

# Information Needs of Deori Community at Doomdooma Revenue Circle in the Tinsukia district of Assam: A Study

Mithun Sarkar

Arabinda Maity

Biplab Chakraborty

## Abstract

*The study focuses on identifying the information needs of the Deori community and trying to fulfill their needs through providing sources of information by establishing a public library concept in Doomdooma revenue circle under Tinsukia district of Assam.*

**Keywords:** Information need, Deori community, Doomdooma revenue circle, Tinsukia, Assam.

## 1. Introduction

The present information environment has put more emphasis on the understanding of the information needs of the different groups of users. So, there is a need to understand the basics of the information needed by the individual and community as well. But the term information need has become extremely complicated with the advent of IT, global economy and change in lifestyle in recent times. The term 'information' denotes a sensible statement, opinion, facts, concepts or associated ideas. It is usually communicated in an organized or formalized pattern thus it helps to increase the potential utility of information. On the other hand, 'need' can be defined as a situation that requires some course of action, which leads to good directed behavior.

Here I have attempted to find the information needs of the Deori community which will help them to understand their information need pattern. Thus, it is possible to help them through community development and community appraisal.

**2. Objectives:** Following are the basic objectives of the study:

- a. To draw a complete socio-economic profile of the Deori community.
- b. To identify the information needs of the Deori community.
- c. To identify the existing infrastructural facilities such as school, colleges, libraries, health centre, government and non-government office and organizations etc. available to them.
- d. To study about the different social welfare schemes and the awareness for the tribal community.
- e. To identify the role of rural library cum information centre for the community.



### **3. Scope and Coverage**

The scope of the study is to present information needs of people belonging to the Deori tribal community of Doomdooma revenue circle in Tinsukia district of Assam. The study has taken on an only Deori village named Sonapur Deori Gaon in Doomdooma revenue circle under Tinsukia District. Total population (Census, 2011) of this village is 673 and Deori people is 423 in the circle. Total respondents 123 have been considered for study purposes.

This study covers socio-cultural, economical, educational, occupational structure, health and hygiene, religious etc. aspects of Deori community in Doomdooma revenue circle in Tinsukia district of Assam.

### **4. Literature**

Goswami (1962) explained the origin and changing nature of Deoris in Assam. Deori people were royal priests of king Bhismaka and the gods and goddesses. Deori (1964) revealed the complete culture and history of Deori society and also studied the redistribution of Deoris after the 1950s and their settlement and social problems.

Chakrabarti and Basu (1997) presented an overview of tribal communities present in India, covering their information needs and their sources of information in their community. They also emphasized on the role of libraries in the development of the tribal communities. Chakrabarti and Basu (1999) worked on the various types of information requirements of the Toto Community. Emphasis was given on their occupation, natural products and its market prices on which their livelihood depended. Chakrabarti (2001) explored and examined the information needs and information seeking behavior of a marginal underprivileged tribal community namely Totos.

Deori (2002) defined the cultural impact of the Deori community in relation to redistribution among another tribe in the riverbank of Brahmaputra. They came to India from Chinese and Mongolian territories and settled in the valleys of river Brahmaputra, Tsangpo, Lassa, Siddhakhtri, Swati or Bidara, Kundil, Chengchukul, Laibari, Laphabari, Sadiya etc. Chakrabarti and others (2008) identified the information needs of the Dukpa community of Lepcha-Kha who were basically non-users of the formal information system and revealed the information needs of the villagers with their traditional information needs.

Deori (2008) described the origin and migration of Deori people in Assam as well as different clans of Northeast India by her study. Chakrabarti and others (2009) depicted a picture about the Dhimal community of Naxalbari Block of Darjeeling District covering the socio-economic condition of Dhimal community with tabular analysis considering all the aspects of their life. Overall, it was a lucid and vivid description about the peoples belonging to the Dhimal community. Patil and Desmukh (2012) discussed that public libraries, being the library of communities, can play an important role in providing effective community information services. This paper dealt with the design and development of public library based computerized community information services. This paper also discussed the definition of CI, concept of CIS. The paper highlighted

the components of CIS, need of CIS, community information service and public libraries and discussed the new role of public libraries.

Hazarika & Dutta (2016) had provided information regarding the traditional uses of plants which played a key role in the health systems of different ethnic groups living in remote areas of North East India through their ethno-medicinal study on Deori community of Bihpuria subdivision, Lakhimpur District of Assam. They highlighted some common plant species and their scientific name, local name, family, distribution, parts used and medicinal use for curing diseases. Pathak (2017) emphasized on tribal identity and societal formation of Deori community with special reference to women to fulfill the objectivity for identity, establish and realize political, economic, personal and social rights for women through the study.

### **5. Methodology**

A household survey of available total Deori population is chosen on random basis to get the information needs of the community on the basis of their socio-cultural aspects. Data has been collected from respondents available in the village at the time of survey through personal interview, questionnaire and field visits as non-participants random survey by interview method and observation method. The answers and responses of the questionnaire are noted down. Collected data is tabulated mainly on the basis of age group and sex of respondents. And finally, it is presented in the form of interpretation and thereafter a conclusion is drawn on the basis of analyzing data.

### **6. Data analysis and findings**

Data has been tabulated and analyzed on different aspects and finally findings are drawn which are following-

**Table 6.1: Distribution of total population in Sonapur Deori Gaon**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Deori Community</b>	<b>Others</b>
673	423 (62.85%)	203 (37.14%)

The above table shows the distribution of the Deori community at Sonapur Deori Gaon in Doomdooma revenue circle under Tinsukia District. The total population of the village is 673 out of which 423 (62.85%) belong to the Deori community and the rest 203 (37.14%) belong to other communities like Nepali, Tanti etc.

**Table 6.2: Distribution of Deori people in Sonapur Deori Gaon**

Age group	Child (below 18 years)		Total	Adult (18 years & above)		Total	All Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female		
Respondent	10 (2.36%)	13 (3.07%)	23 (5.44%)	48 (11.35%)	52 (12.29%)	100 (23.64%)	123 (29.08%)
Non-Respondent	50 (11.82%)	54 (12.76%)	104 (24.58%)	91 (21.51%)	105 (24.82%)	196 (46.33%)	300 (70.92%)
Total	60 (14.18%)	67 (15.84%)	127 (30.02%)	139 (32.86%)	157 (37.12%)	296 (69.98%)	423 (100%)

This table shows the distribution of the total Deori population of Sonapur Deori Gaon in Tinsukia District. It is found that out of the total 423 (100%) population, 123 (29.08%) are respondents and 300 (70.92%) persons are non-respondents.

Among the respondents 23 (5.44%) are children (below 18 years) which include 10 male (2.36%) and 13 female (3.07%). There are 100 (23.64%) respondents who are adult persons (18 years & above). Among them male is 48 (11.35%) and female is 52 (12.29%).

Among the 300 non-respondents, 104 (24.58%) are children of which 50 (11.82%) are male and 54 (12.76%) are female children and out of total 196 (46.33%) adult non-respondents, male respondents are 91 (21.51%) and female respondents are 105 (24.82%).

**Table 6.3: Distribution of respondents according to age and sex**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Up to 18	10	8.13	13	10.60	23	18.70
18-28	14	11.38	16	13.00	30	24.40
28-38	12	9.75	13	10.60	25	20.32
38-48	10	8.13	11	8.92	21	17.07
48-58	7	5.70	8	6.50	15	12.20
58 above	5	4.06	4	3.23	9	7.31
Total	58	47.15	65	52.85	123	100

Table no. 6.3 shows the distribution of total respondents according to the age and sex. It reveals that there are 58 (47.15%) male and 65 female (52.85%) respondents in the sample population.

So, from this table it is very clear that the total number of female respondents is greater than the total number of male respondents. In the age group of up to 18, 28-38, 38-48, the total number of females is greater. In the

INFORMATION NEEDS OF DEORI COMMUNITY AT DOOMDOOMA REVENUE CIRCLE IN THE  
TINSUKIA DISTRICT OF ASSAM: A STUDY

age group of 18-28, the total number of respondents is highest. So, it can be concluded that the young generation of the age group of 18-28 covers the major portion of the total population.

**Table 6.4: Distribution of respondents requiring information of the community in various areas**

Age Group	Educational		Political		About Social Welfare Schemes				Occupational	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Up to 18	10 (8.13%)	13 (10.60%)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18-28	6 (4.88%)	5 (4.06%)	4 (3.23%)	5 (4.06%)	-	3 (2.44%)	4 (3.23%)	3 (2.44%)		
28-38	2 (1.62%)	2 (1.62%)	3 (2.44%)	5 (4.06%)	3 (2.44%)	3 (2.44%)	4 (3.23%)	3 (2.44%)		
38-48	1 (0.81%)	1 (0.81%)	5 (4.06%)	6 (4.88%)	4 (3.23%)	3 (2.44%)	-	1 (0.81%)		
48-58	1 (0.81%)	1 (0.81%)	1 (0.81%)	3 (2.44%)	3 (2.44%)	4 (3.23%)	2 (1.62%)	—		
58 above	—	—	3 (2.44%)	2 (1.62%)	2 (1.62%)	2 (1.62%)	—	—		
Total	20 (16.26%)	22 (17.88%)	16 (13.00%)	21 (17.07%)	12 (9.75%)	15 (12.20%)	10 (8.13%)	7 (5.70%)		
Total of M+F& %	42 42(34.15%)		37 37(30.08%)		27 27(21.95%)		17 17(13.82%)			

Table number 6.4 shows the distribution of respondents requiring information about the community in various areas. In this table, there are some rows and columns to describe requiring information in particular fields according to the age group and sex of the respondents. From this table it can be concluded that out of total respondents most of them require information about education and political aspects.

**Table 6.5: Distribution of respondents having awareness about the library system**

Age group	Awareness		Total	Unawareness		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Up to 18	-	-	-	10(8.13%)	13(10.60%)	23(18.73%)
18-28	6(4.88%)	7(5.70%)	13(10.60%)	8(6.50%)	9(7.31%)	17(13.82%)
28-38	8(6.50%)	9(7.31%)	17(13.82%)	4(3.23%)	4(3.23%)	8(6.50%)
38-48	2(1.62%)	1(0.81%)	3(2.44%)	8(6.50%)	10(8.13%)	18(14.63%)
48-58	3(2.44%)	2(1.62%)	5(4.06%)	4(3.23%)	6(4.88%)	10(8.13%)
58 above	-	-	-	5(4.06%)	4(3.23%)	9(7.31%)
Total&%	19(15.45%)	19(15.45%)	38(30.90%)	39(31.70%)	46(37.40%)	85(69.10%)

Table no. 6.5 shows the distribution of respondents having awareness about the library. From this table it is revealed that out of 123 respondents only 38 respondents (30.90%) have awareness regarding the library system out of which 19 respondents are male and 19 are female (15.45%).

In the age group of up to 18, there are no respondents who have the information regarding libraries out of 23 respondents. There are 10 male (8.13%) and 13 female (10.60%) respondents who are totally unaware about the library system.

In the age group of 18-28, 6 male (4.88%) and 7 female (5.70%) respondents are aware of libraries. There are 8 male (6.50%) and 9 female (7.31%) respondents who are not known about the library out of total 25 respondents.

In the age group of 28-38, there are 8 male (6.50%) and 9 female (7.31%) respondents who have the information regarding the library system and there are 4 male and 4 female respondents (3.23%) who are unaware about the library system.

In this age group of 38-48, there are 2 male (1.62%) and 1 female (0.81%) respondents who are aware about the library and on the other hand there are 8 male (6.50%) and 10 female (8.13%) respondents who are unaware about library out of 21 respondents.

In the age group of 48-58, 3 male (2.44%) and 2 female (1.62%) respondents are aware of the library and 4 male (3.23%) and 6 female (4.88%) who are unaware of the library system out of total 15 respondents.

In the age group of 58 & above, there are 5 male (4.06%) and 4 female (3.23%) respondents who aren't aware of the library system out of total 9 respondents.

From this table it is seen that in the age group of up to 18 and the age group of 58 and above, there is no person who is aware of libraries. It is observed that the number of unaware respondents is greater than aware respondents.

**Table 6.6: Distribution of respondents for using the library**

Age group	Library used		Total	Library not used		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Up to 18	-	-	-	10 (8.13%)	13 (10.60%)	23 (18.73%)
18-28	5 (4.06%)	6 (4.88%)	11 (8.92%)	9 (7.31%)	10 (8.13%)	19 (15.45%)
28-38	8 (6.50%)	7 (5.70%)	15 (12.20%)	4 (3.23%)	6 (4.88%)	10 (8.13%)
38-48	2 (1.62%)	3 (2.44%)	5 (4.06%)	8 (6.50%)	8 (6.50%)	16 (13.00%)
48-58	3 (2.44%)	2 (1.62%)	5 (4.06%)	4 (3.23%)	6 (4.88%)	10 (8.13%)
58 above	-	-	-	5 (4.06%)	4 (3.23%)	9 (7.31%)
Total%	18 (14.63%)	18 (14.63%)	36 (29.27%)	40 (32.52%)	47 (38.21%)	87 (70.73%)

INFORMATION NEEDS OF DEORI COMMUNITY AT DOOMDOOMA REVENUE CIRCLE IN THE  
TINSUKIA DISTRICT OF ASSAM: A STUDY

Table no. 6.6 shows the distribution of respondents for using the library. From this table it reveals that out of 123 respondents, 36 respondents (29.27%) use the library out of which 18 are male and 18 are female (14.63%) respondents. It also reveals that out of 123 respondents, 87 respondents (70.73%) do not use the library out of which 40 are male (32.52%) and 47 are female (38.21%) respondents.

In the age group of up to 18, there are no people who use the library.

In the age group of 18-28, there are 5 male (4.06%) and 6 female (4.88%) respondents who use the library and 5 male (11.11%) and 4 female (8.89%) respondents who do not use the library. On the other hand, 9 (7.31%) male and 10 (8.13%) female respondents are not using the library out of 30 respondents.

In the age group of 28-38, 8 male (6.50%) and 7 female (5.70%) respondents use the library and 4 male (3.23%) 6 female (4.88%) respondents don't use the library out of 25 respondents.

In the age group of 38-48, there are only 2 male (1.62%) and 3 female (2.44%) respondents who use the library and 8 male and 8 female (6.50%) who don't use the library out of 16 respondents.

In the age group of 48-58, there are 5 respondents (4.06%) who use the library out of which 3 are male (2.44%) and 2 are female (1.62%) respondents and 4 male (3.23%) and 6 female (4.88%) respondent don't use the library out of 15 respondents.

In the age group of 58 & above, there are only 5 male (4.06%) and 4 female (3.23%) respondents who don't use the library out of total 9 respondents.

So, it may be concluded that most of the respondents do not use the library out of total respondents.

**Table 6.7: Distribution of respondents having thinking about library that can help them**

Age group	Library can help them			
	YES		NO	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Up to 18	10 (8.13%)	13 (10.60%)	-	-
18-28	14 (11.38%)	16 (13.00%)	-	-
28-38	12 (9.75%)	13 (10.60%)	-	-
38-48	9 (7.31%)	8 (6.50%)	1 (0.81%)	3 (2.44%)
48-58	5 (4.06%)	4 (3.23%)	2 (1.62%)	4 (3.23%)
58 above	2 (1.62%)	1 (0.81%)	3 (2.44%)	3 (2.44%)
Total	52 (42.2%)	55 (44.71%)	6 (4.88%)	10 (8.13%)

Table no. 6.7 shows the distribution of respondents according to their thinking that libraries can help them provide information sources and awareness about recent technologies.

In the age group of up to 18, 18-28 and 28-38, total male and female respondents think that libraries can help them. In the age group of 38-48, 48-58 and 58 & above, maximum respondents think that libraries can help them and few respondents expressed their opinion against this.

It is found that out of total respondents, male respondents are 52 (42.2%) and female respondents are 55 (44.71%) who think that libraries can help them. Male respondents are 6 (4.88%) and female respondents are 10 (8.13%) who don't think that libraries can help them.

**Table 6.8: Distribution of respondents according to their needs of library cum information communication centre**

Age group	Needs of library cum information communication centre			
	YES		NO	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Up to 18	10 (8.13%)	13 (10.60%)	-	-
18-28	14 (11.38%)	16 (13.00%)	-	-
28-38	12 (9.75%)	13 (10.60%)	-	-
38-48	10 (8.13%)	10 (8.13%)	-	1 (0.81%)
48-58	6 (4.88%)	6 (4.88%)	1 (0.81%)	2 (1.62%)
58 above	3 (2.44%)	2 (1.62%)	2 (1.62%)	2 (1.62%)
Total	55 (44.71%)	60 (48.78%)	3 (2.44%)	5 (4.06%)

Table no. 6.8 shows the distribution of respondents according to their need of library cum information communication centre. In this table maximum respondents agreed with the need for a library cum information communication centre in the village area.

In the age group of up to 18, 18-28 and 28-38, there are no respondents who disagreed with the need for a library cum information communication centre. In the age group of 38-48, only one female respondent disagreed with the need for a library cum information centre in the village area.

In the age group of 48-58, there are 6 male and 6 female respondents (4.88%) who agree with the need for a library cum information centre in the village area. Only 1 male and 2 female respondents disagreed with the need for a library cum information communication centre.

In the age group of 58 and above, there are 3 male and 2 female respondents who agree with the need for a library cum information communication centre. Only 2 male and 2 female (1.62%) respondents disagreed with the need for a library cum information centre in the village area.



Table reveals that out of total respondents, 55 male (44.71%) and 60 female (48.78%) agreed with the need for a library cum information communication centre in the village area. Only 3 male (2.44%) and 5 female (4.06%) respondents disagreed with the need for a library cum communication centre in the village area.

## **7. Conclusions**

The present study has been undertaken to explore, analyze and assess the information needs of the Deori community and to find out the possible way by which their information needs might be fulfilled.

On the basis of analysis and findings it can be concluded that for the development of the Deori people regarding their occupation, health, education, etc. they need to explore their information needs, increase literacy and awareness about availability of information and information sources that can only be possible with the setting up of a well-served community information centre cum public library.

## **8. Suggestions**

Most of the family of Sonapur Deori Gaon in the Doomdooma revenue circle under Tinsukia district of Assam depend on agriculture cum tea-garden. At present, many modern facilities and developed technologies have come into existence in society. The Deoris do not have any agricultural information kiosks to know the proper and important information about agriculture to improve their economic development.

Deoris are aware of different Social Welfare Schemes but till now they are not benefited to SWS. So, a proper infrastructure should be developed to improve the social and economic development of the Deori community.

There is no library or information centre within the distance of 25 km. The students are using their school library for their education purpose only. So, a library cum information communication centre should be established within the community areas.

## **References**

1. Census, (2011). District Census Handbook- Tinsukia; Series-19, Part XII-B. Directorate of Census Operations, Assam, 272p. Retrieved on 17.03.2024 on [www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/1810\\_PART\\_B\\_DCHB\\_TINSUKIA.pdf](http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/1810_PART_B_DCHB_TINSUKIA.pdf)
2. Chakrabarti, B. (2001). Over the edge of information in the information age: Informational behaviour of the Totos- a small marginal tribal community in Sub-Himalayah North Bengal, India. One individual perspective. *International Information and Library Review*, 33. 167-168.
3. Chakrabarti, B., & Basu, A. (1997). Tribal community information services in India. *Vidyasagar University Journal of Library and Information Science*, 2.
4. Chakrabarti, B., & Basu, A. (1999). Information needs of the Totos: a sub – Himalayan tribal community. *IASLIC Bulletin*, 44(4), 177-184.

5. Chakrabarti, B. & others (2008). Information needs of Dukpa community of Lepcha-kha (Buxa) in the district of Jalpaiguri. *Calcutta University Journal of Information Studies*, 9 & 10, 65- 85.
6. Chakrabarti, B., & others (2009). Expanding horizon of information services to the disadvantaged: A study on Dhimal community at Naxalbari block of Darjeeling district. *Calcutta University Journal of Information Studies*, 11, 56-76.
7. Deori, D. (1964). 'Deori Samajat Bihu-Puja Utsab' Deori Sanskriti, pp 5-6.
8. Deori, S. (2002). 'Priestly Council of Deori', *Religious Practices of the Deoris*, pp 34-42.
9. Deori, S. (2008). 'Migration and Cultural Transformation of Deoris in Assam-A Case Study of Dhemaji District', in *Journal of North-East India Council for Social Science Research*. Vol-32:2, October 2008; pp 75-83.
10. Goswami, U. N. (et.al, 1962). 'Deori-Chutiya', Published in Bhattacharjee, P.C., in Assamar Janajati(eds) Jorhat, pp-89.
11. Hazarika, B., and Dutta, D. (2016). 'Ethnomedicinal Studies of Deori Tribes of Bihpuria Sub-Division, Lakhimpur District, Assam', in *IOSR Journal of Biotechnology and Biochemistry*, 2(1); pp 46-50.
12. Pathak, G. (2017): 'Tribal identity and societal formation: Reflection on Socio-economic paradigm of women among the Deori community in Assam' in *The Criterion: An international journal in English*, 8(1); pp 073-80.
13. Patil, P. S., & Desmukh, S. J. (2012). Community information services in public library: concept and need. *Aarhat multidisciplinary international education research journal*, 1(3), 143-152.

#### **About Authors**

**Mr. Mithun Sarkar**, Research Scholar, Dept. of Lib. & Info. Sci., University of Calcutta, Kolkata, West Bengal

Email: mithun.sarkar06@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-7945-9971>

**Dr. Arabinda Maity**, Professor, Dept. of Lib. & Info. Sci., University of Calcutta, Kolkata, West Bengal

Email: maityarabindacu@gmail.com

**Dr. Biplab Chakraborty**, Professor and Dean, Dept. of Lib. & Info. Sci., University of Calcutta, Kolkata, West Bengal

Email: beliscu@gmail.com