CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION
1.1. INTRODUCTION

A potential threat to the independence, sovereignty and integrity of India stems from ignorance of the vast majority of the people, caused by lack of provision of adequate, factual and dependable information covering social, political, economic, literary, scientific and technical fields of human activity. A successful individual or nation is the one who or which is generally well informed. Information is power. This has been recognised by all the developed countries of the world.

UNESCO recognised that "Information is an essential part of nation's resources and access to it is one of the basic human rights. Information is not only a national resource vital for scientific and economic progress, but also the medium of social communication. The personal and social development of the individual depends on the amount, quality and accessibility of information to such a user".¹

technological every day. To find out solutions, for these problems 'information access' to the people and free flow of information in the society are prerequisites. The governmental activities have been increased with complexity, consequently the official documents also have been increased not only in number but also in contents and importance. It is a matter of concern about the accessibility of government information not only to the public but also to the scholars, specialists and Information scientists.

The government activity as publisher has grown in importance in recent years. The government is the largest single printer, publisher and distributor at every level, i.e., national, state and local. Some major information generators, besides originators, creators and discoverers of ideas, are technical bodies, scientific and technical research groups, business and corporate sectors, mass media and professional associations. The large scale scientific research undertaken by various national laboratories set up by the Government of India has reinforced the necessity of the government becoming an outstanding publisher. In number and variety the government publications do exceed those of any of the commercial publishers. In size they range from small pamphlets to giant folios. In respect of content also, there is infinite variety from the preparation of tomato ketchup to the effect of nuclear weapons. Some publications of the government are profuse with pictures, illustrations, diagrams, graphs etc.
Government documents act as important primary information sources for research activities. They form one of the most extensive, reliable and impartial sources of authoritative data of technical as well as of general nature, covering practically every aspect of human activities. Technical reports, both Government and quasi-Government, contain the major part of today’s newest information in all fields.

Government touches all aspects of daily lives of public but the public is frequently unaware of the publications issued by their own government. The publications act as means of communication between government and people. The libraries and information centres if they ignore the importance and value of government publications they are missing a large range of information resources which cannot be obtained elsewhere, which provide original and scholarly information which can not be published by private publishers.

Although government publications are eagerly sought for and used increasingly, the general public and the specialists are unfortunately not able to get an adequate understanding of the materials available, their contents, scope, utility and methods of finding the publications available on the topics of their requirement. This is largely due to two aspects viz lack of a bibliographic control and systematized arrangement of the publications.

The term ‘government publications’ has been used by H.M. Stationary office since 1922, although the older terms “Parliamentary papers” and “Non Parliamentary
papers" are often cited. Olle (1965) in his manual prefers "Government publications" while Pemberton (1971) prefers "Official publications".  

The Guidelines envisaged in policy and Guide on Canadian Government publishing (Treasury Board, Ottawa, 1967) are as follows.

Government Information is a means of promoting the effectiveness of governmental policies and programmes by

-- enlisting public co-operation for these policies and programmes, or assisting the administration of statutes and regulations;

-- disseminating the results of technical, scientific, economic, statistical or historical studies; and

-- providing information to the public in answer to requests in order to protect health and welfare, to assist in education or training and to meet emergencies.

It can be said that the free flow of information, from its generation to the ultimate consumer, has been a subject of concern to Information societies and Information centres.

Information is both input and output of any research and developmental activity and flows in a dynamic cyclic continuum. The ideal state of flow of information is that where everything available anywhere is made accessible everywhere. The flow of information is hindered by qualitative as well as quantitative barriers. Poor quality

and great quantity submerge the potential information. Quality control should be exercised and practised by authors, editors and publishers. The need is for better and quicker information than for more information.

1.1.1 Information Transfer Channels

From the generators the information reaches the potential user in a variety of ways. The following figures illustrate the usual modes of communication of information between generators and users.

![Diagram: Information Communication Channels](image)

**Fig.1.1:** Information Communication Channels
Fig. 1.2: Non-Documentary Communication

The Information centre should network and accommodate information flow directly as well as via records. Oral and direct communication are particularly important when the target group consists of rural people.

1.1.2 NEED FOR INFORMATION

Information is resource of resources. It is an essential ingredient of change and change is nothing but a transformation resulting from a new contribution of data.
of different treatment of existing data. The flow of fresh and reliable information is the parameter of progress.

Information is required for a variety of purposes such as decision making, planning, research, innovation, control and monitoring. Besides it is useful for a wide variety of personnel involved in the various technology management tasks. The various categories of users are:

— Entrepreneurial groups.
— Self employed technicians,
— Development planning group like policy makers, planners, consultants etc.
— Extension workers, development officers, and others playing a link role in Technology Transfer between research and potential users of technology.
— R & D personnel.
— Students and teachers of engineering and technology and
— Farmers and artisans at the grass root level.

The information requirement of these various categories of users is differential and dependent on functional, educational and socio-economic factors.

1.2 DEFINITION OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

It is pertinent to survey how government publications are defined by different countries in different contexts.
INDIA:

Benoyendra Sengupta (1967) defined government publications as "any publication printed or processed by the Government (Central or State) or by its authority and or at the expense of any Central or State Government Publishing office or bodies set up by them."³

Rakesh Kumar Srivatsav and Rochana Srivatsava (1985) observed that "the Government publications are the official documents brought out at the government expense, under the authority of the government."⁴

USA:

The most recent attempt in 1962 in the United States of America in the context of depository library programme (in Section 1901 of the United States Code title 41) defines government publications as "Informational matter published as an individual document at government expenses or as required by law".

In the other context that is in the distribution of Government publications to the Library of Congress (in Section 1718 of the United States Code title 41) government publications are defined as "Publications and maps which are printed or otherwise reproduced under authority of law upon the requisition of a congressional


committee, executive departments, bureau, independent office establishment, commission or office of the government\textsuperscript{a}.

Harrod's Library Glossary defines it as "Publications of an official character or of an instructional, descriptive or historical nature which are published by the government publishing departments".

UK:

In U.K. the term Government publications has been used by H.M. Stationary office to include 'Parliamentary' and 'Non-Parliamentary' papers.

Depending on the above definitions given by different institutions or persons, we can arrive at the following workable definition.

Government publications are any graphic materials such as books, pamphlets and other documents published at the expense of the Government and published under the authority of law.

1.2.1 TYPES OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

According to Krishna Murthy (1959) Government publications may be grouped largely under two categories.$^5$

- Records
- Reports

RECORDS:

The governments have to record their activities not only for the benefit of the public but also for their own guidance for the future. In ordinary usage there is no much distinction between reports and records. All the publications invariably begin with the title of "Report of the" or "Report on the" etc. Most of the publications which begin with the title "Reports" are in fact "Records" only. Records are reports on the activities of the government. Therefore, records include the activities of the following:

-- Executive;
-- Legislative;
-- Judiciary; and
-- Various organisations and institutions sponsored by the government.

REPORTS:

Reports include

1. Enquiries into specific problems of administration and functions of the government in the form of commissions, committees etc.

2. Investigations, experiments, discoveries, inventions, fostered for the advancement of knowledge; and

3. Programmes, plans etc. in various fields, as politics, commerce and national development etc.

Rips (1965) identified seventeen basic types of government publications.⁶

Administrative Reports: Most Government agencies issue an annual or other periodical report covering their accomplishments during the past year and their proposed budget and activities for the coming year.

Committee and Commission reports: Reports issued by special committees and commissions provide an excellent overview and discussion of many key issues of significant societal importance. Many of these reports are available for public scrutiny.

Research Reports: The government is a major funder and conductor of research on almost any activity of human life. Research may be conducted on a broad range of topics including health sciences, agriculture, space technology etc.


Press releases: These provide up-to-date information on agency activities, source material, publicly held meetings and proposed rules and regulations.

Periodicals: These include research journals and news letters from individual agencies. These provide better quality coverage of primary information on specific topics.

General Information pamphlets: These publications offer suggestions, ideas and techniques for the citizen to lead a better life. Topics may include how to purchase a house, successful gardening techniques, methods to improve nutritional contents of foods and explanation of tax or other laws and regulations.
Bibliographies: Some executive agencies and committees issue lists of their publications. They constitute bibliographies which are immensely useful for research and investigation.

Directories: This type of publications include government bodies, places and organizations, officials of government agencies etc. These publications are essential for the provision of fast, accurate and current answers to quick reference questions.

Decisions and Opinions: These documents convey the official decisions and opinions rendered in the courts. These publications are of primary importance to any individual interested in legal matters.

Rules and Regulations: Some government bodies issue regulations to guide the public in their dealings with the government.

Maps and Charts: These include weather maps, soil maps, nautical charts, aerial photographic maps etc., which are useful for research purposes.

Audio Visual Resources: These include slides, audio tapes, educational movies etc.

Bills and Resolutions: These are primary source data which are critical in original research and investigation.

Legislature Proceedings: These serve as the records of each session of Parliament.

Hearings: A number of executive agencies hold hearings on topics of great interest by involving the public and make these publications available to society at large.
Laws and Statutes: They represent the culmination of the legislative history process.

According to Sen Gupta (1985), Government publications may be mainly divided as ‘Parliamentary’ and ‘Non-parliamentary’.\textsuperscript{7}

Parliamentary Publications:

These include reports, proceedings, debates etc. of legislative bodies, acts of Parliament and of State Legislatures, bills and statutory instruments (explanatory memoranda, reports of standing committees etc.).

Non-Parliamentary Publications:

These publications include administrative reports, proceedings, transactions, rules, regulations, codes, gazettes, budget estimates, archives, reports of adhoc commissions and committees, bulletins, maps etc., issued by the government agencies, Calenders, prospectus, research papers etc. produced by government institutions, technological laboratories, museums, art galleries, observatories, libraries, scientific departments like the Botanical, Zoological, Geological and Anthropological Surveys, Atomic Energy commission, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Council of Agricultural Research etc., all constitute the category of official documents.

Weech (1973) classified government publications into six functional categories.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{7} Sen Gupta, B. \textit{Opp.cit.}, pp. 89-94.

Legislative function: Government publications issued by legislative bodies advance the legislative process eg. committee reports.

Administrative function: Government publications aid the process of public administration eg. rules and regulations.

Repertorial function: Some government publications report completed task or activity or the progress of ongoing action eg. reports of agencies and decisions of courts of laws.

Service function: Government publications provide useful information to specific groups or individuals eg. agricultural bulletins.

Research functions: Government publications provide the result of research conducted by a government research agency eg. crop experiments.

Information function: Government publications inform the public of the nature and activities of government agencies eg. informational pamphlets.

According to Rakesh Kumar Srivatsav and Rochana Srivatsava (1985)^9, Government publications are divided into three categories.

-- Priced publications.
-- Non-priced publications.
-- Publications for official use only.

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Priced publications:

Priced publications are those which are available for sale to the public. Various catalogues list only Priced publications.

Non-Priced publications:

There are some publications which are not priced. Some documents are procured by means other than printing and therefore are not available. These are meant for publicity or for distribution to a limited number of people who are interested in those publications. Most of these publications do not figure in the official catalogues brought out by the ministries or various government stationary offices.

Publications for official use only:

There are several publications which are intended for the 'official use' of the government departments only. There are publications like manuals, codes and departmental instructions which are meant for the efficient conduct of business of the various departments. Further there are confidential publications in every government department for e.g. the Exchange control manual, manual of standing orders of the controller and Auditor General etc. Though the printing is ordered by the controller of printing and stationary, Government of India and printed at the Government presses, these are not listed in the catalogue of civil publications. Hence, most of the documented information of the government have very little access to the public.
1.2.2 SOURCES OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

- Firstly state and central governments and their subordinate departments.
- A second group of producers consists of the semi government organisations and autonomous bodies such as local governments, judicial and corporate bodies.
- Finally, there are International organisations and societies in which national governments join together for some common purpose. For eg. SAARC, UNESCO, WHO etc.

1.2.3 GOVERNMENT AS PUBLISHING AGENCY:

In India, the publishing of government documents is mainly done by government agencies set up for the purpose, the largest of them being the Central Publication Branch under the control of the Manager of Publications, Government of India. It issues separate general catalogues in respect of civil and military publications of the Government of India, which are stocked by the Branch for sale. Distribution of publications for sale is done by the Manager of publications, Lok Sabha Secretariat, Director, Publications Division (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and other agencies through Government Book Depots and authorised agents in principal cities and towns in the country. The Director, publication Division is responsible for informative, popular pamphlets, books, journals and albums in Indian languages as well as in English. The civil catalogues are available for the public whereas the catalogue of military publications is not available to the public.
In the U.S.A. Government Printing Office (GPO) is the agency which is fully responsible for publication of government documents. Currently, it is estimated that 1373 libraries are considered to be depositories for publications distributed by the Government Printing Office and they receive these publications on the condition that they may be made available for public use. These depositories mainly comprise academic libraries (66%), with the remaining percentage scattered among the large public, state and other libraries. Further, a large number of additional libraries purchase government publications on a regular basis, either directly from the GPO or through an agent.  

10

In U.K., Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO) and the Publication Division of the Central Office of Information publish almost all the government publications of the U.K. Government. HMSO publishes quite a good number of helpful guides like daily list and Monthly catalogues of government publications.

Besides, some international organisations are also responsible for publishing the government publications. The international organisations and their specialised agencies like U.N.O. UNESCO, WHO, are responsible for quite a large number of worthwhile publications having informational and research value.

1.2.4 IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

Government publications reveal the history of government and its policies and achievements. In other words, government publications function as a mirror of government plans and activities.

The modern States have set up various institutions in the fields of commerce, education, art, literature, sociology, culture, science and technology whose services are essential to the nation. The structure and constitution, annual reports and publications of these institutions contain valuable information to the public.

Government information relating to land records, Geographical boundaries etc. are considered to be eternal valuable information to the public. Government publications are also the primary sources of political, social, economic and cultural history of a country. They contain authentic records of the activities of the state in every field of human activity including scientific and industrial discoveries and inventions.

Government publications on social sciences are eagerly sought for to obtain authentic information. The Census returns and gazetteers form the primary sources of information. The gazettes of the central and state governments offer a rich source of material both of the informative and research type. Acts, rules, regulations, codes, manuals and annual reports of the central and state governments are very much in demand. Besides the annual reports and balance sheets of joint stock concerns, those of the public owned, managed or controlled corporations form part of the study of
research workers. The interest of the research workers in the Reports of commissions and committees is ever growing. The debates of the Parliament and various Legislative Assemblies with regard to the general views of the legislature on specific problems or the clause-by-clause discussions on specific enactments offer substantial material to the public. The publications of the Planning Commission and various Ministries' projects or related information are valuable to the public. The public demand for publications on small scale industries and handicrafts is growing. The inquiries for foreign publications on problems similar to ours are also in great demand. The documents of the United Nations and its allied agencies are pressed in to service to meet inquiries on various problems.

It can be said that Government publications being extremely useful from the point of view of keeping the information channel open between the policy makers and general public should begin to respond more favourably to the changing needs of the modern world. They cannot remain a mere supplier of information but have to open more to become not only a means of constructive two-way communication process, allowing various researchers and study groups timely and easy access to information obtained with least trouble, but also to let them have the opportunity of using and interpreting information for filling into scientific calculus so that the end products and findings are more need based on responsive to changing value systems.

With all their shortcomings government publications still remain the major source of information in various fields highlighting government's programmes and
policies. Much of the related information available from other sources is either derived from these or totally based on them.

The demand for government publications in the post-Independent Era has shown a remarkable increase and the trends point towards greater use in the immediate future.

1.2.5 FACTORS AFFECTING ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:


1.2.5.1 Bibliographic Control:

Library Association (London) has defined the 'Bibliographic Control' as "the development and maintenance of a system of adequate recording of all forms of material, published and un-published, printed, audio-visual or otherwise, which add to the sum of human knowledge and information."

Libraries being the repositories of human culture are concerned with the recording of human communication, bibliographic control is an effective means to have access to it through bibliographies, abstracts, indexes and union-catalogues and newer documentation techniques employed. But so far as bibliographic control is concerned, the situation is far from satisfactory because of the following reasons:

— They exist in vast numbers.
— A central government publisher will not be the only publishers.
— Most government publications have little publicity.
— Government publications are selectively covered by national bibliographies.
— Government publications by pass the commercial book shops.
— Official catalogues of government publications are not very informative.

The Bibliographic control of ‘Non-priced’ and ‘For office use only’ government publications is even more acute because they usually do not find place in the publishers catalogues and as such it becomes difficult for public to have access to valuable information contained in them and to be aware of existence of such publications.

Inadequate bibliographic control of government publications not only deprive the users of much valuable and relevant information but also result in huge loss to the state exchequer indirectly.

Although Bibliographic control is closely related to the accessibility and availability but it is not the same. In fact, it is possible for a government publication to be under bibliographic control but neither accessible nor available. The common assumption by many documentalists and librarians in that the increasing bibliographic control will automatically lead to the increased accessibility and availability.12

For tackling the problems of bibliographical control of government publications some control agency or committee having a general cognizance over the collection, cataloguing and dissemination of information should be established or the

government publications should be entered into a depository library system for centralized bibliographic control.

According to Simonton (1962) there are three facets of Bibliographic control. 1. Internal control provided by the bibliographic information given on the government publication itself. 2. Institutional control the measures employed in individual libraries to organize and catalogue the government publications. 3. External control provided by reference sources and other such services.


Bibliographic control is considered as a means towards increased use and access to government publications.

1.2.5.2 Distribution procedures:

It is extensively opined that in spite of large expenditure undergoing in the compilation of the documents, these are not put to maximum use. Slow marketing techniques, lack of information and consultation facilities are greatly responsible for this.

Because of lack of an organised marketing system, government publications remain unsold for a long time and there comes the stage when they become obsolete and have to be destroyed and written off resulting in huge loss. Sometimes the loss is colossal. This statement should not be understood as over statement of facts, but

there is evidence of it. ‘The Hindu’ estimated the stock held with the Department of Publications, Government of India in the year 1980 and commented that publications held in stock were valued at about Rs. 3 crores as against Rs.2.50 crores the previous year and attributed this mainly to the lack of efficient marketing system.\textsuperscript{14}

Hence, before disposing off these as waste-paper, it should be made compulsory on all government offices to consider whether these could be useful to any of the educational institutions and give away these to those institutions.

The Universities are the centres for higher learning and research. The University libraries have a greater responsibility of maintaining a large collection of government publications. The teachers, students and research scholars, they all make use of government publications in their study and research.

The University libraries are facing a number of problems with regard to the acquisition of government publications. This is mainly for the reason that the distribution channel for the government publications has not been formalised as compared to the non-government publications published by private business organisations. Secondly, the failure to catalogue, index, list and publicize government publications.

From 1957 onwards the Indian National Bibliography (INB) has been periodically entering Indian Government publications in Part-II, but it is not exhaustive. The lacunae are mainly due to faulty and ineffective distribution methods. The Indian National Bibliography lists only those publications received in the Central

Reference Library. Those publications which are not received have no chance of entry in the Indian National Bibliography.

Pricing and marketing of government publications should follow a reasonable commercial pattern so that book sellers may take an interest in supplying and selling the publications to the public.

1.2.5.3 National Information Policy:

Comprehensive collection of all government publications is a difficult task. It should be the responsibility of each country to acquire all government publications and effective supply of these to regional centres. Continuing increase in the number of publications, increasing awareness about them, growing demands for them, increasing cost of acquisition and difficulties in achieving them are a few problems in acquisition of government publication. It is necessary to develop a national information policy for government publications to meet the changing information needs of society.

1.2.6 PROBLEMS WITH REGARD TO ACCESSIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

The problems posed by government publications and their accessibility are enormous. Some of the problems are discussed as follows:

1.2.6.1 Restricted documents:

The publications published by the various printing and stationary offices of the Union and the State Governments are available for sale to the public. Besides these, there are several publications which are not listed in any of these publications. There
are several publications which are intended for the official use of the government departments only. There are publications like manuals, codes and departmental instructions which are meant for the efficient conduct of business of the various departments. Further, there are confidential publications like the Exchange control manual, manual of standing orders of the Controller and Auditor General etc. Though the printing is ordered by the controller of printing and stationary, Government of India and printed at the government press, many of them are not listed in the catalogue of civil publications and therefore, the public does not get an insight into these documents.

1.2.6.2 Handling of the publications:

In order to ensure the proper handling, each of the publication should be bound. The binding of government publications is very challenging. In case of serial publications the problem is more as it is very difficult to know as to how many specific issues are there in the volume unless all issues and also the index are received. From the index only we can come to know as to how many issues are there in a volume and then only can we check whether all the issues have been received or some missing.

1.2.6.3 Space requirement:

Looking into the growing importance of government publications as a source material for study and research, the authorities should provide enough space for the
organisation and maintenance of government publications. Sufficient space should be provided for reading purpose and also for the library staff to work.

1.2.6.4 Centralised Agency:

In India there is no centralised agency from which all government publications may be obtained. Besides some of the publications considered to be of ephemeral nature that are available in mimeographed form and that too in limited copies only. These ephemeral documents form primary information material which may be of vital interest to a person carrying out research.

1.2.6.5 Book Sellers:

The commercial book sellers are less interested in government publications because these are less profitable being of comparatively very low price leaving a meager profit. So it is necessary that they may be encouraged by providing some incentives.

1.2.6.6 Long Title:

Government publications having lengthy title using many unnecessary or relevant words cause another difficulty. The lengthy title causes inconvenience in cataloguing of government publications, eg. Report on the working of the trade agreement entered into by the government of India with his Majesty's government in the United Kingdom for the year 1938-39 etc.

1.2.6.7 Change of Title:

Change in the title of publications also causes problem, eg. 'Accounts relating to the sea born trade of India' changed to 'Accounts relating to the foreign (sea,
air, land-borne) trade of India', has now become 'Monthly statistics of the foreign trade of India'.

1.2.6.8 Standard of Publication:

The size, format, paper, printing and binding and the standard of production do not conform to any of the conventional types. The authorship is not clear in many cases. In some cases the name of the author is mixed with the title eg. Proceedings of the All India Council for Technical Education.

1.2.6.9 Absence of Index and Irregularity in publications:

Absence of Index and irregularity in the issue of government publications also poses severe problems.

1.2.6.10 Cataloguing:

Cataloguing of Government publications is somewhat difficult task. Choice of heading has to be done with utmost care due to multiple subdivisions in corporate authorship. The cataloguer has to be careful in cataloguing long titles and he has to be careful to shorten it.

1.3 NEED FOR THE STUDY

It is a fact that in developing countries like India documents which contain the primary record of the activities of government should have been so largely neglected by scholars. The reason may be the problems in connection with access to government publications are many and enormous. No one has ever studied them exhaustively and no one even can be sure of how many publications are there.
Hence, in this investigation an attempt is made to find out various user groups and their access to information produced by the government. It is also an attempt to offer some practical suggestions that can ease the problems of identifying, acquiring and recording the government publications. This study is also useful to both the State and Central governments for achieving Bibliographic control of their own publications.

1.4 LIMITATIONS TO THE PRESENT STUDY

Andhra Pradesh is geographically categorised into three regions namely Andhra, Telangana and Rayalaseema. The present study is confined to only four districts of Rayalaseema Region, namely, Chittoor, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Ananthapur.

Due to paucity of time, availability of data and resources, the study is limited to only Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh with the assumption that the inferences drawn would reflect the trend in other parts of the State and also the country.

Government publications are a specialised resource most likely consulted by members of government officials and persons employed by business organisations, professionals, businessmen, academicians, agriculturists, industrialists and some times by students. Hence, the study is limited to them who form the bulk of the public. However, other groups of the public could not be surveyed due to limitation of time and resources.
1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS OF THE PROBLEM.

1.5.1 PUBLIC ACCESS:

Public Access can be defined as any proper method by which the general public may examine, reproduce or otherwise obtain access to information provided by a governmental entity. Included in this definition is "any information printed, microform and electronic of the government (executive, judicial and legislative) made available to the public in different ways for different reasons".

Throughout this investigation, the word 'Public Access' is used in the context of bibliographic control, collection development and resource sharing, the role of new technology, reference and referral services, the administration of documents, collections and services, the integration of government publications with other library resources, the planning process, and the amount and type of education and training that information personnel have.

'Public Access' means the degree to which (1) a government publication is accurately identified bibliographically in appropriate reference works, (2) information contained in government publications is made known to the users and general public and (3) the public seeks government information and the problems that they might encounter in gaining access to depository collections and retrieving needed information from these collections.

'Public Access' in this context for this particular investigation means when all the members of the general public, regardless of race, religion, age, sex or personal
beliefs, have an equal opportunity to obtain information contained in government information sources.

1.5.2 GOVERNMENT INFORMATION:

The term 'government' is a general one which is used to describe both the body that is having power in a given unit - whether national, regional or local and the whole constitutional system.15

Information may be defined as the data which can be transmitted between individuals, and each individual can make whatever use he/she can of it.

Therefore, 'Government Information' may be defined as information produced by the government in the form of books, pamphlets, documents, etc.

Availability to government publications contained in depository collections implies something quite different from accessibility in terms of information. Availability of government information suggests physically obtaining the information in an understandable format within a specified period of time. Thus accessibility to government information is meaningless if the user cannot obtain an actual copy of the necessary information, because of so many reasons such as non-availability of information in the form of microfiche and inability to provide reproduction equipment, inability to provide necessary information to the user within a relatively short time period or losing of the necessary information resource, misplaced or unobtainable.

Access and availability to government publications are not always the same as access and availability to government information. Access to a specific government document did not provide the necessary government information. That is, access and availability to government publications are a prerequisite for access and availability to government information.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Basing on the scope and importance of the study, the following specific objectives are drawn.

1. To identify and discuss critically important issues related to increasing access to government publications.

2. To know whether the public in need of government information have access to the required information available in government publications.

3. To study, the barriers or difficulties in getting the required information available in government publications.

4. To design a computerized government information system.

5. To offer solutions and recommendations by which government publications and services can be made more effective.

1.7 HYPOTHESES

The study is based on the following hypotheses

1. General public use both formal and informal sources of information to obtain information produced by the Government for their day-to-day activities.
2. Adequate access and availability to government information is not currently being provided to the general public.

3. There is a necessity for conducting seminars, symposia, conferences or workshops in order to keep abreast of latest government information.

4. There is a need for orientation programmes to the users for procuring the effective use of government information.

5. There is a need for specific information system exclusively to provide government information to the public.

6. There is a necessity to design for an effective computerized information system in order to have a quick access to required information provided by the government.

1.8 PLAN OF STUDY

Keeping the objectives in view, the entire work is divided into the following seven chapters.

The FIRST chapter is introduction. It highlights definition, different types, sources and importance of government publications. It also discusses the factors affecting the access to government publications and problems with regard to government publications. It contains the purpose and utility of the study, formulation of hypotheses and limitations. The concepts of the problem and definitions have also been provided.

SECOND chapter deals with the review of literature. For this, the investigator has taken the help of LISA on CD-ROM data base search through computer. The
search was conducted in three data bases viz. Dissertation Abstracts International, LISA and Information Science Abstracts. Sixty eight references were scanned pertaining to different aspects of government information.

THIRD Chapter is devoted to the material and methods. It provides information on sample collection and data processing techniques. It also includes geographical description of the four districts of Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, India. A brief account of collection of data and method of analysis of data were presented.

FOURTH Chapter comprises the analysis of the public access to government information. This chapter is organised according to the design of the questionnaire and objectives of the study. The questionnaire is designed to collect data regarding the government information sources/ services, information seeking behaviour through formal and informal channels by the public, barriers in getting the required government information, the information services expected by the public in information centres and an analysis of the respondent's opinions of introducing computer in handling of government information.

FIFTH Chapter examines the need for provision of government information infrastructure for public in India with special reference to Rayalaseema Districts of Andhra Pradesh. A plan for government information system has been discussed.

SIXTH Chapter focusses on the need for computerized government information systems in the context of revolutionising developments in Information Technology.

SEVENTH Chapter consists of summary and conclusions of the study. It also includes findings and recommendations.