The expansion in the field of education in the post-independence period has been phenomenal. The Education system has provided great access to all sections of the society, including children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, owing to a number of constraints, and socio-economic factors, the benefits of expansion of educational facilities have not fully reached the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to bring them at par with other Communities. To appreciate the special efforts made in this direction and to know the size of the remaining task, it is necessary that data on progress of education and information needs of these communities be complied and made available to public at large. The absence of such data sometimes leads to lack of appreciation of true dimensions of the problem and the efforts being made in this direction. The present study is an attempt to present Information needs of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes: students, scholars and faculties in the higher educational system of Orissa and provides picture of various facets of the educational development of the community.

I would take this opportunity to place different suggestions from the findings of my study to Department of Higher Education, Government of Orissa, SC/ST Welfare Department and authorities of different Higher Academic Institutions in the state. I would also like to convey my sincere thanks to the State Governments and other academic institutions that made available the data required for this thesis. It is hoped that the thesis will serve its intended of a reference document and also serve a useful purpose of creating awareness about the educational development of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes by giving them right to Information through networking.

(Mahendra Kumar Seth)