

**INFORMATION NEEDS OF CHILDREN:
AN EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY**

By

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*Dedicated to my beloved children
Kavitha , Kumeran ,
Harevarnan and Harikumar*

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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative empirical research, which explores the information needs of children aged ten to twelve in selected four regions in Peninsular Malaysia. This study assumed that children are frequently unaware of their information needs. While they are unaware of their information needs, significant adults in the lives of children minister to their information needs that perceived to be important. Data were gathered from open-ended interview questions from fifteen adults from the four regions who work with children in a variety of capacities. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The findings indicated that children in the four regions have numerous information needs. Physiological and safety related information was found to be the critical information needs of these children. Their information needs seems to fit well in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The findings also highlighted that current sources do not meet most of these children's information needs. Sex education, safety related information, emergency procedures, living skills, social awareness, and information on computers were the common unmet information needs of these children. These children are found to be information poor in general. Lack of communication and ineffectiveness of the information providers were perceived to be the main reason for these children not getting the information that they need. The findings also indicated that parents need to be well informed and trained first on the aspects of child caring and information environment of children. Other parties concerned with children were also urged to play an effective role to improve the present situation.