



BUDA FOLKLORE

JOB SHADOWING REFLECTIONS

SARANYA MENON, DP 1,
*SILVER OAKS INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL, BANGALORE.*

01.06.21:

Today was the first day of the program. I was quite excited to talk to the indigenous people of the Northern Karnataka state. Although, admittedly, I didn't do most of the talking; Basavaraj sir (my CAS Coordinator) did because he was fluent in the language that I didn't know how to speak.

Table of reflection:

WHAT I PLANNED TO DO	WHAT I DID	WHAT CHALLENGES I FACED
Call 4 people as those many numbers were given to me by Savitha Akka.	We could call only 3 people because one number didn't exist.	It took quite some time for us to get connected to the numbers because people didn't pick up very fast, so I had to call them at least 3 times. In some cases, the women weren't comfortable talking, so their sons answered the questions.
Ask 27 questions each and get answers to all of them.	We asked all the questions but didn't get answers to all.	They all weren't interested in telling additional stories; perhaps they weren't comfortable to share it with strangers.
Get a picture of them and their quilts and the contact information of others who do quilting.	They told me they will WhatsApp it to my number.	Some people have to recharge their phones, and it may take some time for them to send the pictures along with the contact information to me.
Record the calls so Basavaraj sir could listen to it at his own time and translate it.	Couldn't record the calls at first because that option wasn't there on my phone.	This was an unexpected problem that I had to fix by Googling. This took some time and I was scared of losing time. However, I was still able to fix the problem and finally call all the people.

Overall, it was quite challenging but fruitful at the end. I think that they were quite happy to talk to people as well, as they were laughing and joyful; they were glad to talk to Basavaraj sir as he speaks their language as well.

To ask the questions, I had prepared a questionnaire that had a set of 27 questions along with an introduction and conclusion.

- [This](#) is the questionnaire for 3. Chanravva.

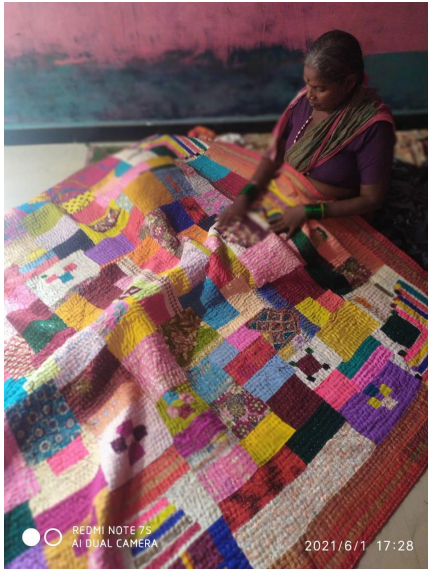
- [This](#) is the questionnaire for 2. Shantavva.
- [This](#) is the questionnaire for 1. Kallavva.

P.S: I have to WhatsApp this number +91 9980497825 to get pictures and contact information from Kallavva.

I have already told Savitha Akka about how today went and I have already asked the next set of numbers for the following days. In fact, she called me after I sent a message saying that I need to involve the youngsters of the households in sending me pictures and contact information of other quilters. She also basically directed me to ask more questions related to quilting, the techniques and the motifs. I am yet to fully understand what exactly these artworks are.

Chanravva, at night also sent me these pictures, which I am extremely grateful for:





In order to ask for contact information as well, I translated my question from English to Kannada and sent it to her.

To gain more information:

- I read [this website on the tradition of quilting](#).
- I read [this detailed blog](#) about quilting in Karnataka - specifically, Kaudi.
- I looked at Pinterest to see what different kinds of quilts look like.
- I also looked at [this blog](#) and [this blog](#), shared by Savitha Akka herself.

Reading and going through these definitely has helped me grasp a better understanding of what it is that I am doing and what kind of questions I am supposed to ask.

Since Akka specifically emphasized on me asking questions regarding motifs, I researched it and found out what it means finally! On the call with her today, she had told me a few examples of motifs that I could use to ask the interviewees. Unfortunately, I couldn't recollect the names. Hence, even though I searched a lot for the names, I couldn't find it until I found these two: Gubbis (sparrows) and Gali Patta (Kite). According to Google, a motif is a 'thing'- a leaf, a flower or a star are all examples of quilting motifs. Along with this, I got to know more about quilting itself, like the fact that people use templates at times to make designs.

With all this additional information, I have come up with additional questions that I intend to ask from tomorrow:

- What kind of patterns do you usually make with the materials you have?
- Do you use templates? If so, what kind of templates?
- What do you make? Blankets, carpets, beds?
- Are there different sizes that the quilts come in? For example: queen size, king size, baby size, etc?
- What fabrics do you use?
- What is the most difficult part about quilting for you?
- What are the steps you take to make a quilt?

I will include these questions in the questionnaire from tomorrow onwards and will let Basavaraj sir know to ask these questions. Yay!

02.06.21:

Today went by slowly. At the beginning, there was not much work to do as my teacher told me to contact only one one person and then compile yesterday's information. She said that it is increasingly difficult to get numbers of people and that I can only call during the evening because their husbands work in the fields in the morning. This means that I need to work in the evening to complete my cataloguing. Moreover, since Basavaraj sir has to translate the answers, I have to wait for him to finish doing that so I can finally compile all the data.

Nope, nevermind..Akka sent me 4 numbers today as well.

- The first call with Nirmalakka was 1 hour long. 1 HOUR! But it went well, she talked a lot, walked us through her life and was quite happy to do it as well. Basavaraj sir, being helpful as always, made little notes of the answers he got so that I can understand it. I have documented her answers in [this](#) document.
- We took a small break of 5 minutes and called the next person, Basavva, which almost took as long as the previous one. I have recorded her details in [this](#) document.

By the time these two calls ended, it was already 13:30 so we decided to take a break until 14:30 so we could call the other two numbers from then. By this time, I have received a few photos from an unknown person; they used a different number. I have asked who they are but they haven't responded yet. They responded! The woman in these pictures is Basavva akka.



This is a major challenge - language barrier and access to the Internet. Yet, it's going fine as of now so it is okay.

Today, I will make a Google Drive Folder with all the documents in one place so it is organized and easier to access. Whatever data I already have, I will compile it in a document and start cataloguing because I don't want to leave it for the end. The only problem is that Basavaraj sir has only written a few notes as answers for some questions; not all. So he has to listen to the recordings again and make sure to write the answers.

Last but not least, I have already uploaded the recordings till date to Google Drive so that even if the space on my phone gets full, I will have a backup.

Moreover, the next two calls didn't go as planned: one speaks only Marathi, while the other disconnected the phone call immediately.

This honestly made me feel so helpless because I didn't know what to do. I knew that I should expect these challenges but I have a deadline and I don't know if I will be able to complete my work before 15th June.

Yet, the Marathi speaking Akka, Jayashree Akka was able to communicate with us as her daughter-in-law could speak Kannada.

At night, Basavva Akka's daughter called me and told me that she would be able to provide around 15 numbers for me to contact. I was so overjoyed hearing this! "Thank you so much", I said. Around the same time, Savitha Akka also sent me two numbers for me to interview; they know only Marathi so I will have to do something about that tomorrow.

03.06.21:

Yesterday, Basavaraj sir told me that he has classes from 9:30 am to 4pm so he will only be able to meet with me after 4pm in the evening. Honestly, this is good only because even Savitha Akka told me that they usually go farming in the morning; they are really busy. They would also prefer us calling in the evening.

I am kind of stressed now, because till date, we have only interviewed 6 people out of which 3 haven't sent pictures, none have sent other contacts and two documents have been mixed up. This is bad! I will try to fix it now so I hope I can finish it on time. But let's breathe! I can do this!

To start off, I checked with my Google Drive where I tried moving all the documents of each person we had collected so far into one folder on My Drive, but it didn't work. I don't know why the files are not moving to one specific folder. So let's forget that, let's make another document and attach all the data of each person in one document and store that in [this](#) folder.

To give me hope in the morning, Savitha Akka called and told me that it's a hard job to follow up and ask for pictures and contact information but just plead them and tell them what it is for.

The next challenge: find someone who speaks Marathi. I have asked Aparna ma'am if she knows anyone in school who speaks Marathi.

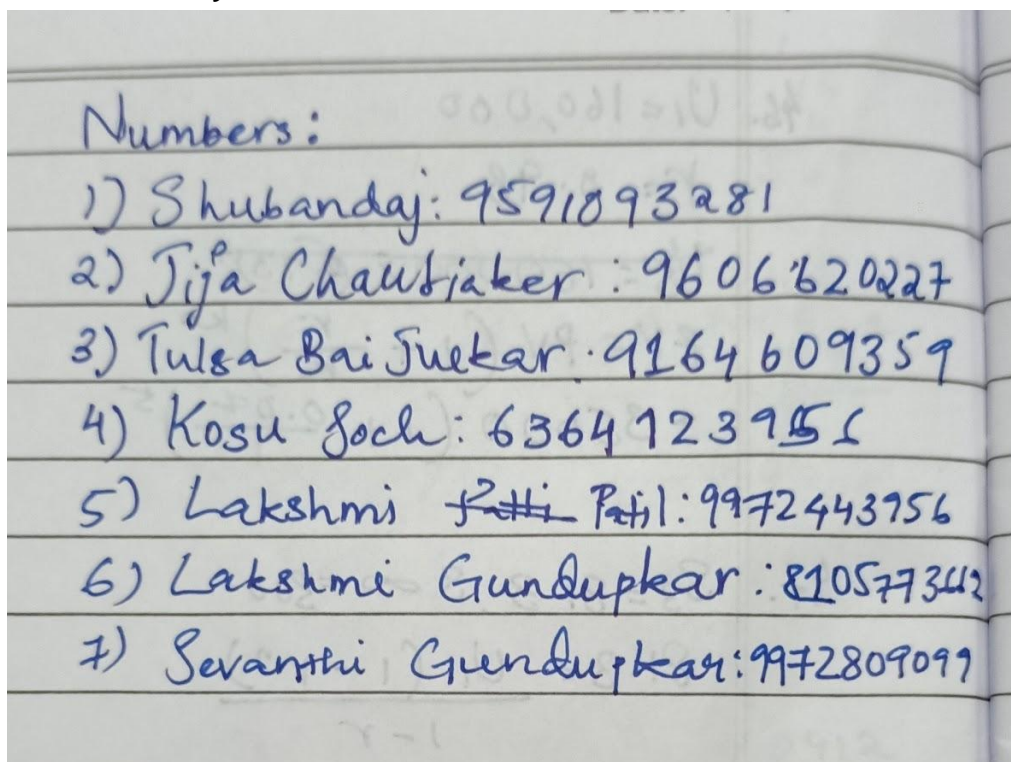
I created [this document](#) to make a database of each artisan, as instructed by Akka. I have received more photos from some people but some people haven't sent anything. So the next step is to actually call the people we've already called once again in the afternoon for a follow-up and the others can be called later in the evening. While going through the document, I realized that I don't know the name of their village though they all live in the same one; nor do I have all the rudimentary data such as their age or birth place. I will make sure to add these questions and record the answers. This, along with some missing information in some people's documents is stressing me out so I will ask Basavaraj sir to somehow finish that first.

I contacted my sir and told him to write the answers on some of the documents but he said that he is busy today so it doesn't look like that is possible. On the other hand, Aparna ma'am provided me with the number of one student - Soham, who is fluent in Marathi. I had a meeting with him where I told him about what he needs to do. I made the questionnaire more concise as seen in [this](#) document and I shared it with him so that he knows what exactly to ask. We agreed to meet at 7pm today to call the two new numbers that Savitha Akka provided.

In the database I have made, I completed writing the data of Basavva. To do this, I divided the information into three categories: "contact information," "livelihood" and "quilting".

Thank God! Now, I have all the other data left.

- Soham and I spent two hours trying to contact the two numbers that I was provided with. It took really long to actually get connected via phone but otherwise the call went smoothly. He was a little nervous, so he missed asking a few questions but that's fine because he has got all the information regarding quilting. Unfortunately, one call itself took so long that he said we will try again tomorrow at 7pm.
- Another important aspect of today was that Basavva Akka's daughter was very helpful by sending me the contact information of 7 other people who quilted. They all speak Kannada so I will have to get in touch with Basavaraj sir tomorrow. These are the numbers I collected from her:



She was also kind enough to tell me to ask for additional help. Because I had no choice, I asked her if she could send me the pictures of people who have not sent it yet despite a follow-up.

04.06.21:

Today, we started calling in the evening. Out of the seven numbers I had got from yesterday, we planned to call at least two people today: the first two numbers. Unfortunately, the first number was a wrong number - I don't know how. The second number, thankfully, picked up. This always happens so I am used to it but it's so draining and it makes the job all the more difficult. I also had an issue with Basavaraj sir being busy because of school starting but I talked with him and he said that he will give more time to my project, which I am utterly thankful for. Starting today, we are going to use the concise questionnaire that I had made yesterday for Soham. So, during the call, he will start writing more points as answers so it is easy for me to understand. The third number also didn't pick up but the fourth one did so that's good. The last number I called with Basavaraj sir today was Lakshmi Patil's. Tomorrow, he said

that he will try to either fill up the missing information on some of the documents or during his lunch break, he will try to call another number with me. After a call with him, I took a small break and then called Soham. With the two numbers we were supposed to contact, there was utter confusion because both the numbers seemed to be of the same person. But after talking to them both, we realized that one of them is the grandmother who quilts while the other number belongs to her granddaughter. They sent their pictures, so thank God!

The thing I did differently this time to increase efficiency is that, after every call with one person, I asked Basavaraj sir and Soham all the questions that I had in case the answers they wrote were unclear. This was good for both of us because it allowed them to remember things clearly from the call while I was able to understand the answers accurately.

06.06.21:

Today is a Sunday and Basavaraj sir has brightened my mood the past few days by saying that we will finish most of the calls and documentation today. I was happy to hear that and eager to finish it. But as always, things rarely go according to plan. We sat at 10 A.M. in hope that we would be able to contact as many people as possible but unfortunately the first few calls didn't go through - some didn't answer, some said to call in the evening after 7 pm and others cut the call. This immediately drained whatever hope I had left but Basavaraj sir was very kind and told me that these are a part of the challenges that we have to hurdle through. This motivated me to go further and call all the people left. There were only 4-5 numbers, and we could only talk with one number in the morning so we kept the rest of the numbers for the evening because many of them were in the fields in the morning. This was fine somehow because the rest of the numbers picked our call and were happy to get interviewed. WHOO! I am pretty close to being done but I just need 3-5 numbers more to finish documenting 20 artisans. In order to get these numbers, I asked sir if we could contact Nirmalakka in the end to ask for more numbers; she knows everyone in the village and even Savitha akka said she would be the best person to ask for numbers. We did and she said she might give a few today so I really REALLY hope she gives us a few numbers so we can start contacting them from the day after tomorrow.

I haven't finished documenting the people's lives in the official catalogue; I only have the notes written by sir in the separate documents. By tomorrow, I will complete it.

07.06.21:

Today morning, I was very happy to get a call from Savitha Akka as we have had no contact for the past three days. She said that she went through my catalogue that I had shared with her a few days ago and I honestly thought she was going to tell me that I need to change the layout because it looks boring but she said that it's done well. I was glad that she liked what I did because it is for her and her NGO. So thank God!

I asked her if she wants the layout changed because a catalogue looks quite different from what I have written. I have mainly documented their lives but

haven't made the layout look colorful or aesthetically pleasing. But she said that it is better for her to turn it into a booklet. So this was fine.

At the end, she told me to add a small note for Basavva akka's daughter as she was the one who took many of the pictures of various artisans in the village.

Along with this, I thought I could give a small token of thanks to both Basavaraj sir and Soham for being my translators.

So, to-do:

- Finish cataloguing the data of the artisans we called yesterday. ✓
- Ask for pictures in case I haven't got any. ✓
- Follow-up with Nirmala akka for contact information. ✓

08.06.21:

Today, I gave Basavaraj sir a few numbers to call to ask for other people's contact information. After constant follow-up with everyone, barely anyone has sent their pictures and other contacts. It's frustrating as usual. When he called them, they said that they will try giving more numbers by tomorrow. I really really hope they do because I need to contact five people more and I have only six days left. So from today 7 pm onwards, we both will contact people who we have already contacted and plead with them for more pictures and contacts.

10.06.21:

I've done nothing better today as well. I'm really starting to lose hope because for the past few days, I have heard nothing from the people I have contacted to get contacts. I had told Basavaraj sir to meet with me at 7 pm today but he had an urgent call and so could not make it. Thankfully though, he had called Nirmalakka and three others who were supposed to give contacts of others. Unfortunately, none of them did. Nirmalakka said that she got vaccinated today and in case she doesn't have fever tomorrow, she will ask for more contacts from other people. I told this problem to Savitha Akka and I haven't yet received any reply. I really really hope she gives me at least two numbers but honestly speaking, I don't want her to give those numbers to me because I want to be able to do this myself. But how do I do it, is the question? There is no incentive for them to provide me with more contacts, so maybe I should think of incentivizing them. Perhaps keep thanking them, appreciating them and pleading with them. I think that's our best bet.

13.06.21:

Today was tiring as well and the fact that I hadn't done anything over the past two-three days for my internship really hit me hard today. It's not that I didn't do anything, I just didn't get any numbers or pictures. But today, things started to change. Basavva akka's daughter, had called me to tell me that she has recovered from her fever and that she can give me three numbers along with the pictures of the people who are missing. That was good news! I was happy to hear that!! I immediately called Basavaraj sir and told him about this. He said that we can sit together from 7 pm onwards and finish calling these three people. The problem is that they might be Marathi speakers because one of the numbers that I got is one that I had already tried to call with Soham but it ended up being the same person from another number. It was a whole

confusion back then so I think the three numbers that she has provided me with won't be Kannada speakers either. However, I still really hope that they know just a bit of Kannada at least to strike a conversation with Basavaraj sir and me. Thankfully, Veena (Basavva akka's daughter), had already sent me the pictures of the people that I had already catalogued and the pictures of the people that she just sent. Unfortunately, one of the people wasn't there at their house so their pictures are not available. I just want this to go well; I don't think at this point I will get 20 numbers in total but I just hope to do my best. Savitha akka had already told me that if I don't reach 20 numbers, that is fine but I want to try getting there. Also, I thought that I could start writing my study on quilting in Karnataka and quilting in this village in particular today itself because in this coming week, I have a program that I have to attend and Basavaraj sir's school also starts so it would be difficult for us to complete it after today. Hence, I am aiming to finish the entire study and catalogue today itself. Too ambitious? I don't think so.

But of course, things never go as planned. The first number, though we were able to connect, kept getting disconnected. We had to call them at least four times again and again. The next number picked up and as we were trying to convey to them that we wanted to conduct an interview, they insisted that it was a "wrong number" and cut the call. Then, we immediately tried calling Veena but she didn't answer. The next number didn't answer. That's great! Exactly what I wanted ugh. So then, Basavaraj sir said that if they call back anytime soon, I can connect him on the phone. I pray that at least someone calls.

After Basavaraj sir and I cut the call today, I realized later that we didn't call Nirmalakka to ask for the other two numbers that her son had collected. Then, I immediately called him and asked him to connect with her whenever possible. I'm so tired but I really hope that at least tomorrow we finish what we started.

14.06.21:

Unfortunately, I was really tired from travelling yesterday so I could not sit late at night and finish my work. Hence, I got up early today at 6 am so that I can complete my study, my findings and acknowledgements. I started by writing traditional quilting in Karnataka. It is in [this](#) document. When I initially started to write this, I didn't know what to include so I looked at other articles that wrote about quilting in different villages in Uttar Karnataka. I mainly looked at 3 articles/blogs and took out some information for each and used it in my article. I didn't copy but I paraphrased the aforementioned information. Next, I wrote the conclusion on the village status and the status of quilting in the same. It was not easy but it was okay. I already knew what to include in it because Savitha Akka had given me the points. I guess it turned out to be pretty long but I wrote whatever I remembered and could write about. Then, I had this program from 9:30 - 7 pm. After 7 pm, Basavaraj sir had told me that we could call more people. Thankfully, Ajay (Nirmalakka's son) had given us 6 numbers the day before so we tried calling the three numbers that Veena had given us and then we called the other numbers. Overall, I needed to call only four more people and that happened! Basavaraj sir went through each call very fast - it lasted for about 12 minutes each. Before, it used to take an hour or so. It was amazing. I got all the important information I needed but I was just

worried about how to get their pictures. I told Basavaraj sir to ask them to send pictures but some of them told me that they don't have a phone and some told that they will send their pictures the next day. So then, sir told me that he will tell this to Ajay sir to see if he can get their pictures by tomorrow as this project is due then. Ajay sir was so nice to say that he will get it right at that moment. He did!!! I was so happy and I was so relieved honestly because I didn't expect that. These people are really nice - they have nothing to gain by helping me finish this project and yet they worked so hard. I am so happy that I will definitely do something for them when I visit them later. So, he provided me with the four pictures.

On another note, I had sent the write-up to Savitha Akka and asked for her opinion. I had told her that I am yet to cite my sources (this was in the morning). In the evening, I finished citing my sources and I was completely relaxed. In the end, I had finished the write-up and the conclusion. I had collected the data but I didn't catalogue them; I will do them tomorrow. I have to also finish the 'acknowledgements' section and get a picture of Kosu bhai as that is the only thing missing.

15.06.21:

Today is the final day of submission. I went through the catalogue - changed the font; applied it to all, made sure that every information was present and also cropped out the useless parts of pictures. I, then, asked for the pictures of some people for the acknowledgements. I quickly finished that since I was just thanking them for all that they had done. Before that, I finished cataloguing the information of the four people that we had talked to the day before. What I gathered was pretty less as compared to the others but I think it was enough - it gave a brief about their lifestyles and quilting stature. The only problem is that there is no picture of Kosu bhai. Savitha Akka had told me that even if there are no pictures, it's not a problem but I really really hope I get his picture through Veena before this day ends.

Veena had gone to his house a few days back but unfortunately, he wasn't there. I asked her now but she said that she has to go and check.

Other than that, I am pretty much done. I can't wait to submit this project today. If I don't get his picture by night, I will just submit it but if there are edits that need to be made, I will gladly do so. I hope she likes it.