CHAPTER – VI

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Information is rightly considered as the resource which enables the people to adequately exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens or make informed choices. Government information is a national resource. The Right to Information Act, 2005 was enacted in the country to bring about reforms in the administration and development spheres of national life in India. The legislation would enable members of the public to obtain access under the law to documents that may otherwise be available only at the discretion of government. The policy makers hoped that the right to information enhances the quality of participatory political democracy by giving all citizens further opportunity to participate in a more full and informed way in the political process. The central and state information commissions are also established all over the country to implement the provisions of the act and safeguard the interest of the people. The officials are also required to play a pro-active role to facilitate greater accountability and transparency at all levels. Studies have revealed that greater the access of the citizen to information, the greater would be the responsiveness of government to community needs. The right to information is expected to improve the quality of decision making by public authorities, in both policy and administrative matters. The present investigation was carried out in Karnataka state to examine the use of right to information by the media professionals. The findings of the study, testing of hypotheses, limitations of the study, implications of the study and implications on future research are delineated in this chapter.

6.2 Findings of the Study

Demographic Features of the Respondents

- There were a majority of male respondents (83.09%), 28-37 years old respondents (50.97%), graduates and post graduates (63.77%), professional media persons (87.68%) and Bengaluru and Belgaum based media professionals (62.56%) respectively among the study sample.
Contemporary Relevance of Right to Information

- A majority of the respondents (90.34%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information was a prerequisite to the development of democracy.

- A majority of the respondents (80.68%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information was a fundamental right of the people.

- A majority of the respondents (72.71%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information was an instrument of public welfare and progress.

- A majority of the respondents (75.85%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated people’s participation in public administration.

- A majority of the respondents (71.74%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated people’s participation in the process of development.

- A majority of the respondents (75.60%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information ensured transparency in administration.

- A majority of the respondents (77.05%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information increased the responsibility of administrators.

- A majority of the respondents (64.01%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information made the elected representatives and officials accountable to the people.

- A majority of the respondents (68.12%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information eradicated corruption in public administration.
• A majority of the respondents (67.39%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated inclusive development of people.

• A majority of the respondents (52.17%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information was an instrument of empowerment of weaker sections.

• A majority of the respondents (59.18%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information led to a progressive way of life.

• A majority of the respondents (73.43%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information created awareness about constitutional provisions.

• A majority of the respondents (73.19%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information created awareness about development policies and programmes.

• A majority of the respondents (68.36%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information created awareness among the people about environment protection.

• A majority of the respondents (66.43%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information prevented the exploitative tendency of public administrators.

• A majority of the respondents (62.80%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information increased the bondage between the government and community.

• A majority of the respondents (64.73%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information ensured connectivity between the development projects and people.

• A majority of the respondents (68.84%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information was conducive for human rights protection.
• A majority of the respondents (73.91%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information made public administrators law abiding persons.

• A majority of the respondents (53.62%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information prevented political interference in the administration.

• A majority of the respondents (71.98%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated access to information about the role and responsibility of the elected representatives.

• A majority of the respondents (75.12%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information prevented abuse of power by the public administrators.

• A majority of the respondents (53.38%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information did not facilitate equal rights and opportunities to the people.

• A majority of the respondents (61.59%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the people to fight against exploitation.

• A majority of the respondents (55.56%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information guaranteed the enjoyment of government facilities in the right time.

• A majority of the respondents (59.18%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated redressal of public grievances.

• A majority of the respondents (51.69%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated quick disposal of legal and administrative processes.

• A majority of the respondents (70.77%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information ensured timely management of government records and operations.
A majority of the respondents (58.45%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated timely implementation of various development programmes.

Uses of Right to Information to Media Professionals

- A majority of the respondents (69.57%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information law was simple and facilitates proper use of law by the media professionals.
- A majority of the respondents (72.95%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information facilitated early access to information to the media professionals.
- A majority of the respondents (65.70%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information made the government information as intellectual properties of people.
- A majority of the respondents (75.12%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to safeguard democracy.
- A majority of the respondents (77.29%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to protect the fundamental rights of the people.
- A majority of the respondents (76.33%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to prevent corruption in the name of development.
- A majority of the respondents (73.91%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to create development oriented awareness among the people.
• A majority of the respondents (68.60%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to enlist active participation of the people in public administration.

• A majority of the respondents (76.81%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to ensure transparency in public administration.

• A majority of the respondents (74.64%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to make the elected the representatives and officials function in a responsible way.

• A majority of the respondents (67.39%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to increase the accountability of public administrators.

• A majority of the respondents (76.57%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to fight against corruption.

• A majority of the respondents (62.08%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to work for the inclusive development of women and weaker sections.

• A majority of the respondents (65.70%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to motivate people to fight for their constitutional rights.

• A majority of the respondents (70.29%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to motivate the people to participate actively in development programmes.
• A majority of the respondents (59.18%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to check the exploitative tendencies of public administrators.

• A majority of the respondents (70.77%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to bridge the gap between government and people.

• A majority of the respondents (58.45%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to develop rapport between development projects and beneficiaries.

• A majority of the respondents (64.25%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to motivate the public administrators to protect the human rights.

• A majority of the respondents (65.94%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to motivate public administrators to abide by the principles of good governance.

• A majority of the respondents (70.29%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to prevent political interference in public affairs.

• A majority of the respondents (70.05%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to fight against injustices to the people.

• A majority of the respondents (72.95%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to fight against the abuse of power.
• A majority of the respondents (62.32%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to work for the equal rights and opportunities to the people.

• A majority of the respondents (77.05%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to motivate the people avail the benefits of government projects in the right time.

• A majority of the respondents (64.98%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to prevent the exploitative tendencies of vested interests.

• A majority of the respondents (71.74%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to facilitate timely redressal of public grievances.

• A majority of the respondents (69.32%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to facilitate timely disposal of files and works.

• A majority of the respondents (66.91%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to expedite legal and administrative procedures and formalities.

• A majority of the respondents (63.77%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that right to information enabled the media professionals to ensure timely implementation of administrative and developmental activities.
Gratifications of Right to Information

- A majority of the respondents (85.51%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of active involvement of media professionals in the good governance.

- A majority of the respondents (71.01%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of active mobilization of media professionals for participatory development.

- A majority of the respondents (61.59%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of creating linkage between the media and beneficiaries of development programmes.

- A majority of the respondents (59.90%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of enlisting active participation of media professionals in the process of development.

- A majority of the respondents (51.21%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of protection of human rights of the people by them.

- A majority of the respondents (53.86%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of protection of environment by them.

- A majority of the respondents (54.35%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of empowerment of women and weaker sections by them.
• A majority of the respondents (68.12%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of preventing the exploitative tendency of public administrators by them.

• A majority of the respondents (69.81%) regardless of gender, age, education, professional background and regional background have stated that Right to Information Act was satisfactory from the point of view of political mobilization to save democracy by them.

6.3 Testing of Hypotheses

H1. The media professionals have not gained absolute awareness about Right to Information Act, 2005.

The data presented in the tables 5.3.1 to 5.3.30 clearly reveal that the media professionals have gained absolute awareness about the Right to Information Act, 2005. Hence, the hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

H2. The media professionals have not gained adequate advantages from the use of Right to Information Act, 2005.

The data presented in the tables 5.4.1 to 5.4.30 clearly reveal that the media professionals have gained adequate advantages from the use of Right to Information Act, 2005. Hence, the hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

H3. The media professionals have not gained adequate satisfaction from the use of Right to Information Act, 2005.

The data presented in the tables 5.5.1 to 5.5.10 clearly reveal that the media professionals have gained adequate satisfaction from the use of Right to Information Act, 2005. Hence, the hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

It was not practically possible for the researcher to contact all the media professionals of Karnataka state to obtain the primary data on the use of right to information act. It was not practically possible to contact all the stakeholders of right to information due to lack of time. The usual limitations of the survey method such
as time, human inadequacies, resource constraints, recollection and communication were experienced by the researcher. Incidental, purposive and stratified sampling methods were followed in selecting the respondents. Though much care has been taken to collect the primary data, the memory bias on the part of the respondents cannot be completely ruled out.

6.5 Implications of the Study

The right to information is used by various stakeholders across the country to access information from the government agencies and expedites the process of development. A national level agency to oversee facilitation on RTI for both supply and demand side requirements should be established to facilitate timely flow of information from the government to the society. The information seekers are required to gain the familiarity with the legal provisions and practical mechanisms. The best practices should be used to establish good rapport between the information seekers and information providers. These practices should be used as guidelines because each information requirement varies greatly from any other and cannot be obtained by using common parameters and methodologies.

The central and state level information commissions should be managed by the information specialists rather than former bureaucrats. The commissions should be equipped with resource persons and competent officials for the speedy and efficient delivery of information services. They should be enabled to plan information delivery strategies and make other people within the commissions aware of the communication strategies for better access to public information. The public information offices should be headed by the persons who can function independently and effectively on the basis of adequate training, funds and facilities. These commissions should play a pro-active role in times of delivery of information services according to the norms and guidelines of the act.

These commissions, educational institutions, media organizations, voluntary organizations and other agencies should organize adequate awareness campaigns among the people in order to utilize the act to combat the corruption and get the services of the information providers. The government should also create an independent oversight mechanism to oversee implementation of the act and
promotion of the right which is lacking under the current context. The government should also further put in place measures to promote openness and a culture of disclosure of information in government institutions on the basis of positive attitude and behavioural patterns of the officials.

Tested, tried and healthy practices should be developed on the basis of research and development endeavours. These practices should also be shared across states and information commissions to enable mutual learning and possibilities for emulation. The information officials should be trained in the application of advanced information technologies and processes to shorten the path to information sharing and provide a wider outreach. The ability of the media professionals should not be hampered through certain laws which are outdated and irrelevant.

**6.6 Implications on Future Research**

This study attempted to evaluate the use of right to information by the media professionals with special reference to Karnataka state. The study has revealed the strengths and limitations of right to information legislation from the point of view of procuring information from government agencies by the media professionals. But, during the course of the study, it is understood that there are many areas which could be considered for research by the future generation of researchers. Further research is needed in order to better determine the best uses of right to information by the beneficiaries of various development programmes, social workers in different NGOs, political activists in different political organizations and social activists in different social and cultural organizations. The future researchers should examine the use of right to information by various stakeholders of development at different levels across the country.

**6.7 Epilogue**

The Right to Information Act, 2005 was enacted in the country to enable the citizens to assess government performance and to participate in the process of nation building activities. The legislation has the capacity to influence the process of government decision-making and policy formulation on issues and concerns which affect the well being of the people. The proper exercise of the people’s right to information can also bring about the empowerment of people. The central and state
governments have established commissions of information with a view to facilitate the flow of information from government to the people. Most of the commissions are not fully and properly equipped in terms of human resources who are specialists in information management. The exercise of this right is hampered substantially because the information users are not fully aware of the provisions of the act and methodologies of obtaining information.

Studies have emphasized the need for developing a methodology of people’s audit of public authorities in order to ensure good governance. Absence of political will has also resulted in the ineffective implementation of the act. The information seekers are forced to knock at the doors of the courts in order to seek the enforcement of the right to information. The courts have also positively responded to the people to the best of their ability. The media professionals do not enjoy any special privileges in respect of enjoyment of freedom of speech and expression and right to information. The media professionals have realized the contemporary relevance of right to information, obtained certain benefits of right to information and derived certain gratifications from the right to information according to the present investigation. The media advocacy on using the legal provisions and enforcing the right to information assumes great significance in the present times since the disposal of the petitions takes time in the court of law. It is of paramount importance that comprehensive and early legislation is passed that guarantees the right to information on the basis of constructive provisions for penalties and autonomous appeal mechanism.