2.3 Parameters Chosen

The social parameters chosen for this study are: (1) Community, (2) Income, (3) Age and (4) Literacy level. These parameters have been chosen for this study because they were found to be significant and diagnostic in the pilot study. Other social variables such as sex, occupation etc. have not been considered as significant for this study. These social parameters which have been chosen have further been sub-classified as detailed below.

2.3.1 Community

Informants belonging to all the three major communities, namely, forward, backward and scheduled communities have been chosen for this study. Individuals belonging to Iyer and Iyyangar communities have been chosen in the forward communities while those belonging to Gounder, Mudaliar, Vanniyar, Nadar, Chettiyar, Vannar and Navidar communities have been selected from the backward communities and those belonging to Pallar, Parayar, Cakkiliar and Kuravar have been selected from the scheduled communities.

2.3.2 Age

Those individuals below the age of twenty five are treated as belonging to the young age group, those between twenty six and fifty years of age are treated as belonging to the middle age group and those who are above 50 years of age are treated as belonging to the old age group.