Executive summary

Women empowerment is the hot topic of the day all over the world. Women health is one of the key areas of concern and debated all over the world at length. The study found that non-medical health problems for women are more than medical problems. The identity of women is established more as a body-anatomical attribute. The present study attempts to find out health seeking behaviour and corresponding health information seeking behaviour. The study has used multi method/approach, basically to control extraneous variables. Extraneous variables in context of this study are like other sources of information to acquire knowledge like mass media, doctor-patient interaction, informal sources like friends, family members and neighbours.

The awareness and knowledge calls for two distinctive approach and hence, the study concentrates on the issues like reproductive and child health (RCH) which has been covered extensively in educating women through information, education, and communication (IEC) programme in existing health care delivery system. The study has also considered socioeconomic factors of the community at different social strata of society. The study was undertaken at PHC area considering family as a basic unit of survey. The data is analyzed using inferential statistical method.

The study found that the awareness of the community about health in general is very poor. Even with massive campaign and awareness programme about RCH, community has very poor knowledge about RCH.
With regard to library and its information services community do not have any knowledge of library, those who have the knowledge of library are of the opinion that library is only for reading newspaper, magazines and story books. The library system could not establish good identity with regard to participation in health and development particularly for women. It is established from the study that information seeking behaviour of women is constrained by blind beliefs and cultural problems as main hindrance.

The main issue in the study is that having many sources and channels of communication knowledge of health particularly for women is poor. Hence, the study has derived a mobilizing and dissemination of information model called “Women health Information System” (WHIS).