

The provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekwini region

By

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Date: December 2007

DECLARATION

I, Chandrawathie Naidoo, declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. Further, I declare that all sources of information used or quoted in this study have been acknowledged as complete references.

CHANDRAWATHIE NAIDOO



Signature

DATE: December 2007

As the candidate's supervisors we have/have not approved this thesis for submission.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Lomathi and Rambrij Ballasar, and my parents-in-law , Govindamma and Marimuthu Naidoo, who left behind legacies of history, religion and culture for their children and grand-children.

ABSTRACT

The reformed Hindu organisations play a major role in the provision of religious and cultural support within the local Hindu community. This study examines the role played by the reformed Hindu organisations in the provision of religious and cultural information within the greater EtheKwini region. The research methodology includes triangulation, where qualitative and quantitative research is employed. Interviews, historical research, observation as well as document and content analysis assists in the collation of information. This exploratory study seeks to determine the kinds of information formats and methods of dissemination that are used by the organisations. Religious and cultural information offered through other services such as the languages classes are discussed. The Indian languages used by the religious leaders are explored. The level of library services offered, the contents and authorship of the published material are investigated. Non-print media and problems associated with the use of the non-print media are discussed. Also discussed are interpersonal means of information dissemination and preservation, like the oral tradition of singing and delivering talks. Essential details of classification in ancient Indian libraries are included in the study since libraries have been a part of Hindu temples and universities from ancient times. Brief historical information regarding the arrival of the Indians in South Africa and the subsequent establishment of the Hindu religion within KwaZulu-Natal is provided. Reasons for the development and support given to the establishment of the reformed Hindu organisations are outlined. An analysis of the interviews conducted covering all the objectives of the study is also included. The collections held by the different libraries/library services are analysed. The significant role played by the reformed Hindu organisations in the preservation and dissemination of religious and cultural information presented in a variety of formats is discussed in the concluding remarks. The researcher has included recommendations that would benefit the participating organisations in their efforts as preservers and disseminators of religious and cultural information.

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GLOSSARY

The glossary below has been included as terminology used in the study falls outside the scope of library science. Many of the terms included are words associated with the Hindu religion and culture.

1. Aryan: People of India whose religion is based on the *Vedas*. It is a group of people “comprising the worshippers of the gods of the Brahmans. One belonging to, or descended from, the ancient people who spoke the parent Aryan language” (*Oxford*, 1989, Vol. 1, p.672).
2. Ashram: Parrinder (1971, p.30) sees an ashram as a dwelling place for ascetics or sages which has, in modern times, become “an open monastery or retreat-house for meditation, self-discipline and service, such as those founded by Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore or Shri Aurobindo Ghose”.
3. Bhajan: It is a song in praise of God, or “an Indian song of devotional love which is sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments, on traditional themes, and may be chanted in temples or in public gatherings” (Parrinder, 1971, p.44).
4. Brahmin: Common English misspelling for Brahmana, i.e. a Hindu priest whose duty it is to study and teach the Vedas and perform sacrifices and other ceremonies (Parrinder, 1971, p.51).
5. Dravidian: “Peoples and languages of southern India and northern Ceylon, (who are) different from the Aryans of northern India. The four great Dravidian languages are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam....” (Parrinder, 1971, p.82).
6. Guru: Smith (2003, p.170) defines a guru as “venerable teacher”, “as one who removes ignorance”. Parrinder goes further by describing the guru as “a spiritual instructor who has himself attained insight, and who initiates the student in the sacred and moral texts, and conducts the ceremonies of his investiture...” (1971, p.111). The lifestyle followed by the Guru is determined by the teachings of the founder of the organisation.

7. Kirtan: Also known as kirtana. It is a devotional song. It is an expression of devotional love in Indian worship. A soloist sings verses and the group the chorus. Music and dancing can accompany the song (Parrinder, 1971, p.154).
8. Language: is a "systematised and confirmed usage of sounds spoken and heard among a given people over a period of time" (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p. 716).
9. Sabha: An organisation or a Hindu religious body (Vedalankar & Somera, 1975, p.169).
10. Samaj: a "society or organisation" (Vedalankar & Somera, 1975, p.169).
11. Satsang: is "a congregation or fellowship of true believers" (Parrinder, 1971, p. 246). It is a "congregation, gathering held for a religious purpose" (Vedalankar & Somera, 1975, p.169).
12. Script: is a form of writing using a particular set of symbols (letters) to represent sounds and words.
13. Shaivites: Worshippers of the Hindu God Shiva. Followed mostly by South Indians (Parrinder, 1971, p.246).
14. Swami: "address of great reverence" (Vedalankar & Somera, 1975, p.169). The *Webster comprehensive dictionary* (1992, p. 1265) defines a swami as "a Hindu teacher, especially a religious teacher".
15. Temple: Can be construed as a place of worship; "cave, mountain, and shelter" or a palace, hut, and fortress". It is built according to guidelines in the Brhat Samhita, a religious text (Jones, 2005, pp. 9038-9040).

16. Translation: Is a “reproduction of a work in a language different from the original” (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p. 1334). In the case of this research a translation would refer to a reproduction of the Hindu religious text from an Indian language, like those listed above, to the English language.

17. Vaishnavites: Followers of the Hindu God Vishnu. Most followers are from the Northern parts of India (Parrinder, 1971, p.300).

18. Veda: The most ancient and sacred scriptures of the Hindus, and means divine knowledge. Claimed to be 10 000 years old but critical opinion dates the written scriptures between 1500 and 800 B.C (Parrinder, 1971, p. 298).

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Religious beliefs and cultural practices enable individuals to survive time and technological advancement. Religion and culture play a significant role in the lives of many individuals. Religion is said to be “a system of communal beliefs and practices...” (*World Religions*, 2003). *Merriam-Webster* (2007) defines religion as an “institutionalised system of attitudes, beliefs and practices”. Another definition states that religion is “a belief in supernatural power or powers that control human destiny” (*WorldNet*, 2006). Therefore religion can be seen as a communal system of beliefs and practices that accepts divine control over a person’s destiny.

Culture “includes language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, and works of art, rituals, and ceremonies, among other elements” (*World Religions*, 2003). Other definitions reflect similar ideas: “the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another” (*Random House unabridged dictionary*, 2006); “the attitudes and behaviour that are characteristic of a particular group or organisation” (*WorldNet*, 2006). Accordingly, culture can be seen to be the behaviour, art and art forms, belief, rituals, ceremonies, institutions and all aspects of life of a specific group of people.

Religions and “cultures have had a special place in society and have played a special role in the development of mankind. It is obvious that libraries play a positive role in social life and give impetus to the development [and sustenance] of culture” (Hua, 1996, p.533). Hua (1996, p.537) goes on to state that “libraries are the symbols of cultural development in a country, a region, or an historical period. Therefore, they become the centres of cultural development. A library is a centre of book collecting and preserving, a centre of documents and information, and a centre of document compiling and printing and an important institution for culture, science and education which shoulders special responsibilities” (Hua, 1996, p.537).

Libraries, bookshops, and printed material thus play an instrumental role in the development and continuance of religion and culture in this age of technological advancement. The provision and dissemination of information within religious organisations is, therefore, an

area of importance to the library and information services (LIS) sector. Therefore, the researcher has sought to document the role of reformed Hindu organisations in providing religious and cultural information.

Hinduism was first practised in South Africa with the arrival of the indentured labourers. The rituals that were practised varied among the Hindus as they came from different villages and regions, spoke different languages and dialects, and each group worshipped their own favourite deity (Bhana & Brain, 1990, p.27). The religion, its devotees and the leaders of the community had to adapt, and make many accommodations to keep the religion alive during the ensuing years.

The religion and its devotees are still very prominent in our “Rainbow Nation” that is South Africa today, over a hundred and forty-five years after the first indentured labourers arrived. The survival of the Hindu religion, its culture and social norms has been largely dependent on the reformed Hindu organisations, especially in the last four to five decades (Meer, 1969, p. 143).

This study, *The provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekwini region*, seeks to highlight the role played by the reformed organisations in providing devotees and interested individuals with the information necessary for their understanding and to practise the religion.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The Indian population in South Africa is complex. Many languages, religions, ideologies and political and social influences exist within the community. The Hindu religious divisions within the community are greatly affected by four linguistic-cultural contexts: Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Gujarati. Presently, there are also the influences of the Hindu reformed organisations which play an integral role in the practice of religion, the celebration of festivals and the promotion of culture within their congregations whose members do not necessarily identify with a particular language group (Meer, 1969, pp. 143-144). Just how much information is shared and how it is shared, by such reformed organisations is not known. Nor is there any record, which could be found by the researcher, regarding the kinds of

information that is disseminated. This study will, therefore, examine the provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekewini region. The kinds of information services offered, the print-based and non print-based information formats, interpersonal means of information sharing and the use of repackaged information are a few of the concerns covered by this study.

Whilst information provision is arguably an important aspect of these organisations, there appears to be no traceable evidence of the role that such organisations play in the provision of religious and cultural information. This study aims to fill that gap.

1.3. Research aim

Given the above problem the proposed study seeks to investigate the role played by the reformed Hindu organisations, their publications and other services offered by such organisations in the provision of religious and cultural information to Hindus, and interested individuals living in the greater Ethekewini region.

1.4. Objectives, research questions and sources of data for the study

The research objectives listed below and the related questions that follow provided the guidelines for the study. The research objectives revolved around the kinds of information services available, the various formats used to preserve and disseminate information, and use of interpersonal means for the preservation and dissemination of information.

1.4.1. Research Objectives:

- To discern the kind of information services offered.
- To identify and analyse print-based formats available (for example, newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets) to preserve and disseminate information in the community.
- To identify and analyse interpersonal means (that is, people) used to disseminate and preserve information.
- To identify and analyse the various electronic formats (for example, Internet, websites, and CDs) in providing information.

The above objectives lead to the following questions:

- What types of information services are offered?
- What structures/policies are there to guide these services?
- What *print-based publications* are available?
- What is their content?
- What languages are they written in?
- How often are they published?
- To what extent is the information repackaged?
- What are the *sources of information* and who are the authors?
- How is the information preserved and disseminated?
- Are there visiting lecturers, priests, authors, and other influential individuals (from both inside and outside South Africa) who play a role in the dissemination and preservation of information?
- How often are these visiting lecturers, priests, authors, and other influential individuals consulted for *information to be used in any local publication*?
- What are their areas of specialisation and what information and skills do they use and share?
- Which organisations are they affiliated to?
- Are the available electronic formats playing a role in the preservation and dissemination of information?
- What role do the various electronic formats play in preserving and disseminating information?
- What kinds of programmes and content are being offered through these formats?

1.5. Justification of the study

The researcher was unable to identify any studies similar in nature to the present study having been undertaken in South Africa. Various databases, electronic journals, printed journals and monographs were searched to no avail. Searches on the Internet were also futile. The nature of the searches and the numerous sources of information that were examined are discussed under the literature review.

The Hindu community forms an integral part of South African society and should be recognized as such. Moreover, Hindu celebrations and festivities are being sold as tourist attractions abroad and locally as a means of improving the economy. Examples of this would be the *Local Festivals* website (*Tourism-natal.net*, 1998) and *South Africa Discover our Drakensberg* website (*South Africa Discover our Drakensberg*, 2007). Thus, a greater understanding of how this community functions and survives is integral to improving this aspect of our economy.

The preservation and provision of historical, cultural, socio-economic, technological, scientific and other subjects has been the task of librarians. In post-democracy South Africa, librarians, as they have done in the past, have a role to play in this endeavour and need to be aware of all kinds of information that is available to be able to assist in the preservation of the history of our “Rainbow Nation”, including information specific to a particular religious group.

This study, as indicated above, will help in understanding the workings of the Hindu community. The rich culture and heritage of the Hindu community has survived over 150 years in a foreign country far from India, and has suffered political, cultural and social isolation from the country considered to be the motherland of Hinduism. We need to know how this was achieved and how the religion and culture of Hindus continues to thrive in South Africa today.

The Hindu community is a part of the greater South African community and the methods used to preserve the religion and culture could well be emulated by other minority groups or even in the larger context of preserving truly South African traditions and cultures. Such a study could well be of interest to government officials, academics, researchers and librarians who have concerns in the area.

The studies that have been done about Indians incorporated only minor aspects regarding the provision of religious and cultural information as a part of the research. Many researchers have already focussed their investigations on aspects of Hindu society and/or certain religious organisations. Examples of such studies are: Ariyan’s *The contributing role of the Natal Tamil Vedic Society to Hindu cultural expression* (1989) which focussed solely on a single

organisation that played a critical role in the lives of Tamil speaking Hindus; or Hiralal's investigation into the Gujarati speaking Hindus of Natal entitled *Gujarati social-cultural organisations: development and growth of the South African Gujarati Maha Parishad – with special reference to the Natal Gujarati Parishad* (1988). Two other studies were Naidoo's research on the the Arya Samaj called *The Influence of the Arya Samaj on Hinduism in South Africa* (1984) and Singh's *A study of the Divine Life Society with special reference to its socio-religious implications in South Africa* (1986). Both of the above mentioned organisations that were researched are considered, by the researcher, as being reformed Hindu organisations. However, this study will focus on how reformed Hindu organisations provide religious and cultural information.

In recent years, with the achievements of democracy and freedom of society, previously banned and sensitive literature and grey material on the freedom struggle are being incorporated into formal libraries, like the Archives of the African National Congress collections housed at the University of Fort Hare (*University of Fort Hare*, 2006) or the archive run by the University of the Western Cape: The UWC – Robben Island Mayibuye Archive (*South African National Cultural Heritage*, 2004). Likewise, the various cultures that are not European in nature are being accepted and shared by various sectors of the general community of the country. Perhaps the time is right for an investigation into a community that has made significant contributions to the freedom struggle, has added to the fabric of our country and a community that has survived so many years being cut off from the Motherland, which is India.

1.6. Research design and methodology

This study is descriptive as well as exploratory in nature. A descriptive research “describes and interprets the present” (Taylor, 2000, p.71). Taylor states further that the “primary purpose of descriptive studies is to analyse trends and current situations that are developing” (Taylor, 2000, p.71). Babbie (1998, p.90) lists three purposes for exploratory studies: “to satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding” of the topic under discussion; “to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study”; and finally “to develop methods to be employed in any subsequent study”. Exploratory studies are invaluable

in social scientific research whenever a researcher is “breaking new ground” and they “almost always yield new insights into a topic for research” (Babbie, 1998, p.90).

Whilst this study falls within the qualitative framework, it includes mainly quantitative measures. The investigation includes descriptions of the nature and methods employed to provide religious and cultural information. Descriptive research includes observation, and survey research, both of which reveal information about “situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p.134). While the chosen methods of data collection are described in detail in chapter four, they are briefly described below.

1.6.1. Data collection

The chief method of data collection was based on the survey interview and historical research. The interview revolved around the services and activities of the organisations and their role in providing religious and cultural information. The historical research was undertaken to outline the background of the arrival of the Indians in South Africa and the political and social influences that affected the lives of those who chose to make South Africa their home. Historical information regarding the birth of the reformed organisations was also researched.

Record and content analysis was undertaken to determine the content of monographs, magazines and other literature in the possession of the organisation. Observation with regards to housing of the library or archive, shelving, cataloguing and other library activities was done.

1.6.2. Sampling

The concept of what a sample is has to be examined to understand its use in any research. A sample is a “portion of the whole” (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p.1113). Therefore, sampling can be said to be “testing using a portion of the whole” (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p.1113). Sampling is essential as it is “impractical or impossible to consult all the people (that is, the population) in a specific category as indicated by the research project” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p.109).

A sampling unit is not necessarily a person but could be an event, city, organisation or institution (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981, pp.187-193). A purposive sample, occasionally referred to as a judgement sample, is the result of selection based on the researcher's knowledge of the population and the objectives of the study (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, p.184). The researcher would make the assumption that such a sample would be typical of all organisations/institutions of that kind (Powell, 1999, pp.67-69).

Purposive sampling often helps to isolate an individual or a group of individuals who have knowledge of privileged information of the organisation. These are people in positions of authority and power. They may be experts or may belong to the organisation for a long period of time. They will also have comprehensive knowledge of the workings of the institution or organisation that they represent (Gillham, 2000, p. 81).

Since only a certain sub-group of the Hindu community of the greater Ethekewini region fit the profile, only 19 individuals representing the reformed Hindu organisations were interviewed. Gray (2003, p. 40) refers to a sub-group that is being studied, as "a sub-culture in subordinate relation to the dominant parent culture". The actual population of the Indian community in South Africa is around one million. According to Statistics South Africa (2006) there are over 527 000 Hindus living in South Africa. The number of Hindu people living in the Ethekewini region is 344 150 (as given by Statistics South Africa via e-mail). This number will be larger still if one includes those Hindus who live in areas surrounding the Ethekewini region.

Busha & Harter (1980, pp.56-7) define population as "any set of persons or objects that possesses at least one common characteristic". For the purposes of this study the organisations being researched were classed as reformed (neo-Hindu) organisations by virtue of the fact that their practices are not out-dated, they offer a simpler approach to Hinduism, are not aligned to a specific language group and encourage personal illumination or development through practising a reformed version of Hinduism, as defined later in this chapter. Such organisations often take their teachings from gurus, swamis or religious leaders of note. The teachings focus on service to mankind and personal illumination.

The organisations that were chosen for this study were reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekewini region. All organisations that had more than two hundred and fifty regular

devotees, branches or cell groups, were older than five years old and fitted the profile of a reformed Hindu organisation as described above were included in the study. The reformed Hindu organisations chosen for this study were the only organisations that fitted the profile and were the only ones that the researcher was able to identify through her knowledge of the community, by reading community newspapers (such as *Post*, *Chatsworth Sun*, *Sunday Tribune Herald*), listening to the Indian Radio station, *Lotus FM*, and by asking friends and relatives who are deeply religious and who follow all religious activities carried out in the Hindu community, over a period of at least four years. Given the small size of the population, all the organisations identified were included in the survey.

Below the researcher has listed the organisations that were researched. It must be noted that these organisations met the criteria listed above. A detailed discussion on each reformed Hindu organisation is given in chapter 3, under 3.5.: “The reformed organisations”.

1. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha
2. Brahma Kumaris: World Spiritual University
3. Chinmaya Mission of South Africa
4. Divine Life Society
5. Gayathri Peedam of South Africa
6. Indian Academy of South Africa
7. ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)
8. Manav Dharam Spiritual Educational and Cultural Trust of South Africa
9. Radha Soami Sathsang
10. Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa
11. Saiva Sithantha Sungum
12. Sarva Dharma Ashram
13. Sathya Sai Movement of South Africa
14. Shree Bhagavata Vedanta Society

15. South African Hindu Maha Sabha
16. Swami Narayan Mandir
17. Vedanta Centre South Africa
18. Vedanta Institute of South Africa
19. Vedanta Mission

The South African Hindu Maha Sabha, although an umbrella body for all Hindus, has been included as it is the parent organisation of all Hindu organisations and the activities and example exhibited by the organisation should be emulated by reformed Hindu organisations as well as Sanatanist movements.

1.6.3. Geographical Location

The geographical region of eThekweni has been chosen for this study. This region was previously referred to as Durban. Areas that lie just outside the eThekweni border cannot be ignored or excluded from the study as Hindus often travel to neighbouring towns or other places to worship on special occasions.

On the eastern seaboard of the eThekweni region is the Indian Ocean. The northern border stretches just past the town of Tongaat and the southern border goes beyond Unkomaas, whilst the western border reaches Cato Ridge (eThekweni Municipality, 2003, p.2).

1.7. Limitations and delimitations of the study

According to Tomas, et al., (2005, p. 58) "limitations are possible shortcomings or influences that cannot be controlled by the investigator". Adams (2005) states that limitations are the reservations, qualifications and weaknesses that exist in any study. Therefore, limitations can be seen to be shortcomings, conditions, or influences that cannot be regulated by the researcher.

Delimitations refer to the "choices that a researcher makes to define a workable research problem" (Tomas, et al., 2005, p. 58). The example presented by the authors was that of the

selection of participants for the population sample or the geographical area covered by the researcher.

The research topic had to be narrowed down to avoid vastness and complexities. Individuals within the Hindu community follow a number of different religions. However, other religious groups, i.e. Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs and Parsees have their own structures to serve their religious needs. Research into information provision by those religious groups could possibly be undertaken in the future by other researchers.

The topic was something the researcher was familiar with: the Hindu community. Further to this the researcher chose to study the role of reformed Hindu organisations, which have multi-lingual congregations, in the provision of information. A study into any of the linguistic groups or their smaller sub-divisions would have made the topic too sectarian and it would have then slanted towards a particular group, sub-community, sect or religious denomination.

This study has been undertaken within a specified geographical area that has a high concentration of Indians, and in particular, Hindus in South Africa. This in itself may be considered to be a delimitation. It has to be noted that many of the key organisations have their offices and executive members from within the greater Ethekewini region.

This study does not focus on the general economic or educational development of the Hindu community, but rather on the preservation and the provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations.

1.8. Key concepts used in the study

The key concepts used in the research and their meanings as this researcher understands them are explained below.

1.8.1. Culture: Mckenna (2004) suggests that culture is “of the people”, “belonging to the common mass of humanity” or to a particular sub-group of individuals who have common beliefs, practices, customs, and values. It includes “the training, improvement and refinement of mind, morals, or taste” (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p.314).

Mckenna (2004) adds further that artefacts and institutions add value to the culture “of a particular social group”. One can therefore assume that culture refers to the beliefs, practices, customs, and values of a particular group of individuals whose teachings and way of life may be revealed through art or institutions which ensures the survival of the group.

1.8.2. Hinduism: Parrinder (1971, p.122) explains Hinduism as “the name, used by Europeans, for the religion of the majority of the inhabitants of the Indian sub-continent”. “Hindus,” he states, “call their religion Sanatana Dharma – eternal truth or right. Doctrines are exceedingly diverse. It has been said that a Hindu is one who accepts the *Veda* as religious scriptures...”. Therefore, many Hindus refer to themselves as Sanatanist, i.e. “those who follow the eternal dharma” (Lipner, 1994, p.12).

Hinduism is believed to be more than 5000 years old. The word *Hindu* comes from the Persian name for the river Indus. Hinduism is a “family” of religions. The religion accepts a “diverse range of beliefs and practices which aim to deliver salvation (*moksha*) to its devotees” (*Religion and Ethics*, 2006).

According to Smith (2003, p.34.). Hinduism may be perceived to be “polytheistic, monotheistic, and monistic”. The principal deities, Vishnu, Shiva and Devi, have many forms and may be worshipped in any of these forms. Devotees often choose a single form of the principal deities and worship that form as supreme.

The traditional form of the religion had a system of social order which placed the priests (*Brahmins*) at the top. The revered texts are the four Vedas and the *Upanishads*. Hindus are traditionally vegetarian, seek salvation, accept ultimate divine reality and often worship any one of the many forms/ incarnations of God. One of the foremost beliefs is that of karma, that is, good deeds result in good consequences and bad actions result in bad consequences and reincarnation.

1.8.3. Information: Can be seen as “knowledge” (Sykes, 1976, p.554), or as *Webster comprehensive dictionary* (1992, p.650) defines it: “any distinct signal element forming part of a message or communication, especially one assembled and made available for use by

automatic machines, as a digital computer". The *American Heritage Dictionary* (2006) defines information as "knowledge derived from study, experience, instruction or communication". Behrens (1988, p.4) describes information as being recorded knowledge. At present a number of formats exist that enable the smooth transference of information. Such formats include the printed formats, electronic formats, as well as the oral transference of information.

1.8.4. Organisation: "A number of individuals systematically united for some end or work" (*Webster comprehensive dictionary*, 1992, p.890). In the case of this study, an organisation will be deemed to be a group of individuals united in their effort to promote and sustain reformed Hinduism through a fully constituted body with rules and descriptions of committee members.

1.8.5. Provision: *Webster comprehensive dictionary* (1992, p.1016) defines provision as "measures taken or means made ready in advance; the act of taking such measures". *Merriam-Webster* (2007) defines provision as the "activity of providing or supplying something" necessary. For the purposes of this study provision is the activity of providing religious and cultural information in a variety of formats to devotees and interested individuals.

1.8.6. Reformed Hindu organisation: Sooklal (1988, p.17-18) believes that such organisations have nothing to do with Hindu revival but rather confirm the ancient truths/teachings of Hinduism and separate the essentials from the non-essentials of the religion. However, the researcher sees such organisations as playing a critical role in the revival and re-confirmation of Hinduism, especially in South Africa. Both points of view are acceptable.

A significant aspect of the reformed Hindu organisations is the ability not to focus on unnecessary customs and out-dated practices as a part of the revitalised teachings. In the Motherland, India, such movements had a great impact on religious nationalism (Sooklal, 1988, pp.18-20) but here in South Africa, such organisations spread essential teachings of Hinduism among Hindus and offer a more modern approach to the religion than that which was brought here by the original immigrants. Distance, political and social isolation from

India and a growing westernised younger generation needed a more practical and acceptable form of Hinduism and the reformed Hindu organisations provided this.

The phrase “New Hindu Movement” or Neo-Hinduism is used to differentiate a new form of Hinduism where social order (caste) is excluded, and the multiple sects are brought together to worship a monolithic form (a single /particular aspect), and where orthodox practices are ignored. Naidoo (1984, p. 64) states that “neo-Hinduism now marks a considerable divergence from some age old practices that have come to be recognised as unacceptable malpractices that have no religious meaning”. Such movements find justification by offering a rational religion, personal illumination through the Hindu religion and a link to ancient Indian civilisation. Language barriers do not exist, and individuals of all castes, creeds and social standing are accepted equally.

Whilst the researcher prefers to use the term Reformed Hinduism, many academics use the term neo-Hinduism. The followers of reformed Hinduism “consider the written Vedas as the most sacred object and the veneration of the five elements is favoured: earth, water, fire, sun and wind” (*Religion and Ethics*, 2006). Neo-Hindus are “the followers of individual gurus and belong to movements such as the Divine life, Sai Baba, and Hare Krishna...” (*Religion and Ethics*, 2006). The common aspects of both groups of Hindus are the rejection of non-essential rituals and the caste system, as well as the simplification of the religion.

There are representatives of reformed Hindu organisations who may take exception to the use of the term “reformed Hindu organisation” as they see them selves as practioners and propagators of true Vedantism. Whatever the objections may be, the researcher has chosen the term “reformed Hindu organisation” to describe the organisations that are an integral part of the study.

1.9. Outline of the study

The nature of this study involved a number of research methodologies at different stages of the investigation. The literature review is covered in chapter two, where the various formats of information that were searched are discussed.

Chapter three revolves around the historical information relating to the arrival of the Indians in South Africa and the establishment of Hindu temples and ashrams. It also outlines the need for reformed Hindu movements in South Africa. This chapter is seen to be essential in placing the study within the unique South African context.

The methodology employed in this study is discussed in chapter four. All the relevant aspects of quantitative and qualitative methodologies are discussed: historical research, research survey, observation and analysis of collections and publications of the organisation.

Analysis of the interviews by question number is dealt with in chapter five. The evaluation of data collected during the interview is handled in chapter six. In chapter seven an analysis of information available through various formats has been undertaken. The concluding chapter, chapter eight, contains concluding remarks and recommendations. This is followed by the references and appendix.

1.10. Conclusion

The many cultures and religions that make up South Africa, must be preserved, studied and understood. The growing need for religious and cultural preservation in the South African context cannot be truly measured. Whilst the widely practised religions such as Christianity and Islam have had investigations and studies undertaken into various aspects of the religions, other less well-known religions need further investigation. Similarly, Hinduism may be considered to be practised by a small group of people and therefore not as well understood as more popular religions.

The various languages spoken by Hindus, the many religious texts, and the hundreds of saints, gurus and swamis and their teachings add to the complexity of Hinduism. A further difficulty is the division between the Sanathan Movements and the reformed Hindu organisations.

However, the current status of modern Hindu organisations will have an influence on the preservation of the Hindu religion and culture as well as in the dissemination of relevant information. A study such as this could only add to existing knowledge about the provision

of religious and cultural information within the Hindu context, perhaps even internationally. In the context of LIS, the findings of this study could be useful in terms of the development of the public library services and other information centres in South Africa in that ideas and findings could be adapted to suit the needs of various libraries that provide religious information to individuals belonging to different religious groups.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Mouton (2001, p. 38) states that the aim of the literature review is to “highlight previous investigations pertinent to the research topic” and this serves to indicate how other researchers have dealt with similar problems in their research. Previous studies also point to inconsistencies and gaps in the field of study. To ascertain the relevance of one’s research within the subject field, one has to search through a variety of sources, such as “textbooks, reports, journals, newspapers, thesis, dissertations, conference papers, conference proceedings” (Mouton, 2001, pp. 34-39), electronic databases, the Internet and, of course, discuss the topic with people working in the field.

Leedy & Ormrod (2005, pp. 64-65) state that amongst other things, a literature review can help the researcher to “tackle” his/her research problem better. Related studies within the chosen field can assist the researcher to avoid many problems and can also help to accelerate the actual research. However, the researcher found little information related to this topic: *The provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekwini region*. This topic relates to investigations in the fields of library science, including community libraries and services, Hinduism, cross-field studies and, perhaps, other subjects.

Much research on Hinduism, as practised in South Africa, has been undertaken. The various celebrations and religious practices have become the focus of academics within the Hindu community. However, this study is not about Hinduism nor is it about the various practices and teachings favoured by local Hindus, and as such very little religious information has been included in this study.

Although there are a few possible ways of organising the literature review, the researcher has chosen to present the information according to themes relevant to the topic. Databases and other electronic sources were searched; literature on information and library services was read extensively; print-based formats relating to the Hindu religion were also investigated; the oral

tradition of Hinduism was pursued; an extensive survey of literature in cross-field studies was undertaken; religious libraries of Christians, Jews and Moslems were investigated; and the status of Hindu religious libraries was questioned.

This chapter covers databases and other electronic sources available through academic institutions. Literature relating to community libraries/services was searched in an effort to locate any library service that may have offered a special program/project to Hindus living within the service area of that library. Literature in the field of Hinduism was researched to ascertain whether any Hindu scholar may have covered aspects of this study in a previous investigation. The oral tradition, the researcher knows from her personal experiences, is favoured as a means of information transference. Therefore, literature relating to interpersonal means of dissemination and preservation was examined. Aspects of Hinduism are often investigated in different subjects. This led to a survey of literature in cross-fields and other studies. Christian, Jewish and Muslim library development programmes were examined in an effort to give a brief description of how other religious groups have handled the development of information provision within their communities. Finally, the development of Hindu libraries was investigated.

2.2. Databases and other electronic sources

Information relevant to this study was extremely difficult to locate on the various databases. The Sabinet Online database had no matches for the following terms: Neo-Hindu movements/organisations; Aryan; reformed Hindu organisations; neo-Vedic organisations; Hindu movements and other similar terms. Although sixty matches were found for the term "Hindu", all the "hits" dealt with various aspects of Hindus and Hinduism. There were no titles that were relevant for this research.

Other terms that were used include: Hindutva, Aryanism, Hindu movements/organisations, Indian religions, Hindu culture, Vedantism, Hindu information/cultural/religious/social needs, Hindu heritage, Hindu community and South African Hindu groups.

In terms of the information and library studies field terms used included: minority groups, ethnic groups, immigrant needs, immigrant communities, multicultural communities,

multicultural libraries, cultural preservation and cultural diversity. These key words produced literature on a variety of subjects that were not relevant to this research. The following key words did produce “hits”: Hindu diasporas and immigrant Hindu communities.

Other databases that were searched with no “hits” were: LISA; ISAP; SA Publications; IBSS; ICTD; ERIC; NEXUS; ATLA (religious data); BDLS (British Library for Development Studies); NDLTD; UCTD; Current and completed research; SA Media; SA ePublications; SA Catalogue and EBSCO. The websites of IASL; ALA; IFLA; and UNESCO were also searched.

Journals that were searched on-line included: *Information for Social Change*; *Information Research*; *Intermedia*; *E-JASL*; *Ethnic and Racial Studies*; *Libraries and Culture*; *Library and Information Science Research*; *Innovation*; *Cape Librarian*; *Collection Management*; *Journal of Academic Librarianship*; and *The International Information and Library Review*. Many other journals for humanities, social science, political studies, ethnic studies, and economics were also searched via the electronic databases.

In terms of the World Wide Web, the Asean News Network has a wealth of information about Hinduism, Hindu philosophy and prayer and everything one wishes to know about Sanatana Dharma, but nothing on reformed or neo-Hinduism. Even a search through *Vidyanidhi – Digital Library* and *E-Scholarship Portal: Indian Theses Database* did not produce any results.

The *ScienceDirect* database which has various electronic journals was also searched. Various articles in *The International Information and Library Review*, available through *ScienceDirect*, about aspects of librarianship in Africa, Asia, Sri Lanka and even India were located but none on information provision by reformed Hindu organisations. The *Emerald* database yielded articles on and about the Indian LIS sector but again nothing on reformed Hindu organisations and their role in the provision of religious and cultural information. Some of the journals accessed through this database were: *Library Hi Tech News*; *Interlending and Document Supply*; *Library Management*; *Librarian Career Development*; *The Electronic Library*; *Library Review*; *Program: Electronic Library and Information Systems*; *International Journal of Social Economics*; *Strategy & Leadership*.

The *ProQuest* database contained many references to books and articles on and about Hindus, Hinduism, the Hindu Diaspora, and Hindus as ethnic and minority groups but none of the references were about reformed Hinduism. Many journal articles on libraries and librarianship were listed on the database, for example, "A discourse on promotion of reading habits in India" by Kanade and Chudamani which appeared in *The International Information & Library Review*, 2006, Vol. 38, Issue 3.

Another database that was searched was *Ingenta Connect*, together with *Inflibnet Chat* and the *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professions* but they contained no information that the researcher found useful. *Biblioline* and *ICAAP* were also searched.

Yet other databases searched were: *University of Texas Press*, *Florida State University*, *Gigablast*, *Motilal Banarsidass* (on-line Indian bookstore), *Infolibrarian*, *American Library Directory*, *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies*, *Indology*, *The Haworth Press Inc.*, and *Meriam Library Research Station*. These databases did offer information on the Hindu religion and aspects of Hinduism but lacked information on Hindu libraries.

Indian authorities and researchers have combined their energies and knowledge to participate in the Universal Digital Library (UDL). The aim of the UDL is to "store in digital form all knowledge ever produced by the human race and to make this content available free of charge to be browsed and searched by anyone, anywhere and at any time" (Balakrishnan, et al., 2005). The Indian effort of the Universal Digital Library is known as Digital Library of India. Upon completion it would be a useful database for Ayur Vedic medicine, palm leaf manuscripts and other aspects of Indian Life. The portal is slowly becoming "the gateway to Indian science, arts, culture, music, movies and much more" (Balakrishnan, 2005, p. 1204). A number of Indian languages will be accommodated on the database and, possibly with transliterations for researchers who are not familiar with the languages. Many traditions and localised information will become available for Indians all over the world. Parts of this digital library are up and running.

But alongside such critical developments such as those being undertaken in India, there are smaller less significant improvements taking place in temples outside of India. And although less significant than developments inside India, these developments are important for the

survival of the Hindu communities that are serviced by these temples. Many temples that are funded by NRIs (Non resident Indians) and immigrant communities outside of India have their own web sites, electronic magazines and temples activities that support these immigrant communities. An example of this would be The Bharatiya Temple of Metropolitan Detroit (Bharatiya Temple, 2007). The library, which is a part of the temple, offers “over 450 videos, 1300 books, 60 children’s books, 350 DVDs, 200 audio cassettes and 100 audio CDs in several regional languages” (Bharatiya Temple, 2007). The library offers many other services and facilities.

Similarly, the Hindu Temple and Cultural Centre of Kansas City hosts a website that offers information on all temples in North America. This non-profit organisation also offers links to portals hosted and established in India (Hindu Temple and Cultural Centre of Kansas City, 2007). The Sri Meenakshi Devasthanam of Pearland, Texas also has a website which offers a number of links (Sri Meenakshi Devasthanam, 2007). While such sites and links are lacking in a South African scenario, Hindus living in Australia, Malayasia, Singapore, England and Canada benefit from similar portals of information.

Another venture from the West is the program of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh which hosts a mini directory of Hindu temples, addresses and contact details on their website (Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, 2007). From this site the researcher was able to determine that a number of American Hindu temples have on-line magazines, for subscribers, as well as on-line archives of past publications. These magazines contain information relating to temple events, fund-raising efforts, testimonies of devotees, stories from religious scriptures and significance of religious celebrations and auspicious days. Examples of such sites are the Sri Shirdi Baba Temple, Pittsburgh (Sri Shirdi Baba Temple, 2004) and Sri Venkateswara Temple, Pittsburgh (Sri Venkateswara Temple, 2005). The previously mentioned temples are examples of the Hindu organisations, both Sanatanist as well as reformed Hindu movements, that are establishing libraries within their complexes as can be seen from the increasing number of websites for such organisations.

2.3. Kinds of Information Services: Literature in the field of community libraries/services

Immigrant Hindus have been known to settle in different parts of the world and the researcher was of the opinion that perhaps some literature, relevant to this study, would be available. Librarians who work in community libraries have to be aware of the needs of the community that they serve. This would, therefore, mean that at some stage requests for religious information from minority or ethnic individuals, or material on and about various religious faiths, would have passed their desks.

Central to the idea of community libraries and community information services is the provision of library services to a demographically and ethnically changing society (Roach and Morrison, 1998, p. 14). Library services have to keep up with technological advancements, racial and religious changes within the communities they serve and have to cope with other LIS issues such as racial equity amongst employees, retraining of staff and shrinking budgets. Many investigations into community library services have been undertaken, several of which are outlined below.

Roach and Morrison (1998), in *Public libraries, ethnic diversity and citizenship* was the first major British study to explore the responses of the public library services to the growing ethnic diversity. The study included four case studies of libraries that functioned under local authorities. The researchers investigated ethnically diverse communities and the racial equalities in matters pertaining to public library users, monitoring of services, management, organisational changes, employees, contracting suppliers and other issues that related to LIS.

Black and Muddiman (1997) handled issues like the creation of community libraries and the librarianship thereof in their book *Understanding community librarianship: the public library in post-modern Britain*. In their own words the book was "... mostly critical of the origins, rise, flourishing [in places and declining in others] of community libraries" (Black & Muddiman, 1997, p.1). They also studied problems associated with community librarianship. There was no information, however, to link this study to the present one undertaken by the researcher.

The many facets of public librarianship and the marketing of such libraries was the discussion theme in *The responsive public library: how to develop and market a winning collection* (2002) by Baker and Wallace. The book emphasised marketing, marketing policies and practices, and included promotional styles.

Libraries are the centre of cultural change for immigrants seeking a place in a new world, but libraries have to change to accommodate new multicultural users. These and other related aspects of librarianship were investigated by Greenhalgh, Worpole, and Landry (1995) in *Libraries in a world of cultural change*.

Multicultural librarianship: an international handbook (1992) by Zielinska and Kirkwood discussed issues surrounding multicultural populations, their needs, ethnic identity and their relationships to the old home country and how it affected libraries and librarianship.

“Ethnic diversity in library and information science” (2000), is the title of an entire volume of *Library Trends*, Vol. 49, No. 1 which revolves around issues surrounding the provision of library services to multicultural societies. All contributors are well-known librarians and offer practical advice and information in their analysis of the communities they serve.

Hanna (1978) focused her research on outreach programmes of city, small town or suburban libraries outside New York State in her book *People make it happen: the possibilities of outreach in every phase of public library services*. Spanish, Puerto Rican, Cuban and Mexican (Hispanic) immigrant users and problems they experienced were highlighted. Socio-economic problems and the influence of religious organisations, that is, churches, were discussed. Even the activities of the chamber of commerce and other community organisations were investigated.

A similar study called *The whole library movement: changing practice in multicultural librarianship* (Alexander & Knight, 1992) looked at multicultural services in the UK. Specific aspects of the study included: community librarianship, service management, museums services, creation of special posts for employees, and marketing. The authors looked at African and Caribbean, Turkish, Asian and other minority groups in Britain. Of special interest was the article “Ethnic minority interest material provision for Asian and Irish

Communities” by Pal Prashar, where he wrote about the different sub-groups within the Asian community and finding material that supported the idea of Asian inferiority. Other aspects of librarianship were also discussed in the book.

Another title that covered a familiar ground is *Cultural diversity and libraries: today and tomorrow* by Datta & Simsova (1989). Cultural diversities, demographic needs, and problems related to ethnic minorities were covered. National and local British library policies were included in the book.

Clough and Quarmby’s *A public library service for ethnic minorities in Great Britain* (1978) offered statistical, historical and social information about minority groups. The book was based on surveys undertaken on ethnic groups. A part of the discussion was about the Indian community. Solutions for catering to the needs of minority groups were offered by the authors.

The role of the library in personal development, community empowerment, creativity and well-being was addressed in *Social inclusion: where do libraries stand?* (Sugg, 1999). Also included was the role of the library in helping children learn, the provision of ICT, and social inclusion. *The changing culture of libraries* (Feinberg, 2001) was a series of articles written by authors who had experience in a wide range of library communities and various projects.

Outreach services in Academic and Special libraries (Kelsey & Kelsey, 2003) showcases a number of programmes offered in libraries situated in different locations, for example, farming communities. Kelsey and Kelsey included practical advice and ideas and techniques for the extension services of libraries and the inclusion of patrons who would otherwise not have had their information needs met.

Cultural studies, library history and aspects of librarianship were the core themes of *Libraries as agencies of culture* (Augst & Wiegand, 2003). Editors Augst and Wiegand have brought together a series of essays written by people knowledgeable in their special fields within the broader subject of library science.

Harvey and Mouridou's (1999) *Popular religious libraries in North America* did not cover any Hindu libraries. The religiously affiliated libraries found in churches, synagogues and mosques were under discussion in this book. The statistical information and other data were indexed. The researcher found no mention of any Hindu temple libraries or for that matter, no mention of libraries attached to reformed Hindu organisations. However, the principles of establishing and managing a religious library would be of interest to those who wish to establish a library and offer library services to devotees of reformed Hindu organisations.

Just like western writers who have written profusely about libraries and librarianship, many eastern writers too, have written about the libraries and librarianship in their countries. One such work, *Libraries and librarianship in India* by Patel and Kumar (2001), has been written with scholars and academics in mind. It covered ten aspects of librarianship: history; national libraries; academic libraries; public libraries; school libraries; special libraries; bibliographic control and services; professional organisations; library education and library automation. The monograph was comprehensive and detailed on most aspects but lacked information concerning culture-based applications and could have included aspects on Indian rural and illiterate needs.

Other librarians have written about different aspects of librarianship as practised in India. An example is Chandrashekara's (2006) "E-resources and services in engineering college libraries – a case study".

Difficulties such as education and literacy, poverty, underdevelopment, technological change, methods of communication and the lack of provision of services in developing countries on the African continent are discussed by Benge (1979) in his book *Cultural crisis and libraries in the third world*. He provided an in-depth description of the book trade, and included information about writing, writers, publishing, distribution and sales of books in new democracies. Other issues dealt with included: the role of information on traditional and transitional societies, bureaucracy, and LIS systems and communities.

Zaaiman, Roux and Rykheer (1988) in *The use of libraries for the development of South Africa: Final report for the South African Institute for Libraries and Information Science*, investigated varied aspects of librarianship in South Africa in conjunction with race groups,

social and business development, science and industrial development as well as agricultural and political changes. The section on the Indian community focused on the nature of the community and highlighted the need for more libraries, qualified librarians and the developments and improvements needed for libraries that were already in existence.

Many authors have investigated various aspects of providing library services to multicultural communities. Problems, challenges and technological changes have been the focus of different studies within the field of community libraries/services. Changes in demographics affect the provision of information, in that librarians would have a larger diversity of religious and cultural groups to cater for, and this includes the Hindu community where such communities exist.

2.4. Print-based formats: Literature in the field of Hinduism

There is much information about the Hindu religion in the form of monographs and academic papers. One of the more significant studies related to this research was done by Diesel and Maxwell. Diesel and Maxwell (1993) in their book *Hinduism in Natal: a brief guide* had explored Hinduism as practised in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The study included aspects of Sanathanist practices, reformed Hindu movements, festivals, scriptures and religious writings and Hindu terms and symbols. This study serves as a useful tool for understanding Hinduism and the aspects of life as experienced by Hindus.

Renou (1972) was the editor of a book called *Hinduism*. His book included information about great writers, poets, philosophers, and song writers. *Hindu religion, customs and manners* by Thomas (1960) and *The religion of the Hindus* edited by Morgan (1953) gave descriptions of religion, science, language, festivals and explanations about religious texts.

Pandey (1976) gave an in-depth description of Hindu samskaras in his book *Hindu samskaras: socio-religious study of the Hindu Sacraments*. He traced Hindu samskaras from their origin through their historical evolution to present day. Another South African study: *The worship of Hanuman amongst Hindus in Durban* by S.B. Singh (1998) made references to Hindu religious texts, and festivals and included the history of Indian indentured labourers.

Chengiah Ragaven's research into *The philosophy of God consciousness in the life of Ramakrishna Paramahansa* (1999) explained the concept of God consciousness in Hinduism. The writer revealed the life of Ramakrishna, his social experiences and his explorations into religion. Other studies such as Singh's (1992): *Kali pooja as a paradigm of Hindu ritual worship* investigated specific aspects of Hinduism and the practices observed and undertaken by Hindus.

Many studies regarding the reformed movements have been conducted. These studies have examined the historical and religious importance of different movements that operate within the community. However, they have not investigated the movements from an information provision perspective. Some of these studies are: Le Roux's (1965) *The Ramakrishna Movement in South Africa – a socio-religious study*; and Naidoo's (1984) *The Influence of the Arya Samaj on Hinduism in South Africa*; Sooklal's (1988) *The Ramakrishna Movement with special emphasis on the South African context since 1965*; and Singh's (1986) *A study of the Divine Life Society with special reference to its socio-religious implications in South Africa*.

Other studies, like that of Ariyan's (1989) *The contributing role of the Natal Tamil Vedic Society to Hindu cultural expression* focused on the parent organisations that represent a particular language group and the activities of that organisation. This study included useful historical and political facts, and included information on other linguistic groups. Pundit Vedalankar's account of the development of the Arya Samaj movement made for interesting reading. The book: *Religious awakening in South Africa: history of the Arya Samaj Movement in South Africa* presented much detail on the early history of Hindus in South Africa. Religious leaders who visited South Africa, their activities and their influence were discussed.

In their book *Arya Samaj and Indians Abroad* (1975), Vedalankar & Somera outline the history and the conception of the Arya Samaj. The book explored the influence of Vedic culture and religion in ancient times, the emigration of Indians to foreign lands (outside of India), the conditions under which they lived, and the problems they experienced. The study included the propagation of the Hindu religion through the Arya Samaj and its branches in South Africa, East Africa, Mauritius, Fiji and other countries to which Indians were taken as indentured labourers. An interesting feature of the text was the section on ancient Indian

exploration and ancient ideals, achievements and ties with countries such as Iran and Afghanistan.

Other studies such as those by Nowbath, Chotai and Lalla (1960), Nambi (1985), Palmer (1957), Stein (1947), and Naidoo (1986) focused on the history of the Indians in South Africa. Reasons for their arrival, their difficulties and their survival were discussed in the above studies. Accounts of Indians, their arrival in South Africa, their contribution to South African history and the impact of politics on their lives in historical texts, biographies and educational textbooks were included in the books.

Many journals publish articles about aspects of Hinduism or about Hindu culture. Reuter's (2001) article "Great Expectations: Hindu revival movements in Java" explored the Hindu revivalism in Java, which was originally a Hindu state. The paper reflected on the historical, political, cultural and social conditions of Hindus. No mention of reformed or neo-Vedanta movements was made.

Another interesting read on Hinduism was (Rinehart, 2004) *Contemporary Hinduism: ritual, culture and practice*. The authors have covered virtually all aspects of Hinduism: history, texts, devotion, ritual calendar, ethics, thought, caste system, and many other topics related to Hinduism. It makes a good read for those interested in the religion.

Vedanta for the West: The Ramakrishna Movement in the United States (Jackson, 1994) was all about the efforts of the Ramakrishna Movement in promoting the Hindu renaissance. Jackson explored the role of the Ramakrishna Movement in the United States. However, the book did not examine the provision of religious and cultural information by the movement.

Whilst many journal articles relating to Muslim, Pakistani and Islamic library issues were found, the only article the researcher found relating to Hindu Library studies was one by Lisa Klopfer (2004) entitled "Commercial libraries in an Indian city: an Ethnographic Sketch", which focused on commercial, street-corner libraries in Pune, Maharashtra (India). The "researcher explored the way these libraries functioned, and the values placed on reading by Pune's middle class library users" (Klopfer, 2004, p. 104).

Reading and library services have been a part of Hindu life for a very long time. It is critical that Hindu institutions, especially the reformed Hindu organisations, remember that “the concept of free public library service in India goes back to ancient times” (Nair, 1991, p. 68) when kings or temples had their collections of literature in a variety of ancient manuscripts. Researchers, students and religious initiates would use these collections to enhance their education (Nair, 1991, p. 68). Therefore, the concept of having libraries attached to temples is neither strange nor new to Hinduism.

There are literally thousands of books about Hinduism and Hindu practices to be read. The vast expanse of Hindu religious literature requires its own in-depth study. Research articles, media reports and Internet sites are far too numerous to be listed or be made a part of this study. Bring together the printed formats as well as the electronic formats containing religious and cultural information, available to Hindus and one ends up with more reading than any single individual could undertake in a lifetime.

2.5. Interpersonal means of information dissemination and preservation

Hinduism is transferred from one generation to the next by the written word. However, there is an older much used method of communication that is still used today: the use of individuals who have knowledge of the religious scriptures and are familiar with the art of verbal transmission of religious scriptures and commentaries (Trehan, 1975, p. 4). The interpersonal means of information dissemination and preservation plays a pivotal role within the reformed Hindu organisations as an accepted means of information transference, like the talks given by religious leaders to devotees during the satsangs.

Hinduism, like many other religions and cultures, has depended largely on the oral tradition for the continuation of the religion and culture. According to Canonici (1996, p.2) oral communication depends on the speaker’s presence, gestures and body language. He goes further to state that oral tradition is passed on from one generation to the next and therefore represents the collective memory of a community.

Where Hinduism is concerned this collective memory is based on “shruti” (that which is heard). The great seers and sages of ancient India represented the collective memory of the

Vedic (Hindu) religion. The original Vedic hymns which were revealed to the sages through meditation, were “committed ... to human memory” (Trehan, 1975, p. 5) and passed down from generation to generation. Students were taught by “hearing and memorising” (Trehan, 1975, p. 5) the hymns. Each student was required to learn the hymns in eleven different ways, including backwards. The chanting of the mantras was done according to precise rules of grammar, pitch, intonation and rhythm (*Hinduism Dictionary*, 2007). Once the student had sufficient knowledge and training, they were then sent out to teach others through the oral tradition. Individuals with knowledge of the Ancient Vedic scriptures were compared to travelling libraries and were responsible for disseminating the religious texts and their explanations to others who wished to learn or to listen (Trehan, 1975, p. 5).

Since language was a medium of communication, a tool for the “preservation of sacred texts” and had the power “to invoke the intervention of the gods” (Schiffman, 2000), it had to be learned in the proper way and by an individual who aspired to be the preserver of the Sanskrit language and of the Vedic text as well as the disseminator of information. Such students “gave to the people religious and ethical instruction in the form of stories retold from the great epics” (Devy, 1998). Even today every village has an elder who tells stories and keeps the oral tradition alive. Thus, when writing had gained popularity, it “became common practice to listen to a learned man read out the epic to devoted groups” rather than for individuals to read the epics themselves (Devy, 1998). Such story tellers have dwindled in number in South Africa. Few elders have learned the craft of story telling and even less practice the art. In recent years the researcher has not seen story tellers or elders tell stories at functions or religious ceremonies held privately or by reformed Hindu organisations. The researcher could not trace names of individuals who were story tellers.

An aspect of oral tradition is the oral literature which could be communicated through dramatic performances (Canonici, 1996, pp.2-7). The Indian oral tradition, too, offers drama as a medium for the transference of knowledge. The ancient Gurukul system of education in India taught sixty four subjects which included dance, drama, music and sport. Actors had to be familiar with the religious texts before performing live in front of an audience. Strict rules of conduct, dress, make-up, facial expression and body movements had to be adhered to (Ramachandra & Patil, 2007).

Dramatic performances in the Hindu religion have their origin in the Vedas. The earliest plays were performed for religious purposes during religious celebrations and such performances were also a way of transferring religious texts to the masses (Gupta, 1991, pp. 1-19). Performances were based on religious texts such as the Mahābhārata and the Ramayana. Song and dance were also included in the dramas (called *lilas* in Hindi). The oral tradition added strength and vitality to the religious, cultural and social lives of the community. Another aspect of the oral tradition, the folksongs, reflects and supports rites, beliefs and practices of the community (Mande, 1995, pp. 147-148).

Such dramatic performances and songs, as mentioned above, have been a part of the local Hindu tradition since their arrival in South Africa. According to Zaloumis (1995, p. 46) Saturday and Sunday evenings were the only free time that the labourers had to perform their dramas. Stories from religious texts like the Mahābhārata and the Ramayana were acted out by singers, dancers and actors (Zaloumis, 1995, pp. 47-48). Religious dramas were often performed near temples or at the temple grounds, especially during auspicious celebrations. Scriptural lessons were offered to the common man through this medium. Satire, folktales and drama for social entertainment were also acted out (Zaloumis, 1995, pp. 49-51).

The local South African Hindus favoured Sanskrit drama because it “offered a rich pageant of mime, dance, music and lyrical texts set in the courts of kings and aristocrats” (Agarwal, 2004). At this juncture it has to be remembered that many of the indentured labourers were illiterate and drama was one of the mediums through which religious messages could be shared and religious texts could be passed on. The excitement of live presentations of dramatic performances was also exhibited during the tours of the various religious leaders who visited South Africa in the early years of the indentured labourers (Zaloumis, 1995, p. 52).

The oral tradition still has privilege over the written forms. Indian storytelling has “been moulded to suit orality” of the narrative fiction like the stories for children (Devy, 1998). Traditionally, it was not only the adults who benefited and enjoyed the oral presentations. There was much on offer for children. Agarwal (2004), an Indian children’s author and researcher, wrote that Indian children have always had the best of the oral tradition. Some stories have been traced back to the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Poems, stories, and plays

for children were also enjoyed by adults. Many of these stories are still repeated to children today and many appear in printed form (Agarwal, 2004).

Hindus have, through the ages, “respected learning and revered learned men, and (have) regarded it as an act of religious merit to encourage and impart learning and support learned men” (Prasad, 1981-1982, p. 156). Vedic literature has been passed down from generation to generation purely by word of mouth. This strong tradition has survived till the present time. Kaviratna (1971) has found individuals in India, Ceylon and Burma who have knowledge of various branches of knowledge like medicine, astrology and scripture, and who are able to dictate for days at a time such information to listeners.

Such is the appreciation of the oral tradition at the local South African level, that special guests are invited to speak to the local Hindu community at regular intervals. Thus, visiting gurus and swamis, as well as other religious leaders who have offered religious discourses during their stays in South Africa have had tremendous support from the local Hindu community. In recent years the visits of Pundit Munelal Maharaj, a traditional Hindu priest, from Trinidad, Shri Satpalji Maharaj, head of the International Headquarters of the Manav Dharam, and a number of religious leaders belonging to various Hindu organisations, both Sanathanist and reformed, have contributed to the tradition of oral discourse for Hindus and to the upliftment of religious teachings. The researcher has attended the talks of both persons mentioned above.

The oral tradition as a favoured means of exploring the Hindu religion and of disseminating and transferring the information to younger individuals has been carried to all corners of the globe by immigrants and their descendents. South African Hindus still benefit from this ancient tradition and where it is dying off, efforts to revive such art forms are in place as will be discussed further later (2.8.) in this chapter.

There are efforts on an international level to preserve the oral tradition of Hindu immigrants. One such effort is the Bidesia Project (Legene, 2005), based in the Netherlands that is exploring and recording the oral traditions of the Hindu people who have migrated to the country. The focus is to record the transference of the oral tradition as it is experienced in the ritual (Sanskar songs) and the social (reflections of everyday life, that is the sufferings,

struggles, seasons and daily activities). The project includes Hindu people from Surinam and Northern India as well (Legene, 2005). Perhaps it is time for the South African Hindus to pool their resources and embark on a similar project to preserve the religious and cultural oral traditions that still prevail in this country.

The use of learned individuals to transfer information to the ordinary person has been prominent amongst Hindus. The oral tradition through the use of song, dramatic performances, recitation of religious scripture and talks has made the Hindu religion accessible to interested people. The large numbers of people who attend such oral presentations bodes well for the future of this tradition.

2.6. Literature in other subjects

Searches into various databases and electronic journals have resulted in “hits” regarding Hinduism, criticism of Hindu religious leaders, and theological studies. One such article was written by Bob Exon of University of Leeds, entitled *Self-accounting for conversion by western devotees of modern Hindu religious movements* (Exon, 1995, pp. 74-82). The article itself deals with the conversion of westerners to neo-Hinduism, and the “convert’s” personal reasons for conversion. He does mention the Satya Sai Movement and ISKCON and their acceptance of “converts”, but does not make comments on the movements themselves or the role that these movements play in the provision of religious, cultural and social information.

It appears that there is a vast selection of religious literature relating to Christianity. A few of the monographs are: *Researching modern Evangelicalism: a guide to the holding of the Billy Graham Center, with information on other collections* by Shuster, Stambaugh and Weimer (1990); *Guide to the manuscript collections of the Presbyterian Church* by Benedetto (1990). Although discussions on classification and other essential details are included, it has to be remembered that the classification categories used in a church library will not suit the needs of any Hindu library as the religious practices, teachings, mythology, histories, and a number of other aspects differ. There are far too many titles regarding Christian church libraries to be listed here.

Much has been written about the Muslim world and the libraries and the collections held by universities, mosques, and other Muslim organisations. Articles have been printed in leading journals such as the one written by Paula Skreslet, "A people of the book: Information policy and practice in the Muslim world" (1997), in *Libri*. The article revolves around the obstacles that exist in the Muslim countries regarding library policies, bibliographic control, development and maintenance of collections held in Muslim organisations.

The culture of being a woman, the interdependence of religion and culture, the religio-cultural status of Hindu women, and social attitudes are included in Mohanlal's Master of Arts study entitled *The emergent Hindu women in a changing South Africa* (1998).

Steven Vertovec, in his book *The Hindu diaspora: comparative patterns* (2000), explores "divergent Hindu practices in the Caribbean and Great Britain" (Vertovec, 2000, p. 5). He questions the "processes surrounding the reproduction and representation of culture, the construction of 'community' and identification as they have emerged in different periods and places among the people who identify themselves as Hindus" (Vertovec, 2000, p. 4). Processes and trends of religion and culture are analysed and compared. Ethnographic case studies are discussed. A brief history of the reformation movements within India is given. Vertovec studied the adaptations and changes that Hindus who live outside of India had to make to survive in broader multicultural communities.

For her article entitled "Multiculturalism, immigrant religion, and diasporic nationalism: The development of an American Hinduism" (2004), Kurien undertook an eight year study that involved "satsangs (local worship groups), bala vihars (local educational groups for children), temples, Hindu student organisations, and Hindu umbrella groups" in parts of the United States (Kurien, 2004, pp.2-3). She analyses various aspects of Hinduism, the history of Indian politics, Indian nationalistic movements in the USA, some Hindu publications and religious influence over Hindus in the article. The article has political overtones and does not cover any of the sub-themes of the present research.

A major part of *Multiculturalism and minority religions in Britain: Krishna consciousness, religious freedom and the politics of location* by Nye (2001) is dedicated to the case study of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Britain and the problems

that the organisation experienced. The author, an anthropologist, has focussed on the legal issues surrounding the Bhaktivedanta Manor, and other issues of religious practice within ISKCON. The author also gives a description of Hinduism as it is practised in multicultural Britain and the problems Hindus face in an Anglican Country. Various case studies are discussed in the book. Festivals are described and religious explanations are given. The book reveals how British Law affects the practice of Hinduism, for example, planning laws, conservation laws and politics. Alternatives and solutions as offered by the various British government departments are listed. Although the author discusses religious freedom in Britain, he relates religious freedom to the ISKCON movement.

Migrants, citizens and the state in Southern Africa (Whitman, 2000) has been written by eight authors who investigated the political, economic and environmental dynamics of Southern Africa. The Southern African Ethnicity Team investigated the migration in the region and the problems associated with migration. Some of the issues dealt with in the text were: development, population trends, legal implications of migration, reconstruction in South Africa, refugee crisis, brain drain and gain in science and technology, recommendations and solutions.

India's educational system is the largest in the world and has over 179 universities. These and other facts relevant to libraries and librarianship in India are presented in Gupta's (1992) *Development of university libraries in India after independence*. It is a comprehensive investigation and includes weaknesses that exist within these libraries. There is no mention of religious organisations or libraries that may be a part of these organisations, yet many universities in India offer academic programs that are based on the Hindu religion and Hindu religious teachings.

Bhattacharyya (2003), in his article "South Asian cultural studies-lessons from back home" looks at Indian debates concerning the preservation and pride of culture and religion among ethnic communities, especially those of Indian origin, and the resultant racism and resistance that they experience.

Literature, about Hinduism, found through searches of academic sources on the Internet has led the researcher to believe that there is much debating about various aspects of Hinduism.

but little, if anything about the preservation and provision of information. A plethora of religious information can be found through simple searches, yet so little is written about libraries, museums or repositories containing this religious literature.

2.7. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim library development programs

There is much freely available printed literature on Christian, Jewish and Muslim libraries and their collections. Yet there is almost nothing on Hindu temples that have libraries, Sanatanist or reformed, or their collections to be found here in South Africa or via the Internet. A vast amount of information on the preservation of ancient Indian manuscripts, libraries in ancient India, writings from India, modern Indian libraries, Indian librarianship and programs that organisations have implemented in India is easily accessible. But the status of libraries belonging to Hindu religious organisations has not been investigated in modern times.

There is much advice and information which has been offered on Christian, Jewish, and Muslim libraries, library systems for these religious libraries, funding for the development of these libraries as well as advice on policy and practice in these religious libraries. What follows below is a description of electronic sources that librarians belonging to these faiths could use.

There are many church library organisations that render support and offer advice to librarians of Christian churches. The Evangelical Church Library Association has a website that offers advice to librarians who work in a variety of libraries: school, church, and corporate. An electronic journal, resources for the librarian, mentoring, and booklists are also available to members (Evangelical Church Library Association, 2007). The Lutheran Church in the USA has a national church library association which offers a similar package to that of the Evangelical Church Library Association. Of special importance is *A Handbook for church librarians* that is sold through the website (National Church Library Association, 2007).

Other websites set up by Christian organisations available for use are: Central Baptist Church, Decatur, Alabama (Central Baptist Church, 2005); Religious Library Resources (Brodart Library Supplies & Furnishings, 1999); and Church and Synagogue Library Association

(Church and Synagogue Library Association, 2005). All the websites offer information on all aspects of librarianship as it affects running a Christian library (Brodart Library Supplies & Furnishings, 1999).

The Association of Jewish Libraries has its own website (Association of Jewish Libraries, 2007) which offers information and advice on the evaluation of literary and artistic excellence as well as for Jewish religious content. Also available is resource information that Jewish librarians could use in maintaining their libraries (Association of Jewish Library, 2007). Like the Christian church library websites, the Jewish library websites offer all kinds of useful and essential information for library practitioners.

Similarly, Muslim libraries and librarians have a range of journals and monographs dedicated to their cause. Of particular interest are the number of websites that guide the new librarian in the establishment and management of Islamic libraries, as well as those sites that offer information on a number of subjects and topics that are related to Islam and the Moslem lifestyle (Islamonline.net, 2007) and Moslem schools (Madrassa In'aamiyyah, 2007). South African Muslims have also dedicated their writings to the unique South African situation and this can be seen in Cajee's article entitled *Islamic history & civilisation in South Africa: the impact of colonialism, apartheid, and democracy (1652- 2004)* (2003). Adams's minithesis *Historical development of Islamic libraries internationally and in South Africa: a case study of the Islamic Library in Gatesville* (2003) is a study that was most closely related to this research. The relevance in the study lay in the fact that the author researched and focused on a religious library in South Africa. A brief history of important Islamic libraries is outlined.

Other websites offer Muslim librarians guidelines for setting up libraries. Planning and management advice is also on offer. Lists of Islamic libraries and information centres, Islamic publishers, print resources, library furnishings and automation systems are available on the website and this makes the website a useful tool for Muslim librarians. Most importantly the website offers a few tips on cataloguing for Islamic libraries and cites examples of author card, title card and so on. Resources such as books and websites that can improve the services of Islamic libraries are listed (Ali, 1999).

2.8. Hindu religious libraries

Ancient India had libraries aplenty. Temples had special rooms for libraries and it was the royal duty of kings to provide libraries and information media to their subjects and interested individuals who came from other countries and kingdoms (Trehan, 1975, pp. 33-39). All libraries in ancient India had some form of classification. Similarly all subjects that were taught at the ancient universities and cultural centres had forms of classification (Trehan, 1975, pp. 15-32).

In the South of India a system of libraries existed. Nair (1991, p. 68) describes these libraries as free public libraries. These were not merely storehouses of manuscripts but collections of information for use by all, “irrespective of caste, creed or religion” (Nair, 1991, p. 70). Three great libraries were located at Taxila, Nalanda and Pataliputra. All of which were university sites. Nair goes on further to state that these collections housed at the libraries “were undoubtedly neatly classified and catalogued in the best possible manner” (Nair, 1991, p. 71). These institutions even had guidelines for the preservation of the manuscripts.

Sahoo and Mohanty (2004, pp. 28-32) have presented their findings on ancient indigenous methods of preservation used in libraries in India. Ancient librarians had at their disposal a number of methods of preservation and any number of aides against insect invasion and other destructive forces. Camphor, dried ginger, neem oil or neem powder and a spice called ajwain were a few of the natural insect repellents used in ancient India.

Ancient Indians had systems of arrangements for literature and other fields of knowledge (Nair, 1991, pp. 70-72). The Vedas themselves were divided into four parts, namely: Rigveda (Knowledge); Yajurveda (knowledge of action); Samaveda (spiritual knowledge); and Atharveda (science and the material world). The Vedic system classified the universe of subjects into four main areas. The table below shows the divisions.

Table 1: Divisions of Vedic subjects

| Divisions of Vedic Subjects | Definition | Related subjects |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dharma | Righteous conduct | Law, theology ethics and sociology (subjects involved in the maintenance of society) |
| Artha | Wealth and prosperity | History, political science, economics and applied sciences (subjects dealing with structural and social welfare) |
| Kama | Noble aspirations | Literature, fine arts, and pure sciences (subjects related to the creative urges in man) |
| Moksha | Emancipation | Philosophy, and spiritual experiences (subjects that help to understand the universe, attain peace and release from bondage of birth and death cycles) |

(Trehan, 1975, p.42)

Further categorisations divided these related subjects further. An example would be the area of science that was divided into mathematics, chemistry, medicine, and so on and so forth. Each of these subjects was further divided into minor areas, for example: mathematics was then sub-divided into geometry, trigonometry, and methods of mathematics like addition, and subtraction (Trehan, 1975, p.40-46). Another example was the six divisions of Vedic literature: Siksha (phonetics); Chhanda (metre); Vyakarn (grammar); Nirukta (explanation of words); Jyotish (astronomy); and Kalpa (ceremonial) (Trehan, 1975, pp.40-46).

The divisions of subjects as discussed above helped Nair reach the conclusion that these ancient collections were “undoubtedly neatly classified and catalogued and preserved in the best possible manner” (Nair, 1991, p. 71). Panini gave the world the very first scientific system of classification. He saw the need to classify and identify the knowledge contained in the books housed at the Saraswati Bhandaras or Granthagaras (libraries) for use by their

clientele. Literature was divided into five categories: Prokta (ordained by different Rishis/ founders of different schools); Drishta (literature that is revealed); Upanata (original works that offered new knowledge); Krita (ordinary subjects); and Vyakhyana (exposition and commentaries). Each category was further sub-divided into minor subject areas. However, Panini was not the only librarian with classification skills. The Aryan sages and scholars had a classification system that entailed eighteen categories for subject matter. That classification system included biographies, short histories and commandments of kings amongst other classes (Trehan, 1975, pp. 38-49).

Eighteen classes of reference books were found in ancient libraries. To name a few: Koshas (dictionaries); Anukramanikas (Vedic indexes); and Viramihira's Brithat Samhita (encyclopaedia of astronomy and astrology) (Trehan, 1975, pp. 50-52).

Duplicate copies were made available through the lipikaras, the scribes of ancient India, who were "engaged to copy sacred texts" (Trehan, 1975, p. 14) and to read to others so that the texts were not mishandled and lasted for a longer time period. Palm leaf (talapatra in the north/ edu or nadi in the south), inner bark of birch tree (bhajpatra), and cotton, silk, strips of wood and bamboo, as well as sheets of gold, silver and copper were used to record the sacred texts. Paper made from cotton was available in India as early as the third century B.C. Leather was never used for the sacred texts as it was considered impure. Even block printing was being used in India by 973-983 A.D. (Trehan, 1975, pp. 15-18).

Paper was introduced to India in the twelfth century A.D. By the seventeenth century the use of paper was common and was encouraged. Poets, chroniclers and story tellers produced elaborately decorated texts so that they could get royal patronage (Devy, 1998). However, the reproduction of these texts was done orally, that is, an orator read out the text and a number of scribes proceeded to write down copies of the text. This is possible as the scribes had knowledge of oral transmission and syllabic pronunciation (Devy, 1998).

However, not all new information was made available to the populace without censorship. Stringent controls were in place to ensure that only authentic and properly investigated information was circulated to the Hindus. This was achieved through the synod (council) which sanctioned or rejected all new manuscripts. All literature produced by specialists on

their special subjects and their investigations and thoughts was taken before the council (synod) for selection. If the manuscript was selected, then a special ceremony (sanskara) was performed before the piece of work was made public (Trehan, 1975, p. 20). Once sanctioned and blessed the manuscript was presented to the author's teacher or king. It was the king's divine duty to provide scribes in an effort to preserve or rewrite manuscripts that had been damaged or to make duplicate copies of popular manuscripts. It was also the duty of kings and of those individuals of financial means to make gifts of books to the Saraswati Bhandaras (libraries). Librarians or Saraswati Bhandarikas held esteemed positions within the communities they served (Trehan, 1975, pp. 21-26).

Later, in the post Vedic age, Grantha Kutis (libraries) were attached to the ashramas. The Mahabharata describes the Granthakar (writer of the book) in the time of Ram. Granthalayis (librarians) were employed at such ashramas as well as at university libraries like the universities at Taxila, Nalanda and Pataliputra (Trehan, 1975, pp. 24-26).

Ancient Indians had classification systems for all facets of religion and culture. Musicians belonged to a number of different schools, each with an individual system of classification for instruments, ragas, vocals and types of music (Bor, 1999). Ancient medics of India, like Charaka, Susruta, Vaagbhata and others had classified Vedic medicines according to ailments, for example, destroying skin diseases, curing an abscess, and healing fractures. Each medic had his own school and system of classification (Tata, 2007).

Literature for children was written and preserved by the authors themselves. Copies were made and left in the libraries where they were accessed and where the public could read them. Lending libraries were not possible by virtue of the fact that the "books" were easily damaged, heavy to carry, and were difficult to replace (Trehan, 1975, pp. 28-30).

The listings of classes, sub-classes and categories of subjects that were used in ancient libraries would need an entire study on its own for proper justice to be done. Trehan (1975), Tata (2007), Nair (1991), and others have written so much on this aspect of librarianship as well as user studies, preservation and publication that it is not possible to fit it in this study.

Temples, too, were centres for all “cultural activities and naturally educational institutions formed part of the temple establishment” (Nair, 1991, p. 72). A modern adaptation of such an establishment could be the new Hindu temples in America were, for example, summer youth camps, language classes, dance recitals, and other cultural and religious activities are offered (Bhardwaj & Rao, 1998, p. 128). South African Hindu temples and ashrams now offer similar functions and services.

The modern Hindu organisations are beginning to develop libraries within the temples, like Hindus did in the ancient past. In fact many Hindu organisations have realised that collaboration between religious organisations and government departments are essential for the benefit of Hindu communities that seek to develop their library facilities. One such project has been initiated by the Wolverhampton City Council in Britain. The project is funded by the All Saints and Blakenhall Community Development (ABCD) and Wolverhampton City libraries. The temple had a collection of specialised religious works. With the assistance of a local librarian the library was developed and is now available for use by temple devotees and individuals from the community. This partnership has created an opportunity for the council facilities to be expanded vastly and for more religious and ethnic material to be made available to users of the public libraries as well as devotees of the temple (Black Country, 2005).

But such projects are not unique to the British and British Hindus. A point of interest was the collaboration between Hindu Samaj Temple in Hamilton, Ontario and the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI). When an arson attack on the temple on September 15, 2001 destroyed the temple, and almost destroyed a valuable collection of five thousand volumes containing information on Hinduism and other reference works, the CCI assisted with disaster management and the specialised preservation of the volumes, contributing human resources, knowledge and funding (Harrington, 2001). Hopefully such incidents will never take place in South Africa. However, this researcher has yet to locate any kind of cooperation between reformed or Sanathanist Hindu organisations and library organisations or government organisations that work in the LIS sector.

This research has revealed that much has been written on and about religious libraries of different faiths, yet so little has been written about Hinduism, and the provision, preservation

and dissemination of Hindu literature by Hindu religious organisations that exist in modern times.

In his article "How to create a golden age of Hindu culture", Salim (1997) states explicitly that "a number of first-rate institutes for the study and preservation of Hindu culture and tradition must be established all over Hindustan". I would like to add that institutes of culture and religion must be established wherever they are Hindus in large number, especially in a country like South Africa. The vibrant culture of music, dance, theatre, story telling, songs, festivals, ceremonies, customs and crafts have to be kept alive. Perhaps here in South Africa we have already begun. In recent months there appears to be an increase in interest in the oral traditions of India. Workshops like the ones held by Dadi Pudumjee, for puppeteers (Dorasamy, 2007) and live religious discourse through story telling and song (called Harikatha), like the production of Andhra Darshan, are on the increase (Sunday Tribune reporter, 2007). Whilst Dadi Pudumjee, an Indian, focuses on the art of puppeteering to convey contemporary social messages, Harikatha (similar to the art of oratorio), "transmits culture, educates socially, imparts values and provides entertainment" (Sunday Tribune reporter, 2007).

Indian librarians and academics from the library science field have written so much about the present library systems, educational, political, and social upliftment through the development of the libraries in India. Still they have somehow ignored or not studied the role of the reformed organisations in providing religious, cultural and social information to the people. A similar apathy has been prevalent in South Africa.

2.9. Conclusion

The search for literature related to the topic was extensive and exhausting. A number of different aspects of librarianship were investigated. Databases and electronic sources relating to different subjects were searched and printed formats of information relating to various study areas were searched. Information related to the provision of library services for different religious groups was investigated in an effort to understand the workings of the modern religious libraries.

Undoubtedly, topics relating to the provision of religious and cultural information amongst Hindus and other religious groups in South Africa had to be investigated. The development of libraries within religious organisations, especially those libraries within traditional and reformed Hindu organisations, can play a more significant role in the provision of religious and cultural information. Other services and activities, like story telling, that are offered through these libraries will stimulate and sustain efforts undertaken for the preservation of the Hindu religion and culture.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ARRIVAL OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THEIR RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

3.1. Introduction

At present Hindus are to be found in virtually all parts of the world. Modern travel and the need for personal progress, adventure and a host of other reasons have influenced Hindus to migrate to different eastern and western countries, where they have to adapt by learning foreign languages and where the religion has to survive, in sometimes hostile circumstances. But this is the post-colonial world of the information age, the age of the Internet, satellite television and radio, video-cams, and easy, speedy travel that helps the religion survive.

The colonial age is really the age that influenced the spread of Hinduism in the west. Remarkably, it was the indentured labour system which the British implemented to replace slavery, when it was abolished, that influenced the spread of Hinduism to many British and European Colonies: Natal; British Guiana; East Africa; Fiji; Grenada; Jamaica; Martinique; Mauritius; Reunion; St. Croux; St Lucia; St Vincent; Surinam and Trinidad (Bhana & Brain, 1990, p.15). These Hindus and their descendents were forced to establish themselves outside their homeland, and find ways of retaining their religious beliefs where no Hindu community existed and where there was little or no support from religious leaders.

Since their arrival in South Africa in 1860, the Indians have been subjected to a number of political restrictions. There were many laws that stifled the growth of the Indian community and brought about instability and insecurity within the community. One of the greatest impediments that the South African Indians faced was that it was only in 1961 that they were declared permanent inhabitants of South Africa, by the then Prime Minister, Dr H.F. Verwoerd (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, p.10).

3.2. Reasons for the arrival of Indians in South Africa

The need for economic development in South Africa, especially on the newly created sugar estates, warranted the import of indentured labour from the Indian subcontinent. Likewise, the

railways, coal mines, wattle plantations, municipal services, carpentry work and domestic employment benefited from the import of the cheap labour (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, p.5). The early Indians were responsible for the importation of a minute part of India to South Africa. They brought with them culture and ancient civilization, religion and philosophy, various languages and literature, numerous festivals and ceremonies. Their sub-groups and sub-cultures are defined by language, method of worship, social customs, food and dress (Singh, 1986, pp.78-83).

However their arrival here in 1860 exposed them to a foreign western society, a politically hostile environment and social suppression. Although the Hindu "sought to retain his cultural identity and religious adherence" these obstacles made it difficult. This was aggravated by the breakdown of the ancient extended family system (Singh, 1986, pp.70-74). The sufferings experienced by the Indians led to a state of religious limbo. There was no religious or cultural support for the continuation of traditions brought from their native land, India. The lack of infrastructure and theological leaders led to apathy, a lack of understanding and a decay of religious standards. This, together with the varied and ritualistic modes of worship emphasized a need for reform and religious leadership (Naidoo, 1984, p.65).

3.3. Hinduism in South Africa

Hinduism in South Africa has undergone a number of interpretations, many changes in practice and organisational modifications that have enabled many Hindus to practise the religion in some form or the other. Whilst any Hindu has an extraordinarily large array of practices, philosophies, texts and schools of ideologies to choose from, it has been the influences of the reform Hindu organisations that have affected Hindus in South Africa the most. The reformed Hindu organisations have helped to unite a linguistically divided group of people, have simplified the religion for the modern educated individual, have offered a kind of standardised religion, and have made the religion easier to understand, and practice.

The Hindus belonged to four linguistic groups, viz. Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu. The Hindi and Gujarati speaking Hindus came from the northern parts of India and were mostly Vaishnavites. The Tamil and Telugu speaking people came from the south of India and were mostly Shaivites (Sooklal, 1986, p.35).

Linguistic, spiritual and ritual practices differed and kept the various groups separate. However, the need to survive meant sharing the resources and tolerating these minor differences which in turn gave impetus to the growth of Hinduism in South Africa.

3.3.1. The early years of Hinduism (1860 - 1905)

The indentured labourers brought to South Africa were chosen for their physical fitness and it was rare to find among them individuals older than 30 years of age. This young brood of men and women had to “find their feet in the spiritual sense without the help and guidance of an older generation” (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, p.6).

Although the construction of temples began almost immediately with the arrival of Indians in 1860, many Hindus were prevented from following their customs and religious practices by the harsh conditions of their contracts, and the control exercised over them by their white bosses (Hofmeyr & Oosthuizen, 1981, p.91).

The majority of the indentured labourers belonged to the lower classes and were illiterate. According to Nowbath et al. (1960, p.35) during the early years there was little evidence of social, religious or cultural awareness amongst the Hindus. This lack of awareness could be attributed to the fact that the immigrants were largely labourers and spent long hours in their jobs. They also had to adapt to a foreign land, strange peoples, both white and African, and conflicting cultures.

The primary purpose of these temples was the perpetuation of ritualistic observances. The temples served the emotional needs of the people but lacked philosophical teachings. Religious institutions were lacking, thus the dissemination of religious literature was not undertaken by any temple organisation. Traditionally, religious education was conducted through family lines but the early labourers lacked this support and this influenced misunderstanding and a lack of tolerance towards Hindus who spoke different vernacular languages. Religious and cultural values were often influenced by “more knowledgeable” elders within the community who often performed religious rituals and ceremonies for the local community or for a specific language group (Naidoo, 1984, p.66).

Many of those individuals whose contracts had ended, and who chose to remain, made efforts to revive their religious practices and customs. Temples were built for religious worship and schools were constructed to educate the young. The temples served to knit the Hindu communities closer, especially through the celebrations of major festivals like Shivarathri and Krishnasthamee (Sooklal, 1986, p. 35).

A dilemma that the Hindus felt was the acceptance of English as the medium of conversation by the younger generation, at the expense of the vernacular. The loss of the vernacular language was an indication that cultural identity was being lost and religious adherence was on the way out. The vernacular languages were essential for the “study and practice of the religion” as religious literature was only available in the vernacular languages (Meer, 1969, p.93).

Since the early Hindu immigrants were influenced and lived by traditional orthodox, ritualistic and ceremonial religion, many of the educated younger set were bound to reject this form of Hinduism. A further complexity was the varied languages spoken by the Hindu people (Sooklal, 1988, p.3).

Whilst the community was held together by the celebration of religious activities, it lacked Hindu theologians. Local priests performed rituals in homes and temples but lacked knowledge of philosophy and their religious knowledge revolved around what they were familiar with. Their profession was inherited through lineage or by studying under a guru.

High profile individuals also influenced the local community. One such leader was M.K. Gandhi, the world renowned passive resistance leader, who established the *Indian Opinion* in 1903. He used the newspaper “as a vehicle for the expression of his policy, his criticism of the government, and his leadership of the Indians” (Palmer, 1957, p.69).

His influence over the Indians was later strengthened when he changed his style of dressing from western to eastern wear. Indians were encouraged not to lose their cultural identity when he established the Phoenix Settlement and adapted his lifestyle, that is, when he rejected the caste system and accepted all individuals as equal (Palmer, 1957, p. 68).

Gandhi had significant influence on South African Indians, however, spiritual and religious stagnation was inevitable because of linguistic subdivisions and differing ritual practices that showed that the Hindus lacked leadership and organisation. Concerned individuals within the community worried about the preservation and continuity of the Hindu religion. The first Hindu preacher and scholar, Professor Bhai Parmanand arrived in South Africa in August 1905. His arrival in August 1905 heralded the re-generation of social, religious and cultural heritage of Hindus (Sooklal, 1986, p. 36).

3.3.2. Growth of Hinduism in South Africa (1905 - 1970)

Hindu reformation truly began in India itself and then spread to British colonies where Indian indentured labourers had set up homes. Reformation was spurred on by criticism of the Hindu religion by the British and by the increasing large numbers of missionaries who set out to convert Hindus to Christianity. "Indian intellectuals and religious leaders" (Rinehart, 2004, p. 56) soon realised the need for revitalisation and reformation to preserve the religion.

Their efforts were, however, thwarted by laws and by-laws that were passed from the 1920s onwards that presented problems of movement, employment and trade for the Indians (Meer, 1969, p.62). Thus began the cultural and religious decline of the Indian people. This cultural and religious decay was aggravated by the fact that many Indians began moving away from agricultural employment to industrial pursuits whose working calendars "did not accommodate their religious needs" (Meer, 1969, p.93).

The publication of newspapers, periodicals and other printed material was boosted by the spread of print technology. Such information was however, restricted to the few who were literate. But it must be realised that the few individuals who led discussions and debates lived in different parts of India and soon a number of regionally based reformed movements were established in South Africa.

Between October 1908 and 1937 many pundits, politicians and academics visited South Africa. Their visits, lectures and tours around the country influenced the establishment of many religious organisations, both orthodox and reformed. The 1940s saw the creation of three influential movements: the Saiva Sithantha Sungum, the Divine Life Society and the

Ramakrishna Movement (Ariyan, 1989, pp.113-126). A prominent Hindu scholar and Guru, Swami Shankeranand, visited South Africa in May 1912 and guided the formation of the Hindu Maha Sabha in South Africa. The first Hindu monk, Swami Adhyanand, arrived in South Africa in 1934 (Sooklal, 1988, pp.120-121).

The scholars brought from India stayed in the country for only a few months at a time and could not co-ordinate religious and cultural activities with any degree of continuity. Institutions that could help with the preservation and dissemination of religious and cultural practices were urgently needed. This led to the establishment of many “reformed” organisations that are still in existence today.

The Hindus in South Africa were not abandoned after the departure of Swami Shankeranand. A constant stream of preachers, scholars and prominent leaders visited from India often, lending moral support, holding discourses and guiding the local community leaders in their activities and projects (Sooklal, 1986, p. 37).

The visits of the scholars and other prominent individuals influenced the practise of the Hindu religion and culture positively. By 1965 (Roacher, 1965, p. 107) the number of revival movements had grown and were seen “as an effort to revitalise Hindu religion, and so adapting it to modern needs”.

During the 1970s Hindus in South Africa saw bold changes within the religion. The emergence of several new Hindu movements added novel dimensions to the already complex situation that existed amongst the Hindus. The most distinguishing factor of these reformed Hindu movements was that they were not linguistically aligned to the four major linguistic groups: Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Gujarati.

The reformed Hindu movements, or neo- Hindu movements, were an important influence in the shifting of emphasis from ritualism (external expression) to philosophical interpretation. “The most notable of these movements were: The Satya Sai movement, The Radha Soami Satsang, The Divine Light Mission and The Hare Krishna Movement [The International Society for Krishna Consciousness]” (Sooklal, 1988, p.1).

3.3.3. Hindu Renaissance (1980 - present)

Rinehart (2004, p.203) has described “the emergence of distinctively modern modes of Hindu thought” as a “process of continuing ... transnational construction of Hinduism”. These “newer forms of Hindu discourse” have been influenced by the likes of Rammohan Roy, Keshub Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekananda, Mohandas Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and others. Such individuals influenced, directly and indirectly, the construction of ashrams and the growth of reformed or neo-Hindu movements that continues to influence modern Hindu thought.

Many of these movements had established themselves in South Africa by the end of the twentieth century. By this time Hindus were better educated and had accepted many western styles of living. English had become the medium of education and communication and this impacted on the practice of Hinduism. The contents of the religious texts were no longer accessible to them and the practice of Hindu rituals, the symbolisms for which they never learnt, had no place in their lives (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, pp.50-76). At present however, Hindus are learning their vernacular languages, as can be seen by the number of language schools that are attached to temples and ashrams. This has led to Sanathanism along with reformed Hinduism flourishing in South Africa.

Sooklal (1986, p.49) has found that “it is easier to obtain English translations of the Hindu scriptures than those in the mother-tongue” and that “nearly all of the Neo-Hindu Movements have embarked on translating the popular Hindu scriptures and actively disseminating them”.

Sooklal (1986, p.51) also found that the majority of Hindus are “stratified more on the basis of linguistic differences rather than the caste system”. Almost two decades later, this is no longer the case. The number of inter-linguistic marriages has increased tremendously. Perhaps this may also be a favourable factor for the reformed movements as these organisations are not linguistically aligned and as such serve as a safe haven for “mixed linguistic marriages”. Language and family traditions can be set aside in the ashrams of the reformed movements.

In the context of reformation, the neo-Hindu movements alleviated the situation by providing easy to read literature in English. The organisations certainly realised the plight of Hindus and

Hinduism in South Africa and sought to help Hindus realise their Hinduism through a number of programmes. Reasons for their growth are discussed in section 3.4. below.

The renaissance as such, is very much alive. India has an embassy as well as a consulate in South Africa. This enables the Hindu religious organisations to “import” traditional priests, and for reformed movements to have gurus and swamis come stay in the country for prolonged periods of time which impacts positively on the teachings of the organisations concerned. This in turn positively influences the initiation of programmes and the subsequent upliftment of the community. For example, in May/June of 2007 Pundit Munelal Maharaj, a traditional Hindu priest from Trinidad visited the country for the sole purpose of encouraging and stimulating the Hindu renaissance. Another example was the visit of Shri Satpalji Maharaj, head of the International Headquarters of the Manav Dharam Spiritual Mission who visited in 2005. There now appears to be a steady stream of gurus and swamis who visit South Africa under the banner of the organisations to which they are affiliated but who also do a round of public speaking and motivation.

Critical to the Hindu renaissance is the growth of the reformed Hindu organisations, the number of branches and cell groups that have been established and the buildings that they are acquiring, or constructing. Many traditional and modern Hindu organisations are attracting the professional individuals who serve on various committees; assist in organising events and who manage the daily functions of these organisations.

3.4. The need for reformed organisations and the differences between the traditional practices and the practices of the reformed organisations

As soon as their contracts ended the Indians within South Africa established little communities in various parts of KwaZulu-Natal. But the National government passed the Group Areas Act which resulted in Indians being moved from their homes and the dissolution of established communities. The relocation of Indians resulted in the dissolution of established communities and of social and cultural uncertainties. Undoubtedly, the worst problem associated with relocation was the break-up of the traditional Hindu family which was a joint family unit (Hofmeyr & Oosthuizen, 1981, p.11).

This system of existence was destroyed by the relocation of Indians to pre-built homes that only catered for the nuclear family. The traditional methods of dissemination of religious information depended on the oral word. Little use was made of printed texts. The joint family system meant that imitation, story telling and discussion opportunities were less frequently available (Sooklal, 1986, p.46).

The younger generations did not gain the essential knowledge required to perform home rituals as the family unit no longer consisted of the extended older members who served to “educate, guide and motivate them” (Ariyan, 1989, p.100). Consequently, new life styles evolved and placed emphasis on western forms of behaviour and dress (Hofmeyr & Oosthuizen, 1981, p.13).

Mother-tongue competence (speaking, reading and writing) was negatively affected by an education system that was Christian-based and influenced by western curriculum (Sooklal, 1986, p.47). Government schools used English as the only language of instruction and did not cater for “religious observances or instruction” (Palmer, 1957, p.166). Other influences that contributed to the decline of mother-tongue usage and the participation in rituals and celebrations was the working calendar of South Africa which was Christian based and which did not allow for the celebration and observance of Hindu festivals and religious days.

The education system within South Africa was Christian in character, and parents who were not Christian became responsible for the religious instruction of their children. A lack of religious schools for the young has resulted in a lack of interest in and understanding of the Hindu religion by the younger generation. Up until recent times even Hindu priests had no academic qualifications in Hindu Theology or pastoral care (Sooklal, 1986, p.48).

Religious education was stifled when the younger generations lost the ability to converse, read or write in the mother-tongue. Religious literature was traditionally written in Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati and other Indian languages. Therefore, translations of religious literature had to be used by the younger western educated generations. But even this was not “readily available or actively disseminated to the community at large” (Sooklal, 1986, p.47).

Thus, organisations that could help the younger people understand and know their religious and cultural roots and continue to be practicing Hindus were needed. The young and the educated turned to Hindu religious movements that reflected the social reform experienced by individuals and contributed to the development of culture. Ariyan (1989, p.103) states that a “need for unity was essential to overcome social, political, economic and religious obstacles in South Africa”. The need for “spiritual awakening”, “personal illumination” (Nath, 1982, p.8) was great and was filled when Hindus joined the new Hindu movements.

The reformed Hindu movements served as an adoptive family for those who joined. This contributed to the devotee’s sense of belonging especially since the joint-family system no longer existed. Regular satsangs drew devotees to a common place where they interacted with the same group of individuals consistently. This provided them with a sense of identity within a sub-community. The dissemination of literature served to fill a vacuum in religious education, created by the breakdown of the joint-family system where informal religious education was consistently given by members of the extended family.

The establishment of reformed organisations was inevitable. The local Hindu community was small and the linguistic and varied forms of worship became integrated through marriage and social integration. The need to belong to a part of the community and a growing desire to understand the religion brought to South Africa by the forefathers ensured a steady growth of reformed organisations. The “simplified” teachings and “philosophical ideas” undoubtedly helped to increase the number of devotees the modern Hindu organisations attracted (Hofmeyr & Oosthuizen, 1981, p.3).

The divergent methods of religious practice between the temple and the ashram were also a contributory factor for the growth of reformed organisations in South Africa. The temple congregation often belonged to a particular linguistic group. A priest conducted the ceremonies and rituals, often with the help of a selected few. Thus, a single individual was responsible for “ensuring the happiness, welfare and success of the members of the community” (Sooklal, 1986, p. 43).

“The great Hindu reformers of the new Hindu organisations such as Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi realised the need for the re-organisation of Hindu thought

according to the needs of the present age” (Sooklal, 1986, p.54). Especially Vivekananda and Gandhi laid great stress on the value of modernisation (Sooklal, 1986, p.54) and social service, in the form of education, medical assistance and the revival of the classical art forms and religious teachings (Gurupedia, 2006).

“The reformed Hindu movements represented a basic change in the practice of Hinduism. As a consequence they are better equipped than traditional Hinduism to meet the stress of the South African situation. They have laid greater emphasis on the philosophical interpretation of the ritual rather than the act itself. The teachings of these movements also have a firm theological basis unlike traditional Hinduism, which in most cases, were devoid of theological exegesis” (Sooklal, 1986, p.56).

The role of the priest, in traditional worship, was of paramount importance as he alone could promote the manifestation of the divine power through rituals, ceremonies and the chanting of mantras. His residence at the temple was essential in sustaining the continued presence of God at the temple. Incidentally, temple worship was not an arbitrary act. Rules of practice and worship have been clearly laid out in the Puranas, an ancient series of texts. The priest was also responsible for the reading or recital of the ancient religious texts and their expositions (Sooklal, 1986, p.44). Even priests did not attend any theological colleges since none existed in South Africa. Interested individuals studied under the guidance of a guru (Naidoo, 1984, p.66).

The family, especially the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and older siblings, are responsible for inculcating a sense of religion and religious pride in the young. Religious, social and cultural values are taught and practised in the home (Sooklal, 1986, p.43). With the breakdown of the extended family system this religious and language pride was lost. The loss of the Indian vernacular reflected a loss of cultural identity. From the loss of mother-tongue emerged the loss of accessibility of religious literature. In order for cultural heritage to survive, religious literature has to be accessed, either through mother-tongue language or through a priest who speaks the mother-tongue (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, p. 74) or by means of translations.

At the ashram the guru conducted the religious service. The satsang generally began with a prayer which was followed by the singing of kirtans and bhajans by the entire congregation led by a singer. A part of a religious text is read and a sermon is delivered by the guru. Thereafter the congregants are encouraged and expected to meditate. Thus, the ashram serves the dual role of providing religious instruction and of practising the religion. Religious and relevant literature is often distributed at the ashram (Sooklal, 1986, p. 37).

These reformed movements attracted the educated and the younger Hindus by offering greater organisational skills and a more rational approach to religion. The older generation continued to worship in the traditional modes as was taught and practised by their parents (Sooklal, 1986, p. 38). Contemporary western education develops "independent and critical minds" that ignores the respect for authority "from household head to priest or guru" (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1979, pp. 101-103)

The education of women and those belonging to the lower classes, created a desire for religious change. This could only be achieved by joining the reformed movements that did not separate individuals according to caste or gender. English, the language of the west, also encouraged new thoughts and actions that were not tolerated by orthodox Hindu practitioners. (Ariyan, 1989, pp.54-57).

Traditional worship is often enforced and influenced through linguistic ties. Individuals belonging to a particular linguistic group will often adhere to the same rites, rituals and observances. The festivals, rites and rituals are far too numerous, and divergent to be discussed as a part of this research. Moreover, there is sufficient literature available that offers detailed explanations, outlines the religious significance and traces the history of festivals, rites and rituals (Sooklal, 1986, p. 39).

3.5. The reformed organisations

Although virtually all the reformers were born in India, it is important to discuss those who influenced the formation of South African reformed movements. The Hindu renaissance was born in India and "was characterised by the emergence of numerous Hindu leaders who took up the cudgels of social reform" (Ariyan, 1989, p. 63). They influenced and encouraged the

“revitalisation and reinterpretation of the Hindu religion in order to make it viable for the modern era” (Ariyan, 1989, p. 63).

Great thinkers and “modern saintly figures” are often “hailed as *avatars*” (Lipner, 1994, p.313). These religious and cultural leaders helped in and inspired the formation of organisations which “had the common aim of adapting the content of Hindu culture to meet new, modern demands” (Ariyan, 1989, p.64). Hinduism needed “regeneration” if it had to survive the onslaught of various Christian movements and their conversion policies.

Gandhi’s stay in South Africa, between 1893 and 1914, had great influence on the Indians and, in particular, on Hindus. His policy of “loyalty to Hinduism and resistance to Christian conversion” earned him much respect among the local people (Rinehart, 2004, p. 403). According to Morgan (1953, pp.46-47) it was the Non-violence or *Satyagraha* policy which won him world acclaim.

The Hindu scholars who visited South Africa had a great influence on the growth of Reformed Hindu organisations and their teachings. There are a large number of Reformed Hindu Organisations as well as their affiliates, branches and cell groups throughout South Africa. The organisations that have branches in the greater Ethekewini region that participated in the survey are described below.

3.5.1. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha

On April 10, 1875 Swami Dayanand Sarasvathi formed the Arya Samaj in Mumbai. The main objective of this organisation was to re-organise the Hindu society, as it had existed since ancient times (Naidoo, 1984, p.7). Swami Dayanand Sarasvathi taught that rituals and theological complexities were to be ignored. Religious, social and educational reforms were embarked upon with the hope of eventually emancipating the masses. He also “believed that authentic Vedic tradition had been lost...” (Rinehart, 2004, p.58). He may be attributed with the honour of having introduced missionary work to Hindus (Ariyan, 1989, p. 68).

The Arya Samaj focused on the teachings of Swami Dayananda. This meant that the caste system was not to be followed; child marriages had to be stopped, widow remarriages were to

be permitted, and re-conversion to Hinduism became accepted. (Rinehart, 2004, p. 218). Caste was ignored, Hindu self-respect was generated, and a defence against external attacks was established (Ariyan, 1989, pp.64-69).

The South African Branch of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha was formed in 1919 (Pundit Kiran Satgoor, 2007). Naidoo (1984, p.4) sees the Arya Samaj as an organisation which has had profound effects upon Hindu religious practices in South Africa. As an organisation the Arya Samaj has had major impact on religious, cultural and educational influence on the Hindus in South Africa. (Naidoo, 1984, pp.211-217).

3.5.2. Brahma Kumaris: World Spiritual University

Spiritual pioneer, Dada Lekhraj initiated the organisation in 1936 in Hyderabad, Sindh (presently Pakistan). In 1950 the headquarters went to Mount Abu where the organisation continued to grow. At present three women; Dadi Prakashmani, Dadi Janki, and Dadi Hirdaya Mohini are the leaders of the movement. In 1985 the South African branch of Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University was inaugurated.

The organisation “teaches a practical method of meditation that helps individuals understand their inner strengths and values” (Sister Usha, 2007). Spiritual growth and personal transformation will support the drive for world peace and justice. The name reflects the belief that women have qualities of patience, tolerance, sacrifice, kindness and love that can be emulated by the rest of the world for “personal growth, human relationship and for the development of caring communities” (Sister Usha, 2007).

3.5.3. Chinmaya Mission of South Africa

Balakrishna Menon initially worked as a journalist in the hope of influencing political, economic and social reform. His interaction with Swami Sivananda ignited his interest in Hindu spiritualism and in 1953 he established the Chinmaya Mission in India. The South African Branch was opened in January of 1981.

The purpose of the mission is to “provide individuals with wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, thus enabling them to become positive contributors to society” (Haripersad, 2007). The mission offers a number of activities suitable for the different age groups that allow participants to change selfish habits and sectarian attitude and to become charitable and tolerant towards all individuals.

3.5.4. Divine Life Society

The 20th century saw the birth of Swami Sivananda, founder of the Divine Life Trust Society in 1936 in Rishikesh, India. Swami Sahajananda, previously known as Sri V. Srinivasan, founded the Divine Life Trust Society in 1952 in South Africa.

The organisation focuses on the dissemination of spiritual knowledge through the publishing and distribution of free literature to interested organisations and individuals. The organisation offers a number of services at various service points. Services range from the protection of the environment to the medical camps and clinics. The movement continues to grow and impact on the lives of many disadvantaged individuals (Swami Sahajananda, 2003, pp.28-100).

4.5.5. Gayathri Peedam of South Africa

The inception of the Gayathri Peedam of South Africa on 22 September 1999 was undertaken by Gurudasamani Swami Shankarananda, a South African. Spiritual upliftment is the key to the development of the community. The centre is run by trustees and managed by an executive committee. Areas of involvement, aside from religious services, include: education, counselling, HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, and many others (*Souvenir Brochure*, 2004).

The organisation takes its teachings and inspirations from the teaching of Babaji, a student of Agastyar - one of the eighteen Siddhas (individuals who have achieved physical and spiritual perfection). Science, yoga, medicine, literature, and philosophy are just a few areas in which they made contributions (Guru Shankerananda, 2007).

3.5.6. Indian Academy of South Africa

Although this academy is not a religious body it has been included in the study as it is a body which supports activities related to the promotion of Indian music, dance, song and drama. The organisation and its leader had much support and respect within the Indian community, especially amongst the Hindus for the work that has been undertaken. According to Dr Naidoo, Indian religion and culture cannot be separated as all art forms have links to various religious deities and mythological characters and events (Naidoo, 2007).

The academy was formed in 1960 by Dr T.P. Naidoo to “promote and preserve forms of Indian classical dance, song and music” (Naidoo, 2007). The academy seeks to regularly produce events where dance, song, music and drama are offered and in this way to create an “interest in Indian arts and to create an awareness of the greatness of Indian Culture amongst Indians and other race groups in South Africa” (Naidoo, 2007).

3.5.7. ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)

In July 1966, ISKCON or the International Society for Krishna Consciousness was formally launched internationally. By mid 1974, Swami Pustakrishna headed a group of five ISKCON devotees, and launched a South African branch. They were based in Cape Town but soon relocated to Durban (Sooklal, 1986, p.57).

The devotees of the organisation belong to a large cross-section of the community. The linguistic affiliation of the devotees may be multitudinous, however the largest number of devotees belong to the Hindi-speaking group. This can be attributed to the fact that the Hare Krishna organisation is a Vaishnavite movement and Hindi-and Gujarati-speaking people are normally Vaishnavites, while Tamil and Telugu speakers are generally Shaivites (Sooklal, 1986, p.78).

Another favourable factor of the movement is their ability to take religion to the people. This entails visiting homes, walking the streets, and having public functions and celebrations outside the ashrams. This “activist” aspect of the movement has drawn large numbers of devotees from various races (Sooklal, 1986, p.80). The philosophy of the organisation is: Krishna is the only God and the Bhagavad Gita is the central scripture. Individuals from

various strata of society are drawn to the Hare Krishna Movement because of teachings that “emphasises both material as well as spiritual devotion” (Sooklal, 1986, p.125).

3.5.8. Manav Dharam Spiritual Education and Cultural Trust of South Africa

Teacher and founder of the organisation, Shri Hans Ji Maharaj disseminated the idea that God is found within man and not in the physical structures created by man. The South African Branch of the organisation began in 1996. Although it is a fairly new organisation, there are already six branches and many cell-groups. The organisation sees its responsibility in “spiritual, cultural, educational, religious and social upliftment of society” (Singh, 2007).

The organisation does not propagate the teachings of Sanathan Dharma but bases its teaching on Hindu religious philosophy. Followers of the religion seek enlightenment and practical advice from the teachings of the founder and its present leader.

3.5.9. Radha Soami Sathsang

The founder of the Radhasoami organisation, Soamiji Maharaj, believes that “each of us ... must escape from the material world to return to its true spiritual home” (Rinehart, 2004, p.216-217). Whilst the influence of this organisation extends mostly over Hindi and Punjabi speaking people, there are many followers who belong to other religions. Whilst the organisation has a strong Sikh influence, teachings of all religions are accepted and shared at the gatherings.

Whilst the international headquarters was founded in 1891, the South African branch was established around 1950. The organisation is “dedicated to a science of inner development under the guidance of a spiritual teacher” (Knapp, 2007). Like other reformed organisations, there are “no rituals, no priestly class, no mandatory contributions nor compulsory gatherings” (Knapp, 2007).

3.5.10. Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa

Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Centre in 1897 in India. What began as a small organisation, soon developed into one of the largest reformed Hindu organisations in the world (Sooklal, 1988, p.1).

The organisation has its origins in a group of young men who came together with the intention of studying Hindu religion, philosophy and culture in Sea View, South Africa. In 1942 Swami Nischalananda formed the Centre. An important teaching of the Ramakrishna organisation is the idea of brotherhood that “transcends caste, class, creed, sex, religion, nationality and race” (Ariyan, 1989, p. 72). The movement gained popularity amongst the traditionalists and those who sought new teachings as it “did not denounce rites, ceremonies, myths and legends” (Ariyan, 1989, p. 72).

The organisation has great influence on Hindu thought and ideology. The essence of the organisation is the spiritual reawakening of Hindus. The main focus of the organisation is the “revitalization of Hindu religion and culture” (Sooklal, 1988, p.3). The Ramakrishna Centre has as its primary concern the promotion of spirituality through the dissemination of religious information. However, this only forms the core function of the movement. The movement also seeks to improve the social environment through humanitarian work and the programmes that focus on human development (Ramakrishna-sa.org, 2007).

3.5.11. Saiva Sithantha Sungum

His Holiness Sri Siva Soobramonia Guru Swamigal founded the Saiva Sithantha Sungum of South Africa in 1937. Each branch has a trained missionary to direct the branch and conduct services. The many activities reflect the ideology of the organisation which is to: “promote the universal brotherhood of man, encourage studies in religion and to create libraries, encourage living a divine life, foster vernacular education, promote culture and to preserve the Hindu heritage, and to serve mankind” (*Saiva Sithantha Sungum of South Africa Souvenir Brochure*, 1975, p. 6).

The Sungum was responsible for religious revival work being taken out of the temple. The twenty-two branches and hundreds of volunteers makes it possible for the sungum to organise activities to perpetuate the teachings of the great saints, for example Saint Ramalingar, Saint Agastayar and many others who worshipped Lord Shiva in his many forms (Yegambaram, 2007).

3.5.12. Sarva Dharma Ashram

The organisation was founded in June 1993 in Welbedacht, Chatsworth. Spiritual guidance and support is given by Divine Life International, which has its headquarters in India. The organisation seeks to serve the local community through a number of activities that is undertaken. The organisation works with other community organisations as well as commercial and industrial companies to bring comfort to the local community.

Swami Ramkripananda Saraswathi, the leader, believes in the motto “service to humanity is service to God” (*Sarva Dharma Ashram brochure*, 2007). The organisation propagates the teachings of Swami Sivananda and the Divine Life International Organisation.

3.5.13. Sathya Sai Movement of South Africa

Sathya Sai Baba was born in 1926 in Andhra Pradesh and is believed to be the reincarnation of Sai Baba of Shirdi who died in 1918. The growth of the movement lies in the “emphasis on Sathya Sai Baba himself as an incarnation of God, and devotion to him is understood to be crucial to spiritual progress” (Coppan, 2007).

In South Africa itself, the organisation was formalised in 1972. With over a hundred and fifty-four branches and countless cell-groups, the organisation is structured to provide service to people through a number of programs. The key focus of the organisation is the moral regeneration of mankind, irrespective of religious belief, language or race (Coppan, 2007). All teachings and discourses of the organisation can be traced back to Sathya Sai Baba himself.

3.5.14. Shree Bhagavata Vedanta Society

The organisation was founded in 1982. The teachings are based on the teachings of the Ramayana. Aspects that the organisation focuses on are: Hindu philosophy; values, ethics and morals according to Hindu law; religious and spiritual teachings; and yoga.

While the approach to Hinduism is contemporary, the teachings are taken from ancient texts. The organisation furthers the interest of renewed Hinduism and aims to bridge the gap

between orthodox practices and reformed teachings. Brother Haridas, the leader, stresses the promotion of “universal spiritual values of Hinduism through organised and systematic knowledge” that encourages “peace, non-violence, empowerment of individual and community” (Brother Haridas, 2007).

3.5.15. South African Hindu Maha Sabha

It was formed in 1910 to represent the cultural and religious needs and teachings of the Hindu community of South Africa (Naidoo, 1984, p.91). The formation of the organisation was influenced by Professor Bhai Parmanand’s visit to South Africa in 1905. One of the aims of the organisation is to help the Hindu community “achieve the cultural ideals” and “to promote enlightenment among the people” (*South African Maha Sabha Brochure*, 2006, p.2). Teachings are taken from ancient Hindu texts.

Although this is not a reformed organisation, it has been included as it is the principal umbrella body of all Hindus and Hindu organisations, Sanathanist or reformed. Although “the organisation exists primarily for the purpose of co-ordinating the work of its affiliate institutions” (*South African Maha Sabha Brochure*, 2006, p.3), as a leading body it also disseminates information and offers a range of services.

3.5.16. Swami Narayan Mandir

Swami Narayan “advocated a program of religious and social reform, criticizing widow immolation, eliminating animal sacrifice from Vedic rituals, providing food for the destitute in times of famine and plague, and holding renouncers to a strict code of conduct” (Rinehart, 2004, p. 215). Although, members are a warm and welcoming group, a disappointing fact is the exclusivity, in practice, of the Gujarati-speaking community as members of this group.

The organisation advocates social care, moral and cultural growth and care, medical and educational care as well as environmental care as part of the spiritual development of the individual. Teachings are taken from Lord Swami Narayan, the first saint associated with the organisation (*Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (South Africa)*

Silver Jubilee Brochure, 1999, p.28). The organisation promotes a strict code of conduct from all members.

3.5.17. Vedanta Centre South Africa

The South African branch of the organisation was inaugurated in 1996. The international leader, Swami Parthasarathy, is also the author of the *Vedanta Treatise: The Eternities*, a widely known and read book amongst Hindus. The organisation has a “multi-disciplined academic base” (Vedanta Academy Brochure, circa 2005/6), which offers practical Vedanta for businessmen, executives from the corporate world, professionals and academics.

The mission of the organisation is to “teach the knowledge of Vedanta in South Africa” (Pillay, 2007). The teachings are not only focussed on Hindus but individuals who belong to various faiths as the discourses are philosophical and spiritual in nature, and not religious. However, aspects of the Hindu life-style are encouraged, for example, the yoga lessons and meditation.

3.5.18. Vedanta Institute of South Africa

Brother Jayram founded the South African branch of the organisation in 1992. The main activity is the propagation of Hindu philosophy and values. The spiritual head of the international headquarters is Swami Parthasarathy. Although similar to the Vedanta Centre South Africa, it is an independent organisation.

The philosophical teachings are taken to the people through lectures given at religious gatherings, by special invitation, or through special camps. Special guests of the organisation such as devotional singers, philosophers, academics and saints, interact with the local Hindu community whenever possible in a bid to improve the spiritual and philosophical lives of individuals (Angejan, 2007).

3.5.19. Vedanta Mission

The Mission seeks to spread the teachings of the Lord as given in the Bhagavad Gita, Vedas, Upanishads and other ancient texts. The organisation was founded in 1965. Its present spiritual head, Guru Deva, states that the organisation has participated in many activities around the province in attempting to give Hindus spiritual and religious knowledge (Guru Dewa, 2007).

Through the printed word and participation in religious and cultural activities within the community, the mission seeks to explain key concepts of Hinduism, Hindu scripture and Hindu lifestyle (Guru Dewa, 2007).

3.6. Conclusion

The Hindus who arrived in South Africa more than a hundred and forty years ago brought with them a religious and cultural legacy that still exists today. Their hard work and menial contributions helped to build temples, many of which are still standing. Their deep faith and perseverance in maintaining their religious practices in a harsh and often unrelenting environment gave roots to the Hindu religion in a foreign country. Inevitably, their toiling, industrious nature and steadfastness ensured their financial improvement and gave rise to the educational development of the community. This in turn influenced the search for meaningful religious practices and spiritual development which was gained through the reformed Hindu organisations.

Religious beliefs are still varied, as can be seen in the number of reformed Hindu organisations that are in existence. However, it is obvious that the number of reformed organisations is growing and that those in existence are gaining more devotees. Education, western influence on thought and religious ideology, and the need to practice Hinduism in a meaningful and spiritually uplifting manner will definitely assist in the growth of the reformed organisations. Other positive influences are the inter-linguistic marriages, a new democracy in South Africa and a constitution that protects the religious rights of all South Africans.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

Research in the field of social science involves both exploration and description which are included in this study. Descriptive studies allows for the in-depth description of specific organisations (such as the modern Hindu organisations researched here) and their specific characteristics (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 81).

This study explored the provision of religious and cultural information by reformed Hindu organisations and the challenges they faced. Exploratory studies are essential when researching a topic that has not been researched in the past, or when information regarding the topic is not available (Babbie & Mouton, 2007, p. 80).

The specific area of this research is based on the activities of reformed Hindu organisations in the provision of religious and cultural information. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. The actual research design involved a number of different data collection techniques and a mixing of research methodologies which is known as triangulation (Struwig & Stead, 2001, pp.18-19).

4.2. Research Design

A research design is defined as a “set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem” (Mouton, 2002, p. 107). Miller and Brewer (2003, p.262) go a step further to state that the research design is the model that the researcher chooses to use to represent proof of the research and the conclusions reached at the end of the study. It is seen as a “blueprint” of the research and outlines at least four problems that the researcher has to deal with: “what question to study; what data are relevant; what data to collect; and how to analyse the results” (Yin, 1989, p. 21).

The research problem determines the research design which includes “plans and strategies to seek, explore and discover answers” to research questions. Nachmias and Nachmias (1992,

pp.77-78) describe the research design as “a plan that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting observations”.

Once the organisations were identified and contacted, their key services, modus operandi and related issues had to be investigated and analysed. All services linked to the preservation and the transfer of religious and cultural information were investigated. Formal and informal archival and library services of the key organisations, where in existence, were also investigated. The normal functions of library services and aspects of operations and management that affect the preservation and provision of information had to be studied.

Another aspect of the study investigated the arrival of the Indians in this country, especially the Hindus, who are not an indigenous people of South Africa. Their arrival in this country and reasons for their arrival were explored to gain insight into their survival. Historical research revealed how religious, cultural and social needs were catered for or ignored, and is discussed in chapter 3.

It has been noted that “researchers in cultural studies observed the emergence of the sub-cultures, ... and asked, ‘Why have these groups emerged and by what processes do they produce their identities, meanings and culture?’” (Gray, 2003, p.40). Similar questions could be asked of the reformed Hindu organisations: Why have these groups emerged and how do they provide their congregants with religious and cultural information to sustain their followings? This, too, is explained in chapter 3.

Once the problem was formulated, the key concepts had to be defined. This was followed by the development of the questionnaire or interview schedule and data collection and analysis.

4.3. Research Methodology

Miller and Brewer (2003, p. 112) see research methodology as being “fundamental to the construction of all forms of knowledge”. They continue by saying that it differs from research design in that it is “a set of guidelines that are widely known and generally adhered to. These guidelines have been developed and refined over time and help to define a subject discipline and to differentiate it from others”.

The research methodology, which includes the tools, assists the researcher to reason out and explain the facts and proceed systematically through the evidence. It can also be seen as a means of communicating the information to one's peers. It affords one the opportunity to transfer the research one has undertaken together with all the relevant evidence to one's peers. In this way one's work is accepted and can be verified (Miller & Brewer, 2003, pp. 112-113).

Research can be "dichotomised into qualitative and quantitative approaches" (Powell, 1999, p.3). Qualitative research methods "involve a problem-solving approach that is highly structured in nature and that relies on the quantification of concepts, where possible, for the purposes of measurement and evaluation. This research methodology focuses on the observation of events from the perspective of those involved and attempts to understand why individuals behave as they do" (Powell, 1999, p.3). On the other hand, the main goal of quantitative research is the formulation of a generalisation based on the establishment of relationships that demonstrate this generalisation. This process involves the use of statistics and numerical values (Miller & Brewer, 2003, pp. 192-3).

This study investigated a social process, that is *The provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekewini region*. Therefore, aspects of qualitative research were used.

4.3.1. Qualitative research

Miller & Brewer (2003, p. 239) state that qualitative research "stresses social meanings rather than the collection of numerate statistical data. It is also closely associated with a variety of data collection techniques that have a long history of use which, over the years have developed authority and reputation".

While qualitative research does not prescribe any single method for research, methods such as ethnography, unstructured interviewing, participant observation and discourse analysis are used to gather data (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 239). "Qualitative data refers to any information that the researcher gathers that is not expressed in numbers. This includes information represented as words, pictures, drawings, paintings, photographs, films, videotapes, music and soundtracks" (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 13). Therefore, all data can be

said to be “naturally occurring, and come in the form of words and images rather than numbers” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 13).

However, Taylor (2000, p. 67) impresses upon researchers that “qualitative methods include historical, descriptive, correlational, causal-comparative, experimental action research and development research which yields numerical data and are evaluated by utilising descriptive or inferential statistics”.

Struwig & Stead (2001, p. 11) state that “there are many research methods associated with qualitative research”. Participant observation, archival source analysis, interviews, focus groups, and content analysis are methods employed by qualitative researchers. Struwig and Stead (2001, p. 11) view qualitative research as being: “interdisciplinary, multi-paradigmatic, and multi-method”. As will be shown, this study employs various methods of research for data collection.

It has to be accepted that human behaviour does not occur in a vacuum and that the environment exerts certain influences on human behaviour. Contextualism, a characteristic of qualitative research, recognizes the unique environment or social context within which the participants or organisations exist. The reformed Hindu organisations may exist in a multi-racial society, but their congregants comprise mostly of South Africans of Indian origin whose circumstances have changed over time, as is discussed in chapter 3.

“Social events are not static and therefore understanding change and process is imperative” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 12). Process research, an aspect of the qualitative approach, allows for the study of social change and the processes involved (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 12). These reformed Hindu organisations were mooted in a time, especially in South Africa, where there was economic and social development amongst the Indians. The growth of the reformed Hindu organisations was also influenced by the educational achievements of the Indians. The larger Indian community was forced to make changes in their lifestyles and ideologies, and this included a change in religious practices which is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

An essential characteristic of the qualitative approach is that it has to occur in a natural setting; and secondly, the researcher should not attempt to control the conditions and behaviour of the participants. For this study, the researcher visited the ashrams concerned only on the days that research was undertaken or when interviews had to be conducted. Although the researcher had visited the ashrams on previous occasions, prior to the beginning of the research, such visits occurred during religious celebrations and other public gatherings. Aside from abiding by the religious requirements, the researcher did not get involved in the day-to-day running or organisation of the reformed Hindu movements that participated in this study.

The study into the role of reformed Hindu organisations in the provision of information involved the qualitative research method as much of the data that was sought was not numerical in nature. Research methods that were employed were the survey method together with record and content analysis.

4.3.2. Quantitative research

“The point of departure of the quantitative approach is numerical measurement of specific aspects of phenomena. It is a very structured approach and requires for explanations to be formulated in terms of the relationships between attributes or variables. The quantitative study is condensed into a number key attributes or dimensions which have to be in numerical form so that they may be measured” (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 192-3).

“Quantitative research requires that the data collected be expressed in numbers (i.e. they can be quantified)” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 7). It has already been stated that quantitative measures were used in this study. The numerical data that was used refers to such things as number of publications, frequency of publications, number of library members, number of texts and other printed materials in the collection, number of branches of an organisation, number of services being offered, and other such data.

The collection of quantitative data, as listed in the above paragraph and the resulting descriptions in the form of graphs and charts is called descriptive statistics (Black, 1999, p.46). Descriptive statistics deal with the tabulation of data, their presentation in tabular,

graphical, or pictorial form, and the calculation of descriptive measures (Powell, 1999, p. 201). Although the data can reveal various important insights, it will “not provide evidence to support the existence of relationships” (Black, 1999, p.46).

4.3.3. Triangulation

Triangulation as a school of thought, allows for researchers to be “flexible and to select a range of methods that are appropriate to the research problem under investigation” (Branen, 1992, p.11). This implies that data for the study is collected using both the qualitative and the quantitative approaches for the research. This, then, is “triangulation”.

Triangulation is an older, more widely used term than “multiple research strategies”, which describes the use of a range of methods employed to collect different types of data, especially when each approach is used in relation to a different aspect of the research problem. The different sets of data that is required to solve the research problem can be integrated with one another.

For the triangulation approach to be successful the researcher has to “specify, as precisely as possible, the particular aims of each method, the nature of the data that is expected and how the data relates to the theory or research problem” (Branen, 1992, p.16).

Quantitative and qualitative approaches can complement each other and may be combined in a number of ways for triangulation to occur. Whilst the qualitative approach is typically associated with participant observation, the quantitative approach is associated with structured interviews, structured observation, and content analysis (Branen, 1992, pp.57-59). Both, quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in this study.

Branen is of the opinion that quantitative and qualitative research can be combined to provide a general picture. “Quantitative research may be employed to plug gaps in a qualitative study which arise because, for example, the researcher cannot be in more than one place at any one time, or alternatively, it may be that not all issues are solely amenable to a quantitative investigation or solely to a qualitative investigation” (Branen, 1992, p.60). Such is the case of this present study.

It is accepted that the quantitative approach is used to “highlight the researcher’s concerns” whereas the qualitative approach defines “the subject’s perspective as a point of departure” (Branen, 1992, p.60).

The quantitative approach does not “readily allow the researcher to establish relationships” amongst the variables of the study as it is “often weak when it comes to exploring the reasons for those relationships”. A qualitative study can then be used to “help explain the factors underlying the broad relationships that are established” (Branen, 1992, p.61).

Using both approaches provides a “means of bridging the macro-micro gulf”. “Quantitative research can tap large-scale, structural features of social life, while qualitative research tends to address small scale behavioural aspects” (Branen, 1992, p.61). Therefore, when a researcher wishes to investigate both levels, it may be necessary to integrate both approaches to the research at hand.

4.4. Data Collection

Community surveys can be effectively undertaken using a variety of data-collection methods and sources of information. Busha & Harter (1980, p.167) state that this type of research is considered “nominal research which does not involve collecting data for use in testing hypotheses. This type of study deals with the identification and description of a variety of community features that have a real or assumed relationship to the utilisation of library resources and services”. They believe that “the most effective surveys are often conducted as interdisciplinary studies, insofar as both the collection and analysis of data are concerned”. Cultural groups, churches and other religious institutions and organisations form a part of the agencies that work within the communities. Information about the institutions can often be gathered from the institutions themselves (Busha & Harter, 1980, p.168). The present investigation therefore can be considered to be a community survey of a sub-group.

The information collected from community surveys could be used to train, re-train library staff, plan buildings, develop resources and facilities of temple/ashram libraries and expand the services offered by municipal or public libraries. Such surveys also help to determine “the unique requirements of special clientele within the institutions” (Busha & Harter, 1980,

p.169). The reformed Hindu organisations included in this study may be seen to have “unique requirements” and could, consequently, make contact with library associations and institutions that offer library and personnel development courses and, in that way enhance their facilities further.

For the purposes of this study, a number of data collection methods were used. Interviews formed the main data collection method used. The survey was based on interviews conducted with representatives of key reformed Hindu organisations. Interviews were conducted to collect information relating to the role of key reformed Hindu organisations in the preservation and dissemination of religious and cultural information. Other methods used in the study were historical research, observation, as well as document and content analysis and these will also be discussed later.

4.4.1. Interview

Aside from observation, document and content analysis, and research into already published and unpublished texts, the structured interview formed the backbone of the study. Of the three types of interviews: semi-structured; unstructured and structured, the structured interview was preferred as current data regarding the provision of religious, cultural and social information was required. A structured interview “consists of a list of specific questions” (Suler, 2004) from which the researcher does not digress. The structured interview can be considered to be a question and answer session. The interview schedule used in this study had a prescribed set of questions that were asked of all representatives. The strict order of asking the same questions to all interviewees meant that the responses to the research questions lent themselves to descriptive analysis which is included in chapters five and six.

The main function of the interviews was to generate data through answers given by the respondents. A structured survey/interview, which is a quantitative tool, was used (Taylor, 2000, pp. 166-167). The number of questions and their sequence remained the same for all respondents. The questions themselves had identical wording for all interviews. Most of the questions asked were open-ended but required answers that were factual in nature. The respondents were free to “clarify and qualify” their answers giving details that they saw as

being relevant (Bailey, 1994, pp. 120-121). This was useful as the study was exploratory in nature.

For the purposes of the present study, the exploratory survey was accepted as the best method of collecting the necessary data. "An exploratory survey, often conducted as qualitative research, can increase the researcher's familiarity with the phenomenon in question, it can help to clarify concepts, it can be used to establish priorities for future research, it can identify new problems, and last, but not least, exploratory research can be used to gather information with practical applications" (Powell, 1999, pp.58-59). During the interview phase of this study a number of different responses were given for each question and sub-question that was asked. The responses given by the interviewees were analysed and are discussed in chapters five, and six. Recommendations and concluding remarks are discussed in chapter eight.

The interview marks the acceptance that "knowledge is generated between humans, often through conversation" (Cohen et al. 2007, p.349) and is used regularly by social scientists to collect data relevant to the chosen topic. In order to gather information related to this study, structured interviews were conducted. This allowed for respondents to see and interact with the researcher.

Essentially the reason for choosing the interview and the structured one in particular is that "any variation between the responses can be attributed to the actual difference between the respondents (or the organisations they represent) and not to the variations in the interview process" (Bailey, 1994, pp. 120-121).

Personal interviews were chosen for flexibility, control of the interview situation, the high response rate and the collection of supplementary data (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981, pp.187-193). The emphasis of such interviews allowed for the collection of "distinctive views and perspectives to which other kinds of evidence can be related" (Gillham, 2000, p.82). However, since this was an exploratory study, there were no other known studies to which this could be compared or related.

The interview was chosen over the written questionnaire so as not to bother respondents with the task of writing out answers (Gillham, 2000, p.13) as well as to show that the researcher

was truly interested in the process of collecting data. This method of data collection was also chosen, to make the interviewee appreciate the contribution he/she was making to the study (Gillham, 2000, p.7).

As the individuals who were interviewed were leaders and high-profile people in the community, the researcher believes that their knowledge served as a major source of data. The interviewees were representatives of the reformed Hindu organisations listed in 3.5.

The interview itself began with the researcher explaining the purpose of the research, and in particular, the need for the interview. The interviewee was informed that he/she was free to ask questions at any time.

Data collected from the interview was entered onto a spreadsheet, where possible, for analysis and interpretation. The interviews were analysed as a single group - see data analysis in 4.6. below.

4.4.2. Historical research

History records show any development and advancement of socio-economic standards and changes in thoughts and ideologies that occur. The Hindus in South Africa experienced these changes in religious philosophy and practice. These changes were enhanced and affirmed by the appearance of the reformed Hindu organisations which offered the devotees a modern approach to an ancient religion. The need for such organisations and their developmental histories, together with their philosophies and teachings had to be researched in order to ascertain the role that the reformed Hindu organisations play in the provision of religious and cultural information.

Busha & Harter (1980, p. 92) quote B.A. Hinsdale's definition of history: "history is the story of man living in social relations in the world, as traced in various records and memorials..." But historical research is essential when assessing "the importance of a specifically historical understanding of social phenomena" (Taylor, 2000, p. 141) such as the section on the reasons for the growth of the reformed Hindu organisations in this study. In order to "facilitate the

specific social research project at hand” (Taylor, 2000, p. 141) historical research was undertaken to place the reformed Hindu organisations in the South African context.

Historical research “typically goes beyond mere description and attempts to interpret the facts as reconstructed” by the researcher. In other words, the historian attempts to “give meaning to the facts” should they be relevant to the theory (Powell, 1999, p. 65). In a study of this nature historical facts are required to understand the need for the establishment and growth of the reformed Hindu organisations. The political situation in South Africa, the socio-economic standing and improvement of the Indian community, as well as changes in individual thought and ideology, and the influence of western education, are just some of the “outside” history that cannot be ignored.

The researcher used material housed in the libraries of the University of KwaZulu-Natal at their Howard College and Westville campuses, as well as the Documentation Centre based at the Westville Campus. Brochures and other materials housed at the various ashrams were also used. Internet sites were useful for background information regarding the reformed organisations.

4.4.3. Observation

Powell states that to “observe” means “to watch attentively in a scientific manner” (1999, p. 117). Observation is a data collection technique that can be influenced by the setting or environment that is chosen for the observation. Personal observation offers the researcher direct access to information that is not contaminated by bias. However, for the purposes of this study the observation that was undertaken involved the analysis of information collections. Therefore the presence of the researcher did not impact negatively on the workings of the organisations concerned.

The phenomena or items of interest are observed in their natural settings (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981, pp.153-155). Since the library, book shop or repository of the various reformed Hindu organisations are situated close to or are a part of the ashram’s buildings, all observations, with regard to the library layout and archival collections that do exist, were done on site. Observation by the researcher alone was undertaken for this study.

Observation was used to examine the housing of collections available, the type of classification (where they exist), the kinds of printed publications, methods of shelving, preservation techniques (where they exist) and lending facilities. Observations were recorded on the spot during the session by simply writing down the essential facts (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, p. 184). A simple checklist which included the following items was used: use of computer, use of classification system (any kind), method of shelving, special features of collection, types of information formats, use of accessions register, records of users, and spine markings.

4.4.4. Document and content analysis

Content analysis “involves the description and analysis of texts in order to represent their contents” (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 43). This process takes the form of qualitative assessment of words and terms used in documents and focuses on the description of the contents of the text/s being analysed.

The “gathering and analysis of textual content” which was used in this study, is referred to as content analysis (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 13). Document and content analysis was essential to ascertain what content was available to devotees, what language/s were used and what types of information were contained in the documents. Both printed and non-printed sources of information were assessed.

Content analysis is a “procedure designed to facilitate the objective analysis” of information “in printed or audiovisual materials” (Busha & Harter, 1980, p.171). Content analysis, as such, promotes “objective, systematic and quantitative descriptions” of communication mediums such as books, newspapers, magazines and a variety of other publications. Content analysis was undertaken in the present study for the purposes of making “explanatory assertions” about the mediums used to convey information, the authors, the documents, the language used, and the information itself (Babbie, 1990, p. 100). These aspects are analysed in chapters five and six. Publications by the organisations, the information that was distributed by the organisations, and the information that was received by the organisations from their headquarters or other organisations and agencies were examined. Descriptions were recorded to determine the range of subjects covered. Both printed and non-print media

that were available in collections were analysed. Whatever printed matter or electronic formats were available were analysed. Although no checklist was used in this part of the exercise, copious notes were made at the respective venues for analysis when all interviews were completed.

The contents of documents are analysed in an effort to make meanings and messages contained within the documents more precise. The importance of textual information can also be assessed. For clear and accurate content analysis, elements and characteristics of the information have to be defined and classified (Busha & Harter, 1980, pp.171-174). Analysis of the documents held by the reformed Hindu organisations was not in-depth and did not include every single publication that was disseminated by the organisations. Random samples of the series were analysed. Where interviewees pointed out popular choices of titles borrowed or bought by devotees, these titles were analysed more closely.

4.4.5. The researcher

Traditionally, the researcher who employed extended participant observation became a part of the sub-culture or cultural group under investigation. However, as the researcher was already familiar with the teachings and philosophies of the various reformed Hindu organisations, she knew that many of the teachings were contradictory to the Sanatanist way of life that she lives but this did not interfere with the research as the basic teachings and principles are the same for all Hindus.

The researcher did not have problems of “over-identification” with any one of the above-mentioned organisations (Gray, 2003, p. 84). Nor did she show bias towards any one of the organisations, as she is not a bona fide member of any organisation that participated in the study. Once respondents realised that this was a study for academic purposes, they were cordial and very forthcoming with their responses.

Mouton (2001, p.148-149) states that “a researcher is often seen as a stranger, an outsider, or an intruder”. This was not a problem as the researcher is of Indian origin, had a basic knowledge of Hindi and Tamil, was a Hindu by birth, and wore eastern clothing at all times.

Traditional attire was worn, such as saris and Punjabis. The researcher was seen to recognise and respect the religion and culture, which in turn, made her more acceptable and accepted.

One significant aspect of the research was that the researcher did not have to make any special efforts to pass as a practising Hindu or ask questions that would otherwise be asked by a non-Hindu.

Further, respect for the religion, denomination and individual philosophies was shown at all times. Negative or demeaning comments and questions were never mentioned or asked. From the very beginning, the researcher maintained a dignified and cordial relationship with the respondents.

As this is not a detailed study of the Hindu religion as practised by the various reformed organisations, religious practices and teachings have been mostly ignored as a part of this research.

4.4.6. Population

The study population was one of purposive sampling as the organisations chosen had to fit the profile given in chapter one, 1.7.1. All organisations had to fit the description of a reformed Hindu organisation, had to be more than five years old with a congregation of 250 devotees or more. This meant that the number of organisations was limited to 19. All interviewees were senior members of the reformed Hindu organisations and had been members or leaders for a number of years.

4.5. The Interviews

Once the organisations were identified, they were contacted telephonically and informed of the topic of the study and were given a brief summary of what the study entailed. Only those organisations that were able to answer the three filter questions were included in the study. The filter questions were: How old is the organisation? How many devotees attend the services and the functions of the organisation regularly (this determined congregation size)? What are teachings/ values that the organisation propagates?

All filter questions were asked telephonically/ prior to the actual interview. Interviews were set up so as not to inconvenience the interviewee. The majority of the interviews took place on location of the ashrams or on property belonging to the organisation. A few took place at restaurants and at places of business belonging to the interviewees.

The questions asked were those that appear in Appendix 1. As questions were asked notes were taken. The interviewees were always given the opportunity to air their views and opinions on matters relating to the study. Such comments and opinions are reflected in chapter 6, where necessary. Interviews generally were about two hours long.

4.6. Data analysis

The data collected was analysed according to the objectives of the research. History, publications, services, international influences, training of priests (in their role as disseminators of information), generation, preservation, dissemination, celebrations, and other related sub-headings and headings were included in the interview.

The statistical analysis was used to “summarise observations or data in such a manner that they provided descriptions to the research questions” (Powell, 1999, p. 180).

As this was an exploratory, descriptive and explanatory study, the data collected was used to explore the kinds of information services offered, the formats used to preserve and share information and the interpersonal means used to disseminate information. “On the most basic level, descriptive statistical analysis can indicate how many persons, objects, scores, or any other countable variable was measured. These calculations are known as frequency distributions and are usually reported in tables” (Powell, 1999, p. 183). To enhance the overall meanings of data collected “tables and pictorial representations were used to portray characteristics of the cases with respect to the variables that were measured” (Powell, 1999, p. 183).

Computers are “frequently used for statistical analysis, especially when large amounts of data” are involved (Powell, 1999, p. 183). The researcher too, chose to use a computer for data analysis. A spreadsheet was used to collate the information and make the necessary

inferences. Since only 20 organisations were involved in the study, there was no need for a sophisticated statistical computer program.

Once the interviews had been completed, the data was processed. The respondents' answers were put into categories and patterns were sought. Observation of the library and its contents catered for the content analysis of this study. Documents as well as other formats housed at the reformed Hindu organisations were analysed for content, and language in which the information was provided.

4.7. Validity and reliability

The validity of a study is "the truth or trustworthiness of the findings" (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p.18). Internal validity of a study is "the extent to which its design and data" allows the researcher to "draw accurate conclusions..." (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 97). Struwig and Stead (2001, pp.18-19) state that qualitative researchers use triangulation to provide valid evidence, especially where a number of data sources and various methods of data collection are used.

As noted, triangulation was used in the present study. Data collection involved the use of interviews, historical research, observation, as well as document and content analysis. Data collection methods have already been discussed in this chapter under 4.4.

There are a number of factors that could impact on the study either negatively or positively. One such factor known as researcher effects, refers to the degree to which the researcher's "biases and prejudices" (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 144) influences the reporting. Another important factor is the presence of the interviewer which may "encourage or discourage responses from the participants" (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 144). As noted earlier (4.4.5.) the researcher was not a member of any of the reformed Hindu organisations that participated in the survey and was therefore not biased towards any particular respondent or reformed Hindu organisation. The interviewees accepted the researcher as a Hindu because of the eastern attire worn by her, and by the use of the Sanskrit greeting.

External validity refers to the extent to which the conclusions may be generalised to other contexts. One method of “ensuring external validity” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 134) is to conduct the interview in a real-life setting, that is, to conduct the interview at a place where the respondent feels at home. This was done for the present study as all interviews were conducted at ashrams.

Reliability refers to the “extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent or stable” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 130). This study did not involve any testing, therefore, scales and weight readings have not been included. However, “a study is replicable when the study’s research process is clearly and accurately described” (Struwig & Stead, 2001, p. 6). Other researchers will be able to repeat this study should they wish to as the research design and methodology has been described in this chapter.

Observation and interview reliability were addressed in this study (Struwig & Stead, 2001, pp. 134-135). Notes that were made during the observation have been stored. The interviews were structured, that is, the same set of questions was asked in the same order to all interviewees. The questions for the interview were tested on two individuals from reformed Hindu organisations.

4.8. Conclusion

The essence of research methodology is to ensure that the researcher has conducted the investigation in an acceptable, honest way and that the results of the study add to the body of knowledge. Research methodology is important as it determines the validity of the study. The researcher has discussed all aspects of the research design and methodology that was used in this research. The use of the triangulation approach in this study has helped to cover all aspects of the study, that is, the exploratory and descriptive aspects of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

5.1. Introduction

The objectives of the study were attained by conducting interviews with representatives of reformed Hindu organisations, observing their library collections and analysing their documents. The discussion of the survey results follows in chapter six. The analysis of the documents and their contents is discussed in chapter eight.

A total of 19 organisations participated in the study. The objectives of the study were listed in chapter one, 1.3., but are repeated here for the benefit of the analysis that has been done.

A thorough analysis of the interviews was essential to understand the kinds of information services that exist within the reformed Hindu organisations, the structures and policies that guide the provision of such services, what print-based information sources are available and what contents they offer, the sources of repackaged information, how the reformed Hindu organisations provide information that is not print-based, the influence of visiting specialist on publications, the type of information that is provided through electronic formats, and finally, what challenges the reformed Hindu organisations face.

The findings of the survey are analysed according to the objectives and the questions that were asked. However, the questions have not been repeated but the discussions have been placed under relevant subheadings.

5.2. Analysis of Objective One

The objective was: **To discern the kind of information services offered.** This objective led to three questions numbered 1.1., 1.2., and 1.3. The analysis of the sub-questions that made up each question is given below.

5.2.1. Analysis of question 1.1.

The main question was “**What types of information services are offered?**”. The sub questions have been analysed as follows:

Organisations with a library/library service/repository

Five reformed Hindu organisations had libraries but no book shops. There were 13 reformed Hindu organisations that did have libraries. There was only one organisation that answered the question negatively. The organisation, however, did have a collection of material, that is, books, brochures, pamphlets, CDs, and other non-book material for sale and a small display shelf.

Type of stock held in library/library service/repository

It was essential to ascertain the types of information media held by the reformed Hindu organisations.

Table 2: Stock held in library/library service/repository

| Type of information medium | Number of organisations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Books/Monographs | 19 |
| Photographs | 18 |
| Brochures/Leaflets | 17 |
| CDs/DVDs | 12 |
| Magazines/Journals | 12 |
| Computer | 12 |
| Special editions of books | 9 |
| Audio cassettes | 8 |
| Newspapers | 5 |
| OHP | 3 |
| Artefacts (statues, metal objects, book stands for reading, stone carvings) | 2 |

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations had more than one type of information medium in the collection. Books were a part of the library collections of the 19 organisations.

Organisations with museum/display centre

Six organisations had museums or display centres on their premises. Display centres housed religious pictures, large charts with quotations from religious texts and religious leaders, whilst the museums housed artefacts, old religious books, religious paraphernalia and items of clothing. Museums and display centres were found at either the older organisations or those organisations that seemed to have sufficient funds to afford this feature.

Organisations with archives

Eight organisations had archives. One reformed Hindu organisation was in the process of developing an archive. Many organisations did have a collection of old minutes of meetings, and other printed material used in the running of the organisation in the past. Interviewees did not see this documentation as being a part of the archive.

Services offered by the organisations

This question was asked to establish what avenues other than religious services and library services were available for the provision of religious and cultural information, for example, language classes will enable devotees to access religious information from the original source of choice, which is, the Vedas or other religious texts.

Table 3 below lists the services offered by the organisations. When offering these services, the leaders and elders of the reformed Hindu organisations use religious and cultural information. For example, during the course of counselling devotees, spiritual leaders will use religious advice offered in Hindu religious texts.

Table 3: Services offered by the organisations

| Services | Number of organisations |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Counselling, for example, marriage and family | 16 |
| Social programmes | 14 |
| Language classes | 11 |
| Meditation | 11 |
| Training of priests | 9 |
| Printing | 9 |
| Youth groups | 9 |
| Publishing | 8 |
| Medical clinics | 5 |
| Rehabilitation programmes | 4 |
| Other services | 3 |
| Homeopathic clinics | 2 |
| Western education | 2 |
| Women's forum | 2 |
| Arts, crafts, sewing and baking | 2 |
| Disaster relief | 2 |

Most organisations offered a few services such as medical clinics and counselling and not only religious and cultural services. These clinics, counselling services and other services were seen to improve the lives of devotees, especially in the poorer communities. Religious and cultural information was offered during the provision of non-religious services, for example, marriage counsellors might make reference to marriage vows or characters from the Ramayan who have portrayed good qualities of being a wife or a husband (Swami Ramkripananda Saraswathi, 2007).

Format of the religious services

Question 1.1.6. was asked to ascertain how religious and cultural information was provided during the service. The services included aspects such as the singing of bhajans (songs). The

languages in which the songs are written and sung influence the devotees' understanding of the songs.

Table 4: Format of the religious services

| Format of religious service | Number of organisations |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Talk/discourse | 16 |
| Invocation | 13 |
| Singing | 13 |
| Shanti Path | 12 |
| Aarti | 12 |
| Special requested service | 6 |
| Question and answers | 5 |
| Story telling | 2 |
| Do not conduct religious service | 2 |

There was a single organisation, the Indian Academy of South Africa, which did not hold/organise services or sathsangs, but did say special prayers before shows and special functions. It has to be remembered that all art, dance, drama, music and lilas (religious plays) are performed in honour of God, therefore special mantras must be chanted before their renditions. Whilst the formats of the services may have differed, certain elements, for example, the invocation prayer, singing of religious hymns, talks/discourses, aarti and shanti path were conducted by most reformed Hindu organisations in Sanskrit or the language of choice used by the reformed Hindu organisation.

Regularity of religious services

This question was asked to establish how often devotees came together to pray and to listen to discourses as a means of sharing religious information. During these services religious leaders may read from a particular religious text or deliver a talk written especially for that function.

Table 5: Regularity of religious services

| Regularity | Number of organisations |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Functions held when necessary | 8 |
| Weekly | 7 |
| Daily | 5 |
| Twice weekly | 5 |

Languages in which services are conducted

This question was asked to establish how many of the Indian languages were being used by the reformed Hindu organisations during their religious services. This also helped the researcher to judge whether devotees still communicated in the Indian languages.

Table 6: Languages in which services are conducted

| Languages | Number of organisations |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| English | 18 |
| Hindi | 9 |
| Sanskrit | 9 |
| Tamil | 7 |
| Gujarati | 6 |
| Telegu | 4 |
| Other | 2 |

The Indian Academy of South Africa was not included in this table as it did not offer sathsangs. Eighteen reformed Hindu organisations used English as well as one Indian language during the services. Two organisations used English only, and one organisation encouraged singing in the Indian languages but spoke only English during the service and for the discourse. Other languages that were used during the religious services were Bengali and Marathi.

Languages in which songs are written

This question was asked to establish whether the written form of the Indian languages were still being used in South Africa by devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations. The singing of songs is the central activity of the religious service (sathsang). The language used by South African Hindus does impact on the accessibility of religious and cultural information as most religious information existed in the Indian vernacular languages in ancient times.

Table 7: Languages in which the songs are written

| Languages | Number of organisations |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| English transliterations | 15 |
| Hindi | 7 |
| Sanskrit | 5 |
| Other Indian languages | 4 |
| Tamil | 2 |
| Gujarati | 2 |
| Telugu | 1 |

A total of 15 organisations made use of religious songs that were transliterated into English script. A transliteration is the use of the English alphabet to phonetically represent an Indian language, that is, the words are spoken/sung in the Indian language but are written in English script. The high number of reformed Hindu organisations that use transliterations is reflective of the large number of devotees who could not read the vernacular scripts used by the reformed Hindu organisations. Songs that were written in Hindi were used by seven organisations. Hindi appeared to be the most popular language used by reformed Hindu organisations.

Provision of religious literature in Indian vernacular

All 19 organisations did provide religious literature to devotees and members but only 10 organisations provided religious literature in the Indian vernacular languages spoken by the devotees attending their sathsangs.

Religious Scriptures

Hindu religious scriptures have traditionally been written in the Indian vernacular languages. The Hindu religion is vast and there are a number of religious scriptures that a religious leader may choose to preach.

Table 8: Religious Scriptures

| Religious Scriptures | Number of organisations |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bhagavad Gitā | 15 |
| Vedas | 10 |
| Ramayan | 10 |
| Other religious texts | 8 |
| Upanishads | 7 |
| Srimad Bhagavatam | 5 |
| Texts written and commentaries given by religious elders | 5 |
| Thirukkural | 3 |
| Special prayer books | 2 |

Every organisation made use of at least one religious scripture that was relevant to the teachings of the organisation. Many reformed Hindu organisations have used two or more religious scriptures to serve their needs. Texts written by the elders include poetry, stories with morals, biographies of the saints and other books not containing religious information, but did have relevance to the religion and the teachings of the organisation concerned.

Table 9: Languages in which scriptures are written

| Language | Number of organisations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| English only | 14 |
| Sanskrit | 13 |
| Translations of religious texts (into English) together with Indian vernacular language | 11 |
| Tamil | 4 |
| Hindi | 3 |
| Telegu | 3 |
| Gujarati | 2 |
| Other | 1 |

Many of the religious texts that were used were written in the Indian languages but did have English transliterations. The reason for this kind of text was that many South African Indians do not read the vernacular script.

Readings from and explanations of the scriptures

This question was asked to ascertain whether religious and cultural information was sourced from the traditional religious texts.

Readings from the scriptures was done by 15 group leaders of reformed Hindu organisations, whilst two organisations did not offer readings from the scriptures but did offer sathsang. A further two organisations had no need for readings from any religious scriptures as they did not offer sathsang. Of the 15 organisations where the group leader did do readings from the scriptures, 13 group leaders gave explanations of the scriptures.

Table 10: Languages in which explanations are given

| Language | Number of organisations |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| English | 15 |
| Sanskrit | 4 |
| Hindi | 3 |
| Gujarati | 2 |
| Tamil | 1 |
| Telegu | 0 |

English was used by 15 reformed Hindu organisations as the medium of communication during sathsang. Of these 15 organisations, 13 of them gave explanations of the readings from the religious scriptures in English. As most of the reformed Hindu organisations did offer explanations in the Indian vernacular languages, it can be assumed that many Hindus still do speak in the Indian vernacular languages.

5.2.2. Analysis of question 1.2.

Organisations that had libraries/information services were asked questions 1.2. and 1.3. Of a total of 19 reformed Hindu organisations, 18 of them qualified to answer these questions.

Structures/ policies to guide the library/ book and non-book services

Library services are generally offered within the framework of organisational structures and policies which guide work processes, the kinds of information obtained and made available for users, as well as defining rules for users.

Number of organisations with organisational structures

There were only six reformed Hindu organisations that had formal organisational structures in place to run the library. However, all reformed Hindu organisations interviewed did have executive committees and sub-committees that performed various functions, and did have constitutions that set out rules and regulations for the library functions that were carried out by the organisations.

Organisations that have written guidelines for the provision of library or information services

Of the 18 organisations that qualified to answer this section, only eight organisations had specific guidelines for library or information services. The remaining 10 reformed Hindu organisations provided such services without written guidelines but with guiding decisions being taken by committee members in charge of the library or information centre when necessary.

Organisations that have specific individuals in charge of library services

Specific individuals were in charge of library and information service at 15 of the 18 reformed Hindu organisations. The 15 organisations had office management, volunteers, committee members and appointed members who took care of these services.

Organisations with mission statements which clearly outline aims and objectives of the library/information centre

Eight of the reformed Hindu organisations that made up this study had mission statements that included aims and objectives of the library or information centre. Although 10 of the reformed Hindu organisations did not have mission statements that included aims and objectives of the library, there were committees that took decisions regarding the running of the library/information centre.

Organisations that have a budget for library or information services

Three of the reformed Hindu organisations had budgets for library or information services. Of the 15 organisations that did not have budgets, seven relied on donations and five organisations depended on arbitrary amounts that committee members or individuals decided upon.

Organisations that do have records of library users/members

Seven reformed Hindu organisations did keep records of members and users of the library services, whilst another seven reformed Hindu organisations did keep visitors' books which could serve as records. The remaining four reformed Hindu organisations did not keep any records at all.

Rating of library services

Thirteen reformed Hindu organisations saw library services as being very valuable in providing resources to devotees and interested individuals. Five organisations saw library services as not valuable as they were not well used. Positive use of library services by researchers, priests and leaders of the organisation was reported by 14 reformed Hindu organisations.

5.2.3. Analysis of question 1.3.

The main question, **1.3.**, asked “**Is this organisation affiliated to other organisations?**”. This question was asked with the intention of ascertaining whether reformed Hindu organisations shared library resources, information about library services, or worked with each other, in providing the local Hindus with religious and cultural information.

Organisations affiliated to other organisations

Thirteen of the organisations that participated in the study were affiliated to other local organisations. Affiliations with the International headquarters of the same movement were maintained by 11 of the reformed Hindu organisations. Eight of the reformed Hindu organisations were affiliated to the South African Hindu Maha Sabha.

Organisations that used the services of other organisations for the provision of library or information services

There was a single organisation that used the services of other organisations in the running of the organisation's library or for the provision of library services. The other 17 organisations had not sought assistance from other organisations in the running of the library or for the provision of library services.

Organisations that have used the services of the Indian Embassy

This question was asked to ascertain whether the reformed Hindu organisations sought the help of the Indian Embassy in providing religious and cultural information or for support in any form. There were 15 reformed Hindu organisations that had used the services of the Indian Embassy. Of these 15 organisations, 10 organisations had used the services of the Embassy for visa purposes. Other organisations interacted with the Embassy on a social level or sought donations from the Embassy. Two organisations attended training courses offered by the Embassy, and six organisations sought religious and cultural assistance.

5.3. Analysis of Objective Two

The objective was: **To identify and analyse print-based formats available (for example, newspapers, magazines, books, and pamphlets) used to provide and share information in the community.**

5.3.1. Analysis of question 2.1.

Print-based publications

Question 2.1. was asked to ascertain what print-based publications were available through the reformed Hindu organisations.

Table 11: Print-based publications

| Print-based publications | No of organisations that publish and/or distribute |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Journals/magazines | 15 |
| Leaflets/Brochures | 13 |
| Books | 12 |
| Flyers | 11 |
| Manuals/training manuals | 8 |
| Annuals | 6 |
| Series | 6 |
| Papers | 4 |
| Conference papers | 4 |
| Other | 4 |

Journals/magazines were published and/or distributed by 15 reformed Hindu organisations. Many of the journals/magazines were published by the parent body of the organisations. Leaflets/brochures, flyers, and annuals were published locally.

Table 12: Number of print-based publications distributed

| Print-based publications | Average number distributed annually |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Books | 25 thousand each between six organisations |
| Journals/magazines | 15,5 thousand each between eight organisations |
| Leaflets/brochures | 7,3 thousand each between twelve organisations |
| Flyers | 5,6 thousand each between ten organisations |
| Annuals | 1 thousand each between four organisations |
| Manuals/training manuals | 2 thousand each between three organisations |
| Series | 40 thousand each between three organisations |

Many of the figures given were approximate numbers. The “series” referred to a number of books relating to the same kind of subject or relevant to a particular age group, for example, *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks* (1953-1974) which is series of books containing the lectures of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Table 13: Methods of distribution

| Methods of distribution | Number of organisations |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sales at fairs, religious campaigns and special events | 16 |
| Free distribution at special events | 9 |
| Through branches | 9 |
| At sathsangs | 9 |
| Community events | 8 |
| By subscription from Indian Headquarters | 3 |
| Posting to individuals who had contact with the organisation | 2 |
| Knock and drop | 2 |
| Other | 2 |

Many reformed Hindu organisations used more than one method of distribution for their print-based formats. Certain titles and formats may be free whilst other formats may be for sale only, or be available through subscription only. Generally material that was free was promotional material or contained information about the organisation, the founder and the teachings of the organisation.

Regularity of publications

Journals/magazines were published monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly or bi-annually depending on the needs of the devotees and the financial standing of the reformed Hindu organisation. The larger and older, more financially secure organisations published material more often than the smaller, newer organisations that were not financially well-off. Brochures and special publications were published annually or when the need for such a publication arose. Reprints were brought in from the international headquarters when shortages arose or when special campaigns were planned.

Control over publications

All 19 organisations did have publishing control over printed matter distributed by the organisations through editors or editorial boards or committees. Since many of the reformed Hindu organisations had their headquarters in India, the editor or editorial committees were

based in India. The South African bodies had control over local publications like the leaflets/brochures, promotional material and information for local events.

Number of organisations that have unpublished material

There were 15 organisations that had in their possession unpublished material. The types of unpublished material held in the collections contained lectures by religious leaders, information received from Indian specialists, academic papers and accounts of the lives of saints.

Description of unpublished material

Talks/discourses by spiritual and religious leaders were generally researched or prepared before being delivered. These written or audio copies were not published but were held by the organisation concerned. Often, because the spiritual and religious leaders of the reformed Hindu organisations were based in India, the unpublished material was held at the headquarters. Indian specialists who had researched various aspects of the religion had donated their unpublished material to the organisation of their choice. Information about the life of a saint/s that had been researched by religious leaders, guest speakers and senior members of the congregation, had not been published but was also stored for future reference.

5.3.2. Analysis of question 2.2.

Question 2.2. asked interviewees to “**Describe the contents of the publications**”.

The contents of the publications would reflect the language of choice, the levels of reading of devotees and other information relevant to the publications.

Number of organisations that have devotees who belong to a specific language group

Question 2.2.1. was asked to ascertain the languages spoken at the reformed Hindu organisations and to determine whether there were organisations that used a single Indian vernacular language exclusively. The use of Indian vernacular languages would imply that South African Indians spoke Indian vernacular languages. Therefore they would be able to access written religious and cultural information in the original language and script.

Only three organisations had devotees that belonged to a specific language group. Those organisations were: Saiva Sithantha Sungum, Swami Narayan Mandir and the Vedanta Institute of South Africa. Sixteen other organisations had devotees who belonged to the various language groups that make up the Indian community in the greater Ethekwini area.

Languages in which articles are published

A mixture of Indian languages was used in the publications of 10 reformed Hindu organisations. Eight organisations published material in English. Other Indian Languages, such as Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu, were also used. Ten organisations used language that was appropriate for other language groups that devotees belonged to, for example, Afrikaans and Russian. The latter language was used in the Russian branches of the organisation but articles in Russian were made available to devotees in South Africa when they were requested.

Reading levels of Indian languages used in published articles

A few reformed Hindu organisations did publish books written in Indian vernacular languages. These were for individuals who could fluently read the Indian vernacular languages. There were magazines that contained articles written in the Indian vernacular languages for fluent readers of the language. However, many publications presented articles written in English and used transliterated quotes from religious texts when necessary. These quotes were, at times, presented in the written vernacular scripts, and the vernacular quotes could be ignored because the transliterations were provided. The researcher did not encounter any articles written for beginner readers of the Indian vernacular languages.

Translations, transliterations, explanations, and commentaries

The use of translations of articles published in Indian languages was essential as many Indians living outside of India had difficulty reading the Indian vernacular languages. Where articles or extracts were published in any of the Indian vernacular languages, transliterations were also provided. Explanations for extracts from religious texts used in articles were also given. Translations of articles written in the Indian vernacular languages were offered by 14 organisations. Eight organisations offered translations, transliterations and explanations for articles written in the Indian vernacular languages, for example, an article written in Gujarati script had a transliteration, and was followed by an English translation of the article. There

were explanations for articles written in the Indian vernacular languages. Spiritual heads and leaders of three organisations also gave oral explanations and commentaries of materials published in articles when there was a need to do so.

Subject content of articles published

The type of subjects covered in the publications was investigated.

Table 14: Subject content of articles published

| Subject content | Number of organisations |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Philosophy | 16 |
| Religion | 14 |
| Values | 13 |
| Culture | 12 |
| Ethics | 11 |
| Art | 10 |
| Dance | 9 |
| Wide range of topics | 9 |
| Self-awareness/motivation | 9 |
| Spiritual | 6 |
| Medical | 5 |
| Diet | 5 |
| Music | 4 |
| Children's literature | 3 |
| Education | 3 |
| Children's stories | 3 |
| Cookery | 2 |
| Information on organisation | 2 |
| Other | 4 |

There were numerous subject categories of articles published by reformed Hindu organisations. Philosophy was the most popular category as many of the reformed Hindu organisations do focus their teachings on the philosophy of the Hindu religion. Religious articles were also popular as the organisations see themselves as protectors of the Hindu faith. Material on values, culture and ethics was made available as these aspects of Hindu life were seen as being closely linked to the religious teachings. Those topics that were seen as relevant to improving the lives of devotees were written about in the publications. The “other” category included literature, sculpture, and writings of saints.

5.3.3. Analysis of question 2.3.

The main question 2.3 was “Is the information repackaged? (Repackaging is the re-use of information to make it more accessible)”.

Original sources of information used by organisations

The reformed Hindu organisations have a number of religious texts to choose from. The question investigated the original sources of information used by the organisations.

Table 15: Original sources of information used by organisations

These were original sources of information that were often quoted in articles and talks. At times extracts or entire chapters were reproduced in publications distributed by reformed Hindu organisations.

| Original sources | Number of organisations |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bhagavad- Gita | 12 |
| Vedas | 10 |
| Ramayana | 8 |
| Upanishads | 7 |
| Literature from Headquarters | 7 |
| Literature by founding Guru/s | 6 |
| Number of religious texts | 4 |
| Indian Literature | 3 |
| Mahabharata | 3 |
| Ithihasas | 3 |
| Puranas | 3 |
| Literature on the 18 Sithas | 2 |
| Other | 4 |

The Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Ithihasas, Puranas and literature on the 18 Sithas are Hindu religious texts and parts of these texts are used in some form or the other in the religious, philosophical and spiritual teachings of the reformed Hindu organisations. Whilst the majority of the reformed Hindu organisations cited Hindu religious texts as the basis of their teachings, four organisations used a “number of religious texts” on which their teachings were based. Literature from the international headquarters of the organisations as well as literature by the founder Swamis and religious leaders were also cited as sources of information used by reformed Hindu organisations.

Country of origin of information

India appears to be the birthplace of much of the information used by reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekewini region with 18 organisations using information sourced there for local publications. London, England was the place of origin of information used by two organisations for local distribution. Other countries where information was sourced and then repackaged were: Sri Lanka; Pakistan; USA; Mauritius; and Singapore. None of the reformed Hindu organisations used information that was produced locally for repackaging.

Organisations that have repackaged information for non-print media

There were 18 reformed Hindu organisations that had repackaged non-print media in their collections. The media had been altered in some way to suit local devotees.

Table 16: Types of non-print media

| Types | Number of organisations |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| CDs | 18 |
| DVDs/VCDS | 9 |
| Videos | 6 |
| Audio cassettes | 6 |
| Websites | 5 |
| Films | 3 |

Of the non-print media available to devotees, CDs appear to be most popularly used, with eighteen organisations having collections of CDs. Devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations purchase or borrow CDs at regular intervals, perhaps because they prefer the use of this medium as against reading. Although videos and audio cassettes are held in the collections, there are an ever decreasing numbers of requests for them. Requests for DVDs appear to be on the increase as material on video format is transferred to DVD format.

5.3.4. Analysis of question 2.4.

The question asked in 2.4. was “Who are the authors of the information?”

The credentials of authors generally add value to any publication. The above question was asked to ascertain who the authors were and what their credentials were.

Original authors of documents/texts

Saints, swamis, and religious leaders are the most quoted and read authors of religious documents and texts. Rishis and academics are the second most quoted and read original authors of religious documents and texts. The works of yogis and gurus are also greatly appreciated. Many of the original authors have long since passed on; in fact, many of them lived thousands of years ago. Many of the modern day saints, like Swami Vivekananda and Swami Sivananda, wrote much on Hinduism, its practices and the philosophy of Hinduism. The founders of many of the reformed Hindu organisations have had much of their writings and explanations of the ancient religious texts published in recent times.

Brief descriptions/credentials of the original authors

Sixteen reformed Hindu organisations had access to the works of original authors. Thirteen of the reformed Hindu organisations used material written/spoken by individuals who claimed to have received the knowledge from a higher divine power. Thirteen organisations also used material written by academics. The authors who had academic qualifications had specialised in aspects of the Hindu religion, for example, one author had researched aspects of the hawan (fire) ceremony.

5.4. Analysis of Objective Three

The objective was: **To identify and analyse interpersonal means (i.e. people) used to provide information.** Questions 3.1., and 3.2., and the sub-questions made up this objective.

5.4.1. Analysis of question 3.1.

Question 3.1. asked: “**Aside from using the printed material, how is cultural and religious information disseminated?**”

The various methods of information dissemination aside from the use of printed material were investigated.

Organisations that prefer the use of printed material to provide information

Fourteen reformed Hindu organisations favoured the use of printed material to provide information to devotees. Four organisations did not use printed material to provide religious and cultural information but did rely on lectures for information dissemination. Lectures given in conjunction with printed material were preferred by eight organisations. Two organisations used lectures, printed material and other formats were used when needed and when available.

Non-print media used to provide information to devotees

Talks/lectures (non-print media) were also used to provide information to devotees by 14 organisations. Eleven organisations used CDs as information media. Nine organisations used DVDs, videos, e-mail/Internet, websites, and cassettes as means of disseminating information. Plays/sketches, seminars, and story telling were also used by two organisations as means of disseminating information to devotees. Three organisations used TV and radio channels to disseminate information.

Problems experienced when using non-printed methods of information dissemination

The types of problems that organisations experienced when using non-print methods of dissemination were investigated.

Table 17: Problems experienced when using non-printed methods of information dissemination

| Problems | Number of organisations |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Devotees forget information given orally | 6 |
| Limited access to electronic formats and equipment | 5 |
| Cost of owning and maintaining equipment is too high | 5 |
| Lack of interest on the part of devotees | 4 |
| Faulty equipment | 3 |
| Setting appropriate dates so that most of the devotees could attend functions | 2 |
| Problems in transferring information on cassette to CDs | 2 |
| Other | 3 |

All 19 organisations responded to this question. The worst problems appeared to be that devotees forget the information shared with them orally. Five organisations experienced problems with access to electronic formats of information and equipment required to utilise the formats. Five organisations found costs of owning and maintaining other formats of information too expensive. A lack of interest by the devotees themselves was experienced by four organisations. Three organisations found equipment required to utilise other non-print formats to be faulty as the equipment had to be hired or borrowed. The “other” responses included enlisting the help of appropriate speakers to address the devotees, piracy of CDs and DVDs, and the fact that the information provided on electronic formats had little meaning when live explanations were not given.

Locations/venues/ circumstances best suited to information provision outside the temple/ashram

The question was asked to ascertain what locations/venues/circumstances were used to provide information to interested individuals.

Table 18: Locations/venues/ circumstances best suited to information provision outside the temple/ashram

| Locations/venues/circumstances | Number of organisations |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Invitations from other organisations | 15 |
| Special functions | 12 |
| Religious festivals | 9 |
| Community Halls | 8 |
| Any facility where there may be interested individuals | 7 |
| Small temple organisations that may be Sanathanist | 7 |
| Fairs | 6 |
| Classrooms of schools when invited | 5 |
| Members go door-to-door | 2 |
| Other | 2 |

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations responded to this question. Invitations from other Hindu organisations during religious festivals was seen as the best locations/venues/circumstances suited to information provision outside the temple/ashram by 15 reformed Hindu organisations. Twelve reformed Hindu organisations found that special functions

hosted by Hindu organisations, like those held to commemorate founding members who are now deceased, as being suitable occasions for the provision of information outside the temple/ashram. Religious festivals and community halls (where functions were being held) were accepted as good places to disseminate information. When the reformed Hindu organisations work closely with school communities, they are often invited to share values and ethics with learners and teachers. This was accepted in a positive way by the reformed Hindu organisations concerned.

Methods of information dissemination used at outside locations/venues/ circumstances

Eighteen organisations responded to this question. Six reformed Hindu organisations held special campaigns. Seven organisations used stalls at fairs and community events and five organisations had displays at a variety of venues and functions. During special campaigns areas or groups of people were targeted for information dissemination, for example, a particular part of Chatsworth may have been the target area because of social problems being experienced there.

Individuals tasked with information dissemination

The question was asked to find out which individuals within the reformed Hindu organisations were tasked with information dissemination.

Table 19: Individuals tasked with information dissemination

| Individuals | Number of organisations |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Senior members of the organisation | 11 |
| Any member with training & practice | 8 |
| Secretariat | 4 |
| Guru/swami | 4 |
| Information Officer | 4 |
| Individuals with academic qualification | 3 |
| Selected individuals | 3 |
| Priests | 2 |
| Trustees | 2 |
| Other | 3 |

Senior members of the organisations were the chosen individuals tasked to disseminate print and non-print information by 11 organisations as they knew the teachings and the religious

texts that the organisation focussed on. Eight organisations had members with training and practice to disseminate print and non-print information. However, these members had to be bona fide members of the reformed Hindu organisation for a long period of time. The “other” category included devotees and volunteers who were known to members of the organisation.

5.4.2. Analysis of question 3.2.

Question 3.2. was “**Are there visiting lecturers, priests, authors, and other influential individuals (from both inside and outside South Africa) who play a role in the dissemination and preservation of information?**”

All respondents were asked the questions in this category.

Organisations that have visiting priests, authors and other influential individuals

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations had priests, authors and other influential individuals who visited their organisations for a variety of reasons, mostly for religious reasons to show support for the reformed Hindu organisation. Visiting priests came to South Africa during special religious celebrations, during special campaigns or to oversee the management of the organisation.

Areas of specialisation

The areas of specialisation of visiting priests, authors and influential individuals were investigated.

Table 20: Areas of specialisation

| Areas of specialisation | Number of organisations |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Religious | 16 |
| Academic | 13 |
| Literature knowledge | 13 |
| Selected Individuals according to needs of organisation | 10 |
| Philosophy | 8 |
| Yoga | 8 |
| Special pujas | 5 |
| Business consultants | 2 |
| Specialists in arts | 2 |
| Other | 2 |

All 19 respondents answered the question. The most valued reason for priests, authors and influential individuals coming to South Africa were for religious purposes and for their knowledge of the Hindu religion. Academics that have qualifications related to Hinduism, Hindu philosophy, and Hindu scriptures have begun visiting South Africa to share their knowledge with South African Hindus. Other individuals with specialist knowledge of the various aspects and areas of Hinduism, Hindu lifestyle and art visit South Africa as guests of the reformed Hindu organisations.

Regularity of visiting lecturers/priests/authors

All 19 respondents answered the question. Six organisations had visiting lecturers, priests and authors at least once a year. Five organisations had visiting lecturers, priests and authors who came to the organisation when there was a need. However, all reformed Hindu organisations did have visiting lecturers, priests and authors. In recent years the numbers of visitors have increased due to the fact that the Indian Embassy and the Indian Consulate have facilitated the obtaining of visas for religious visitors. An example would be the recent visit of the head of the International Chinmaya Mission visiting Durban during Navarathri 2007.

Places from which visiting lecturers/priests/authors came

The home countries of visiting lecturers/priests/authors were India, Mauritius, UK, USA, Sri Lanka, Singapore and places where significant numbers of Hindus have settled. Many

interviewees cited apartheid laws as the chief cause of South African Hindus not having had ties with other Hindus in India and other parts of the world in the past. Now, many Hindu organisations, both reformed and Sanathanist, are using the freedom of the new constitution to bring in religious leaders and Hindu academics in an effort to revitalise Hinduism in South Africa.

Purpose of the visits of lecturers/priests/authors

The main purpose of religious visitors to South Africa was the maintenance of religious teachings and the imparting of skills and knowledge. Spiritual guidance, new methods of preaching, and refreshing the old ideas were listed as reasons for the visits. Senior members who visited from the international headquarters came with the purpose of servicing the aims of the organisation and of overseeing the running of the organisation. Other individuals came to South Africa to attend special functions, to facilitate communication between the headquarters and the local offices, or for personal reasons.

Consultation of specialists/gurus/priests for information to be used in any local publications

Nine organisations did not find it necessary to consult the specialists/gurus/priests for information to be used in any local publications because there were few local publications. Three organisations consulted specialists/gurus/priests only when they were present in South Africa as this information was included in special editions. Only one organisation consulted specialists/gurus/priests for every publication that was distributed as the magazine was published locally.

Dissemination of information by senior members or the guru/swami

Seventeen reformed Hindu organisations used talks to disseminate information by the senior members or the guru/swami. Discussions as well as question and answer sessions were encouraged as a means of information dissemination. Sathsangs, special functions as well as pamphlets and writings were used by the senior members or the guru/swami to disseminate information.

Regularity of visits to different parts of the world for cultural/ religious support

Only four reformed Hindu organisations managed to send leaders to different parts of the world for cultural and religious support on an annual basis. A lack of funding was the reason that these visits were not undertaken more often. Three organisations sent leaders at least twice a year to different parts of the world for cultural and religious support. Other organisations sent leaders abroad when finances and sponsorships permitted.

Members/ students sent to other parts of the world to train/ gain knowledge and skills

Twelve reformed Hindu organisations sent members and/or students go to other parts of the world to train/ gain knowledge and skills. A lack of funding prevented other reformed Hindu organisations from sending their members and/or students. Whilst many devotees were keen to gain knowledge and skills to attain the title of spiritual or religious leader, here in South Africa, they did not want to go abroad for prolonged periods of time.

Regularity and number of individuals sent to other parts of the world to train/ gain knowledge and skills

The very large organisations with many branches could not give definite numbers of exactly how many individuals went abroad to train and gain knowledge and skills. However they were aware that each branch had sent at least a few individuals abroad each year to train and gain knowledge and skills. Seven reformed Hindu organisations sent individuals to various destinations to train/ gain knowledge and skills at least every year. The number of individuals depended on funding and those who showed a genuine leaning towards attaining religious titles.

Senior members and office bearers of the reformed Hindu organisations often had to cater for such trips during their leave from work. Five reformed Hindu organisations had not sent any individuals to train or to gain knowledge and skills abroad because of a lack of funds and because it was felt that elders in the community were able to train the students themselves.

Places where members/ students go for training/to gain knowledge and skills

Twelve organisations sent members and students to India to be trained or to gain skills and knowledge. Only one organisation sent individuals to Sri Lanka for training or to gain skills and knowledge. Five organisations sent individuals to ashrams overseas and to international

retreats to train/to gain skills and knowledge. Five organisations did not respond to this question.

Qualifications and skills brought back

Members and students of 10 organisations returned with new ideas of methods of imparting knowledge. Eight organisations benefited because individuals returned with knowledge of religious texts. Other benefits were that individuals returned after becoming acharyas and swamis. Three organisations gained because students came back with knowledge of pujas. Knowledge of art forms and leadership skills were improved and this in turn impacted positively on the provision of religious and cultural information as the qualified and skilled individuals were better able to transfer information to devotees.

5.5. Analysis of Objective Four

The objective was: **To identify and analyse the various electronic formats (for example, radio, TV, internet, audio-visual) in preserving and disseminating information.**

5.5.1. Analysis of question 4.1.

Role of various electronic formats in the preservation and dissemination of information

Electronic formats were used by 18 reformed Hindu organisations to preserve and disseminate information. Eleven organisations had websites which offered various kinds of information; nine organisations used electronic formats for preservation of religious and cultural information which included textual information, music and song; eight organisations were interviewed for radio or TV; and seven organisations made use of the website of the international headquarters. Six organisations made effective use of CDs, DVDs and other formats to disseminate and preserve information. Electronic formats were used for advertising, workshops, live transmissions, web casting and information regarding the organisations. At least four reformed Hindu organisations were looking into expanding the list of titles of CDs and DVDs produced by the organisation.

Programmes and content offered through the electronic formats

The kinds of programmes offered through the electronic formats varied from organisation to organisation. Eleven organisations offered religious and spiritual information through the electronic formats. Nine organisations had information about the organisation on the website. Eight organisations offered cultural information, as well as self empowerment and self development information. Two websites offered question and answer type of information. Music, chanting of mantras and religious scriptures in the original Indian vernacular language were being planned by two reformed Hindu organisations.

Role of Internet in the running of the organisation or for the provision of services

The e-mail facility was popular with 12 organisations as members of the organisations communicated with each other via e-mail. Seven reformed Hindu organisations used the Internet (e-mail) to communicate with other organisations and five organisations used the Internet for public relations (advertising perhaps). Two organisations posted workshop material on their websites. One organisation had e-books on the website. Organisations posted articles, lectures and information regarding classes being held on the websites.

Websites

15 organisations did have websites. Three reformed Hindu organisations were in the process of developing their own websites separate from the website hosted by the international headquarters.

Information offered on the websites

The kinds of information offered on the websites varied greatly. Ten organisations had historical information on their websites. Nine organisations had information on the websites that specified the teachings of the organisations, and eight websites had religious information relevant to the organisational beliefs. International and national news, current news, lists of affiliates, programmes being offered by organisations and literature were also to be found on the websites. Information on holy places, forthcoming events, training programmes, courses and information about seminars were included on a few of the websites of the organisations that made up the study.

5.6. Analysis of questions 5.1.; 5.2.; and 5.3.

These questions were asked in an attempt to understand the degrees of aggressiveness in disseminating information, the shortcomings and challenges that the reformed Hindu organisations face and what improvements could positively affect information dissemination and preservation.

These final questions also gave the interviewees an opportunity to voice their feelings and express some of their concerns.

Pro-active or aggressive information dissemination by the organisation

Although two organisations admitted to not disseminating information about the organisation to outsiders, the other 17 organisations did undertake information dissemination at some level. Eight organisations stated that their activities could be termed pro-active because the senior members were always working on projects for information dissemination, while five described their activities as being aggressive. One organisation relied on word of mouth; four organisations held campaigns to draw attention to their organisations and the activities, and only one organisation described the activities as being “mildly aggressive”. There were two organisations that worked through schools. Seven organisations found that the use of the press and news media suited their needs. Six organisations found it essential to keep up with technology to be able to advance their activities and two organisations described their activities as “not aggressive” or “fanatical”.

Shortcomings and challenges faced by organisations with regards to the dissemination of information

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations faced some sort of shortcoming or challenge regarding the dissemination of information. A lack of finances was the worst problem with eleven organisations citing this problem. A lack of interest by devotees was experienced by eight organisations. The fact that many devotees were not literate in the Indian language was a problem for six organisations. Seven organisations recognised that only small numbers of Hindus were actually interested in their organisation. Younger members showed a low level of interest in six organisations. Other problems experienced which affected just one or two

organisations included delays in importing literature, low stocks of books and other media, as well as a refusal by senior members to adapt to change.

Possible changes to improve the dissemination and preservation of information

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations answered this question. Of these, 10 organisations saw the access to greater funding as the solution to some of their problems. Nine respondents stated that devotees needed to use the new technologies available to improve the dissemination and preservation of information within these organisations. There were other possible changes which only a few of the reformed Hindu organisations accepted as means to improve the dissemination and preservation of information related to the organisations. These included attracting more volunteers; offering devotees publications with relevant information for their needs; vigorous marketing; and a greater involvement from Indian organisations and individuals with knowledge; the inclusion of the indigenous languages spoken in South Africa; an improved system of religious and cultural education of local Hindus; as well as the development of archives for the preservation and dissemination of the local history of Hindus.

5.7. Conclusion

Interviews were conducted with an aim to collecting data. The questions asked during the interviews resulted in information being obtained from interviewees that have helped to reveal much about the state of libraries and information provision amongst the reformed Hindu organisations. It is obvious that the organisations are making an effort to use the above mentioned methods together with a number of other methods to provide information to devotees.

Individuals from other countries are invited to share their knowledge and skills with South African devotees. Where knowledge and skills are needed, South African Hindus are encouraged to go abroad and gain the knowledge and skills and return home to share their newly gained knowledge and skills with other devotees and interested individuals.

Presently, the reformed Hindu organisations encourage the improvement of systems of providing religious and cultural information within the community.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

The results of the research interviews were presented in chapter five. In this chapter a more critical review has been presented of the interviews and of the observations made of the libraries/library service/ repository to ascertain how the provision of religious and cultural information is affected.

The libraries housed at the reformed Hindu organisations may be considered to be special libraries. The distinguishing feature of a special library is that it is “established to obtain and exploit specialised information for the private advantage of the organisation which provides it with financial support” (Ashworth, 1979, p. 6). In this study the parent organisations were the reformed Hindu organisations.

Special libraries are different to public libraries which are supported by “a statutory warrant for their existence” (Ashworth, 1979, p. 7) or academic libraries which are traditionally established by the institutions of higher learning. These libraries are established by organisations that see a need for such information services and then make themselves liable for the costs that are incurred.

The libraries housed at the reformed Hindu organisations are essential for the survival of Hinduism and for the education of Hindu people in South Africa.

6.2. Discussion of Objective One: The types of information services offered by reformed Hindu organisations

Each subsection is discussed under a separate subheading. The first subsection deals with the types of information services offered by the reformed Hindu organisations.

6.2.1. Types of Information services offered

Each sub-question has been discussed separately.

6.2.1.1. Review of Question 1.1.

The libraries that belonged to the reformed Hindu organisations and their collections were the focus of this question.

Libraries and their collections

This is a general discussion of the libraries and the collections housed at the reformed Hindu organisations. A more elaborate discussion of the collection follows in chapter seven where different types of formats are examined.

Generally, all library collections were housed in a special room dedicated for library/library services. There were two libraries that needed special mention because they only housed literature that was published by the international headquarters of the reformed Hindu organisation concerned. The 11 reformed Hindu organisations that had libraries/ library services had a wide selection of books, CDs, booklets and other information formats.

Newspapers as an information format were widely used among the reformed Hindu organisations. Only five organisations received newspapers regularly. Four organisations received regional newspapers, such as the *Daily news*. One of these four organisations received Indian newspapers, but not regularly. One organisation received only community newspapers, such as *Rising sun* and *Chatsworth tabloid*, which was then redistributed in the local housing project.

Another popular format was the brochure which was a part of 17 collections. A brochure may be seen to be “a small booklet containing promotional material or product information” (*American heritage dictionary of the English Language*, 2006). Many brochures were published by the reformed Hindu organisations concerned, or by other Hindu organisations, both Sanatanist and reformed. Brochures were published on special occasions, to celebrate anniversaries and new buildings for example, *The 80th anniversary brochure* of the Arya

Pratinidhi Sabha of South Africa and the brochure that was published by the Sarva Dharma Ashram on the opening of the new dining hall.

The books included titles about the lives of saints, great leaders and prominent individuals and like brochures were published locally. An example of this genre is *Glory of guru's grace* by Sri Swami Sivananda and published by the Divine Life Society of South Africa.

The magazines that were held in the collections generally dealt with religious, philosophical, spiritual and cultural information. One such magazine was *The Hindu*, which is published in India. Twelve organisations had access to magazines that were published either here in South Africa or that which came from the international headquarters in India. Most magazines carried a wide range of topics, current news, religious information and other related subjects. *Jyoti*, published by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa is an example of a magazine that carries a wide range of topics which includes articles on prominent Indians from the past, medical achievements of the Indians and other such articles.

Similarly, leaflets which are printed locally were found in the collections of 16 organisations. A leaflet may be seen to be "a small flat or folded sheet of printed matter, as an advertisement or notice, usually intended for free distribution" (*Random House unabridged dictionary*, 2006). The information in the leaflets often informed devotees of the religious significance of special religious days, special prayers that were held, and of special functions that were organised by the organisations. Examples of such leaflets are: *The power of prayer* published by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa, and the *Daily family prayer* published by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of South Africa.

Photographs were popular with eighteen organisations. Special events, religious observances, and guests delivering key note addresses had been photographed and kept by the organisations.

Other local or Southern African publications such as special editions of books have been published by reformed Hindu organisations. The publication of special editions marked milestones of the organisation, either locally or internationally. *Hinduism: towards a better understanding* published by the Swaminarayan Temple of Gaborone, Botswana is a good

example of a special edition that is a part of the collection of the Swaminaraya Temple in Durban.

Museums and archives

Whilst printed formats are important in the provision of religious and cultural information, there are other ways of providing information like the establishing of museums for Hindu religious and cultural objects, art and related items.

Where museums offer three dimensional mediums of information, archives offer information by way of old documentation. Archives were generally lacking among the reformed Hindu organisations surveyed for this research. However, many of the organisations were in the process of collecting old documents, minutes of meetings, brochures, leaflets and other printed matter and video tapes for the purpose of building up an archive. Generally archival material was stored in boxes, files or on shelves and marked with dates, occasions and names of people.

Museums and archives offer an older perspective of the Hindu religion and in a bid to make the religion more accessible to the Hindu community religious classes and study classes were offered by thirteen organisations. These included Bhagavad-Gita classes and special classes at appropriate times of the year on the Ramayan and other religious texts. It was during these periods that intensive provision of religious information took place by way of reading the religious texts and giving oral discussions based on the readings.

Other methods of information dissemination

Such is the demand for special services that reformed Hindu organisations have held special services requested by devotees, most times at the homes of devotees to celebrate special occasions or to remember the dead. Storytelling was undertaken by two organisations, although many more organisations held balvikar/Balvihar (children's) classes on the days when sathsang was held. Nine organisations held youth programmes. During these programmes religious and spiritual information was disseminated to the children. Some organisations even had special programmes for the different age groups. Aside from the weekly children's classes, the youth camps were the only other time that children were offered any kind of religious or cultural information.

Language/s

The provision of religious and cultural information must be in a language that can be accessed by devotees attending the sathsangs of the reformed Hindu organisations. All Indian languages, spoken in the greater Ethekewini area, were used during sathsang. However, the main language spoken throughout the service was English. The reason for this was that not all Indian devotees were familiar with the Indian languages and the congregations consisted of devotees who spoke a variety of languages. Sanskrit was frequently used during the sathsangs of many of the organisations.

The use of English during the sathsang combined with the use of printed English transliterations of bhajans and kirtans sung at the sathsangs implies that many Hindus no longer read, speak and perhaps, understand the Indian vernacular languages. Although songs were written in all Indian languages spoken in the greater Ethekewini area, devotees showed a preference to read the transliterations.

English transliterations of songs and the English language were used by all 19 organisations to provide religious literature to devotees and members. Ten organisations provided religious literature in the Indian languages spoken by South African Indians. Organisations offered religious and organisational information through brochures and leaflets.

Religious scriptures

However, the key method of providing religious and cultural information is through scripture. A total of 21 different scriptures were used by the reformed Hindu organisations. The Bhagavad-Gita, Ramayan and the Vedas were the most popular choices. Organisations generally chose texts that were relevant to the teachings propagated by a specific organisation. A few organisations used other Hindu religious texts when the need arose. The religious texts that were used were written in English (transliteration), or in an Indian vernacular spoken by local Indians. Most interviewees reiterated that many local Indians preferred to read transliterations of the religious texts.

Understanding the religious scriptures is critical to understanding the religion. It was noted that 15 group leaders read from the scriptures, and 13 of these group leaders gave explanations of the scriptures, mostly in English. Explanations were necessary as many

devotees did not understand Sanskrit, the language used in many of the religious texts. Although English was the preferred language of use for the provision of explanations, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati were also used. Telugu was not used by any of the reformed Hindu organisations. The reason for this is that the Telugu community has a strong Sanathanist following and the Andhra Maha Sabha (the parent body for all Telugu organisations) has many branches and offers many activities for the Telugu people. This does not mean that there are no Telugu devotees amongst the devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations.

The Hindu religion is followed by people who speak many languages and who have accepted one or more of the numerous religious texts that are available. The rather large number of religious texts and commentaries, as well as the related texts, which were being used, could be seen as a representation of the vast teachings and religious philosophies that Hindus could choose from. It is a known fact that there was no founder of the Hindu religion but the many saints, sages and rishis have made contributions to the Hindu religion.

6.2.1.2. Review of Question 1.2.

Structures and policies are explored in this subsection.

Library policy and services

The use of organisational structures and policies in guiding the library/book and non-book services is critical to the provision of library/book and non-book services. Only six organisations had structures in place to guide the library services of the organisation. Although 13 organisations did not have written policies in place for control and management of such services, they did have members of management and sub-committees that took decisions for the provision of information to devotees.

In the absence of proper policies, ad hoc decisions had been taken regarding the purchase and resale of books, the acquisition of books, and the acceptance of donations for library services. However, 11 organisations did have senior members, committee members, and the group leaders who guided any decisions that had to be taken regarding the library services.

Specific individuals were in charge of library services at 15 of the 18 reformed Hindu organisations. Office management, volunteers, committee members and appointed members were put in charge of library services. The researcher only encountered one individual who had qualifications in library science and who worked as a cataloguer who volunteered his services at one of the reformed Hindu organisations. Many individuals simply saw this as a service to the organisation. Many interviewees did request my assistance in helping to set up or to re-organise their libraries.

However, a library cannot be set up without aims and objectives being a part of the mission statements of the reformed Hindu organisations. There were only nine organisations that had included statements about information provision in their organisational mission statements. The task of developing library services in any organisation would be hindered since so many reformed Hindu organisations had not considered library services in their mission statements. This would mean that there would be no budget for facilities or personnel to run the library services.

Three organisations had budgets for the provision of library or information services. The remaining 15 interviewees were not aware of the actual amounts spent on the provision of library services or the approximate value of the donations that the library service received. Many of the donated items that the researcher saw were old religious books, printed and published in India, and written in Indian vernacular languages. There were a few books for beginner readers and learners of the language. A few individuals, who had passed on, had bequeathed their private collections to the organisations of their choice. Others had donated English fiction books, encyclopaedias, dictionaries and books useful to school children. There was a definite lack of information formats for Hindu devotees.

Seven of the 18 reformed Hindu organisations had records of members or users of the library in the form of visitors' books and daily diaries. None of the libraries or book collections had proper manual or computerised systems of recording loans and returns. A few representatives reported that library stock was lost through improper record-keeping of users and users who did not return items borrowed from the collections.

Whilst the value of the libraries was undermined by the poor facilities and lack of proper record keeping, researchers, priests and leaders have made use of these services. Representatives of organisations felt that the services that were on offer should be improved.

6.2.1.3. Review of question 1.3.

Affiliations

Affiliations to other Hindu organisations could impact on the provision of library services through networking and the sharing of information. Although 11 Hindu organisations were affiliated to the international headquarters of the movement to which they belonged, there appeared to be no guidance on the provision of library services. Eight other organisations were affiliated to the South African Hindu Maha Sabha but this affiliation did not impact on the provision of library services, either. Most affiliations to the international headquarters facilitated the importing of printed material and other formats containing religious and cultural information for resale or to be included in the library collection from the parent organisation based in India or Sri Lanka.

There was one organisation that used the services of another organisation to provide library services. The Chinmaya Mission of South Africa used the services of their sister organisation based in Singapore to establish their library and book shop. All other organisations did not use the services or seek help from other organisations in the running of their libraries and book collections. Many organisations had not even thought to ask for help at local schools or municipal libraries where there are individuals with the necessary skills.

Use of Embassy and Consulate

Since the first democratic elections in 1994, the Indian Embassy and Consulate has had offices in South Africa. Contact with the Indian Embassy and Consulate was maintained by 15 organisations. However, the contact maintained by these organisations was used for obtaining visas, religious and cultural assistance, and attending training courses. No mention was made of assistance given regarding the establishment of library services for the reformed Hindu organisations or for any Hindu organisation. None of the respondents commented about the role, if any, played by the Embassy or Consulate in the provision of religious and cultural information.

Many of the reformed Hindu organisations that sought the help of the Indian Embassy regarding visas did so to enable religious leaders of the parent organisations to come to South Africa and propagate the teachings of those organisations. Religious leaders who have had training or who have been ordained in India are in great demand in South Africa, because South Africa has a need for such individuals. The past political situation in South Africa hindered interaction between Indian and South African religious leaders. At present many reformed Hindu organisations have religious leaders who come from India for special celebrations or come to stay for three months to two years in South Africa. This enables the organisation to consolidate the teachings, propagate aspects of Hinduism, and to authenticate the existence of the reformed Hindu organisation.

6.3. Discussion of Objective Two: A review of print-based formats available through reformed Hindu organisations

Print-based formats that were published or distributed through the reformed Hindu organisations are discussed below.

6.3.1. Available Print-based publications

Printed formats containing religious and cultural information would serve the needs of devotees and could also make it easier for the reformed Hindu organisation concerned to disseminate and preserve information essential to the teachings of that organisation. Objective two sought to ascertain the print-based formats that were available.

6.3.1.1. Review of question 2.1.

Print-based publications

All the organisations surveyed produced some form of printed matter for distribution. The fact that the print-based formats were well-received amongst the devotees is crucial as it indicates that devotees are prepared to accept the print-based formats. Library services, could therefore, be well-used by devotees once they were established since devotees have been exposed to print-based formats of information and have responded well to this format.

Since many publications came from India devotees had to subscribe in their personal capacities for these publications. This complicated the process for the interested devotees who wished to subscribe as they now had to fill in forms and post money orders to India. Three reformed Hindu organisations preferred that devotees subscribe directly to India for magazines and order other literature through the headquarters based in India. This saved on manpower and clerical work.

Subscription to these publications are negatively affected by the fact that the editorial committees sit in India and the reformed Hindu organisations in South Africa played little or no role in the subject matter offered through these publications.

However, South African Hindus do research and produce papers locally. The Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa and the South African Hindu Maha Sabha had academic papers in their collections. Other organisations housed papers that were presented at conferences and at special functions.

Distribution methods varied from organisation to organisation. Whilst free literature was available through many reformed Hindu organisations, there were also those items that were sold to devotees. The sale of these items was seen as an income for the organisations. However, profits were minimal as the service was also seen to benefit the individual devotees. The free publications that were distributed were in the form of sponsored leaflets and brochures, booklets containing religious information (often also sponsored), book marks and other tokens.

Devotees who attended satsang regularly were given the printed material free as it was not considered fair to ask for donations since devotees had already made contributions of prasad and monetary donations after aarti. There was one organisation that distributed free literature acquired through the international headquarters to interested individuals who may in the future wish to become devotees of the organisations.

The Radha Soami Satsang of South Africa and the Vedanta Centre South Africa were the two reformed Hindu organisations that chose to post literature in the form of newsletters and invitations to their devotees. Many representatives of other reformed Hindu organisations

found that postage was too expensive, and that there were no personnel available to carry out the tasks required for posting items.

Control of printed material

All the reformed Hindu organisations did have editors, editorial boards or committees or editors-in-chiefs. At least eight organisations relied on the international headquarters for publication of magazines. But local newsletters, invitations to local functions and other less important printed material was published locally. Control of the contents of the locally printed material was overseen by senior members, and special committee members who made up the editorial committees. Those reformed Hindu organisations that did publish printed material regularly, set up special editorial committees when the need for such committees arose.

Unpublished information

When visiting religious leaders, Indian religious academics and other specialists visit the country, they often visit local branches of the reformed Hindu organisations or give lectures and special sathsangs held at community halls and other large venues. These talks and lectures are then video-recorded or audio-recorded by individuals of the reformed Hindu organisation concerned and stored for later use. These recordings contain information essential to the Hindu religious and cultural practices. Such unpublished information will contribute to the archival collections and make good article content for the printed formats.

Religious heads and senior members often delivered talks and discourses at sathsangs that had been researched, or that referred to knowledge acquired through special training and meditation. Even regular devotees were sometimes given the opportunity to speak about a given topic at the weekly sathsang. The handwritten or typed pages of the speakers' notes were simply stored away.

6.3.1.2. Review of question 2.2.

The contents of publications with regard to languages used, translations of articles written in Indian vernacular languages, the use of transliterations and explanations are discussed below.

Contents of publications

English was the language in which talks and discourses were delivered and was the preferred medium of communication by devotees at most of the reformed Hindu organisations. The use of English overcame language barriers as the local Hindus generally spoke English only or English and one Indian vernacular language. Printed formats of information were also written in English to make it easier for devotees who could not read and write the Indian vernacular languages.

Reformed Hindu organisations that undertook outreach programmes in areas where Africans resided saw a need to have religious and cultural literature translated into isiZulu. Although there was one reformed Hindu organisation that had published religious and cultural literature in Afrikaans, there were a few organisations that had embarked on programmes to attract people who spoke a variety of languages. It was hoped that very soon in the future there would be publications in languages spoken in South Africa.

The use of translations, transliterations and explanations is a common feature in the publications where quotes or entire articles were written in any of the Indian vernacular languages. Eight organisations published material that included the original text, transliterations, translations and explanations. Although only the spiritual heads of three organisations gave oral explanations and commentaries, most interviewees did state that questions and answers as well as oral explanations were given of any published material. This was seen as an important method of providing information to devotees because devotees asked the questions they wanted to and the answers that were given were relevant to the devotees.

Philosophy, religion, values, ethics, art and culture were included in the subject content of many publications. It was disappointing to see that only three reformed Hindu organisations published material concerning children's literature and stories. This was an indication that children were not well catered for in the print-based formats.

The contents of many of the magazines was limited to spiritual, religious and philosophical topics and lacked information about traditional art forms, references to Indian literature of the past and the present, historical information on India and scientific developments of the

ancient world, Indian crafts, ancient Indian games or great architectural buildings in India. The researcher expected far more information on these subjects since all aspects of Indian life begins and ends with dedication to God, and all art forms are intricately woven with religion. So many more aspects of Hindu life could be explored in the magazines of the reformed Hindu organisations to improve the knowledge of devotees. Books on the subjects mentioned above were available in many of the collections belonging to the reformed Hindu organisations.

6.3.1.3. Review of question 2.3.

The use of repackaged information in publications offered by the reformed Hindu organisations are discussed below.

Repackaged information

Stillwell (2001, p. 40) describes repackaging as the “selection of appropriate materials, re-processing of the information in a form that can be readily understood, packaging the information, and arranging all these materials in a way appropriate to the user...”. Such repackaging has not been used in the publications of the reformed Hindu organisations. Information from religious sources were quoted in the original language and transliterations as well as translations were offered. All the ancient texts were cited as sources of information for repackaging: the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Ithihasa, Puranas, and literature on the eighteen sithas or saints of the south of India (Thevaram). Literature issued by the headquarters (in India) and written and edited by the same headquarters included a lot of information that had been repackaged.

Six reformed Hindu organisations used literature written by the founding guru/ saint or swami. These teachings, stories and little anecdotes had been told and retold many times in the past. Such information was often published in English only as the publications went out to many international branches. Although three reformed Hindu organisations used repackaged information from Indian literature, this information was not purely religious in nature. Philosophy, spiritual guidance, ethics, values and other relevant information was repackaged for consumption by devotees through the publications. Information relating to the arts: music, song and dance were included in a few publications.

The Indian Academy of South Africa was the only organisation, included in the survey that made use of international and national news agencies and websites for relevant information to be repackaged for their publications. Information available from the news agencies and websites were adapted for re-use in the publications of the organisation.

Information that originated in India was used by 18 of the organisations surveyed. This could be understood in context of India being the birthplace of the Hindu religion and the birthplace of almost all the saints and reformers of the Hindu faith. India is still accepted as the Motherland by Indians living in other parts of the world, including South Africa. Sri Lanka and Pakistan (both of which were a part of ancient India) were also listed as countries where repackaged information originated. London, England; the United States of America; Mauritius and Singapore were also listed as places where repackaged information originated. The places mentioned above are places where senior religious leaders live. Information offered by the leaders but has been adapted for use by the local Hindus. It must be noted that these places have a high population of educated and wealthy non-resident Indians (NRIs), and have well established centres of Hindu religion.

Non-print media, such as CDs, were also repackaged for use by 18 reformed Hindu organisations. Songs and music were adapted for local devotees. The CDs contained religious songs and chanting of mantras with a few explanations. Printed material was repackaged as non-print media such as DVDs that had cartoon versions of the religious texts such as the stories from the Ramayan, and stories about Hanuman. ISKCON has an interactive DVD *Bhagavad-Gitā as it is*. Video cassettes and VCDs contained Hindu religious information, talks from religious leaders, or had recordings of celebrations and religious festivities.

6.3.1.4. Review of question 2.4.

The authors of publications offered by the reformed Hindu organisations are explored below.

Authors of the information

Religious leaders and academics were the original authors of the religious texts used and quoted by reformed Hindu organisations. Saints, rishis, gurus, and swami were widely listed as being authors of documents used by the organisations. These individuals are held in great

esteem by Hindus, especially those who seek religious guidance. The religious leaders belong to various schools of ideology and philosophy.

Reformed Hindu organisations often used texts and documents written by the founders of their organisations and the works of authors with academic credentials. The works of authors who received their knowledge through higher divine power was acknowledged by 13 reformed Hindu organisations. Such knowledge came from long periods of deep meditation and living as hermits or through interaction with other individuals who had such powers. This knowledge has to be disseminated to devotees for their spiritual growth.

6.4. Discussion of Objective Three: Identification and analysis of interpersonal means used to provide information by reformed Hindu organisations

The dissemination of religious and cultural information through interpersonal means are explored in the subsection below.

6.4.1. Review of question 3.1.

Preferred methods of information dissemination

Eight organisations preferred to use printed material together with lectures. The printed material included the religious texts or an article that appeared in the publication that came from the headquarters of the reformed Hindu organisation. Other printed matter included quotations from religious texts or from texts written by the religious leaders. The preference for printed material over other methods of dissemination was based on the fact that devotees could read the information at a later stage and in that way keep the messages fresh in their minds. However, the lecture given by the religious leader was considered more important than the printed material.

The reformed Hindu organisations that did not use printed material to disseminate religious and cultural information relied on the lecture delivered by the religious leader, a chosen senior member of the congregation or chose an individual from the list of speakers accepted by the senior council of that organisation. The researcher found the devotees of these

organisations to be educated/intellectual individuals who often did read religious and cultural material of their own free will.

Use of non-print media

Websites, videos, films, drama presentations, and slide presentations were also used to disseminate religious and cultural information. These methods of dissemination sparked interest in devotees whose numbers increased when such presentations were announced early enough. A few organisations used a balanced approach which involved the distribution of printed material and included an oral explanation of the contents of the printed material.

A host of methods of information dissemination was used by the various reformed Hindu organisations. The most popular non-print methods of information distribution were talks and CDs. Talks were popular because of the intimate atmosphere that existed in the ashram where devotees were familiar with each other and their swami, guru or religious leader. The direct nature of the exchange of information made the information acceptable and devotees paid attention to what was said. Talks were also popular because such presentations allowed for questions and answers.

The use of CDs to disseminate religious and cultural information was also a common choice with 11 organisations. Many of the CDs that the researcher encountered had recordings of religious music, talks delivered by religious leaders and the chanting of mantras. The DVDs that were used included interactive copies of religious texts like the Bhagavad-Gitā. A few DVDs contained religious stories for young children in a cartoon-style format like the *Stories of Hanuman*.

Commercial videos and films from India were shown to devotees. A few videos and films about the spiritual journeys of saints and their teachings were viewed by devotees. Films shown to devotees were essentially art films that contained strong moral storylines or had dance routines based on Indian classical dance form.

Dissemination of information about the organisation, nationally or internationally, was done through websites. There were only seven reformed Hindu organisations that had their own websites which included information regarding the South African branches.

Cassettes of recordings of religious songs, mantras and talks given by religious leaders were found in library collections.

Sketches were used as a means of information dissemination to entertain and to inform the devotees of religious and moral teachings. Seminars and story-telling were popular methods of information provision. Workshops were also used as a means of disseminating religious and cultural information.

Television programmes were used to spread teachings of Hinduism, to explain the celebrations and festivals celebrated by Hindus. Interviews regarding a number of topics that affected Hindus were done for radio, particularly Lotus FM. VCDs, computer programmes, and slides were also used in efforts to provide information to devotees.

Problems associated with non-print methods of information dissemination

There were organisations that owned electronic equipment and had regular devotees in charge of setting up and maintaining the equipment. These organisations did not experience any problems when using electronic equipment. However, three organisations found it financially difficult to maintain faulty equipment or found that the equipment that had been hired or borrowed was faulty. Six representatives cited the forgetfulness of devotees as a reason for not using non-print methods to disseminate information. Five reformed Hindu organisations had limited access to other formats and equipment as they could not afford to buy the equipment or to loan it regularly. Their devotees, too, generally had little or no access to such formats, for example, devotees did not have access to the Internet at home or devotees did not possess DVD-players. There was also a lack of interest among devotees in using such media outside the ashram.

Two reformed Hindu organisations had problems in transferring talks from the cassette formats to CD format. A lack of interested individuals and those with skill for such tasks was seen as a problem. People with skill or interest had to be found and coerced into doing the job.

The setting of dates for devotees to attend functions where different kinds of media could be used to disseminate information was problematic. Other problems associated with the use of

non-print media were: devotees found that the information had little meaning when none of the religious leaders gave live explanations; piracy, for example, CDs had been illegally copied and sold; and getting appropriate speakers for the sathsang.

Locations/venues/circumstances for information provision outside the temple/ashram

Reformed Hindu organisations found that invitations from other Hindu organisations were good circumstances to distribute pamphlets, issue invitations or to inform other Hindus, through talks, about the activities, programmes and teachings. Special mass functions held at public places like the municipal grounds, or community halls were used to disseminate information to Hindus. Fairs held by community organisations, invitations to schools, higher educational institutions and business houses were considered good opportunities for information dissemination. Special campaigns, like visiting markets, malls and popular family picnic spots, were organised to disseminate information.

Individuals responsible for information dissemination of print and non-print media

The services of senior members were sought to disseminate information orally to devotees and interested individuals. Reasons forwarded for the choice of senior members included: maturity of the individuals, stability of characters and knowledge of the teachings and working of the organisation.

Members who had training and practice were chosen as information officers in four of the organisations. The number of information officers varied from two to six. These were individuals who understood the needs and plans of the organisation. Generally older members who had been with the organisation for a fairly long period of time were used as information officers. Such members understood the religious teachings of the organisation and could answer questions put forward by interested individuals.

6.4.2. Review of Question 3.2.

The role of visiting lecturers, priests and authors are discussed below. Reasons for and regularity of their visits are explored.

Role of visiting lecturers, priests, authors

All 19 reformed Hindu organisations had lecturers, priests, authors, and other influential individuals who visited their organisations for a number of reasons. Religious leaders who visited South Africa did so, on special request from the host reformed Hindu organisation. These priests gave public talks and visited branches of the parent organisation. Academics and individuals with knowledge of the Hindu literature also visited on request from reformed Hindu organisations that they were affiliated to. Yogis, philosophers, and individuals with specialist knowledge of some aspect of Hinduism were brought to South Africa for specific reasons and for a specific time only. The visits of these yogis, philosophers and specialist were widely advertised for the broader Hindu community to benefit.

Hindu scholars and priests were brought to South Africa to perform special pujas, for example, peace prayers. Other individuals with special talents and knowledge of Indian arts were invited to come to South Africa when there was a need and when funds permitted for such visits.

Regularity of the visits by priests, lecturers and authors

Annual visitors came to South Africa during special times in the Hindu calendar, for example, an individual may visit around the time of Krishna Asthamee or Ramnaumi. All reformed Hindu organisations had regular visitors who came to South Africa to serve a particular need or to motivate the devotees of that reformed Hindu organisation.

The visiting lecturers, priests and authors came from a number of places: India, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, London, USA, and Singapore. India and Sri Lanka are the ancient homes of Hindus. Mauritius and Singapore have high numbers of Hindus in the populace. London and the USA have a growing number of Hindus who recruit priests from India.

Reasons for the visits of priests, lecturers and authors

Visitors came to South Africa for religious purposes, that is, either to serve as priests and gurus in local ashrams or to perform and teach special prayers to local Indians. Thirteen reformed Hindu organisations had visitors whose specific purpose was to maintain religious teachings of that particular reformed Hindu organisation. Other visitors came to impart skills, for example, how to manage the local ashram. Other visitors came to offer spiritual

guidance to devotees and conducted special sathsangs. Other reasons given for visitors to the reformed Hindu organisations included servicing the aims of the parent body, academic needs, and to refresh ideas regarding the various programmes.

Contributions of the visiting priests, specialists and gurus in local publications

One organisation used contributions of visitors in every publication. Other reformed Hindu organisations consulted such visitors whenever necessary, or when they were present in South Africa. The contributions made to local publications by the visitors were not significant. Their appeal lay in fact that devotees wanted to see, hear and make contact with them when they were in South Africa.

Methods of dissemination of information by local senior members

Locally, senior members disseminated information through talks and discussions which were very popular. As stated before, most devotees do not have access to Internet and therefore posting information on websites is not considered important. The religious leaders often only spoke at special functions or at the regular weekly sathsangs. Rarely do senior members contribute religious and cultural information for publications. Talks and discussions had greater appeal because of the personal contact that was made between devotee and swami/guru.

Religious and cultural support

Religious and cultural support was sought from organisations or individuals from different parts of the world. The visits of local religious leaders to other parts of the world for cultural and religious support are largely dependent on the financial situation of the reformed Hindu organisation or the individual concerned. Invitations from other reformed Hindu organisations internationally are received by local organisations. However, responses from South African organisations depend on sponsorship and needs. Often, the individuals who went abroad for religious and cultural support had to pay their own way. An important point to mention is the lack of structured facilities for the training of priests, monks and religious leaders in South Africa which means that individuals with aspirations of becoming priests, monks and religious leaders have to travel overseas for training. The small number of monks and religious leaders proves to be a hindrance to the flow of information. There are times when some ashrams do not have religious leaders available on the premises. This is as a

result of the religious leaders leaving South Africa when their visas expire and their replacements not arriving prior to their departure. Devotees have to organise themselves to ensure that the flow of religious and cultural information continues in the absence of leaders.

Members/students who go to other parts of the world to train/gain knowledge and skills

Members or students from 12 organisations were sent for training to other parts of the world. The seven organisations that did not send members or students for training to other parts of the world offered the following reasons: a lack of funds; did not see the need to send people overseas as there were sufficiently trained people in Durban; devotees did not have the inclination to go abroad for lengthy periods of time for training.

The number of members or students sent overseas to train or gain skills and knowledge by reformed Hindu organisations varied from one individual per organisation every two years to dozens per year. The better established reformed Hindu organisations and those whose devotees could afford to sponsor others regularly sent people abroad for training and developing skills required by the organisation. The number of people who went abroad to gain religious skills and knowledge depended on a number of factors: sponsorship, especially for the poorer but committed individuals; leave from work; and the individual's personal financial situation.

The majority of individuals went to India for training and to gain skills and knowledge, since India was the birthplace of Hinduism and the place where many reformed Hindu organisations had their headquarters. Senior swamis, gurus, academics, and other religious leaders of the various organisations were based in India. Since many reformed Hindu organisations had retreats in many countries, both in the east and the west, interested individuals also visited these retreats.

Qualifications and skills brought back to South Africa

The greatest benefits of training trips for the reformed Hindu organisations were the new methods of imparting knowledge, for example, the creation of youth groups and the development of youth camps. Ideas for different programmes that could be initiated locally, for example, women's weekend camp; new methods for fundraising, for example, the sale of CDs and DVDs; activities for devotees outside the sathsang environment, for example, a

special satsang at the beach; and new methods of propagating the teachings of Hinduism, for example, use of websites, were some of the points that were discussed for imparting or sharing of knowledge.

There were four organisations that had benefited when local Hindus returned from India as archaryas and swamis after spending time learning and meditating. Other individuals returned with knowledge of special pujas (prayers) and how these pujas had to be conducted. Knowledge of ancient Hindu texts, as well as the teachings of various religious leaders was also brought back by interested individuals, senior members of the different satsang groups, and local religious leaders. These individuals shared their knowledge with the local devotees.

Knowledge of art forms, such as dance and music were also learned by individuals who made trips abroad for religious and cultural purposes. On their return workshops and shows enabled them to share their skills and knowledge with other people.

6.5. Discussion of Objective Four: Identification and analysis of electronic formats used to preserve and disseminate information by reformed Hindu organisations

The discussion below revolves around the use of electronic formats to preserve and disseminate information.

6.5.1. Review of question 4.1.

Role of electronic formats in the preservation and dissemination of information

Although electronic formats were accepted as effective methods for preservation and dissemination of Hindu religious and cultural information, there is rather limited use of the electronic formats by many of the reformed Hindu organisations. CDs and DVDs were formats used for information dissemination, especially music and religious songs. Many of the CDs and DVDs were mass produced and sold to devotees and interested individuals at fairs and special functions. Other contents included the discourses delivered by local and international religious leaders.

The reformed Hindu organisations used their websites to preserve and disseminate historical data, list activities being undertaken or to advertise future events. Other kinds of information were also found on a few of the websites, such as biographical information about the founding leaders and the teachings of the organisation. Religious, cultural and organisational information was posted on the websites for branches all over the world to access.

There were 15 organisations that had websites. However, many of these websites were actually controlled by the international headquarters of that particular reformed Hindu organisation. There were three organisations that did not have websites and did not envisage developing one in the near future as their devotees did not necessarily have access to the Internet. One reformed Hindu organisation that had been in the process of developing websites locally saw the need for such a service. The dissemination of information through such a medium was essential as devotees or their children had left the greater Ethekeeni area for employment purposes and were now located in different parts of South Africa.

Printed copies of information from the international websites were made available to devotees who did not have access to the international websites. There were two reformed Hindu organisations that undertook live transmissions of talks by senior members of the headquarters: the Brahma Kumaris and the Manav Dharam. Web casting was used by one organisation only. Five organisations used radio for advertising their special functions when funds permitted. The organisations saw radio interviews as opportunities for propagating the teachings of their particular organisation.

Two reformed Hindu organisations had information regarding their local activities and programmes on their websites. These organisations had specific individuals, who were members of their sathsang group, in charge of keeping the information on the website current. Two organisations were in the process of developing websites. There were three organisations in the process of transferring information that was in print format to electronic archives and CDs. Much of the information related to minutes of meetings, activities and events of the past. There were also many very old photographs of members and activities that were being scanned for posting on the websites.

Websites of eleven reformed Hindu organisations offered religious and spiritual information. Kirtans, bhajans, mantras, explanations of mantras and songs were made available through the electronic formats. Radio and television programmes that were broadcast nationally and locally also offered information about the reformed Hindu organisations.

Advice for study classes, yoga classes and certain art forms were available on certain websites. One reformed Hindu organisation used the electronic media to explain the messages of the art forms, for example, the symbolism of hand positions in Indian classical dance. Philosophy, Hindu cultural information, as well as information relating to medical conditions and their treatments, diet and healthy life style were given through the electronic formats. A few websites presented information through the use of questions and answers.

The Internet was used for public relations, that is, the website was seen as an advertisement for the reformed Hindu organisation, especially when links from other sites were set up. Workshop material, e-books, articles, lectures and alternative therapy, such as reiki classes were advertised and available on websites. The workshop material was directed at the convenors of the workshops and related to the contents of the workshop. Articles that had been published in print media also appeared on the websites. The lectures that were available in the electronic media had been delivered by the swamis or spiritual heads of the various reformed Hindu organisations.

Historical information relating to the founding of the reformed Hindu organisation, the founding fathers and mothers, as well the teachings of the organisation were available through the websites. Religious information regarding the important festivals celebrated by the reformed Hindu organisation, quotes and sayings from religious texts relevant to that particular reformed Hindu organisation, explanations and commentaries for extracts from religious texts, and application of Hindu teachings in everyday life were available on the websites. Other websites stressed the teachings of the spiritual head of that reformed Hindu organisation.

International and national news was also highlighted on the websites. Activities, programmes, and reports of past activities were posted on the sites. Programmes often related to the teachings of the organisation concerned. A few websites had lists of affiliates in the

different countries on the websites. Some websites had religious literature, in English or in an Indian vernacular, available. Details of seminars, and training programmes were posted on the websites. A few websites had information relating to holy places, in India.

The e-mail facility was the main reason many reformed Hindu organisations used the Internet. E-mail was not only used to communicate with individuals within a particular reformed Hindu organisation but also to communicate with individuals from other Hindu organisations.

6.6. Discussion of degrees of aggressiveness in disseminating information; shortcomings and challenges that are experienced; and changes that need to be made to improve information dissemination and preservation.

The aggressiveness with which information is disseminated, the shortcomings and challenges that the reformed Hindu organisations face and possible changes in the methods employed to preserve and disseminate religious and cultural information are discussed below.

6.6.1. Review of Question 5.1.

Pro-active or aggressive information dissemination

Pro-active information dissemination behaviour could be seen to be acting in advance of an expected difficulty, for example, mass conversion to another religion. Aggressive behaviour would be assertive, energetic activities with the intention of increasing the number of devotees that attend the sathsangs of a particular reformed Hindu organisation. Although representatives of eight reformed Hindu organisations stated that information dissemination was pro-active, they insisted that their activities in this regard were not aggressive. Devotees were given information relating to religious celebrations before the date of celebration, and devotees were made aware of individuals and organisations that did not respect or take into account their religious rights.

All five reformed Hindu organisations that described their information dissemination as aggressive offered counselling services and offered religious literature to devotees on a regular basis. Other programmes and activities that were offered by these reformed Hindu

organisations could be seen as developmental for individual devotees. Such programmes and activities included amongst others: HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns; grief counselling in times of death in the family; religious support for families in need; and youth programmes. Devotees were encouraged to participate in these programmes and were often asked to assist with the arrangements and facilitation of such programs.

Programs and activities are supported by printed literature. However, two reformed Hindu organisations that did not disseminate printed information concerning their activities also responded to the question. Their explanations for not offering printed information follow. The Radha Soami Sathsang did not believe that there was a need for information dissemination among non-devotees. This stemmed from the fact that when individuals found the guru through research, meditation, and interaction with other devotees, those individuals would seek out the relevant information at their own will. The Indian Academy of South Africa did not see the need for information dissemination as that organisation was in the business of promoting the Indian arts, such as classical dance, music, and Indian theatre productions.

The four organisations that held special information dissemination campaigns were older organisations that were more firmly established. These campaigns were hosted over a period of time, for example two or three days, and interested individuals were given information about the organisation and the teachings followed by the organisation. The organisations were: The Divine Life Society, ISKCON, Saiva Sithantha Sungum and the South African Hindu Maha Sabha.

The South African Hindu Maha Sabha did see their activities as aggressive, but wished to preserve all forms of religion and culture of Hindus. The organisation worked with other groups from different religions and appreciated the rainbow culture of this country.

The Vedanta Institute of South Africa did not see their activities or information dissemination as aggressive. Instead, the organisation appreciated the contact it had with other Hindu and non-Hindu organisations, business houses, and educational institutions.

6.6.2. Review of Question 5.2.

The shortcomings and challenges experienced by the reformed Hindu organisations when disseminating and preserving information are explored below.

Shortcomings and challenges experienced when disseminating and preserving information

The lack of finances was the most common of the challenges faced by the organisations when disseminating information. There were a small number of devotees who contributed regularly to the coffers of the organisations, but much more funding was required for better information dissemination, social upliftment programmes, youth affairs and support services, such as counselling, feeding schemes and other such services.

Religious and cultural upliftment programmes were hindered by devotees who could read, but who chose not to read. Many of the interviewees complained that although the devotees were educated, many with degrees and post-matriculation qualifications and others had at least matriculation certificates, devotees did not read information relating to the religion or other cultural aspects that could influence their lives positively. This lack of interest affected information dissemination activities, and the use of disseminated information. The lack of interest also affected research that had to be undertaken for publications and talks.

Seven of the representatives said that there were small numbers of devotees who were interested in information dissemination activities, research and propagation of the teachings relevant to their reformed Hindu organisations. Two organisations saw the need to stimulate interest relating to the teachings of their organisations and the programmes and services that their organisations offered in the white community because services like yoga, reiki, and crystal healing and massage therapy were appreciated by individuals who belonged to that race group. Such services generated income and presented opportunities for information dissemination among non-devotees and interested individuals.

However, interest in the organisation, its teachings or the activities and programmes that were offered from young Hindu members was generally disappointing. Young people

reluctantly participated in programmes or offered their help to sustain the services that the organisations offered.

Another hurdle that had to be overcome for effective information dissemination to take place, was obtaining stocks of books and other media from publishers based in India. Timely delivery was not always guaranteed and this had an impact on sales and distribution.

Printed information is not the only method of disseminating information. The use of modern technology by the organisation and its devotees was essential for the future survival of the organisation and for the benefit of the devotees of the organisation. There was a need to protect against the reformed Hindu organisations from becoming obsolete in the eyes of devotees and the greater community at large. Therefore, the organisations had to keep abreast of technological advances.

The acceptance of new technologies and change were not welcome by senior members within the organisation. This prevented reformed Hindu organisations from changing the way services and activities were carried out. Young members became disinterested and failed to assist with services and activities.

6.6.3. Review of Question 5.3.

Interviewees were asked what changes they thought could be made to improve the dissemination and preservation of information. The responses of interviewees are discussed below.

Possible changes that could improve the dissemination and preservation of information

The most popular response was the accessing of more funds so that services and programmes would not have to be abandoned and to allow for more services and programmes to be included as a part of the work undertaken by the reformed Hindu organisation concerned.

Funding was not the only retardant of progress. Senior members who failed to accept and use new technology prevented progress and development within the organisation. Reformed Hindu organisations need to attract more volunteers who understand the teachings and the

workings of the various organisations. There was also a need to educate the man in the street in using the electronic media available.

Three representatives recognised the need for publishing more relevant material and information for devotees and interested individuals. More local publications and vigorous marketing of the organisations had to be initiated and sustained in the future.

Greater involvement from Indian politicians, religious leaders, and other prominent individuals in matters of religion and culture in the future was essential. Interviewees felt that more could be done to meet the cultural and religious needs of the local Hindu community.

Two representatives felt that there was a need for a local archive for people of Indian descent in the Ethekewini area. The archive could also serve as a cultural centre for the region and be accessible and relevant to the communities it would serve.

Reformed Hindu organisations in the Ethekewini area had to increase the physical space being used by the organisations. The facilities that were available at some of the reformed Hindu organisations were under-utilised and yet other organisations needed to develop space that could serve the needs specific to that organisation. Other changes that were suggested included increasing the number of fairs and exhibitions organised and hosted by Hindu organisations for the Hindu community. The religious education of Hindus needs to be improved. It was pointed out that Hindus must embark on self-development programmes and initiatives for Hinduism to be appreciated by all concerned.

6.7. Conclusion

The reformed Hindu organisations play an important role in the provision of religious and cultural information. The use of print-based material and electronic formats are important for the provision of religious and cultural information. Although problems associated with the use of electronic formats has been experienced, the use of these formats will become more popular as devotees acquire the necessary equipment to make use of the formats. Other methods of information provision have ensured the flow of information to devotees and interested individuals.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ANALYSIS OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS HELD BY REFORMED HINDU ORGANISATIONS

7.1. Introduction

The collections at the reformed Hindu organisations were at times old and dusty and at other times current and still growing. Many of the reformed Hindu organisations were adapting to all kinds of electronic formats that are available for use. However, the tried and trusted format of the book was the popular choice for presenting information. Books, brochures, booklets and leaflets were popular formats used for the dissemination of religious and cultural information.

A critical factor is that a complete and in-depth analysis of all information presented in printed, electronic and other formats, by reformed Hindu organisations based in the greater Ethekewini area is not possible in this study as such an analysis requires the attention and focus of a complete study in its entirety. What follows is an exploratory analysis of observations made of available religious and cultural information through a variety of formats. The researcher has tried to be as explicit as possible while remembering that this is only one aspect of the study that she has had to focus on in the survey.

7.2. Common Scriptural titles found in the different collections

Copies and variations of the Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gitā, and Ramayana, were found in virtually every collection. Whilst editions and translators differed, these religious texts were deemed an essential part of the collections. Complete sets of the Sri Ramacaritamanasa, The Vedas, and the Upanishads were located in many of the book collections held by the reformed Hindu organisations. Other religious texts that were popular were: the Brahma Sutras, the Vishnu Purana, as well as other Puranas.

7.3. Children's literature

Devotees of the Chinmaya Mission, who have young children, could subscribe to the *Chinmaya udgosh* (2006), which is a monthly magazine for the youth branch of the organisation, called the All India Chinmaya Yuva Kendra. The magazine is published

through the International headquarters based in India. The editors and sub-editors of the magazine ensure that the magazine offers a wide range of articles for the youth.

Prayers are printed in Hindi and have English translations. The editorial column contains messages and extracts of lectures delivered by Swami Chinmaya himself and other Swamis of the order. Poems, quotes and sayings by respected individuals, politicians and anthropologists such as Tim Connor, and Mahatma Gandhi are included to instil a positive attitude in young minds. Values relevant to the youth, like those that influence the organisation itself, society, education and culture are highlighted as are the programmes undertaken by the various youth groups found in different countries and areas. Stories about saints that inspire and promote service to humanity are also found in the magazines. Some articles are printed in Hindi only, thus forcing the youth to learn the language.

Children's literature was clearly visible in the collection housed at the Chinmaya Mission. Cartoon-style stories of Swami Chinmaya and other swamis and saints of India were available. Letters to children written in the form of a book by Swamiji (Swami Chinmaya), activity books for children, prayer books for children and joke books made up the collection housed at the mission. Tales for children and books for senior primary children with religious stories and activities were found on the shelves. Story books for children of different ages were also available. Of special note was the *Bhagawad Geeta for children* (Swami Chinmayananda, 1996) which contained a simplified version of the Bhagawad Gitā. The text contained the Sanskrit version of the original script, a translation and explanations. At the end of each chapter, there are questions which could be answered as a group or individually.

The collection of books for children and young adults was fairly large. Joke books in a two volume series was for sale. Special prayer books with pictures of gods and goddesses, the Sanskrit prayer, a transliteration, and explanations were among the other books. Books on general history and science as well as topics that children find interesting were available. There were pocket books with sayings and quotations.

Divine life for junior children (2007) is a publication of the Divine Life Society. The book contains short pieces of advice for children about their behaviour, personal hygiene, and love for all things. The information is written in English and isiZulu with beautiful photographs of

animals, flowers and scenes. Although the booklet *Glory of Hinduism* (Divine Life Society of South Africa, 2006) has been published for all interested individuals to read, the researcher has placed it in this category as the booklet is simple to read and even children will understand the text. The researcher has assumed that the aim of publishing such information is to instil a sense of pride among young and old alike.

A number of activity books for children are published by ISKCON. Many of the books are targeted at younger children who are just beginning to read and who enjoy colouring in pictures of Krsna and scenes from religious texts.

A True Disciple: story of Saint Eknath (Manav Utthan Sewa Samiti, n.d.) is one of a few children's books available at the Manav Dharam's collection. This children's book has colourful pictures and can be easily read by children at senior primary level. Loose colouring pictures for younger children were also available.

Young devotees of the Radha Soami Sathsang had a small choice of literature. The stories, all written by older devotees of the organisation, were beautifully illustrated and were pointedly non-denominational. Neither religion nor any sectarian group was mentioned in the stories. A special book of poems for children, with explanations for special stanzas that may be difficult for children to understand has been published.

The Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa runs Hinduism courses for children. Special course books for children have been published. Other literature published by the organisation is simple enough for young children to read and understand. Little pocket books on the teachings and saying of Sri Sarada Devi, selections from the Bhagavad Gitā, and the sacred wisdom of Sri Ramakrishna have been published. Children have found the books enticing as they are colourful, simple and glossy.

Children are encouraged to read by the Sri Sathya Sai Central Council of South Africa and the International headquarters of the organisation. Special books for children are published by the organisation. *Krishna-Arjuna Dialogue: The Gitā for young adults* (Sri Sathya Sai Baba, n.d.) is a book that has been specifically written for young adults. The text is simple to read and understand. *Sunrays for Sunday: a compendium of inspirational stories* (Saidasa,

n.d.) has a thought for the day with pictures and hand-drawings by the contributors of the stories. There were also colouring books for children, guidelines to spirituality for the youth and stories for children. School textbooks in human values for children were also available. A *Bal vikas* magazine for children is also published by the international headquarters and is available through subscription.

Literature is seen as critical in supporting the efforts of offering religious classes (Bal vihar) for the youth of the Swami Narayan Mandir of South Africa. Children can read about tales of wisdom, and simplified messages from the Head of the organisation. Younger children have a choice of picture books to choose from. Sathsangs have also been published for the youth. *108 Pasang Mala* (2007) contains stories written and translated by the sadhus of the organisation. All stories have morals and have been adapted from a range of sources, including Aesop's tales.

Gītā magazine for children (Meera Devi, 2001), a publication of the Vedanta Mission, has been published for young adults. There was an editor and assistant editor for the publication. Many of the articles were written by the youth who belonged to the Children's Gītā Club. Articles are related to Hindu teachings and stories from Hindu literature. Clue word games and matching games for children were included in the magazine. The library housed a healthy collection of picture books in simple English, Hindi, and Gujarati for young children to read. Books of Indian origin were available in the library.

7.4. Books

Whilst the Divine Life Society of South Africa is known for their publication and distribution of many free books and series, a popular monograph published by them is called *Glory of guru's grace* (2003) edited by Sri Guru Sahajananda. The monograph is a biography of Swami Sahajananda and highlights the successes and achievements of the organisation.

ISKCON has a large selection of books published and distributed by the organisation. Three biographies of leaders of the organisations are available. The titles are: *Srila Prabhupada-lilamtra*, *Acarya*, and *Your ever well wisher*. All monographs are written and published abroad and are brought to South Africa for distribution.

A number of monographs have been published by the different international branches of the Ramakrishna organisation, which describe the lives of Swami Vivekananda and his spiritual wife. Many other titles have been published in over eight Indian languages by the different branches of the Ramakrishna organisation.

Although the Saiva Sithantha Sungum of South Africa does publish monographs, their collection at the centre in Chatsworth houses a few classic titles published by other branches, both national and international. Biographies of South Indian Saints and their teachings are found in the collections. *Queen Kunti*, the queen mentioned in the Ramayana, is the title of a book written about the queen and her life which was found at the centre's library. Dozens of books written in Tamil are a part of the collection. An in-house publication was *Soobramoniam* (1994) written by Brahma Sri Siva Soobramonia Guru Swamikal, which reflects on the founding Guru's life and teachings. The writings, teachings and philosophies of Saint Ramalingar are described in *Pathway to God trod by Saint Ramalingar* (Vanmikanathan, 2006). The publisher, an ardent devotee of the Sungum, paid for the publication with his personal funds. Many other titles are in the process of being published.

The Sri Sathya Sai organisation publishes many monographs. Authors are generally followers of the organisation and not necessarily Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself. Author Charles W. Gregory wrote *Lighting and the dreamwalker: an allegory of the healing of a soul*, (n.d.) which is a devotee's tale about his spiritual journey. Many of books in the collection were about devotees and their experiences or dealt with spirituality and philosophy. An autobiography about Sri Sathya Sai Baba is available for sale at the book store.

A number of monographs about the previous leaders of the Swami Narayan Mandir have been published. These include books on Gunatitanand Swami, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and the present leader, Pramuk Swami Maharaj. Books on culture like *Akshardham: Indian culture* and *Cultural cosmic voyage* have been sold by the organisation's headquarters. Many other titles are available for sale through the website or through the local branch base in Durban.

7.5. Magazines/Journals

The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha is responsible for the publication of the *Veda Jyoti* (Behadar et al, 2006) which appears three times a year. Articles reflect the reformist attitude of the organisation. The range of topics published in the magazine include: obituaries of leaders from the organisation, kids corner, recent events, youth groups and their activities, the performance of various pujas, as well as extracts and explanations from the religious texts. Modern aspects of Hindu philosophy, AIDs awareness articles, the opening of new branches, as well as changes and innovative programmes implemented by the branches of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha are offered through the publication.

The *Tapovan Prasad* (Chinmaya Mission, 2006) is a monthly magazine published by the Chinmaya Mission Worldwide. Like all other publications that are distributed by the mission, here too, there is an editorial committee. Photographic credits and acknowledgements are printed on the front inner cover of the magazine. Prayers in Hindi with transliterations and translations appear in the publication. A special prayer to the guru is included. Articles offer advice on coping with life and the changing circumstances of any individual, for example, ageing. Articles on meditation, the paths of pilgrimage, poems that reflect the spiritual life, interviews with leaders of the various branches, and self empowerment are covered in the publication. News from centres around the world, up-coming events, camps, courses, lectures and seminars are found in the magazine. Each issue has a theme, for example, old age and senior individuals.

Transcendence (Petzer, 2007) is the title of the monthly magazine published by the Gayathri Peedam of South Africa. This publication is available every full moon. The small compact (A5) magazine carries well-researched articles written by published authors as well as saints and swamis of the east. Information on workshops, weekly classes and religious celebrations are printed in the magazine. Extracts from published books like *Why men don't listen & women can't read maps* by Alan and Barbara Pease are offered as advice for devotees. Yoga exercises, nutritional information, crystal healing, understanding energy and the art of leadership are a few of the topics covered in the magazine. The magazine is divided into four sections: regulars; transform; transmit and transcend. Every issue carries a special feature of religious significance.

Back to Godhead (Nagaraja Dasa, 2006) is the title of the magazine published by ISKCON. The magazine is published every two months and carries articles relating to the activities of the various branches of the organisation; special programmes and building projects are described in the publication. Ancient places of interest in India are featured. Human values, science and the Hindu religion, stories about Krsna and aspects of religious philosophy are written about in the magazine. It is an international publication and the editorial committee does not sit in South Africa.

The Manav Dharam Society of South Africa is not responsible for the publication of the magazine called *Manav Dharam: Spiritual and Inspiration Magazine* (Tandon, 2006). The monthly magazine is published in India. Like most other religious magazines available through the reformed Hindu organisations, this one too carries features about the founder and his activities. The teachings of the organisation and relevant teachings from the ancient texts of Hinduism are propagated through this publication. Sayings and quotes by the saints of Hinduism appear frequently in any copy of the magazine. Lectures and talks given by the founder and his family are carried in the publication. Activities of the different international branches are also described. Spiritual leaders within the organisation, both men and women, and their views on religious and spiritual matters are also printed.

Spiritual Link (2006) is the name of the international publication of the Radha Soami Sathsang. There is also a local newsletter that is published on a monthly basis which allows for devotees to keep in contact with each other. The newsletter carries local news of activities and talks given locally. The *Spiritual Link* is a monthly publication and devotees subscribe individually to the magazine.

A quarterly journal called *Jyoti* (2006) is published by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. It carries a number of articles relating to religion, the lives of saints and sages, spirituality, news and reports and Indians who have made an impression on the lives of people in India and around the world. Other Ramakrishna centres around the world publish their own journals. Consequently, there are over twenty journals that are published by different branches of the Ramakrishna movement. Many of the journals are written in Indian languages not spoken in South Africa like Kannada and Bengali.

Quarterly News (2000) is a newsletter published in South Africa by the Sri Sathya Sai Central Council of South Africa. It carries news of local events, activities, programmes and developments of the various branches and cell groups that are affiliated to the organisation. The South African publications board is responsible for this publication. Also included in the newsletter are tips for living a positive life, good habits of Sai devotees, and short articles (about a paragraph long) by devotees of the organisation. The international headquarters publishes a monthly magazine called *Sanathana Sarathi* which carries articles on recent happenings, discourses and other information.

Hindu Light (2006), published every two months by the South African Hindu Maha Sabha, is distributed free of charge through shops that sell prayer goods, affiliates of the Sabha, and other interested individuals. Articles about the various religious celebrations and observances of all language groups are featured in the publication. General medical advice by practicing medics is given in the magazine. Reports on the construction of new temples, ashrams and building projects undertaken by Hindu organisations are published. Future events are also advertised in the magazine. Writers describe aspects of Hinduism and give commentaries on parts of religious texts.

The headquarters of the Swami Naraya Mandir publishes a range of magazines in different Indian languages as well as one for English readers. The English edition of the magazine is called *Swaminarayan Bliss (2006)*. The magazine is published monthly and contains information relating to all aspects of Hinduism and the organisation. Rituals, discourses, life lessons as experienced by spiritual leaders, achievements of the headquarters, and achievements of the different branches of the organisation, history of Indian and Indians, and messages about the Dharma are included in the publications.

7.6. Archival material

Some of the oldest archival material is stored by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Photographs, minutes of meetings, invitations to meetings and prayer functions, correspondence, committee logs as well as brochures make up this collection. The dated boxes in which the items are stored serve as a systematic means of storage and retrieval. Much of the material

has been retrieved from affiliates and individuals who, in the past, played a vital role in the functioning of the organisation.

The complete sets of past publications of the Radha Soami Sathsang's magazines are housed at their facility in Chatsworth. This local publication, dating between 1963 and 2004, has been well preserved. Called *Science of the Soul*, the A5 publications contains lots of spiritual information for devotees. Other sets of series from USA, Hong Kong and Britain were located in glass cabinets at the centre. Other archival material in the form of speeches and talks are stored at the same venue.

Religious research and academic papers form a part of the archival material housed at the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. Materials produced by the monks of the order are also stored at the centre.

Many rare out of print books written in Tamil and English about the South Indian Saints, their teachings and the teachings of the Sungum are a part of the collection of the Saiva Sithantha Sungum of South Africa. Other rare books written by mystics were found on the shelves. Such texts are consulted by devoted researchers of the sungum. Other research material is obtained from the International Institute for Saiva Sidantha Research in India. Unpublished manuscripts from the universities of the South of India are a part of the Sungum's library. Many manuscripts are written in Tamil and Telugu.

The library at the Vedanta Mission housed a number of research articles in the library. A few of the articles had been published in religious and other journals used by academics. Articles that had been researched in the Indian languages of Hindi, Gujarati and Sanskrit were located in the collection. The collection also included rare books written in Gujarati that had been published many decades previously. Old pictures of activities carried out by the organisation had been stored in the library.

7.7. Some printed religious information found in the collections

The *Aryan Prayer Book* [n.d.] is one of the best sellers of the publications put out by the Arya Samaj. The book contains mantras and bhajans written in Sanskrit. Transliterations and

explanations of the mantras and bhajans are printed in the text. *Havan for me* (Rambilass, 2001) is a booklet that contains simple instructions for performing the havan, instructions to the individuals, and also offers the importance and significance of the havan ceremony.

Many of the collections that were surveyed contained material relating to other religions: Christianity, Islam, Traditional Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. Philosophy, spiritualism and teachings of the great saints of the aforementioned religions were included in virtually all the collections surveyed for this study.

The Veda Niketan is the “publications and propagation wing of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (South Africa)” (n.d., *Prospectus of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha*, p. 2.). Thus, many courses are offered through the organisation and accordingly, literature to support the academic programme of the organisation is published. Books that are published by the organisation include: *Dharma Prathama* (2004), *Dharma Pravesh* (2004), *Dharma Praveen* (2004), and *Dharma Prabhakar* (2004). There are many more books that are published as support material for courses on Hindu scriptures, principles and philosophy of Hinduism, fundamental Vedic teachings, and special courses for the training of priests.

Much of the collection of the ISKCON organisation can be considered to be religious in content. The specific subdivisions of the collection that fall into the category of religion are: classics, karma and reincarnation, Vedic science and ecology, as well as yoga and meditation.

The Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa has the collection of Tagore’s writings on Ramakrishna, books on the lives and teachings of saints, sages, and rishis of the east. Many of the religious magazines and journals that the centre subscribes to are published by Hindu religious organisations and this makes the collection a valuable current resource for students and academics of the Hindu religion.

Unique titles devoted specifically to the teachings of the Saiva Sithantha Sungum are housed at the centre in Chatsworth. *Soobramoniem Thirumarai*, a series of twelve volumes, contains the thoughts, emotions and teachings of the Saiva Saints. There is also a fourteen volume series which contains the philosophical works of the saints, called the Saiva Sithantha

Scriptures. Other titles written in Tamil are about the philosophy, practice, service and devotion of the Saiva Saints and religious leaders. The latest research on and about the Saivite saints, their writings and their teachings are constantly sought and acquired by leaders of the organisation.

All religious material available at the Sri Sathya Sai Centre's library is sanctioned by the headquarters. Titles such as *Geetha Vahini: The Divine Gospel*, *Bhaagvatham Quiz*, *Mahaarbhaaratha Quiz*, and quiz books for other Hindu religious texts were published by Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust in India. Many religious books have been published in pocket size for portability and easy access. Spiritual poems and quotes by Sri Sathya Baba himself are available in book form. Mantras, their historical significance and explanations are available in printed format.

The Swami Narayan Mandir has published lots of books relating to a number of different topics. *Searching Questions and Fulfilling Answers* (Sadhu Tilakratnadas, 1999) contains a wide range of questions asked by devotees and non-devotees and offers answers given by the religious leaders of the organisation. Other religious material has been written about discourses given by the religious leader. Aspects of divinity and spirituality have been discussed in *Divinity* (Sadhu Paratattvadas, 1994). There have been many books published by the organisation that offer devotees and interested individuals information about the teachings, principles and values expounded by the organisation.

Religious material abounded on the shelves of the Vedanta Mission. Ancient religious texts, books on Hindu philosophy, symbolism in Hinduism, rituals performed by Hindus, and aspects of yoga, fasting and the chanting of mantras were some of the topics covered in the collection. *Bhāgavat-Vedānta: Prayer Book* (Guru Dewa, n.d.) includes pictures of deities, quotations from the Saints, mantras written in Gujarati, transliterations of the mantras, explanations and commentaries of the mantras. Other booklets containing similar information were located on the shelves of the Vedanta Mission.

7.8. Annuals and Brochures

The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of South Africa publishes a number of brochures and leaflets like the information leaflet which advertises their vision, mission, management and other aspects of the organisation (Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, n.d.). The *80th Anniversary Brochure: 100 years of Arya Samaj Movement in South Africa* (Rambilass, 2005) carries a number of messages from religious leaders of organisations affiliated to the Samaj as well as messages from leaders of the reformed Hindu organisations. The teachings of the movement and principles promoted by the organisation have been featured in the brochure.

Articles which feature Indians who have contributed to the local Indian community as well as articles which feature individuals who play significant roles in the lives of Indians internationally are a major part of the *Indian Annual* (Naidoo, 2004-2007). The publication also caters for historical information like the article on the Mongol warriors which appeared in the 2006 issue. Improvements and achievements in the Indian technological field and new medical opportunities in India have been written in the *Indian Annual* (Naidoo, 2004-2007). Special features include vegetarian and meat recipes, the achievements of individuals, weddings of prominent Indians, and vacation destinations in the East. Awards received by local Indians in any number of careers are highlighted. The annual also carries special articles on Indians who have achieved success in their chosen careers. In fact, the annual has published information that had had any kind of bearing on the Indian community in South Africa.

International editions of brochures published by the Manav Dharam (international headquarters) were located at the ashram in South Africa. The Brochures covered the World Peace Tour undertaken by the present head of the organisation. Pictures and articles on the different stops that had been made on the tour are featured in the brochure. Meetings with political and social leaders were photographed and written about in the brochure. Other brochures highlighted the building projects and other activities of the organisation's branches internationally.

A number of brochures are published by the Ramakrishna Centres internationally. *Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission* (n.d.) is one such brochure. Historical

information, pictures of ashrams of significance and Sri Sarada Devi and Sri Ramakrishna, ideology, teachings, method of administration, and various other bits of information have been brought together in this brochure. Each of the centres around the world is responsible for publishing material needed by the centre. This has resulted in numerous brochures being produced.

The Saiva Sithantha Sungum's brochure, published at the official opening of the Chatsworth Centre, contains pictures and articles about the Sungum, the founding saints and their teachings. The brochure also has messages from prominent individuals who worked closely with the Sungum. Each centre is responsible for the publication of brochures published by the centre commemorating various celebrations and expansions of the branch.

Brochures from various schools run by the Sri Sathya Sai Centre have been published. The opening of these schools, which are run in accordance to rules and guidelines set by the international headquarters, and their special events are publicised through brochures. Special brochures have been published to commemorate the birthday of the Guru Sri Sathya Sai Baba and other auspicious days marked by the organisation.

The annual published by the South African Hindu Maha Sabha is called *The Hindu* (2005-2007). It boasts an editorial column written by Dr T.P. Naidoo. It carries a number of messages written by prominent individuals who work closely with the Hindu community and articles written by academics based in South Africa. Information on the significance of various religious ceremonies, symbolism in Hinduism, ethical Hindu values, and aspects of culture are printed in the annual. Tributes are paid to deceased people who devoted their lives to upholding religious and cultural values, and who worked tirelessly in the Hindu community. News about new temple organisations and temple projects are also found in the publication. Activities, programmes and celebrations of sub committees are described in the annual. Aspects of global Hinduism are discussed in *The Hindu*.

All branches of the Swami Narayan Mandir are responsible for the publication of brochures. The South African branch of the organisation celebrated its silver jubilee in 1999 and brought out a brochure for the occasion. The *Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (South Africa) Silver Jubilee Brochure* (1999) carries a number of messages. But

more importantly, it highlights the teachings, values and lifestyle of the leaders of the organisation. Activities of the various branches within South Africa are featured. Articles about Hinduism, rituals and symbols are carried in the publication.

7.9. Leaflets, booklets and occasional prints

The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha has published many leaflets; however, the leaflet that deserves attention is called *phir milenge* (undated). The leaflet advertises the Hindi film by the same name and gives advice on AIDS/HIV as well as the AIDS helpline number. *Namaste: An International Greeting* (undated) gives a simple explanation for the use of an ancient greeting accepted by all Hindus. Yet another useful leaflet that has been published and distributed by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha is called: *Yajna Havan* (n.d.). This leaflet offers brief explanations of the Yajna and comments on the offerings and Sanskrit mantras.

Many thousands of booklets and leaflets are printed annually by the Divine Life Society of South Africa. A few recent publications are discussed below. *Solving the problems of Kali Yuga* (n.d.) offers the reader ways of living a pious life, for example, the reader is given reasons for not watching television, how the individual can overcome personal weaknesses or how a person could overcome depression. *Pathway to peace and happiness* (n.d.) includes short moral stories, explains the effects of karma, and informs devotees of bad fashion habits that reflect badly on the individual.

The Power of Prayer (n.d.) is a leaflet produced by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. Simply written, it could be appreciated by the less educated individual. *Tribute to His Holiness Swami Ranganathananda* (n.d.) pays tribute to the previous president of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission world-wide. Biographical details of the swami and general advice for teachers, children and devotees are given. The booklet *Memories of Sri Ramakrishna* (Ghosh, n.d.) is dedicated to the swami who changed the life style of Girish Chandra Ghosh, a playwright and producer of theatre. The booklet contains a series of incidents that occurred between Girish Chandra Ghosh and Sri Ramakrishna. A number of pocket books such as *Sri Sarada Devi: Teachings and Consolations*, *Selections from the Bhagavad Gitā*, and *Sacred wisdom of Sri Ramakrishna* have been published by the

Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. These small, easy to read booklets can be carried around and passed on to people who need to learn about the teachings of Ramakrishna.

There are booklets for newcomers to the Sri Sathya Sai organisation. The forty page booklet gives relevant information related to the running of the organisation, the teachings of the Guru, the ideals and values upheld by the organisation as well as how the newcomer can become involved in the many projects and activities that are offered by the organisation (*Newcomers*, n.d.).

Booklets about Indian history and past achievements of the Indians have been published by the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (Swami Narayan Mandir). *Understanding Hinduism* (Sadhu Brahmaviharidas, n.d.) is about Hindu achievements going back five thousand years. The booklet reveals aspects of Hinduism, the history of the organisation and the founding fathers of the organisation. The present leader, his service to Hindus and non-Hindus and his leadership examples have been defined in a leaflet *Pramukh Swami Maharaj* (n.d.). *Social & Spiritual Care* (2003/4) highlights the activities of the organisation throughout the world.

A number of leaflets and booklets have been published by the Vedanta Mission. Many booklets, pocket-sized for carrying around, have been written in Gujarati. Mantras and their explanations have been included in such publications. However, there have been other booklets that have been published with Gujarati mantras, transliterations of the mantras, explanations of the mantras and commentaries. One such booklet is *A study of the Puruṣa Sūktam: hymn of the absolute Godhead* (Guru Dewa, 2005). The leaflet *Some facts about idol worship* (Guru Dewa, n.d.) was written with the intention of informing Hindus of the need for having Idols.

7.10. Series and Manuals

CMW News (2006) is a bimonthly newsletter of the Chinmaya Mission. Its focus is spiritual and religious and carries Gurudev's (the most senior of monks within the organisation) message. Spiritual encounters and philosophical messages are highlighted. Questions and answers, short stories that contain moral endings and Hindu teachings are found in the

newsletter. News about temples, temple events, and special camps are given. The newsletter focuses on information concerning the North American centres. All editorial, design, layout and photographic credits are listed.

A series of significance that was found at the Chinmaya Mission was the *Hindu Culture Series* (2001) which offered guidance for everyday living according to Dharma rules.

Manuals published by the Jadatharaya Institute of Right Living, which is a branch of the Gayathri Peedam of South Africa, are used during workshops held for stress management, weight loss, and reiki sessions. The manuals are given at special classes held for devotees and who register for the classes by paying a fee.

Dr T.P. Naidoo is the editor for the *Heritage Series* (2005-2007) which is published by the Indian Academy of South Africa. The series is published with the intent of highlighting the Swami Thyagaraja festival and important shows, and concerts held by the academy to promote Indian culture. Details about the guests at the festival are included. The publication carries a number of messages by prominent individuals who work within and with the Indian community.

Local music orchestras which have had long influential careers and which have contributed to the promotion and tutoring of music to younger individuals have been thanked through this series. Biographical data about members and their achievements are given. Temples of architectural note, individuals, both local and international, who influence the lives of others as well as news about festivals held locally, are described in the series. Awards received locally and abroad by South African Indians are advertised and details of the awardees are shared. International spiritual leaders and local aspirants are featured in the publication.

A number of manuals are published by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. All manuals are intended for in-house use only. Manuals for teachers of courses offered at the centre, for the administration of the branches and for the administration of the national headquarters have been produced. Guidebooks for courses offered by the centre have been published, like the *Hindu Studies guidebook* (n.d.). Such guidebooks have to be used in conjunction with other references and texts on the Hindu religion and teachings of the religion.

The *Bhagavata Vahini Series* (Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 1970-1986) is a sixteen volume series that contains the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in a condensed form. *Sathya Sai Speaks* (Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 1953-1974) is a seventeen volume series that contains the discourses of the Guru over four decades. Volumes can be bought individually. Indian culture and spirituality is discussed in the *Summer Showers Series* (Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 1972-2002). All information presented in these three series has been written by Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself.

An annual newsletter is published by the local branch of the Swami Narayan Mandir in Durban. The purpose of the newsletter is to outline the projects and achievements of the organisation in Durban. International news is also included in the publication. Experience and thoughts of local devotees are described in the newsletter, *Shree Swami Narayan Mandir – Durban, 5th Anniversary Newsletter* (Swami Narayan Mandir, 2004).

7.11. Electronic formats

The Divine Life Society had a healthy collection of videos, CDs and cassettes. The videos contain speeches of swamis, self-help, self-development and empowerment. Religious videos on the Ramanyana were also a part of the collection. There were CDs with recordings of sathsangs and cassettes with bhajans dedicated to deities.

The International Society for Krsna Consciousness has adapted to the use of new technologies that are available. A number of DVDs are available through the organisation. Interactive CD ROMs include: *Interactive Bhagavad Gitā as it is* (2000), *The library of Vedic Culture* (2004), *ISKCON Interactive DVD* (2003), and *The complete Prabhupada DVD Library* (2004). Other titles of CDs are also available. DVDs of festivals held by the various branches, and religious places in India can be obtained through the organisation. A DVD documentary on the Ganges River is popular among devotees and other Hindus.

The small collection of CDs housed at the Manav Dharam consisted of compilations of songs favoured by the devotees of the organisation. A few songs are generally sung by other Hindus outside of the ashram. The sathsangs were rendered by Indian artists and groups of followers of the organisation.

An important feature of the library at the Radha Soami Sathsang of South Africa was the collection of cassettes, video cassettes and CDs. These contained sathsangs and their translations of talks given in Hindi and English. All cassettes, video cassettes and CDs were colour coded for the different decades and the type of information contained on that particular format, for example all material that originated in the 1980s had orange year tags, and the shabads had red round sticks on them. The collection also included material in other languages like French.

A number of e-books are available on the Ramakrishna website. Registered users have indexes and cross-references to guide their use of such books on the web sites. Information can be called up and downloaded by these registered users.

Other formats offered by the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa include VCDs, CDs, and charts. Many of the VCDs contained speeches given by monks of the order or were used to present special information on education, health, environmental science and topics related to the programmes and projects undertaken by the organisation. Recorded music and sathsangs are available on VCDs and CDs. Charts that were published contained vital information relating to topics such as education, agricultural science, health, HIV/AIDS, and diabetes.

The library collection of Saiva Sithantha Sungum has hundreds of audio CDs, DVDs, audio cassettes and video cassettes. Hymns sung by the Sungum saints called Thevaram and Thiruvacagam and Thirukurral are recorded on Audio CDs. Cultural and classical music were found on the CDs. Language lessons for the teaching of the Tamil and Telugu languages were available on CDs. The chanting of sacred hymns, devotional songs and poetry have also been recorded on CDs. The DVD collection is vast and covers a range of titles which are about: the Saivite temples in India; life stories of saints and sages; festivals of India; the Saints of the Sungum; living female saints and a host of topics.

Video cassettes of a number of festivals were found in the collection housed at the Sri Sathya Sai Centre's facility in Reservoir Hills. Meditation, lessons from Sri Sathya Sai Baba as well as discourses given by the Guru are included in the collection. Pictures and photographs, often in life size prints were available. Packages for little children, made up of books and

CDs, and containing rhymes in English and Indian vernacular languages were available. Audio cassettes with bhajans and mantras were also found on the shelves.

One of the reformed Hindu organisations that has excelled in the publication and sales of audio-visual formats is the Swami Narayan Mandir. Video cassettes, audio cassettes, CDs and DVDs contain a wide range of religious information. For example, devotional songs, cultural events, and songs for children are available through CDs and audio cassettes. Video titles include information on festivals, Indian culture, the teaching of values, educational topics and discourses given by religious leaders. DVDs include information on religious pilgrimages and places of religious significance.

7.12. The collections in general

Publications of local authors like Pundit Vedalankar and Professor Satya Prakash were shelved among the more prestigious international authors, namely Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, and Swami Dayanand in the collection housed at the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Literature from other Hindu organisations was a part of the stock. Information relating to Christianity, Islam and Buddhism was clearly visible on shelves. The collection boasts literature from the Rigveda and other ancient Hindu texts to modern day Hindu philosophers. Many of the books contained Sanskrit writing, transliterations and English translations with commentaries. An interesting collection of past leaflets was found among the books. Books containing information on Hindu life-style, the practicing of reformed Hinduism, pujas for reformed Hindus as well as prayers and bhajans were available.

The Brahma Kumaris: World Spiritual University publishes leaflets for advertising various courses and programmes. The in-house collection of cassettes and CDs contain religious chants and talks and lectures delivered by senior members of the organisation. Pocket books contain sayings and quotations by famous people who belonged to various faiths.

The Chinmaya Mission had books that covered a wide range of topics and subjects. Aspects covered included: Meditation, self-development and self empowerment, Advice to householders (married people), and the assumption of religious lifestyles. Moral stories,

information on the power of prayer dealing with sorrow, parenting and ethical choices in life were also a part of the collection.

The collection also housed books written in Hindi and Sanskrit. Advice on how to conduct poojas, symbolism in Hinduism, aspects of Vedanta, Religion and Human values, pilgrimages to places of religious significance, and talks on the samkaras were topics that were written about in dozens of titles. Books containing chalisas for various deities, books dedicated to a number of deities, Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies, and books on Hindu culture were found at the mission. Books by western authors on Hindu philosophy, and aspects of Hinduism were available. Other books had been published by various reformed Hindu organisations and distributed here in South Africa.

One significant collection that was truly more than just a religious collection was the library at the Divine Life Society. Information relating to politicians, the independence of India, and Indian history was a part of the stock. Other interesting texts revolved around animal rights, flower gardening, birds, and topics on nature. Books about Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and religions of the Middle East were found on the shelves. There were numerous DIY manuals on the shelves. Medical information relating to Indian traditional medicine (ayurveda) as well as modern western medicine material was stored in the collection.

The bulk of the collection of the Divine Life Society revolved around aspects of Hinduism and Hindu culture. Works by saints, swamis and renowned Hindu authors made up the collection. Western authors on eastern philosophy, religion and related aspects, such as Max Muller added validity to the library. Books on meditation, explanations of religious texts and biographies of the Hindu saints were found amongst older copies of *National Geographic*, vegetarian cookery, journals from other reformed Hindu organisations, and the writings of Sikh saints like Kabir.

One of the larger collections of books and other information media was held by the Gayathri Peedam of South Africa. Devotees have an excellent range of information sources to choose from: best sellers Like Neale Donald Walsch's *Conversations with God*, Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*, the *Chicken Soup* series are available among other religious and related works. Astrology, numerology, Horoscopes, reiki, crystal healing, yoga, pilates, gemstone healing,

tarot readings, feng shui, vastu vidhya, and palmistry are some of the topics covered by hundreds of books. Spirituality, theology, philosophy, divinity, self healing, pranic healing, self-realisation, spiritual awareness and the philosophy of yoga are other subjects covered in the collection.

Hindu religious literature was shelved alongside books on Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Various authors who have written about eastern and western philosophy had a place in the library. Books from other reformed Hindu organisations were a part of the collection. Lots of information about the mother Gayathri (the name of the organisation represents this Goddess and it is a mantra chanted by Hindus regularly) was available. A vast amount of literature written by swamis, about swamis and the teachings of the saints was located in this collection. The collection also housed books written in Tamil, Hindi and Sanskrit. This collection, like a few other collections, deserves greater investigation and analysis than can be done in this survey.

Although a closed collection, the collection of the Indian Academy of South Africa has been made available to academics and researchers. Books about history, Indian classical dance, Indian music, religion and philosophy were located at the academy. Aspects of Indian architecture, Indian life-style, and a healthy selection of brochures, published by the academy as well as other Hindu organisations, made up the library. Photographs of events, presentations and special functions were aplenty.

ISKCON's collection of books is made up mostly of books published and distributed by the organisation. The collection has been subdivided into nine classes: introductory books, biographical books, classics, cooking, karma and reincarnation, songs, Vedic science and ecology, yoga and meditation, and multimedia CD/DVD. Whilst the number of titles held in the collection may be small, the actual numbers of copies that are sold and distributed free exceed tens of thousands annually. Books are printed and published outside of South Africa and are shipped to South Africa for local distribution.

A small select number of books made up the collection housed at the Manav Dharam Society of South Africa. The majority of the books had been written by Satpal Ji Maharaj who was the founder of the organisation. Stories of aspirants were collated into a single volume called

The True Path and had been written by Satpal Ji Maharaj himself. Aside from books on science and spirituality, there were also books on Christianity and Islam in the collection. A small number of books were devoted to Lord Krsna. Of special interest were the books about the Ramayana and Mahabharata: *Some ideal characters of the Ramayana* (Goyandka, 2005) and *Some ideal characters of the Mahabharata* (Goyandka, 2005). Other titles that were visible were written in Hindi and Sanskrit. Many invitations and leaflets announcing a number of functions and special celebrations were stored in the collection. Pictures of Devis and Devatars were found among the other printed matter. Calendars and leaflets containing songs relevant to different Hindu celebrations were available.

A well organised and relevant collection of material was found at the Radha Soami Sathsang in Chatsworth. A qualified librarian was in charge of the library. Videos, CDs, photographs, cassettes, journals and books made up the collection. The different formats had been filed separately, and had been arranged in alphabetical order of author surnames. Although the collection was largely spiritual and philosophical in nature, a few books on vegetarian cooking and yoga were available. Literature revolving around Christ, Islam, and Sikhism was included in the collection.

Poetry, written in Hindi with transliteration and translations, about the Soamis was found in the collection at the Radha Soami Sathsang. The teachings of the Guru Nanak and other Gurus had been brought together as collections in monographs. Discourses by the great saints and leaders were reproduced as volumes. Other material covered Christ, Gospels of Christ, Odes of Soloman, and teachings of the disciples. The collection had been used by devotees as date stamps were found inside the books.

More than ninety percent of the books that are sold at the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa are imported from India. The library collection held at the ashram in Glen Anil has more than two thousand books that are for internal use only for bona fide users, that is, devotees and researchers. The collection includes many titles written and published in the west.

Other books on Indian history, philosophy, spirituality, art, art forms and ancient history of India are located in the collection. There are dozens of religious journals to which the centre

subscribes. Biographies of saints, sages and Indian leaders abound on the shelves. Amongst the treasured works was the biography of Swami Ramakrishna written by Romain Rolland as well as Tagore's writings on Swami Ramakrishna. Also found on the shelves were the ancient Hindu texts of the Bhagavad Gitā and Ramanyana together with various works of analysis and explanations of many of the Hindu religious texts. The smaller branches at Pietermaritzburg and Asherville have their libraries with hundreds of books at both locations.

Although the library at the Sarva Dharma Ashram is small and dated, the collection has classical English literature, many children's books and covers a wide range of topics. Encyclopaedias such as *World Book*, *Britanica*, *New Book of Knowledge* and *New World Library* are a part of the collection. Children's books written by Enid Blyton, Nancy Drew and other classical writers were found on the shelves. Stories for very young children and beginner readers were available. Books published by other traditional and reformed Hindu organisations were in the library. The traditional ancient Hindu texts and variations written by different saints were found on the shelves. Books on and about Christianity, Islam and Buddhism were found on the shelves. Other available titles included books on western medicines, herbal remedies, Hindu philosophy, Gandhi's politics and teachings, Indian History and modern mathematics.

Themes that were covered in the Sri Sathya Sai Centre's collection were: spirituality, religion, philosophy, testimonies of devotees, discourses and lessons from the Guru himself, stories with morals, and educational material. The collection had many topics on offer; however, a very large percentage of the collection was made up of material published by the international headquarters or other branches of the organisation. Books that had not been written by Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself had been written by devotees who belonged to various international branches of the organisation. All material on offer at the facility was related to the organisation or the teachings of the organisations.

Hundreds of titles covering a vast range of subjects made up the collection at the Shree Bhagavata Vedanta Society. Dictionaries for various Indian languages as well as for the English language were available in the collection. Religious books printed and published by other Hindu organisations, both traditional and reformed, were a part of the collection. Biographies of Saints such as Sai Baba, Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Shankeracharya, and Sri

Saankhaya and their writings were among other material. Hindu religious philosophy, spirituality, yoga, meditation, and Hindu rituals were a few of the topics covered by hundreds of books.

The Society also held religious texts about the Christian, Muslim and Buddhist religions. Copies of the *Koran*, various editions of the *Bible* (both testaments), the *Torah* and literature about Buddhism were housed in the collection. Aside from the traditional ancient Hindu texts like the *Upanishads*, the *Vedas*, the *Brahma Sutra Bhasya* and the *Bhagavad Gitā*, other relevant writings about Hinduism were included in the collection. Writings about the Hindu Dharma, the cultural Heritage of India, and Hindu leadership, temples in India, Hindu value systems, and commentaries about various Hindu texts were found on the shelves. Books on medicine, both western and Vedic, Indian metaphysics, Indian theology, herbal remedies and scientific theories abound on the shelves.

The collection held by the South African Hindu Maha Sabha covered all Indian languages spoken by South African Hindus. There were any number of books written in the vernacular languages, which the researcher recognised by script. A number of religious texts, books on philosophy, spiritualism, pujas, samskaras and aspects of culture were included in the collection. Brochures from affiliated organisations, special publications from Hindu organisations, and leaflets (celebrating a number of functions) were located on the shelves. Many dictionaries were shelved among the books. Encyclopaedias and a number of reference books were also housed at the facility.

Information is available through many formats at the Swami Narayan Mandir. The collection entails publications of the organisation and very little from other Hindu organisations or publications from non-Hindu organisations. However, the collection covers a wide range of topics and information is provided through a range of formats which is interesting and exciting for the devotees. Devotees purchase many items available for sale and therefore, many devotees have substantial private collections in their homes. Items are available for sale most times when functions and sathsangs are held.

Vedanta Centre South Africa is a branch of the Vedanta Cultural Foundation which is based in Pune, India. The Durban collection houses only publications of the organisations. There

are seven titles published by the organisation: *Vedanta Treatise: The Eternities*, *Select English poems*, *Choice Upanishads*, *Srimad Bhagavad Gita – Vol III*, *Srimad Bhagavad Gita – Vol II*, *Bhaja Govindam*, and *The Symbolism of Hindu Gods and Rituals*. These books are used consistently to reinforce the teachings of the organisation. Many audio CDs have been recorded by the organisation. Many titles are philosophical in nature and relate to the teachings contained within the *Bhagavad Gita*. Other titles cover topics such as reincarnation, self-realisation, self-management and man and his mind. Devotional bhajans are also contained on CDs.

An organisation similar to the Vedanta Centre South Africa is the Vedanta Institute of South Africa. The Vedanta Institute of South Africa has a collection of magazines, books, journals and other material housed on their premises. Ancient Hindu religious texts and commentaries on them are a part of the collection. Writings by the great saints of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism were found in the collection. Texts about and on Christianity and Islam were available. Political writings about India, Indian history and the history as well as politics of other countries were shelved among the religious material. Magazines from other Hindu organisations had been collected. Information on business management, aspects of economics, and subjects related to business were a part of the collection. CDs and audio cassettes were also collected.

The newer formats offered for the presentation of information has not been used by the Vedanta Mission. The vast collection of material found at the Mission included material covering all aspects of Hinduism and topics related to Hinduism. Academic books and religious texts written in Gujarati, Sanskrit and Hindi were shelved together. Greek mythology, Indian mythologies, Indian philosophy, encyclopaedias and biographies of the Saints of India were included in the collection. Books about different religions and the holy books of the different religions were housed in this collection. The thousands of books that have been brought together in this collection cannot be justly analysed here. There was a very wide range of subjects, topics and sub-topics covered in this collection.

7.13. Conclusion

Beyond a doubt there is sufficient religious and cultural information in printed or electronic format to serve the needs of the local Hindu community. Magazines, books, cartoons, religious texts, and brochures abound in the collections held by the reformed Hindu organisations. Although so little cultural and religious information is produced and published locally, there is no shortage of internationally published material. The range of topics, the depth of the contents covered by the collections as well as the variety of formats cover all relevant information that a devotee may need.

The reformed Hindu organisations have made significant efforts to secure religious and cultural information for their collections. However, these collections need to be dusted, reorganised and made available to the devotees. It is obvious that better use can be made of all material held in these collections through better management and the use of proper library procedures and principles.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Introduction

An investigation like the present study can surely help reformed Hindu organisations to improve their services and encourage the Hindu devotees to make use of the available information within their community. Vast amounts of religious and cultural information in a variety of formats are available for the devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations. Marketing and impetus is required to ensure that the collections are utilised profitably by the Hindu community.

It is the responsibility of the Hindu community who are devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations to bring about the necessary changes that will assist in systematic and regular information sharing through facilities that are modern and freely available.

8.2. Summary of investigation

The introductory chapter of this study, chapter one, dealt with the statement of the problem; listed the objectives of the study; and justified why such a study could make a contribution to the South African LIS sector. The study population was described and the participating reformed Hindu organisations were listed. Also, the geographical location, limitations and delimitations of the study were explored. The critical concepts of culture, Hinduism, information, organisation, provision and reformed Hindu organisations were explained as this researcher found appropriate to the study.

A review of the literature that was studied in the course of this investigation has been discussed in chapter two. Printed formats, electronic formats and ancient manuscripts of India have been discussed. Included in the chapter are some basic points on ancient classification systems and a few points on ancient Indian libraries. Aspects of the oral tradition that affects Hinduism have been described briefly as these affect the methods of information dissemination used in South Africa by reformed Hindu organisations. Some information regarding modern Hindu libraries, attached to Hindu temples, have been included. There was a need to establish what other Hindu

organisations were doing as regards the establishment and ongoing development of libraries within their organisations.

A brief history of the Indians in South Africa has been outlined in chapter three. The Indentured Labour system that was implemented by the British was the reason for the arrival of Indians to this country in 1860. The history of the Hindus who had come from India to South Africa has been briefly discussed as it was the descendants of these Hindus who greatly influenced the establishment of the reformed Hindu organisations as well as other Hindu organisations that exist within the Hindu community today. Reasons for the growth of the reformed Hindu organisations were also discussed in this chapter. A short description of each of the organisations that participated in the survey is given.

Chapter four dealt with the research methodology and design. Explanations of research design, research methodology, triangulation, as well as qualitative and quantitative research were given. Data collection methods employed in this study were also discussed. Interviews, historical research, observation, document and content analysis as well as data analysis were discussed.

An analysis of the interviews and the data obtained from the interviews appears in chapter five. Here, where possible, information has been presented in tables to make reading easier. A copy of the questions asked has been attached as an appendix to this submission. This chapter presents information that describes religious and cultural information provision within reformed Hindu organisations, and the individuals responsible for information provision.

The survey results have been reviewed in chapter six. Important findings and supporting evidence have been presented. Results concerning the provision of printed formats, electronic formats and oral information have been discussed. The influence and use of modern technology has been included in the discussion.

A critical review of the collections held by the reformed Hindu organisations has been presented in chapter seven. Aspects of the discussion included common titles, children's literature, and monographs, magazines/journals, archival material, religious material and other print formats and non-print formats have been discussed.

8.3. Concluding remarks

Hofmeyr & Oosthuizen, (1981, p.3) stated that “temple worship will become more prominent a part of South African Hinduism than it has ever been”. They went on to say that these temples “will be modelled on the ‘meeting houses’ of groups like that of the Arya Samaj”. In this study the Arya Samaj was seen as a reformed Hindu organisation, and together with the other participating reformed Hindu organisations has been seen to have a major role to play in the provision of religious and cultural information through a number of different avenues.

The critical factor is to accept that the information services of the reformed Hindu organisations have a major role to play in preservation of Hindu religion and aspects of Hindu culture and that all activities can be enhanced by “accurately harnessing information” (Hua, 1996, p. 538) and making it available to Hindus, both local and international.

Since Hindu temples serve as a place of worship and of cultural identity (Bhardwaj & Rao, 1998, p. 126), it is the temples/ temple libraries, or as in this case the ashrams, that have the burden of providing the essential information required by devotees. Although visiting gurus, swamis and other religious leaders have made tremendous contributions to the religious teachings of Hindus, their visits are temporary. Therefore, a more permanent repository of information by way of the library must be available at all times. Local Hindus, especially those belonging to specific religious organisations need to continue to sponsor and support such visitors in a bid to inculcate and sustain Hindu religion and culture within the Hindu community.

The reformed Hindu organisations have ancient library systems, oral traditions and a written legacy to emulate. Religious and cultural sustenance must be supported by adapting and adopting these ancient bequests in an effort to offer information to the Hindu devotees in ways that are interesting, exciting and long lasting. The many avenues that exist for reformed Hindu organisations to offer religious and cultural information will be supported by a single addition, a fully functioning library containing a collection of formats that will satisfy all religious and cultural information needs of the devotees.

8.4. Recommendations

A far more systematic approach to the development and use of libraries within reformed Hindu organisations and traditional Hindu organisations has to be taken. The libraries need to be maintained by individuals with experience and knowledge and need a budget so that an acceptable level of service is provided. Leaders within the Hindu community need to realise the importance of providing the necessary information to devotees, especially to the younger set, many of whom lack interest and motivation to get involved in activities and programmes carried out by Hindu organisations.

Proper library policies have to be adopted and implemented. Perhaps affiliations with library associations and other international reformed Hindu organisations that have libraries will encourage the growth of local libraries among the reformed Hindu organisations. Ideas about how to develop and maintain libraries can be exchanged through these associations.

Creative programmes need to be implemented to encourage more devotees to read literature on the Hindu religion and culture. Reading clubs could be established. Religious and cultural information has to be more freely available for sale and use. The number of titles and the range of subjects covered have to be expanded. Local Hindus must be encouraged to read the Indian vernacular languages. Devotees could also be coerced into using more electronic formats for their religious and cultural information needs.

The advent of electronic media and telecommunications and the growing use of such technologies must surely influence the exchange of ideas and religious and cultural information. But is this enough? What needs to be done is obvious. The creation of libraries, repositories and collections of material that can satisfy the needs of an educated and enlightened community is essential to the survival and continued interest in the religion, culture and social aspects of the lives of Hindus in South Africa, and in particular, in the greater Ethekewini region. The use of library computer programmes available can only assist with the speedy delivery and updating of current collections.

The adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies in a bid to provide religious and cultural information to devotees of the reformed Hindu organisations has to be done urgently if Hindus

are to keep up with technology and the kind of information offerings made by other religious groups. A greater financial investment must be made by individuals of the Hindu faith and reformed Hindu organisations alike for innovative library services to be available for devotees. Interested individuals with library science skills and other people with a desire to learn and share must make a concerted effort to make the available information in the various formats accessible to the greater Hindu community within the greater Ethekewini area.

Another key point is that the Hindu community needs to become more familiar with the use of the Internet and electronic sources of information. Perhaps, interested individuals and organisations could give lessons to develop an interest in such mediums that offer vital information on religion and culture, as well as to equip people with the necessary skills that will enable them to access the relevant information. Information portals like the Digital Library of India could be used for great benefit by South African Hindus. Reformed Hindu organisations could establish links to such portals and enable devotees to gain access to limitless amounts of information.

Access to information must also be available through other avenues. The ashram of the reformed Hindu organisation must continue to support youth camps, dance classes, music lessons, language lessons and other services. Critical though is the establishment of functioning libraries that could support Hindu philosophical studies, anthropological investigations, as well as religious and cultural studies. Such activities are essential for any ashram to truly function as a cultural institution. Cultural relics, old documents of immigrants and their families, personal collections of photographs and pictures, together with letters and diaries need to be brought together within the collections housed at ashrams and temples for preservation and future use. Such items have been largely ignored by established facilities run by government agencies.

The ancient Hindus have left behind interesting and affordable systems of transference of religious and cultural information, which is the oral tradition. In an effort to sustain or to reintroduce oral traditions of the past the old story telling methods of yesteryear would do well when implemented by trained story tellers who have proper knowledge of the ancient Hindu texts. Fireside tales, puppet shows, street performances and picnic days ought to be reintroduced to the youth and the older folks. These methods were used effectively in the past to pass on religious information through stories and drama.

Whilst reading programs and study groups need an injection of faith and passion, religious and cultural leaders need to continue with their chosen activities in order to allow the activities time to grow and become popular. Elders must find creative ways to engage the youth in programs offered at the reformed Hindu organisations.

A novel idea would be to publish the writings of the youth locally. Many of the reformed Hindu organisations rely on international publications for news as well as for religious and cultural information. These international publications lack information on the South African scene. This results in local Hindus failing to subscribe to or to read these magazines and newsletters once they acquire them. It is obvious that publications with a more local flavour are desperately needed within the Hindu community.

The South African Hindu community exists within a larger social environment, where government agencies, commercial libraries and special libraries do not serve the specific needs of Hindus. Visits and browsing through the shelves of these other libraries revealed small collections of literature on Hinduism. Where collections did exist, they did not cover many aspects of Hinduism and, in fact, often only basic information was available.

Modern public libraries focus on a balanced collection and can therefore, not show bias towards any particular religion or sectarian group of any religion. Consequently, it is imperative that religious organisations must, and with great urgency develop their own collections which reflect the vernacular languages spoken by their devotees as well as recent publications concerning the teachings propagated by the organisation.

Whilst this study investigated a part of the Hindu community, that is *The provision of religious and cultural information by the reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekwini region*, there is much more research that has to be undertaken to cover the entire Hindu community, for example, information provision within the Sanathanist sub-group of Hindus. Other aspects could possibly cover the electronic provision of information for Hindus, that is, the information available through the Internet.

The last recommendation that the researcher has to offer is further research into information provision and related LIS matters concerning organisations of the various religious groups that

live and practice their beliefs in South Africa. More studies like that of Adams' investigation into the "development of Islamic libraries internationally and in South Africa" (2003) need to be undertaken within the South African milieu. In the recent past a number of Christian bookshops have opened up in malls and at other locations in and around the Ethekewini region. Perhaps, this will influence students of LIS with a Christian background to investigate LIS aspects further within the Christian community. Jews, Buddhists, Sikhs and a number of other religious groups exist within the larger South African community. Research into information provision and library services for these religious groups could be undertaken in the future.

8.5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the provision of religious and cultural information by reformed Hindu organisations in the greater Ethekewini region. It was found that the 19 reformed Hindu organisations offer access to religious and cultural information through a number of formats that include the printed medium as well as the electronic media. Aspects of oral tradition such as talks, story telling, and plays are included as means of disseminating information. Other programmes like Indian vernacular classes are offered in a bid to encourage devotees to read the religious texts in the original language in which they were written or told.

Since religion is a part of all aspects of the lives of devotees, devotees must show a desire to read the religious and cultural information provided to enhance their lives. Devotees have access to religious and cultural information through association with the reformed Hindu organisations. However, whilst the library services are in themselves not appropriately organised for regular use by devotees and need to be developed, they do exist. Information provision through other avenues like youth camps and sathsangs are undertaken. No devotee should complain of a lack of religious and cultural information.

APPENDIX 1
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. To discern the kind of information services offered

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <p>1.1. What types of information services are offered?</p> | <p>1.1.1. Does the organisation have a library/library service/repository of any sort?</p> <p>1.1.2. Describe stock: books, newspapers, brochures, monographs, journals, magazines, leaflets, photographs, special editions, other.</p> <p>1.1.3. Does the organisation have a museum/display centre? Give a description.</p> <p>1.1.4. Does the organisation have an archive? Please describe.</p> <p>1.1.5. Which of the following services does the organisation offer? Describe the services offered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Language classes; ii. Counselling , e.g. Marriage and family; iii. Training of priests; iv. Printing/publishing; v. Religious classes; vi. Other. <p>1.1.6. Briefly describe the format of the religious services.</p> <p>1.1.7. How often are religious services held at the ashram?</p> <p>1.1.8. In what languages are the services conducted?</p> <p>1.1.9. Are songs written in any of the Indian Languages or are they written in English?</p> <p>1.1.10. Does the organisation provide religious literature in any of the Indian languages? Explain.</p> <p>1.1.11. What are your scriptures and what language have they been written in?</p> <p>1.1.12. Does the guru/group leader do readings from the scriptures? Are explanations of the scriptures in English or in any of the Indian languages?</p> | <p>Interview Observation</p> |

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1.2. What structures/ policies are there to guide these services?</p> | <p>Should the organisation have a library or information service then the following questions will be asked:</p> <p>1.2.1. Is there an organisational structure or an elected committee to run the library/ information centre?</p> <p>1.2.2. Are there written guidelines for provision of such services?</p> <p>1.2.3. Are there specific individuals in charge of such services?</p> <p>1.2.4. Does the organisation have a mission statement which clearly outlines aims and objectives of the library/information centre?</p> <p>1.2.5. Does the organisation have a library policy?</p> <p>1.2.6. Does the organisation have a budget for library services? How much money is spent annually? Describe donations, if any, made to the library and estimate the value of these donations.</p> <p>1.2.7. Are there records of members/users of the library service?</p> <p>1.2.8. How valuable is the library in the provision of information?</p> | <p>Interview Analysis of records Observation</p> |
| <p>1.3. Is this organisation affiliated to other organisations?</p> | <p>1.3.1. Is your organisation affiliated to any other organisation? Explain the nature of the affiliation.</p> <p>1.3.2. Does this organisation use the services of other organisations in the running of the organisation's library or for the provision of library services?</p> <p>1.3.3. Has this organisation used the services of the Indian Embassy?</p> | <p>Interview</p> |

2. To identify and analyse print-based formats available (e.g. newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets) used to provide and share information in the community.

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2.1. What print-based publications are available? | 2.1.1. Which of the following publications does the organisation publish and distribute? Journals/magazines; Monographs; Flyers; Leaflets; Annuals; Series; Manuals; Brochures; Papers; Other 2.1.2. How many copies are printed and how are they distributed? 2.1.3. How often are they published? 2.1.4. Does the organisation have an editor/editorial board for the publications? 2.1.5. Does the organisation have material, which is used but not published? Describe such material. | Interview Record analysis |
| 2.2. Describe the contents of the publications. | 2.2.1. Do devotees belong to any specific language group? 2.2.2. What languages are the articles written in? 2.2.3. Do any of the publications contain information written in any Indian language? 2.2.4. What level of the Indian language is used in these publications? For e.g. easy reading level which will be accessible to individuals who are not very literate in the Indian languages. 2.2.5. Do the articles have translations, transliterations or explanations? 2.2.6. Describe the subject content of publications produced by this organisation. Repackaging is the re-use of information to make it more accessible. | Interview Record analysis |
| 2.3. Is the information repackaged? | 2.3.1. What are the original sources of information that is repackaged? 2.3.2. In which country/s does most of the repackaged information originate? 2.3.3. Is repackaged information offered in non-print media? Explain. | Interview Record Analysis |

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.4. Who are the authors of the information? | 2.4.1. Who are the original authors of the print and non-print documents/texts? 2.4.2. Give brief descriptions/credentials of the original authors. | Interview |

3. To identify and analyse interpersonal means (i.e. people) used to provide information.

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 3.1. Aside from using the printed material, how is cultural and religious information disseminated? | 3.1.1. Does the organisation prefer the use of printed material to provide information? Explain. 3.1.2. Aside from the printed medium, what other methods are used to provide to devotees with information? 3.1.3. What non-print media is used to provide information? 3.1.4. What problems does the organisation experience when using non-printed methods of dissemination of information? 3.1.5. Which locations/venues/ circumstances are best suited to information provision aside from the temple/ashram? How is information dissemination done? 3.1.6. Which individuals, within the organisation are tasked to disseminate print and non-print information? | Interview |
| 3.2. Are there visiting lecturers, priests, authors, and other influential individuals (from both inside and outside South Africa) who play a role in the dissemination and preservation of information? | 3.2.1. What are their areas of specialisation and what information and skills do they disseminate? 3.2.2. How often are visiting lecturers/priests/authors/ etc. brought to this country? 3.2.3. What is the purpose of their visits? 3.2.4. How often are these specialists/gurus/priests consulted for information to be used in any local publication? 3.2.5. How do the senior members or the guru/swami disseminate information? 3.2.6. How often do leaders of your organisation go to other organisations/ individuals in different parts of the world for cultural/ religious support? 3.2.7. Do any members/ students go to other parts of the world to train/ gain knowledge and skills? 3.2.8. How many? How often? 3.2.9. Where do they go to? 3.2.10. What qualifications and skills are brought back? | Interview |

4. To identify and analyse the various electronic formats (eg. Radio, TV, internet, audio-visual) in preserving and disseminating information.

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1. Are the available electronic formats playing a role in the preservation and dissemination of information? | 4.1.1. What role do the various electronic formats play in preserving and disseminating information? 4.1.2. What kinds of programmes and content are being offered through these formats? 4.1.3. What role does the use of the internet play in the running of the organisation or for the provision of services? 4.1.4. Does the organisation have a web site? 4.1.5. What kind of information does the site offer? | Interview Record analysis Investigation of sites |

5. The questions below were asked to give interviewees an opportunity to assess their own organisations and to encourage them to express their opinions.

| RESEARCH QUESTION | LEAD-ON QUESTIONS | SOURCE |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 5.1. How pro-actively or aggressively is information dissemination undertaken by this organisation? 5.2. What shortcomings/ challenges does the organisation experience with regards to the dissemination of information? 5.3. What possible changes could there be to improve the dissemination and preservation of information? | | Interview |

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