

**Summary of the Ph.D. thesis on**  
**Business Information Needs of the Indian Corporate Sector**  
**conducted by Mr. H .Anil Kumar under the guidance of Dr. Kautilya Shukla**

**Introduction**

Indian businesses face many challenges in today's competitive environment consisting of global players and highly demanding customers on one side and are faced with shortage of skilled manpower on the other. It is a complex environment that they operate in with 'information' becoming a critical component of their strategy and operations. Right information to the right person at the right time for right business actions is the greatest challenge that businesses face. Need for information exists at all levels from in-the-market executives to middle management and top management in the organization. The type of information required would determine the sources of information, the media preferred, the technology used to access this information, the providers of information to be approached, the purpose of information searching and qualities of information required.

In this context, the present study to explore the information needs of Indian corporate sector was undertaken. This will not only facilitate provision of right information to the right person at the right time but will also help in designing information systems and services in the organization that effectively address information needs of its managers.

**Scope of the study**

The scope of the study is limited to people working in the middle management or higher level in Indian corporate sector. The companies include public limited, private limited, family businesses, small businesses and government businesses. The research includes a review and analysis of the data collected from 303 middle level managers working 185 manufacturing and service sector companies from various cities of India.

The data was analyzed to look at the type of information required, sources used, media preferred, information providers used, purpose of information search and qualities of

information that are relevant and important. The study also looks at the variations in results between managers in manufacturing sector and services sector to enhance the understanding of business information needs in the Indian context.

### **Review of Literature**

To facilitate a systematic understanding of existing research in this area the chapter on literature review is presented under the classification developed as follows:

1. Models and theory of business information needs.
2. Environment scanning and strategic information needs research.
3. Business information needs study of specific business sectors.
4. Business information needs of managers working in specific functions, roles and levels.
5. Business information needs of specific types of companies from specific locations and geographical areas.
6. Business information needs of companies based on ownership by special groups like aborigines and expatriates.
7. Business information needs of companies based on size – small and medium businesses and also based on different phases like start-ups, gestation and in financial distress.

### **Research Questions**

The main research questions being addressed in the study were:

1. What is the type of technology is used at work by managers working in the Indian businesses?
2. What type of task or work related information is required by Indian businesses?
3. What are the information sources used and information media preferred by Indian businesses?
4. Is search for information by self or facilitated by others and where is the information sourced from?

5. What is the purpose of the information search and what are the perceptions on the attributes of information that they consider important?

In addition to these research questions, hypotheses were also formulated to provide focus to the study and research into the questions mentioned above. The hypotheses were developed mainly in the context of comparing respondents working in the service sector companies with the respondents working in the manufacturing sector companies.

### **Methodology**

The present study was aimed at investigating the business information needs of the Indian corporate sector. The study explored the business information needs of managers working in the Indian corporate sector and looked at their demographic profile, personal and organizational. The main aspects of the study involved looking at the types of information that is required by them and how they access this information and their perceptions of various attributes of information that is needed by them.

The methodology applied to research into these objectives is discussed in the chapter on data analysis in detail, including the methods, techniques and procedures followed by the investigator in carrying out this study. The data collection from the identified sample was undertaken with the help of a survey instrument, the questionnaire that included 129 data that were identified to be collected under 10 main categories.

### **Sample**

The total sample consisted of 303 responses out of 315 received responses from the total of 500 mailed questionnaires. The respondents were working in 185 companies in all and 174 respondents were working in 111 services sector companies and 129 respondents in the 74 manufacturing sector companies.

## **Findings of the study**

The findings that are based on the data analysis and derived from the study have been reported in detail in the Chapter 5 - Findings and Conclusion in the thesis which throws light on the various aspects information environment in Indian businesses like technologies widely used at work, most used information type, most useful categories of information, types of information, the most used information source, media preferences, information search behavior, most used providers of information, purpose of seeking information, important qualities of information and similarities and differences in information environment of manufacturing companies and services companies.

## **Conclusion**

The study provides an understanding of the information environment of the managers working in the various companies in India. The section on type of technology they are using at work indicated adoption of various information technologies quite well in the workplace. The type of information needed depended on the type of company they work in and the type of sector they are associated with.

The study also clearly indicates the information environment of Indian businesses is similar but there exist some fine differences in the information needs of the manufacturing sector and the services sector.