CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION
1.1 Community

Community is the local area in which people function most completely and directly. Sociologists have defined the community as a local area over which people are using the same language, feelings more or less the same sentiments and acting upon the same attitudes. Most of them today, use the word ‘community’ to refer to such units of social and territorial organizations as villages, cities, towns and metropolitan areas. It refers to the places in which people maintain their homes, earn their livings, rear their children and in general, carry on most of their life activities. Community is continuous geographic area in which mutually dependent groups act together to satisfy their needs through a common set of organizations and institutions.

1.2 Community Information

The study of community life leads to the groups who are the inhabitants within the community and their daily living. The outstanding personalities, institutions and organizations often exercise their influence on the community life in meeting the informational needs to finding out solutions. These community informational needs include the problems related to the various kinds such as food and nutrition, schooling of children and levels of education, health care and social welfare, law and order, political rights, housing, transport, sanitation, and cultural activities and so on. Every individual in the community needs information from whatever the source to fulfil his information requirements to solve the
day-to-day problems in the community life. Community information ordinarily means the information in community for the community. It is the information required by the members of the community or those acting on their behalf to make an effective use of the resources available to them within the community. It is related to specific problems of private individuals or group of them, and, as often as not, is linked to advice in what is called an advisory service. It can even be linked to the function of 'counselling' in which practical help is given with personal problems such as marriage guidance or prevention of diseases etc. (Baker, 1996).

The distinct characteristics of community information according to Martin (1987) are:

(i) form and content of information as well as its provider are directly related to local needs;
(ii) people are the important sources of information, that means the system is to be developed for linking people to people;
(iii) relationship between the enquirer and the provider is more specific and
(iv) this demands a substantial shift towards greater interaction between citizens, local networks, agencies, etc., which lead to sharing of accommodation, services, etc.

1.3 Community information needs

The term 'information' in community information has a different connotation to the one existing in symbolic forms in books, data banks, files etc. It is an experience whereby people are linked with one another
in mutually useful ways created, shared and used by two or more persons acting together in the community. Donohue (1976) recognized two types of information required by the community: (1) Survival information, such as that related to health, housing, income, legal protection, economic opportunity, political rights, etc., and (2) Citizen action information, needed for effective participation as individual or as member of a group in the social, political, legal, economic process. Durrance (1984) added a third component i.e. the local information, to this which he defined it as 'information appropriate and useful to the community including a calendar of local events, courses, and other educational opportunities and basic information concerning government agencies, local organizations, fraternal groups and clubs, etc.' However, a clear definition of what is meant by 'information needs' is still open to speculations. Some workers have also distinguished information 'needs' from 'requirements' by saying that the information needs provide a broader or wider connotation in which specific requirements are satisfied. Therefore, the information needs of the individuals in the communities are their overall needs of information from whatever the source to fulfil their information requirements to solve the day-to-day problems in the community life, both domestic and professional.

1.4 Approaches for assessing the information needs

Information need studies can be grouped into two categories: (1) those which assess the information need or requirement of the general
public consisting of either a homogeneous group of people or a heterogenous group involving different types of communities, and (2) those which assess the information need or requirements of a user community i.e. the users of one or more libraries, or information systems, centres and networks. These studies are often grouped as use studies and user studies.

In the former category the public in general form the study material whereas in the later category the study material is the users i.e. library users, students, research scholars, teachers, scientists, professionals and other users of particular information systems, centres and networks. Because of the various difficulties encountered with the general public while assessing the information needs, such studies are carried out much less in number in comparison to the other types of studies.

1.4.1 Assessing the users' information needs

Studies on the information requirements of users of specific libraries, information systems, centres and networks (Barnes, 1965; Dervin & Nilan, 1986; Hewins, 1990) are available in literature compared to few works in assessing the (general) publics information needs (Beal, 1979; Bunch, 1982; Horne, 1988 and Kempson, 1990). Approaches for assessing the information needs of particular user group involve different types of requirements (Guha, 1983; Bhargava, 1986). Based on Molvin Voigt's (1961) analysis, Guha (1983) and Bargava (1986) have identified
four different types of information requirements: (I) current requirements, (ii) everyday requirements, (iii) exhaustive requirements and (iv) catching-up requirements. Based on a review of literature since 1978, Dervin and Nilan (1986) have identified six approaches to information assessment. These six approaches which were used by research workers include (i) users' demands on systems/resources, (ii) users' awareness of current services, (iii) likes-dislikes of users, (iv) priorities of users, (v) community profiling, and (vi) the interests, activities of groups of users. All the above mentioned approaches are meant for assessing the information needs of users or user groups with well defined requirements or at least meant for such persons who can express or demand their needs from a system. In most cases the users as well as the sources of information are defined. The responsibility here is only to make contact between the users and the sources of information after assessing their needs as relevant as possible. Most of the research works on information needs are carried out in this direction.

1.4.2 Assessing the Publics' information needs

Unlike the users' information needs, it is very difficult to assess peoples' or publics' information needs but an attempt to do so must be made if the community is to be provided with the relevant information. Kempson (1990) suggests mainly three ways for assessing the information needs of the public: (i) Perceived needs which can be assessed by simply asking people what information needs they think that they have. The
problem with perceived needs is that people are frequently unaware that they need any information. This may be due to their ignorance that information can be used to solve a problem which they face or simply they may not appreciate that there are solutions to their problems; (iii) Actual needs which refers to the information which they actually needed or sought for over a period of time i.e. a week, month or even a year. This can be assessed by asking them to specify whether they needed to find an answer to a question, solve a problem or to make a difficult decision; and (iii) Hypothetical needs which are explored by asking people what they would do if they needed information about a particular problem or situation. The problem with asking people about hypothetical information needs is that it is necessary to select problems and situations with which people can identify*. Even then, many people find it difficult to respond to a hypothetical situation.

Two other studies can be cited as evidences for possible approaches for assessing the information needs of the general public. One is the work of Dervin (1983) and her colleagues which consisted of a set of conceptual and theoretical premises and a set of related technologies for assessing how people make sense of their worlds and how they use information and other sources in the processes. The other is the work of Balkin (1984) and his colleagues which consisted of a starting point with a situation in which some one with a problem needs

* Altogether twelve hypothetical information seeking situations related to the everyday problems of the people are identified and described in this investigation.
help from some kind of information system. Balkin emphasises that the approach does not focus on information needs but on people in problematic situations with views of the situations that are incomplete or limited in some way.

1.5 Information seeking situations and information providers

Assessing the information needs of the general public in the community is a difficult process especially with those who are neither aware of library services in the locality nor know about the sources to satisfy their information needs. The identification of this need and the nature and behaviour of its potential users are considered as the two basic aspects of community information. Thus the information need of a community is that information needed by the members of the community to make best use of the resources available to them within the community that helps them directly or indirectly in solving their day-to-day problems. In other words, it related to the identification of information needs of the people with probable information-seeking situations and the most probable course of action which they would take to solve these problems.

1.5.1 Information seeking situations

Problems of community residents are numerous and every aspect of their daily lives whether it is economical, social or political poses problems which they solve by seeking information from different sources. Often they contact other persons in the community for information to
solve these problems. This brings a constant interaction between two or more persons in the community. Such a situation where a person meets another person or source in the community to seek information for solving a particular problem can be identified as an information seeking situation and the person or source which provides the information can be considered as a potential information provider for that situation. In fact, most of us come across such situations in our daily lives which either we solve the problems if we are aware of their solutions or seek information from others or approach different persons or sources for solutions in which case the later become the information providers to these problems.

One consistent problem is that it is difficult to design studies which will reliably measure peoples’ information needs. In some instances, their information needs may be easy to identify e.g. the lack of a fact or statistical details. At other times, the information need is less definable; for example, in the expressions like ‘I don’t know what I want, but I will know it when I see it’. This has been defined by Brookes et al. (1979) as an Anomalous State of Knowledge (ASK). It is frequently impossible for people to articulate what their ASK is. In these circumstances, a method of surveying information needs that does not ask the user explicit questions of what his or her needs required*. Observing information seeking behaviour is a well established technique. Such

* The information needs of the respondents are assessed in this investigation by asking them questions in an indirect manner. As far as practicable the questions are related to few every day problems while assessing their information needs from the probable course of action they undertake to solve those problems.
method can reveal information needs and the subsequent actions taken to satisfy those needs. Unsatisfied needs can be seen when the appropriate information is not found (Eager & Oppenhiem, 1996).

1.5.2 Direct and Indirect Information Providers

Every information seeking situation involves a potential information provider who provides information to the seeker to solve that particular problem (Beal, 1979). The information provider which provides the exact information for solving the particular situation is considered as the direct information provider. For example, a doctor or a health inspector/visitor is a direct information provider to problems related to health and disease. On the other hand, the information provider who instead of providing the exact source helps to locate or identify and direct the seeker towards the exact source of information in solving a particular situation, is considered as the indirect information provider. This type of providers are not capable of providing the exact information but helps to acquire such information within the community. For example, a neighbour becomes the indirect information provider when he or she help in locating the whereabouts of a doctor for solving a particular problem related to health and disease. However, the nature of information providers may vary depending on the various characteristics of the information seekers, such as sex, age, marital status, occupational and socio-economic status and their living environments.
1.6 Community information services

Though the origin of community information service can be traced back to the end of the 19th century, it became more significant during the crisis of second world war, when men returning from the war to their communities needed advice on their rehabilitation. However, the present phenomenal growth in community information services stems only from the late sixties (Bunch, 1982). Since librarians in the last few decades have increasingly felt that they too have a part to play in meeting the information needs, it is high time to look at the means by which public library involvement in the field of community information can be achieved.

The community is a multifaceted unit involved with a number of organizations working in it or on it. Though a direct relationship exist between the community and the library in a democratic society, owing to lack of awareness among the librarians for the most part they have not been actively involved in community development. Inspite of the common belief that everyone has needs which a library can meet, the percentage of non-users is still substantial. A major problem may be the failure of libraries to focus on what the users want, not what they think the user should have (Ellis, 1986).

The study of community involves an understanding of its cultural, geographical, political, social and economic processes and problems operating there in. The public library should appreciate the
problems of the community and suggest possible solutions. In the process of service to the community, the library needs some support. It depends on the community for the economic as well as moral support. When it depends on the community it is accountable to the community. A public library cannot survive without the involvement and support of the community where it functions (Chandrasekhar Rao, 1996). The libraries can be used as the best media centres in communicating the information to the communities, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the libraries as providers of information to the public. Martin (1976) suggests that if a library is to develop goals according to the main characteristics and peculiarities of its own community, then it must critically attempt an analysis of the community. Thus public libraries must come out of their traditional roles and provide commercial and technical information and they can not do this as individual institutions but with the help of library associations and government support (Oguara, 1969). This demands an emerging role of the librarian as the information consultant, learning advocate and communication mediator (Penland, 1981). They should not make the libraries only the gossip and information centres giving them the look of anything more than the middle class clubs. The librarians must be social workers as much as anything else. Healy (1984) considers the attitude of the public to the idea of the librarians as the successful information providers of community information.

Due to the growing interest in community information services, the Library Association in UK set up a Community Information Project (CIP)
in 1977 with the financial assistance from the British Library to collect, analyse, process and disseminate information on the area of concern solely to community information in libraries, particularly in public libraries. Besides, a large number of non-public library information giving organizations in the field of community information such as, the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs), the Consumers Advice Centres (CACs), the Housing Advice Centres (HACs), the Neighbourhood Advice Centres (NACs), the Legal Advice Centres and the Local Authority Information Centres have developed in Britain. Further description about these centres is not done here, since extensive descriptions about these centres are available in literature. In the opinion of Jackman (1978) the public libraries have failed to grasp the opportunity to participate effectively in providing information to the community as this role has been usurped by the non-public library organizations. However, the development of community information provision in public libraries in UK could assist improved decision making both by the general public by certain groups of people and by library staff (Coleman, 1986).

In USA, like the CIP in Britain, Public Information Centres (PICs) are set up to identify community information needs and to list the sources and agencies which could meet these needs (Donohue, 1972). The branch libraries as neighbourhood information centres are also set up with the objective to demonstrate to neighbourhood residents and the community at large that the urban public library can be a vital force in daily living, can provide free information, can refer residents to additional sources of
information and assistance, and that the library can adopt itself in non-traditional ways to meet the needs of those who have not previously used public library services and neither have experiences nor knowledge of the role of a public library in the daily lives of the residents of the community (Childers, 1976). By identifying and describing three basic forms of community information i.e. direct service, back-up and self help, Bunch (1987) draws a distinction between the predominant US model of information and referral and the more varied UK responses. He describes two recent trends in UK: the extension of community information to meet more specialized needs and the increasing use being made of new technology.

In Australia, the community information service is provided by the Citizen Advice Bureaux since 1958, which is modelled on the British pattern. The public libraries play an important role in the creation of community resource centres to provide information on such community topics as housing, food and clothing, and social services. (Trask, 1973; Bunch, 1982; Williamson, 1986). In Canada, the Information Barrie, set up by the public library Board at Barrie, Ontario provides community information service as a part of the library activities (Smith, 1978; Saltys, 1985).

Although there are no such services on the scale of UK and USA, few other countries have made some progress towards community information services to the general public. The literature provides few
instances on such services in the countries like Scandinavia, Sweden, Denmark, Brazil, South Africa, Uganda, Burma, Malaysia, Nigeria (Eisenberg, 1974; Bunch, 1982; Owino, 1984; Suiden, 1987; Garish, 1987).

But in India, where the people are generally illiterate and majority are under poverty line representing the lower socio-economic groups of the community, the situation is different. The concept of community information is yet to occur in an Indian context so far the information needs of general public are concerned. Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1985, 1987) provide the results of a project carried out in a semi-urban community of Orissa in which they found that people in the community are yet to realize the benefits of public library service to solve their everyday needs. They mostly depend on interpersonal means to meet their information requirements.

1.7 Community Information Sources

Information plays a crucial role in the development of a country. It is the basic responsibility of a welfare government to ensure that proper communication channels are built-up for effective distribution of information and diffusion of knowledge (Vishwamohan, 1988). In any modern complex society a wide variety of organizations supply information to the local community. They are:

(i) Local authority through its public library system; its archives, its tourist bureaux, its operational departments and its ad hoc information services, e.g. for industry and commerce.
(ii) Voluntary organizations, usually having financial support from the local authority.

(iii) Specialist organizations, related either to subject matter (e.g. housing, law, welfare rights) or to client groups (e.g. the disabled, youth, ethnic groups) (Gray, 1982).

While making an information needs survey in India, Musib (1991) identified the following sources which are useful to the public as information sources:

(i) Self/personal experience
(ii) friends, neighbours, relatives
(iii) family members
(iv) fellow professionals
(v) market/shop keeper, local place where people generally gossip
(vi) Block/Panchayat office
(vii) Service holders and professionals such as doctors, teachers, etc.
(viii) Others which include public libraries, religious persons, T.V., Radio, newspapers, etc.

In another study on current information needs in a semi-urban community in Orissa, Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1985) found that neighbours topped the list of indirect providers of information to the public followed by old persons of the locality. Others in the list included the Councillor, self knowledge, the Pujari (i.e. the Priest of the nearby temple), the Notified Area Council, the educated people and the local MLA (i.e. Member of the Legislative Assembly).

Coleman (1986) suggests that the people are an important source of community information. The librarians may no longer
necessarily look the answer up but may refer an enquirer to another individual. The idea of linking people to other people is a new concept for most public libraries. The nature of information needed in rural areas varies from community to community and that in most cases people meet their information needs by talking to friends, neighbours and relatives (Kempson, 1989). This does not provide sufficient detail to enable the services to be planned and it needs to be supplemented by the collection of detailed local information. To collect detailed local information, Kempson (1989) suggests to build a picture of (I) the community profile, (ii) the primary information providers in the community i.e. the information providers’ profile and (iii) the information needs of people in the community and the extent to which they are being met i.e. the information need profile. Although people in some occupations serve purely informational roles, much of the information necessary for survival has always been provided as a secondary function by agents whose primary roles are other than that of information provision. In a tightly knit community, for instance, casual conversation and gossip provide a great deal of the information needed for survival (Donohue & Kochen, 1976).

Extensive surveys are made to investigate the citizens information needs and seeking (Chen & Hernon, 1982; Dervin et. al., 1976; Warner, Murray & Palmour, 1973) which revealed that people tend to prefer informal sources and that they rarely seek assistance from public libraries to solve their everyday problems. However, some surveys, in particular Dervin et. al. (1976) included a number of fresh ideas to
approach practices of information seeking from the viewpoint of an individual in the context of everyday life (Savolainen, 1995). The clearest picture that emerges from research studies on information needs is that, in spite of the abundance of information available, citizens are uninformed about public and private sources, facilities, rights and programs (Kahn et al., 1966). They are frustrated in their attempts to get information required for everyday problem solving (Rieger & Anderson, 1968; Mendelshon, 1968) and are unable to cope with information needs (Dervin, 1976). Information does not seem to percolate down to the level of common man due to a variety of factors. As for example, the WHO sponsored broadcasting programmes regarding child welfare, health care, malnutrition, vaccination etc., though well conceived and valuable, do not get beamed to the proper audience. Millions of people are groping in darkness of ignorance due to reasons such as lack of access to mass media, obscurantism, illiteracy, superstition and indifference to community awareness to better living conditions (Vishwamohan, 1988):

By examining the extensive literature dealing with information sources, Dervin et al. (1976) noted that much of the evidence, although indirect, indicates:

(i) Television is the most used (and believed) mass medium for the average adult, but it lacks the kind of information needed to solve everyday problems;

(ii) Peer-kin relationships (friends, family, relatives) are the most used sources on most topics for most people;
(iii) awareness of potential information sources is low (Block, 1970);

(iv) use of professionals and non-profit agencies is limited to the highly educated elite (Levine & Preston, 1970); and

(v) a law of least effort is a strong factor in source use. Most people tend to use resources and services that are close to home rather than comparison shop (Alexander, et al., 1968; Udellet 1966; Zweizig, 1973).

1.8 Review of Literature

Scanning the primary journals and secondary publications like Library and Information Science Abstracts, Information Science Abstracts and Library Literature, Annual Reviews, Advances, Trend reports, unpublished theses and dissertations, Dissertation Abstracts like Dissertation Abstracts International, few text books and monographs on the subject areas related to community information, information use and user studies, information needs, public library and its use, etc. from the beginning upto 1998 revealed that the published literature in these areas are numerous and scattered. It was not possible to record all the relevant literature for this review. Therefore, few omissions could not be avoided.

The literature showed that the studies on community information and information needs of specific communities though began after the Second World War, their number increased considerably during 60's reaching the peak in 70's and 80's. During the later part of 80's there was a declining trend in the community information studies which reached to their maximum in 90's. On the other hand 90's witnessed the emergence of new areas like access to electronic information sources, information
services to communities through computer networks like INTERNET etc. The electronic media in the 90's dominated over all other media for information services.

Since the electronic information sources and services are distant dreams in the Indian context, unlike their counterparts in other countries, publications related to these areas are not emphasized in this project.

Inspite of numerous publications on community information services, a concise definition of information needs of individual citizens could not be achieved. The information need studies dealing with the 'user communities' i.e. the users of one or more libraries or information systems, centres and networks are more in comparison to those dealing with general public consisting of either a homogeneous group of people or a heterogeneous group involving different types of communities (Beal, 1979; Dervin & Nilan, 1986; Hewins, 1990). Studies related to the approaches for assessing the users' and publics' information needs are mentioned earlier which need not be repeated here. An observational method for undertaking user needs studies is provided by Eager & Openheim (1996).

1.8.1 Community information : General aspects

The theoretical aspects of community information, its nature and scope has been discussed by various authors (Berry, 1973; Ainely, 1980; Airhart, 1980; Barugh, 1984; Baliarsingh & Mahapatra, 1987; Avgerinos,
1994; Alemna, 1995; Pienaar, 1995). Allan Bunch (1982) in his classic book has discussed about the origin, scope and development of community information services. Most of the works on the subject in the later years are the reflections of this book. The works of Donohue (1976) and Durrance (1984) reveal that the information required by the community can be recognised into (i) survival information, (ii) citizen action information and, (iii) local information. Baker (1996) distinguishes local information from community information. Local information is that which originates locally and covers all topics including local government, business, transport, tourism and entertainment, as well as information of a social character, whereas community information is that which helps to meet specific needs within the local community and which may be local, regional, national or even international in origin. The topics covered by both local and community information include housing, planning, social security, employment, consumer affairs, legal problems, leisure, health, welfare and education. They include the interests of groups with particular disadvantages such as the disabled, the institutionalised and the ethnic minorities (Gray, 1982).

A wide range of studies in different countries at different periods indicated a high demand for community information. It is to be expected that in accordance with the programme of Universal Availability of Information, the National Information Policy of every country must provide for community information service for the benefit of all people (Vishwamohan, 1988). The information needs and their identification as
well as the nature and behaviour of the potential information users are the two basic aspects to be considered. The works of Beal (1979) and Horne (1983) are good examples in this regard. For effective planning (Fish, 1978; Saltys, 1985) of community information services, the coordination programmes (Black, 1970) and various projects (Childers, 1976; Donohue, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1976; Donohue & Healey, 1974; and Ganzalez, 1973) are also emphasized from which different models of community information (Bovay, 1976; Boyle, 1976; Delia, 1980; Durrance, 1982 and Morehead & Rouse, 1982) can be developed.

1.8.2 Community information needs

The information need of a community is that information needed by the members of the community to make best use of the resources available to them within the community that help them directly or indirectly in solving their day-to-day problems. In other words, it relates to the identification of information needs of the people with probable information-seeking situations and the most probable course of action which they would take to solve these problems. The precise nature of the need depends on the type of society in which the people live, but in general, it is for information which serves most functional purposes, that is information which helps people to improve their quality of life either directly by solving an immediate problem or in the longer term by helping them to influence decisions which will effect their lives. The information is, therefore, needed by both individuals or groups of individuals
(Kempson, 1986). Green (1990) attempts to distinguish between the terms information needs, wants and demands. He finds that needs share certain defining elements. They are instrumental and purposeful and unlike wants, they are contestable. Green finds that the element, however, that most clearly distinguishes a need from a want or a demand is that there is no necessary self-awareness of a need. People frequently need things without being aware of the need. In day-to-day work, the lack of self-sufficiency constitutes information needs. These information needs represent gaps in the current knowledge of the user. Apart from the expressed or articulated needs, there are unexpressed needs which the user is aware but does not like to express. The third category of need is the dormant need of which the user is unaware. However, the information services provider may be able to bring to light these needs (Cronin, 1981). In order to identify information needs, to have some insight into the actual information needs, one should adopt various methods to gather information on the many factors which influence information needs. No single method or tool will serve entirely. A careful selection and blending of several techniques depending on the user whose need is being studied is necessary (Davadasan, 1989). Instead of depending upon the questionnaire or interviews or even on observation in the library, one should observe the people/users throughout their working day, so as to assess their information seeking and information need even when they do not go to the library (Eager & Oppenheim, 1996). Nicholas (1997), however, opines that information needs data by its very nature can be obtained only through open ended interviews and, less satisfactorily,
through diaries and observations. Since information needs are complex and subjective, they are best determined by methodology focusing on user behaviour, actual habits and satisfaction. The dialectics method, whereby the information professional becomes the part of the user group, particularly in discussions on information and research through daily contact, has sufficient flexibility to capture the dynamics of information needs (Gonzalez, 1996). Information needs are affected by a variety of factors such as: the range of information sources available, the uses to which the information will be put, the background, motivation, professional orientation and other individual characteristics of the user; the social, political, economic, legal and regulatory systems surrounding the user; and the consequences of information use (Paisley, 1968). According to Crawford (1978) the following factors also affect the information needs: work activity, discipline/field/area of interest, availability of facilities, hierarchical position of individuals, motivational factors for information needs, need to take a decision, to seek new ideas, to validate the correct ones, to make professional contributions and to establish priority for discovery, etc.

1.8.3 Everyday information needs

The clear picture that emerges from research studies on information needs is that inspite of the abundance of information available, citizens are uninformed about public and private resources, facilities, rights and programs (Kahn et. al., 1966; Dervin, 1976). More often they fail to
get information required for everyday problem solving. This creates the problem of providing appropriate information services for which the information needs are to be managed and controlled in order to be useful and accessible (Dervin, 1971, 1976). To get the right information to the right person at the right time, the information management or control process of the information delivery system must have access to both appropriate information sources and appropriate information solutions. The system must be able to select from all relevant sources those, who hold relevant information and must then select from all relevant information that particular subset that solves the particular need of the seeker. Dervin (1976) provides the elements and linkages in the information system of the average citizens. Based on the work of Warner et al. (1973), she provides 19 major categories of everyday information seeking problems which later she divided into 154 sub-categories. The major categories are:

1. Neighbourhood
2. Consumer
3. Housing
4. Housekeeping and household maintenance
5. Employment
6. Education and schooling
7. Health
8. Transportation
9. Recreation and culture
10. Financial matters or Assistance
11. Public assistance and social security
12. Discrimination and race relations
13. Child care and family relationships
14. Family planning and birth control
15. Legal
16. Crime and safety
17. Immigration, migration and mobility
18. Veterans and military
19. Public affairs, political and miscellaneous

Childers & Post (1975) identified 11 broad areas of information needs of the poor:

1. Health
2. Home and family
3. Consumer affairs
4. Housing
5. Employment
6. Welfare Programmes
7. Law
8. Political process
9. Transportation
10. Education
11. Recreation

Each area is further subdivided and the subcategories are classified into five major types of information:

1. Factual
2. Legal
3. Directional
4. Financial, and
5. Counselling

While studying the information requirement of an Indian Community Baliarsingh (1989) and Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1985,1995) have considered the results of the following day-to-day problems:

1. Inferior quality of ration supplied/Consumer
2. Recent price rise/Consumer
3. Intention to purchase a house or plot/Housing
4. Intention to construct a house/Housing
5. Searching for better employment/Employment
6. Knowledge about voters list/Rights
7. Willingness to join a political party/POLITICAL
8. Expression of feelings regarding government issues/POLITICAL
9. Whereabout of a doctor/Health
10. Handling of neighbour’s disturbances/Legal
11. Availability of books for reading/Recreational
12. Admitting children in a good school/Educational
13. Raising of funds for developmental work/Charity
14. Information about a person, place, club, society, lane, street, etc./Local.
15. Information about a Goddess of the locality/Local
16. Acquaintance with potential personalities within the community/Local

1.8.4 Community information providers and sources

It has already been mentioned that every information seeking situation involves a potential information provider who provides information to the seeker either directly (i.e. Direct Information Provider) or indirectly (i.e. Indirect Information Provider) (Beal, 1979; Baliarsingh, 1989; Baliarsingh & Mahapatra, 1985) to solve that particular problem. However, the nature of information providers may vary depending on the various characteristics of the information seeker. The works of Gray (1982) regarding the varieties of organizations which supply information to the local community; Musib (1991) regarding the sources of information useful to the public; and various other works i.e. Kempson (1989), Donohue & Kochen (1976), Warner et. al. (1973), Dervin, 1976, Dervin et.
al. (1976) have already been cited earlier and need not be repeated here. In the study of Ching-Chin Chen (1981) the respondents specified twelve information sources of which the libraries ranked ninth. Among the others interpersonal sources i.e. personal experience and the experience of a friend or relative occurred prominently. Chen (1981) classifies the information sources as:

(i) Interpersonal sources i.e. personal experience, or that of friend or relative etc.
(ii) Institutional sources i.e. professionals, schools, churches, libraries or governmental.
(iii) Mass media i.e. newspapers, television, radio, magazines, books, and
(iv) others

While confirming the views of Dervin (1976), Williamson (1986) cites relatives and friends as information sources of citizens for 'support', and institutional sources and private professionals for 'referral'. Chatman (1983, 1987) found that the low-income people are likely to look to their opinion leaders for: (i) events that occur in the neighbourhood (factual information); (ii) where to go to buy things (directional and financial information); (iii) information about health problems and what to do when people are sick and need health care (counselling, legal, and directional information); and (iv) bringing up children (factual and counselling information).
1.8.5 Role of public libraries

The role of public libraries and the responsibility of the librarians in developing the community information services has already been discussed earlier. Role of public libraries in the community information studies has attracted the attention of the authors from the beginning. Many authors have emphasized its role in their works. Few notable ones are mentioned here. The major functions of the public library, as said by the Public Library Manifesto of Unesco are recreation, education and information. The public libraries have been fulfilling their recreational function to some extent and that which is concerned with education to a limited extent, while the function relating to information has been totally ignored (Chandrasekhar Rao, 1996). Public libraries are originally not identified as community information centres but can offer a number of advantages as potential providers of community information. Community information services currently offered in US and UK public libraries include; an Information and Referral Service (predominant in USA); direct service by librarians in cooperation with other agencies; back-up service to existing networks of information provision; and self-help in which the librarian collects and compiles material to facilitate use by the individual client.

The cultural role of public libraries (Monroe, 1981), the users' satisfaction on them (Delia & Walsh, 1983) and their overall performance have also been reported (Laurer, 1984; Singh, 1960). The position of the
libraries in a changing society (Blasingame, 1972) and as community assets (Conway, 1978) as well as the position of libraries in the community (Creelman, 1975) have been discussed by the authors. The role of public libraries to improve literacy is discussed by Baker et. al. (1982), Griggs (1982) and O’ Brien (1983) whereas Kaefoed (1977) has discussed its role in a grass root democracy attempting to provide the public with better information on local and government activities. Healy (1984) studies the attitudes of the public to the idea of the librarians as the provider of community information, whereas Coleman (1985) studies the attitudes of the library authorities.

Public libraries in communities of all sites must provide access to materials in the full range of subjects. Planning for collection building can be made more effective through an examination of the life interests and life styles of residents of the community in which the library is located (Lucas, 1980). District and town libraries should aim to meet the demand for general information and provide access to relevant information sources such as railway and coach time tables, addresses of local authorities, local maps, theatre programmes, etc. (Amrichova, 1994). Aquada (1994) suggests the creation of an information service about the local area within the public library to tackle such situations. A theoretical framework regarding the value of library services is worked out by Saracevic & Kantor (1977).
A public library is a place where people can extend their environment, add to their experience and obtain information (Jones, 1994). Martin (1976) suggests three avenues which a library may adopt for community analysis: (i) it can hire a consultant, (ii) it can conduct self-study, and (iii) it can participate in community analysis with other community agencies including governmental planning units and citizen planning groups. Of course, a library can be a negative force in a local community if it is not connected to that community. Librarians must understand their communities and form cooperative partnership with other agencies (Croneberger, 1990). The public library as institution plays a fundamental role in the process of socialisation, raising the quality of life and alerting individuals to their rights and duties as citizens. In countries where public libraries have low status and their potential is unrealised, future development depends on promoting interaction between the community and information: this requires knowledge of the characteristics of the locality and ensuring the relevance of services (Revista, 1993). Waters (1996) says that the public library should become a positive force for the millions of smaller establishments who will need current data and reliable information in future. After talking to people from all sections of the community and reading local publications, librarians can decide which services should be offered. This process of knowing the community, determining needs and evaluating services lies at the heart of the library services’ commitment to contribute towards the creation of a literate informed society (Fotheringham, 1996). A political mandate is needed for libraries to fulfil the widest possible social role. Without this mandate,
each library must determine which media and services can benefit society (Boese, 1998).

1.8.6 Types of Communities

The most important aspect of community studies is the community itself. Most of the works in the literature have focused on the information needs of scientific communities who are rather aware of their information sources (Albright, 1976). But the situation is somewhat different in case of general public, especially with those who are neither aware of library services nor know about the sources to satisfy their information needs. There are few communities who are aware of the existence of libraries and their services, but do not make use of them for various reasons. The communities can be grouped broadly into three categories as given below. However, overlappings occur among them due to lack of clear distinctions:

(i) General public

(ii) User communities, i.e. communities identified with a particular branch of knowledge.

(iii) Special communities, i.e. communities identified with special characteristics such as age, sex, physical disability, geographical location, economic conditions, educational background, etc.

Literature dealing with each community are identified and mentioned below indicating the names of their authors along with the year
of publication. Since the works related to user communities i.e. communities identified with a particular branch of knowledge do not fall under the purview of this investigation, they are not mentioned here to save space. Otherwise, literature dealing with this category of people are extensive and dominate over the other two categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Authors with years of Publication</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Black Community</td>
<td>Fairer-Wessels &amp; Machet, 1993</td>
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<td>4. Consumers</td>
<td>Gaurd, et. al., 1997; Philips &amp; Zorn, 1994; Cundari &amp; Stutz, 1995; Deering &amp; Harris, 1996; Gann, 1996; Gibbs, Sangal &amp; Burrus, 1996; Isaacs, 1996; Solomon, 1996; Fichter &amp; Martin-Brownell, 1997; Pifalo &amp; Others, 1997;</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Councillors</td>
<td>Nicholas &amp; Colgrave, 1996;</td>
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6. Disabled Community
   Mc Gregar, et al., 1989; William, 1989;

7. Disadvantaged Community
   Pienaar, 1995; Irving, 1997;

8. Domestic Servants
   Aun, 1994

9. Ethnic minority
   Elliot, 1986;

10. Farmers
    Ozowa, 1995; Bay-Petersen, 1996; Leckie, 1996

11. General Public
    Dervin, 1976; Dervin et al., 1976; Pamlour et al., 1979; Chen, 1982; Dervin, 1984; Durrance, 1984; Gluck, 1996; Otike, 1997;

12. Health care Workers
    Apalayne & Ehikhamenor, 1996; Crabtree & Crawford, 1997; Sidwell, 1998;

13. Home Schoolers
    Young, 1995

14. House wives
    Eggert, 1994

15. Illiterates
    Umapathy, 1973

16. Janitorial workers
    Chatman, 1987

17. Journalist
    Nicholas, 1997; Nicholas & Martin, 1997

18. Labourers
    Chatman, 1987;

19. Lesbians
    Whitt, 1993;

20. Local community
    Grey, 1982

21. Nurses
    Pettigrew, 1996; Spath & Buttlar, 1996

22. Parents
    Lobosco et al., 1996; Spath & Buttlar, 1996; Marden & Nicholas, 1997; Reddy, Narayan & Prakasam, 1997

23. Parliamentarians
    Thapisa, 1996;

24. Patients
    Farmer & Peffer, 1996; Mays, 1996
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<td>29. Teachers Community</td>
<td>Dillon, 1997</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>References</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed community</td>
<td>Kempson, 1981; Harris, Brown &amp; Sprovier, 1985; Barugh &amp; Woodhouse, 1986; Bromley &amp; Allott, 1992</td>
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<td>Urban Community</td>
<td>VOOS, 1969; Greenberg &amp; Dervin, 1970; Bundy, 1972; Dervin &amp; Greenberg, 1972; Dervin, 1973; Dervin et. al., 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Harris, 1988; Beattie, 1989; Fairer-Wessels, 1990; Nwagha, 1992; Novellino, 1993; Cassidy, 1994; Mita &amp; Simmons, 1995; King, 1995; Baker, 1996; Cheek, et. al., 1996; Dewdney, Lockerby &amp; Harris, 1996; Heiberg, 1996; Lucker et. al., 1996; Baker, 1997; Graydon et. al., 1997; Ngimwa, Ocholla &amp; Ojiambo, 1997</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young girls</td>
<td>Edwards, 1996; Edwards &amp; Poston-Anderson, 1996</td>
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</table>
1.8.7 Reading interests/habits

Reading habits of citizens play an important function in satisfying their information needs. Through various media, book and non-book, their mind always reach for the information they sought for. Most of the people need the print mass media-newspapers and magazines-regularly and frequently for information purposes which can be confirmed from their selection of the type of mass media and the choice of topics such as editorials, news, sports, advertisements, etc. (Wilson, 1981). Reading newspapers and books gives access to other people’s thoughts and ideas. In recent years the United Nations, UNESCO and IFLA have drawn particular attention to the need to stimulate reading and have become involved in the struggle against illiteracy. The UN pronounced 1990 the year of literacy and many contributions have been made during this decade. At its 25th session in 1989 the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a plan of action for the eradication of illiteracy, summed up in the slogan “Literacy for all by the year 2000”. UNESCO regards the strategy in this area as its “priority of priorities”. In the Public Library Manifesto, for instance, UNESCO stresses The Right to know and has strongly emphasized the influence of information and literature on human development and social welfare (Bror, 1997).

In the vast literature available on the reading interests or habits, which are mostly dealing with literates, academic community and people belonging to higher level of socio-economic development and concerning
mostly with the academic institutions, it has become quite difficult to choose and pick the relevant ones which reflect their usefulness in the community information studies. Literature dealing with the reading interests of the general and special categories of communities (not identified by any subject specialisation) reflecting their value in information need studies and concerning mostly with the public libraries are considered here.

Grubb (1982) in her survey of reading interests and activities of older adults in three central counties finds that the reading interests and activities of older adults do differ from younger adults, that the amount of time spent in reading by adults is related to education, annual family income, ethnicity and sex of the reader. Lucas (1980) also provides evidence that there is a direct relationship between the range of life interests and the range of reading interests among adult public library users. Factors like sex, occupation and life style are also influential. Regarding media, Allen (1987) says that variables relating to greater use of print materials include leadership responsibility, sex, education, income and location of the respondents. The reading ability seems to be significantly related to the use of print materials, but not libraries. Cobbey (1980) concludes that the community and the daily newspapers have different functions for the individual. The community newspaper serves the individual's personal life, that side which concerns the family and the home. The basic function is exhibited differently in urban and suburban communities. For the urban individual, the community newspaper is
complemented by the daily, both are sources of community information. In older age, the paper becomes more important because this is the time in the individual's life when identification with the community and localistic attitudes are their strongest. While studying the reading habits of rural Malays, Kibat (1978) found that occupation and income are significantly related to the habits of reading books but not so with respect to newspaper and magazine reading. Age appeared to be significantly associated with the habits of reading books, newspapers and magazines. Seibel (1991) suggests that there is a connection between degree of professional competence and reading practices and the type of literature read.

Sociological aspects of reading has been dealt by Yilmaz (1995) and Sleimakh (1993), whereas Erlandsson & Rydquist (1994) have provided the pleasures of reading. Even the advent of electronic media has not resulted in deriving the pleasure and decline in reading (Gauthier & Graves, 1993). Blunkett (1998) reports that the National Year of Reading (NYR) in the UK is an ongoing project designed to foster literacy among 80% of 11 year old by the year 2002 and to promote life long learning. Another project i.e. the Illinois Reading Enrichment and Development (IREAD) programme started early 1980's, is a coordinated self supporting effort between librarians and the Illinois Library Association (ILA) to develop and provide high quality low cost resources and products to enable local library staff to motivate children to read (Farrugia et. al., 1997). Lee (1997) describes a project designed with an aim to establish the reasons why
reading is rejected in favour of other leisure activities. Creswick (1997) reports about the Book Trust Conference 'Reading now' held at the British Library, London, in Nov., 1997, which focused on the position and usefulness of reading in the moving picture society of the 1990's. Libraries play a crucial role in the reading lives of their users, but they have been plagued by the invisibility factor. Mc Mearney (1998) describes the Well Worth Reading Scheme conceived by Southern Arts in the UK, a national scheme systematically promotes contemporary literature through libraries. Few studies dealing with the reading interests of specific communities along with the names of their authors are mentioned below. It has been said earlier, that the information needs of these communities can be assessed, at least indirectly, from their reading interests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Authors with years of publications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Agricultural Workers</td>
<td>Sperry, 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Blacks</td>
<td>Leach &amp; Verbeck, 1993;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Children</td>
<td>Coleman, 1996; Farrugie &amp; Others, 1997; Gohr, 1997; Blunkett, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Domestic servants</td>
<td>Aun, 1994</td>
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<td>5. Handicapped</td>
<td>Carlsen, 1997</td>
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<td>6. Mothers</td>
<td>Nespesa, 1995</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>References</td>
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<td>10. Teenagers</td>
<td>Wicks, 1995; Mc Kearney, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Urban communities</td>
<td>Cobbey, 1980; Baliarsingh &amp; Mahapatra, 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Visually impaired</td>
<td>Cabral, 1998;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Women/Female community</td>
<td>Harris, 1996; Smith, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Young people/Adults</td>
<td>Benge, 1970; Duggal, 1974; Evans, 1976; Kibat, 1978; Lucas, 1980; Amey, 1982; Baliarsingh &amp; Mahapatra, 1993; Belayche &amp; Sulzer, 1993; Leach &amp; Verbeck, 1993; Poulain, 1993; Eskes, 1994; Sochocky, 1994; Cockett, 1995; Piehl, 1995; Straws &amp; Wolff, 1995; Brewis &amp; others, 1996; Burgin, 1996; Chance, 1996; Hunt, 1996; Mc Abee, 1996; Mitchell &amp; Smith, 1996; Shanker, 1996; Weibel, 1996; Beauregard and others, 1997; Chance, 1997; Fernandez, 1997; Gagnier, 1997; Lombard, 1997; November, 1997; Rosen, 1997; Schlender, 1997; Stratton, 1997; Gibson, 1998;</td>
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1.8.8 Utilisation of leisure time

Reading is the best means of utilisation of leisure time (Pybus, 1997). Besides the interests in reading books and non-book materials, people adopt different other means to utilise their leisure time. Published literature in this area is scanty due to its overlapping with similar areas in the field of journalism and mass communication. However, Amey (1982) suggested that adolescents of different socio-economic classes in a Canadian urban centre attended movies, watched Television, read newspapers and in general interacted with all types of media. Griffith (1986) suggested that information would enhance the quality of life through more leisure time and more satisfactory recreation and entertainment. The relationship between the public library and leisure time is traced by Harris (1996). In India Musib (1991) identified the means of utilisation of leisure time by persons engaged in cottage industries. Baliarsingh (1989) identified the means of utilisation of leisure time by different communities in Orissa. In another study Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1993) report the general publics’ reading interests towards the nature of books and other materials for utilizing their leisure times in a semi-urban community, where most of the people are illiterates and belong to the lower socio-economic groups of the community.

1.8.9 Computerised information services

It has been mentioned earlier that since the electronic information sources and services are beyond the scope of libraries and
library users in India, numerous publications dealing with those have not been considered in this project. Few publications of general importance are mentioned here simply to keep the review in the present context.

The emergence of new technology has enabled rapid data collection via mechanical interviews, lowering the cost and facilitating immediate data tabulation and analysis (Klein & Sobol, 1996). While the technology offers the means to master the quantity of information which will be produced, human cognitive abilities will act as a bottleneck in its flow, making it important for librarians to work in the area of interdisciplinary connections with the cognitive sciences (Urbanija & Nidorfer, 1997). Librarians have a responsibility not only to adopt and adapt technologies to their purposes, but also to collaborate with the technology developers in order to assist them in understanding and taking into account librarian's needs and concerns (Stricker, 1998).

Due to the advent of electronic access and telecommunication facilities, Internet may become an important vehicle for meeting the information needs (Gaurd, et. al., 1997), facilitating the development of 'virtual' communities who can communicate with each other via electronic media (Romm, et. al., 1997). Opportunities offered a WWW community networks include sharing through online databases and electronic networking, potentially easy in communication between organizations and between sectors (Hallam & Murray, 1998). While the WWW can be more graphically appealing, it can also be overwhelming (Clark, 1997). The
electronic version offers extra features to the paper version such as expanded coverage of community events, audio clips, searchable classified ads and hosted discussion forums (Velsmid, 1996). Blake (1998) suggests that since the older people do not want to be burdened with maintaining personal computers at home, it is vital to provide access to the Internet in public places, especially public libraries.

The Web technology helped the daily newspapers (in USA) to provide online services as an extension of their mission of being a community's primary information source and as one of the larger venues for local advertising information (Conhaim, 1998). Auer (1998) suggests that public libraries can help to develop the new genre of Internet literature. This should be a multimedia product of a creative process in dialogue between participants, a synthesis of text, graphics, animation and audio. Innovative media centres should support this work. There is much potential in stocking graphic novels in the library since (i) they can be used to maintain a fiction reading habit of the public, (ii) they can be accessed by both skilled and reluctant readers, (iii) there is no stigma in being seen reading graphic novels and (iv) their appeal to young adult makes them a powerful tool in encouraging library use by an area of the community not easily reached (Gibson, 1998).

Hobohm (1995) cautions that for a short time at least, the dissemination of information through the Internet will mean an extra workload for the majority of traditional participants in the information
business and other information media, such as books, periodicals, and databases, will remain at the centre of the market place. On the other hand, Internet information activities will have an essential impact in the near future. Digitizing vast amounts of information is often hailed as liberating knowledge from physical restraints, resulting in greater access to more information. Yet on-line libraries without walls have their drawbacks. Digital documents are subject to unpredictable decay and may become unreadable in a short time. Books are often more durable. Moreover, the physical relatives of libraries with walls (and people) offer a personal dimension unavailable in the mysterious and impersonal realm of cyberspace (Groothuis, 1997).

1.8.10 State of the art reviews on community information, use and user studies, etc.

Few state of the art reviews and literature searches have been published on the subject areas of community information, information use and user studies. Notable ones are the reviews of Evans (1976) from an historical perspective; Bunch (1982) from general point of view, i.e. on the origin, scope and development of community information services; Dervin & Nilan (1986), by considering the literature published after 1978 and Hewins (1990) by taking the literature published within 1986 and 1989. While reviewing the publications on social equity and information technologies, Doctor (1992) deals extensively with the publications concerning information needs and users with an emphasis on identifying
the everyday information needs of ordinary people. Metoyer-Duran (1993) provides a review of literature that relates to the gate-keeping model of information seeking behaviour. Based on the trends of literature identified by Hewins (1990), Julien (1996) has made a content analysis of the literature on information needs and uses from 1990 to 1994 to test (i) the evidence for an attempt towards interdisciplinary, (ii) continued focus on the cognitive process of users and (iii) to identify the research methods other than the typical surveys available in the literature. In India, Singh (1979) has provided a state of the art review on information needs. Wood (1971) has provided a review on user studies from 1966 to 1970. Similarly Power (1979) has also made a review on the user studies from Australian angle. Besides these, bibliographies on the subject are also compiled by Atkin (1971), Albright (1976) and Bone (1976).

1.9 Research in Indian Context

The libraries are the community centres. Various devices are developed to draw the attention of the members once they are within the four walls of the library. But what about those who neither come to the library for one reason or other nor aware of the activities of the library in the community life and its multiple potentialities for enriching their community living. In view of the community information, as has been noticed in the Western countries, the situation in India, especially in Orissa, is completely different. Majority of the citizens in India belong to the lower socio-economic group of the community and are not exposed to
the community information services that could be provided by the public libraries. On the other hand, the public libraries in the country are not more than mere public reading rooms having some collection which are developed not on the basis of the information needs of the local people but on the selection policies of the governments adopted at the top level. These libraries are usually poorly equipped and staffed. Mostly they are single room libraries without having even a telephone facility. Electronic service media like E-mail, INTERNET etc. are distant dreams to these libraries in comparison to their western counterparts. This is the reason why the public library research projects in India are confined only to surveys. The notion of community information services is yet to be understood by the Indian librarians. However several studies on information needs of different communities are made by Indian authors (Singh, 1960), as academic projects, mostly dealing with the information needs of the scientific communities. Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1985, 1995) have attempted to assess the information needs of a semi-urban community consisting of literates, illiterates and persons from different occupational groups. Sarada’s (1986) study on information needs was confined to rural communities of Andhra Pradesh whereas Chandrasekhar Rao’s (1996) research provided information needs of tribal communities of the same state. Vishwamohan (1988) outlined the community information sources and provided a framework for their handling, whereas while dealing with community profiling Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1989) have discussed about the types of local information sources. Musib (1991) has made a survey on the cottage industries of West Bengal to study the
information seeking patterns whereas the information needs of small scale industries in Bangalore are reported by Peter & Peter (1993). The relation between community analysis and the library collection building in public libraries is discussed by Musib (1989), whereas the public aspects are dealt by Gopinath (1992). Theoretical aspects of community information, their problems and prospects in India are provided by Baliarsingh & Mahapatra (1987), whereas Baliarsingh (1992) outlines the role of libraries in the community development. Other relevant works of Baliarsingh & Mahapatra related to this area of study are (i) current information needs and their providers among the literates and illiterates (1985), (ii) literacy and library consciousness of different communities of Orissa (1988a); (iii) reading interests among adult literates (1988b) and (iv) their relationship to the collection development of public libraries (1993). It can be noticed that except one or two cases, not much work has been done in India to study the everyday information needs of the general public and to develop community information services based on these needs.

1.10 Objective and scope of this investigation

In view of the geographical settings, socio-economic conditions and the existing facilities of resources and services available to Indian communities, whether rural or urban, an up-to-date information service is badly needed to meet the everyday information needs of the people. It can be noted from the review of literature that most of the works on community information have dealt with the situation of Western world,
which are in complete contrast to what is happening in India. Except the work of Baliarsingh (1989), no other author has attempted to study the everyday information needs of an urban society in India. Therefore, a detailed study on the everyday information needs of an urban society surrounded by an industrial environment of a large scale industry in India (i.e. the Rourkela Steel Plant, one of the largest steel plants of India) was felt very much necessary to throw some light on the subject. In the absence of good published literature on the subject in India, it will be very much useful to future researchers.

The overall objective of this investigation is to assess the everyday information needs of different communities residing in an urban locality surrounded by an industrial environment. Its main objectives are:

(i) to assess the nature of information providers, both direct and indirect regarding their day-to-day information seeking situations;

(ii) to assess the interests of the community to satisfy their specific information needs through their reading interests and habits;

(iii) to find out the different ways and means through which the persons in the community utilise their leisure time, and

(iv) to assess the library consciousness of the persons in the community through their knowledge about the library services and their willingness to accept the advisory services to solve their day-to-day information needs.
1.11 Organisation of the contents of the thesis

Keeping the scope and objectives of this investigation in view, the contents of the thesis are organised into different chapters. Chapter 2 describes the setting where the survey is conducted mentioning about the choice and identification of the sample respondents, the methodology, adopted to collect and compile the data. It also describes the sample characteristics.

Chapter 3 deals with the findings. The chapter is divided into four sections i.e. (i) nature of information providers, (ii) reading interests, (iii) utilisation of leisure time and (iv) library consciousness. Tables related to each section of Chapter 3 are placed after the descriptions of all four sections.

Chapter 4 provides the discussions, suggestions and conclusion. Discussions on each section of the Chapter 3 'Findings' are made here. Tables related to this chapter are placed at the end.

The references and the appendices are provided after Chapter 4.