SYNOPSIS

The present research undertaking aims to find out various types of information needs and patterns of information seeking behaviour of the Santal Community, the largest homogeneous tribal community with bright historical records and distinct socio-cultural background. The study identifies the various types of information needs viz. food and nutritional information needs, health and child care information needs, housing information needs, education and schooling (formal and informal) information needs, employment information needs, political information needs, law and order information needs, cultural information needs i.e., marriage, festival, hunting, taboo and totem, gods and goddesses etc.; agricultural information needs, recreational information needs i.e., story/novel reading, radio/TV programmes, music, cinema, drama, yatra (one type of theatre), dance, sports and games etc.; personal relation information needs for drought help, poverty eradication, price rise; consumer goods information needs regarding the availability of consumer goods; Government welfare projects information needs for government public issues, visitors information, map, social consciousness etc. as well as the patterns of use of direct and indirect information providers at the time of information seeking for fulfilment of information needs. It shows the important role of rural libraries and informal literacy missions, primary health centres, multipurpose workers/anganwadi workers and veterinary workers, agriculture development officers and village development officers (agriculture), block development officers and employment exchange officers for the fulfilment of various information needs viz. education and schooling (formal and informal), health and child care, agriculture, and full-time/part time employment respectively. It also represents that this community people use indirect information providers more than direct information providers. The intelligent quotient of Santal people is not very less than developed communities so seriously taken educational programme will be very much effective for their educational development.

This interdisciplinary research comprises six chapters.

Chapter 1 entitled 'Introduction' covers twelve sections (1.1-1.12) i.e., Introduction, Statement of the Research Problem, Objectives, Hypotheses, Choice of Community, Research Methodology, Importance of the Research
Study, Definitional Analysis, Identification of Community Information Needs, Origin and Development of Community Information Services, Community Information Needs Assessment and Its Problems, and Process of Information Seeking Behaviour. First section 'Introduction' (1.1) discusses about the concept and importance of information, objectives of studying information needs, methodology for assessing community information needs, process of identification of information needs; second section 'Statement of the Research Problem' (1.2) warranted to be answered a set of interlinked questions for the purpose of this study; third section 'Hypotheses' (1.3) discusses about the answers of the interlinked questions; fourth section 'Objectives' (1.4) depicts the objectives of the research study; fifth section 'Choice of Community' (1.5) discusses the causes behind the choice of community; sixth section 'Research Methodology' (1.6) comprises three sub-sections i.e., Literature Search, Visit and Tour Programmes and Community Survey. These are the methodologies adopted to assess the information needs and information seeking behaviour of the Santal community; seventh section 'Importance of the Research Study' (1.7) depicts the importance of this study; eighth section 'Definitional Analysis' (1.8) defines the terms Information Needs, Community, Community Information and Information Seeking Behaviour; ninth section 'Identification of Community Information Needs' (1.9) identifies the various types of information needs of Santal community; tenth section 'Origin and Development of Community Information Services' (1.10) discusses the origin of community information services and community information studies and services in India and abroad; eleventh section 'Community Information Needs Assessment and Its Problems' (1.11) describes the problems regarding information needs assessment; and the last section not the least 'Process of Information Seeking Behaviour' (1.12) discusses the processes associated with the information seeking behaviour in order to fulfil the information needs.

Chapter 2 entitled 'Background of the Santal Community' covers four sections (2.1-2.4). These are Tribal Heritage, Origin of the Santals, General Characteristics and Community Life of the Santals (29 sub-sections), and Jamboni Block and Mouzas under Survey discusses about the Santals and the whereabouts of Jamboni Block and surveyed mouzas (i.e., Kapgari, Gidhni, Kherejora, Chilkigarh, Kadopindra and Chiapara).
Chapter 3 entitled as 'Methodology of Data Collection' focuses about Total Sample, Sample Characteristics (14 sub-sections), Methodology, Designing of Questionnaire, Data Collection and Data Compilation (i.e., six sections, 3.1-3.6). Chapter 4 entitled 'Data Analysis and Findings' discusses about Information Needs Analysis and Findings, Information Service Requirement Analysis and Findings, Information Seeking Behaviour towards Library (i.e., three sections, 4.1-4.3). There are two types of survey covered in this research work i.e., information needs and information seeking behaviour so two types of analysis and findings are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 discusses about 'Community Information Services'. There are ten sections (5.1-5.10) of this chapter i.e., What's Community Information Services? How Community Information Services? How Community Information Services? Monitoring and Evaluating Performance, Condition for Success in Community Information, Necessity of Community Information Services in Developing Nations, Community Information Services for Non-User Disadvantaged Community (2 sub-sections), Community Information Studies and Services in Abroad (2 sub-sections), Community Information Studies and Services in India (2 sub-sections), Public Libraries as Community Information Centres (9 sub-sections) and Implications of Findings. The last section i.e., Implications of Findings highlights that which centre is appropriate for Santal Community Information Services.

Chapter 6 discusses about 'Summary and Conclusions' (i.e., two sections 6.1-6.2) of the research work.

In Summary part, researcher summarises the discussion of Chapter 1 to Chapter 5.

In Conclusions part, the researcher recommends that

1) Governmental direct contact is necessary to make aware the underdeveloped communities (e.g. Santal) people with all types of information because they are very shy in nature and unwilling to go to the government office, library etc. to fulfil their information needs;

2) Establishment of primary, secondary, higher secondary schools and colleges in the remote area and introduction of teaching in Santali language for Santal people;

3) Efficiently organized informal literacy mission and mobile library service will be helpful for education of the tribal people as for example 'Ekal
Vidyalaya' (school with one teacher) project [which was established in 1988 with 60 schools, in 2004 the number is 10,100 and proposed growth in 2007 is 30,000 and in 2011 is 1 (one) lakh] already running successfully in Nepal, North-Eastern India like Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Eastern India like Jharkhand and South India like Kerala. The main motto of this project is to educate (including primary education, professional education, health education and awareness education) the backward community people in the easiest way considering ‘education with play’ as well as medical treatment by the Arogya Sevika (Nurse) for the backward class in the primary stage of disease and to involve the backward people in various types of self-employment programme like agriculture, warm culture for bio-fertiliser etc. So establishment and continuation of ‘Ekal Vidyalaya’ or similar project is necessary for tribal or backward class upliftment (Source: Ekal Vidyalaya CD. Contact: Ekal Vidyalaya: A People’s Movement, 5-A, Link Road, Jangpura Ext., New Delhi-14. E-mail: ekalvidyalaya@vsnl.net). Education is the main source of knowledge and knowledge is power so education accelerates the progress of mankind;

4) Santali (Alchiki script) language and literature should be recognized by the Government from Nursery level syllabus to highest educational level to attract them for education because a community will be developed through education with mother language support;

5) At least one Village Development Officer (agriculture) in each Gram (Village) Panchayat should be appointed to act as a mediator between agricultural research centre/Agricultural Development Officer (Block Level) and village level farmers [specially of underdeveloped communities (e.g., Santal)];

6) More direct contact is necessary among multipurpose workers/anganwadi workers/veterinary workers and underdeveloped communities (e.g., Santal) people for better health, child care and cattle care of underdeveloped communities (e.g., Santal) people;

7) Government should pass the Traditional Culture Preservation Act for easy maintenance of traditional culture without disturbance from the outsiders;
8) To motivate the Santal community with other community people for free exchange of information and culture;

9) Village Development Officer/Anganwadi workers/Gram Sevak (Village Social Worker)/Health Staff etc. should be trained with Alchiki script for working knowledge in Santali language for conversation as well to convey information to Santal and other underdeveloped communities people;

10) To give the opportunity to Santal and other underdeveloped communities people in employment through sports quota and other State and Central Government employment to uplift themselves and bridge the information, cultural and economical gap between the developed communities people and underdeveloped communities (e.g., Santal) people which will help to remove their poverty, anxiety and improve their personality dimension and academic career;

11) Organization of various fairs, festivals, observation of famous Santal personalities/freedom fighters, seminars on Santal history, origin, role of Santals in freedom movement from Governmental financial support to preserve the traditional values of Santals.

Bibliographical References have been prepared for this work. At the end of every chapter (where available) separate references have been given.

Appendix includes a model questionnaire which was canvassed among the respondents. At the beginning of the thesis the picture of Santali Dance, Traditional Treatment and Area Maps of India, West Bengal, West Midnapore District and Jamboni Development Block have been provided.