be very, very brief, though one can respond to many things. But one thing that I agree with is what Girish spoke about that a kind of statement of purpose will be helpful. And it is something that I was going to mention. Other thing I wish to point is what may be in plan in what Suresh said about the unstated part / unexpanded part. So maybe it will be in that. In the unstated and expanded part. The way I see it is this. Now very quickly, let me say about the innovation part that GSR talked about. It appears to me that one will have to be very very careful there. Because if one is talking about school children, (the students) then for that quantitative part of the study it is not clear how much the school going students will actually know about various things that one wants to know about the material conditions. So it is nothing to do with what kind of education they are having, but that they are very young, basically. School going children, even middle school and high school are hardly up to 15, 16 17 years old. And a lot of things about their own families, they are unlikely to know about material conditions. So that is one thing that I

felt that whether the innovation helps or whether this innovation is going to be a kind of hurdle in knowing that part. But that is not the very important part the material condition one, and that is a different matter. So that is one thing. The other thing is what the statement of purpose would probably make it more clear. And unexpended part also may make it more clear (what is to be added one can see and respond at that time). However, to my mind the more important part is to be the non-quantitative part of the study -let me call it study, and not a survey, in the sense that what GSRK began with that one wants to know how the lokavidya Samaj lives. So coming from that point of view, it will be in that non-quantitative study, from which perhaps there will be a lot more to gain. It will be more in terms of insights. I don't see that publishing it would be a big problem that the people who are responding to the quantitative part/ material part and those responding to the so-called non-material part are different people. It is not very important. You can call them two parts of the study. OK, so that is not very important because it is basically trying to understand which questions can be understood or answered better in which way. In many studies they do both - the structured questionnaires; and then they do the group activity. They have names also: the participatory rural appraisal (PRA). So they do different kinds of things. That is probably not the difficult part. The more important part is that what one is trying to gather as some of that I have not seen, it maybe in the unexpended part. The questions such as the following would be interesting. In which way they have been organizing themselves as a Samaj. That is what has not come through in what has been talked about so far. So there at the family level, at the household level, what they're talking about is one thing. And even individuals can respond to that how they view themselves as part of a particular samaj. And what they don't consider as to be necessarily / essentially as their samaj and how they interact with them. For a long time, in economics, people have talked about the moral economy and what is not a moral economy: where you have you recognize the obligations to each other (moral economy) and that part of the world where you have more transactional approach rather than obligational approach (outside moral economy) the kind of thing that we don't do with our own people. But this kind of thing (i.e.

obligation) you don't bother, if they are not your "own" people. So there is a clear understanding of what is our samaj, what is not our samaj in that sense. So that part has not come through in what has been described. maybe it will come in the unexpended part, but as you have described, in that "how do they organize themselves into a samaj" that has not at all come through. The second thing is that in some sense if there are issues of functionality, then what kind of issues do they perceive, that are not letting them have the realization of their potential in their own eyes, and not somebody else's eyes. So those kind of things have not come through. I thought that this would have been the more important part. Quantitative things you have lots of studies out there. It will be adding to that, including the area that this, what do you say that mobility over generations and over the same generation. Intergenerational mobility, there are studies as also there are studies for economic conditions, for employment conditions, for health conditions etc over generations. There have been studies of those kind. Of things also. So that part is important, but even more important will be that part what has been called the non-quantitative, non-material part where one tries to actually grapple with the societal issues - basically how they view themselves? How they view the difficulties in their potential to be realized? And I just make one comment on statement that Abhijit said that we basically have all agreed that, whatever they have is, that is their strength, their knowledge and all that kind of thing. Asserting by some people who are not even seen to be as a part of that samaj and their understanding that is this is so. I don't think you can keep taking it as a statement - absolute statement. You're doing a study. Everything should be, almost everything should be, open to study also. So to what extent they see this kind of thing as their strength or not - why that should not be open to study. I don't understand. We have taken it as a self-evident truth. I have no idea how it is self-evident truth. When you were asking about questions to be open, whether I engage with that or not, but taking it as a self-evident truth the study is certainly not good. I don't think that's the right thing to do. Whether we engage at this stage; or GSRK and Suresh engage; or it becomes too far expanded and one can go in graduated fashion that we do this much this time and more can be taken up by other people or another time, that is a

different issue, because there's also doability issue. So I have basically confined myself, except for the last comment, to what I have seen in the write up, that GSRK has put there and what he has talked about, what Suresh has talked about. We could take up later various other things.

ABHIJIT (CORRECTED) Speaker 4 01:22:26

Just a clarification, I have said that their knowledge is their strength. We have to find out 'what' these strengths are. I have not said that we know what their strengths are. I have said that their knowledge is their strength. Because they live by their knowledge, they have been - the whole life is going by their knowledge. That is all that I have said. That is all the point that I wanted to make. Sorry, uh.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2

OK, Avinash?

AVINASH (CORRECTED) Speaker 5 01:23:25

It was an interesting discussion ... what points that Abhijit has raised, I think are very good. I just want to add that this is this division between what is material side and the worldview side. What Abhijit is saying. It's not that it is not material side. I'm just saying that when we talk about living and the material side of living it includes all these things. So, when we talk about how we make, how do people make their living, it is of course true that the flow of cash that has to come - one thing is the need of the cash has increased more and more as we go on, and secondly, to earn that cash you have to sort of do various kinds of things and plus it is also true that there are aspirations and all for more and more ... that is also true. The material problems of living cannot be reduced to how one makes one's living. The idea is to see how life is sustained materially. In that sense, apart from that one aspect making living these other aspects, that Abhijit has pointed out, I think they are very important and means. Study. There should be some sort of way of gauging how these aspects ... how strong these aspects

remain, or what are the problems they face. Right now, that's the only point I wanted (to make)

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2

How can I change it?

CHITRA JI (CORRECTED) Speaker 8

I am in agreement with the questions that Abhijit raised. There should be a statement on why we want to do the survey. In any case this survey – whether a limited one, or an extensive one - in the Lokavidya Samaj is bound to be fruitful ... because even small interaction with them will give us something ... and it should be done. I just want to raise one issue, which is that – as Naresh also said – we should find out how they organize. For this one has to go where they live and enter into a dialogue with them. Without that it is difficult to see how they live. I do not know how exactly the survey is to be done. But, a lot depends on our perceptiveness too ... on what is the way we are trying to look at their lifestyles. Also, their struggles ... which are for change, or reform. We must look at those to understand what kind of transformations they desire. That is all I want to say.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2

Sunil?

SUNIL Speaker 7

OK. How much time is left? 5 min?

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:29:16

10 minutes is fine.

I don't know. I want to respond to GSR. The first response is everybody had something very interesting and significant to say, so it was a very good discussion, a very educative discussion. Maybe also a sufficiently comprehensive one. Perhaps after some time, after a long time (it was) that people came in from various different angles and approaches. Two comments I wish to make now. One is about going via the students. It is a novel approach. There is no doubt about it. I don't, well ..., I don't belong to these areas of studies. So I don't know, but just as GSR has said that this has not been done perhaps so that way it would be interesting. But one will have to ... it is tricky. It is tricky because the values of these students are different from the values of their parents and grandparents, who are from the earlier generations. For the students, one may guess, unless one finds out, but one may guess as far as we know these students ... and the extent to which we have our interaction with students and what is going on ... that for students only those things have value which have a market value. This entire rojgar, this employment, non-employment, ... everything finally focuses on things having value only when they have a market value. It is not so with the peasantry. Even when they don't get a market price, it is not that agriculture does not have a value. But for a student, for a son of an agriculturist, since it doesn't give get value in the market, get price in the market, it is valueless for him and therefore he will not go back to it. One can expand on this argument, but largely speaking, for students, ... value ... whatever is valuable is valuable because it has a market value. Now, this is definitely not true with the parents who are organizing those families. This is not true with almost anyone who manages affairs on the basis of small capital ... and this is related to that doesn't belong to ... that is, those who don't belong to a capitalist social formation. There are many things which have value without having a market. But an aspirant, a student who aspires, generally speaking, all students who aspire to be part of a capitalist social formation, the only thing that would have a value would be one that has a market value. This is a serious point. And this is, you see, of very fundamental importance. It will raise questions of the nature of representation finally. Can students represent

their parents in certain aspects ... in very many aspects, if you want to have a study of a certain kind of large assessment about the life then students would function as some kind of representatives of that kind of life, which is not. This will prove to be a major problem. Students ... children cannot vote for their parents. This is not the same thing, but it should be kept in mind. All those arguments must be invoked. Why children cannot vote for their parents? All those arguments must be looked into before figuring out how valuable is an assessment of parents ... of their lives ... by students. I don't think it is a merely factual detail that is going to be related. And we have enough experience on this. When we went out in search of practices that had no great market value ... whether growing cotton in a certain area or doing the agariyas iron smelting or there are others. Until we reach those actual people and saw the exercise, everybody said *kuch nahi hai, sab khatam ho gaya*. And we reached there, we found furnaces, as as many as 20 furnaces in some village. And people from those villages had told us: "*Kuch nahi hai, sab kuch khatam hogya*. We don't know anything. We had seen something our parents were doing, but now there is nothing." And when we actually go there, you find 20 furnaces in a village. Now this has to be kept in mind. While you see what is not valuable is not reported, even (by) those people themselves, even (by) those people who have great interaction. I still remember *Hamare Adilabad wale jo the ... Kala Sharma, Sharmaji kala ashramwale*. The first time we met him, in 1995 I think, he said: "*Vahaan ke adivasiyon ko kuchh nahin aataa hai*." That later on, maybe he realized, or whatever happened. I don't know more. What happened later with his ... what all he did? I'm not greatly aware. But I got somewhat put off. In 95, we were at the formulation of Lokavidya after a 10 year exercise, or a 15 year exercise, in the farmer's movement. And we find a man respected in the region, who says: "*In logon ko kuchh nahin aataa hai*"! Now, maybe after some questioning probing this that he would have said, *Nahin, nahin aataa to hai*. I didn't mean that, I didn't mean that etc. You get these responses. When going towards the village, you stop at a small shopping complex where there is a doctor, a small cloth shop and a small shop of some utensils this, that or something ... *tin-chaar dukane thin*. You asked them about certain practices that

may have been there some 50 years ago and do not have a market value today. They all simply said: “*Kuch nahin hai sab khatam*. And we when you go deeper into the village, you find that 25% of the value of the of the family economy comes from those practices which have no market value. If 25 ... up to 25% - I'm taking a quantitative this thing after long being in this kind of exercises - if 25% of the value of the total it takes to run house - if 25% is contributed from certain kinds of exercises, which do not have a market value, in what sense they do not have a market value? They have a value, a value for the life of the people. And yet they do not have a market value. I'm sure ... yes, GSRK and Suresh obviously will look into all these difficulties of these exercises. I am not aware whether social science studies earlier or the anthropological studies may have taken this into account, but social science studies or data collection of different kinds ... quantitative data collection, whether it takes into account these kinds of factors. It must be doing ... because factors are not easily left out. And from this I come to the second point and then I'll finish.

The second point is I had made a suggestion in the discussion earlier, that ... can we develop a sociology of knowledge perspective for building this study program - the investigation that GSRK and Suresh were suggesting. Can we build a sociology of knowledge perspective? Can we build a program from the sociology of knowledge perspective? I had asked this for two reasons. One is knowledge is our focus and second, I know - in the sense that GSRK had said once - that one of his students, and maybe more, has a very large take (on this). That is, they have spent maybe 10 years, 20 years in studies of sociology, of knowledge. So some of his students could be of great assistance or help, or may get interested. From the sociology of knowledge head, which also interests us in figuring out the nature of this study. It is not easy, I am not suggesting (that). It is not a hand-waving exercise to tell what a sociology of knowledge perspective for a study of this kind is. But I am somewhat apprehensive about the language being used repeatedly: Whether this village has changed over last 50 years. Of course, it has changed, and it has changed a lot. We all know that. Why do we say that we don't know what ... We know grossly what changes have taken place.

It is not that we don't know. The question is whether structural features have changed, whether hierarchies have changed and to what extent. Whether inclusion, exclusion, type of maps need to be redrawn and to what extent? That is the main issue. That is, whether their knowledge can be instrumental in an intervention for a structural change. That is all that the issue is, and the question is not how much knowledge they have. Just as Abhijit used a certain language, I will use another language. There are various streams of knowledge, all kinds of knowledgeable people, all kinds of knowledgeable people in the world. And a very small part of them is represented in the university. And the economic policies, even of the well-being of the people and welfare state, (are) based entirely on the knowledge that resides inside the university. It may have been brought in from somewhere. I'm not saying anything about how it (was) collected. But all the knowledge that resides in a university is only a small part of all the knowledge that there is in society.

This statement can be made without being bothered about whether the village has changed in last 20, 10 years or not. Lokavidya Darshan is not focused on the village. Lokavidya Darshan is not focused on the community. Lokavidya Darshan is not focused on caste. I will suggest that some of us we take a re-look - we we don't have to agree with what is written ... that is a different issue - but about what is there in the website? About how we introduced ourselves. In the name of 'Ideas' and - what is that - 'ordinary life', 'lokavidya' and certain other initial statements, three, four of them. How we have seen it ourselves. Maybe we need to change that. That is not an issue. But how have we changed, looked at ourselves so far, which we have called the lokavidya standpoint.

And I don't think any exercise is possible in a non-ideological fashion. I don't think it is. Nothing is doable in a non-ideological fashion or without a philosophical backdrop. It is always there. We are either aware of it or not aware of it. Either we are conscious of it or not conscious of it. Either we are basing our planning on that, or we are doing it spontaneously. But it cannot be absent. I mean, human beings are thinking beings. They don't work outside their frameworks of thought. They can transcend that, but they can transcend that

only after understanding what their framework is. Not by denying that they have a frame of thinking. If I maintain that I have no philosophical backdrop of my thinking, then I cannot transcend my thought. I think we all have the capacity and we have shown that in the past to transcend our own constructions in the world of thought. But only when we are aware of what our world of thought has been. Not without it. Not by denying its existence. When I say, when I suggest - and I had made this suggestion - that it has to be largely non-ideological, (that) is to say: an incessant - these are the words - incessant transcendence of one's own ideological standpoint. Booting - that you continuously boot. That you don't kind of refer to your thought, what you had said ... All classical thinkers, if you look back, I mean, we are somewhere - I'm not suggesting that we are classical thinkers ... I'm only suggesting that we can attempt to do something. Classical thinkers don't refer to what they had said before. Read Marx. Read Gandhi. I don't remember Marx saying in any significant way anywhere that he said this in German ideology and now he's saying this, and this had ... he had already said this ... He may say at times ... but mostly every time it is a picture building from a standpoint. Without referring to what he had said earlier. Can we do this? I think this exercise, which has been imagined by GSR and Suresh, gives a concrete opportunity for us to be able to do that. And we should. I mean it is an open question whether we measure up to it or not. I think we can measure up to it. That is all.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:46:28

OK. I think we will continue with this. You want to say something just now? Yes, GSR.

GSRK (CORRECTED) Speaker 1 01:46:36

Very useful, all the points. What we can do, or I will try and do is to try to incorporate many of the things and then come up with some others. I mean some new statement of the purpose and how do we ... I mean, I have not done it deliberately. I thought this is enough now for a discussion. So, we can spend some time maybe discussing this again for some time. Otherwise, maybe next

week itself. I myself will try and circulate something, even if it is not very, I mean well-discussed with Suresh, what I conceive as the purpose. How do we go about it? Why are we doing this kind of a thing, etcetera. That is one - I will try and circulate a small note on the basis of it. Again, we can discuss some of these things, especially the second part of the study - the qualitative part. I will also try to answer what Budhey and others have raised. That is one. Secondly, this - Budhey has been asking me about the sociology of knowledge perspective. There is a student of mine who is a professor at JNU now who has been doing a lot of work on sociology of knowledge and I will try. I know that she knows about our activity, namely Lokavidya and all. But then she has not taken any great interest. I will try and see if I can get her interested so that she would at least answer some of the questions that we put to her. And she might even respond in a larger sense. I will try and see if I can somehow rope in her ideas and her services. I will tell her that she can also give us some kind of perspective on what she thinks is the sociology of knowledge in this kind of a question. So I will see if I can do that but may not happen in the next week itself. But hopefully before we launch into a major kind of initiative about this study, we will have to collect all these things and and make a very clear idea of what we want to do and how we go about doing this? The major part of the study would be how do we conceive it? How do we properly conceptualize it, and how do we frame it etcetera, because the rest can only be a small execution. But then this part, you know we will spend some more time and see if it can be done maybe with a lot of discussion amongst ourselves. So, next week I mean I will try and present some small note trying to incorporate certain things that that have come up today. And otherwise, we can still discuss it next week also. That's what I thought.

NARESH (CORRECTED) Speaker 6 01:49:40

About sociology of knowledge, two people come to my mind who have engaged with that: Haribabu, we all know him. There is Sambhu Prasad. Both of them have engaged in this. I have not been in touch with them recently. So to what extent they would be useful, maybe separately, if one wants, one can get in touch with them. Both of them have dealt with this question. Both have sociology of

science and technology, and also larger question of sociology of knowledge, whether from lokavidya perspective - from that point of view, whether they have engaged, I don't know. But, I think, that is a matter of engagement.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2 01:50:33

OK. So, we'll continue with this next week. I had just one small request. Earlier also I had made it once. See there is a transcript of this which can be made which is a bad transcript because it is a machine transcript. But if everybody just looks at their own part ... whatever they said themselves, and sort of corrects it, which will not take more than 10 minutes for anybody. Please do that because that will help, you see, as many times one wants to refer back to what one oneself said or what others said. Also, this transcript is sometimes so bad that one can't make it out, so one has to go to the video, which is much more tiresome as you have to first locate what you are looking for, etcetera. This – the transcript - is a word file with every speaker's name, etcetera. So, if you can just locate your own piece and spend 10 minutes on it, correct it. Because there may be many mistakes (in the transcript) ... so that will be very helpful, particularly in this phase we are undergoing just now.

NARESH (CORRECTED) Speaker 6

You are sharing it. You are sharing it on that drive. You are sharing it on the drive. Are you sharing it on the drive. Last week, there was no transcript shared. There was video. And I think, these papers were there in both word and pdf. Transcript was not there, so, you know, last time.

GIRISH (CORRECTED) Speaker 2

Where? Where? No, no, no. In the directory it is there very much there. In the folder in the shared folder. It is very much there. I have not put it on the website till now because it needs to be corrected. It can be put there too.

NARESH (CORRECTED) Speaker 6

And so. But it is not on the Google Drive. Is it on OneDrive or Google Drive?

GIRISH (CORRECTED)

Speaker 2

On the web. I don't remember about last week. But I try to put it the next day and once I had actually made a specific request, Krishnarajulu had corrected it also ... his own thing. So, whenever you find time. So unless of course it is some half an hour talk or something, then it will take slightly more time. But as far as possible, do it so that we will have some kind of a ... you know ... body of text to refer to. Rather than having to go back to videos and audios, It is many times difficult to recall what was said by everyone. So then do it so far as possible. ... So let us meet next time. Hopefully something else will also be there from both Suresh and GSR, in the form of some write up. OK, so let's stop. Thank you.