5.1. FINDINGS

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data presented in the previous chapter, the major findings of the present study have been presented in this chapter. These findings have been acquired through a study of extant literature, intensive survey, personal observation, opinions and suggestions of people interested in the concerned area. It has been found that the college libraries of Upper Assam in general are facing various problems since inception. These libraries have not been able to get rid of these maladies barring a few libraries which have been striving against the odds in a slow pace by putting strenuous efforts on their own.

A good number of college libraries in this part of the state have no adequate facilities to ensure

1. Digitization
2. Automation
3. Electronic resources
4. Networking and communication
5. ICT and IT based tools
6. Manpower
7. Financial support
8. Quality service
9. Quality management
10. Best practices
11. Space
5.1.1.


Major findings

1. The growth of colleges and the libraries of these institutions got accelerated after the independence of India. The rate of growth of college and college libraries were found highest during 1961-1970 i.e. 46.67% followed by 20% during 1981-1990.

2. Yearly budget for the libraries of the provincialised colleges were not very satisfactory as almost all the college libraries had to plan and prepare their annual budget within five lakhs of rupees. It can be said that the limited budget of the libraries became a challenge to cope with the modern trends and techniques and the rising demand of the users.

3. The strength of manpower has been found very low in majority of the college libraries of the area. Only 28.33% of the college libraries have been seen to have more than five but less than ten member staff. With insufficient of manpower, it has become difficult for the libraries to provide all the required services to the users at the right time.

4. 50% of the librarians have been found to have experience of ten years or more followed by 23.33% of the librarians with eleven to twenty (11-20) years of experience and 26.67% of the librarians have got experience of twenty years or more.

5. The status of 18.33% of the libraries of the area have been found to be advanced, followed by 63.33% and 18.33% of the libraries which could be called modern and traditional in nature respectively.
6. The status of libraries as perceived by the respective librarians has been found very good in case of 6.67% of the libraries, while 66.67% and 6.67% of the libraries has been perceived as good and poor respectively.

7. The provincialised college libraries of the area did not have designated quality consultants in their libraries.

8. It has been found that a good number of library professionals of the area have not been satisfied with the present ambience of the library, manpower, available resources and infrastructure.

9. The quantum of collection of resources in the area has not been found satisfactory in most of these libraries. Of course, a few have been possessed with good number of textbooks, reference books, back volumes of journals and current periodicals.

10. The collection of digital and electronic resources has been found very low. A good number of provincialised college libraries of the area have been running without having e-resources / electronic gadgets.

5.1.2.

Objective 2. Quality Awareness Level (QAL) Among the Library Professionals of Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam.

Major findings

1. It has been found that majority of the library professionals i.e. 65% showed QAL as medium; followed by 25% as low and only 10% librarians has responded to QAL as high.

2. All the library professionals showing high QAL have been found to be professionally qualified with PG degree in Library Science.
3. 6.67% of the librarians showing high QAL were found to have possessed professional experience as librarian up to ten years, followed by 1.67% with eleven to twenty years and only 1.67% of the librarians were found to have experience of more than twenty years.

5.1.3.

Objective 3. Key Activities for Quality Management as Initiated by the Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam

Major findings

1. The commitment level of library professionals has been found high in 8.33%, medium in 50% and low in 31.67% of the libraries of the area.

2. Education and training level has been found high in 26.67% of the college libraries, medium in 48.33% and low in 25%.

3. Service standards of provincialised college libraries have been found high among 8.33%, medium in 33.33% and low in 58.33% of the libraries.

4. It has emerged that maximum of the college libraries have possessed medium level processes standard i.e. 56.67%; followed by low level with 33.33% and high among 10% provincialised college libraries of the area.

5. The customer survey status has been found high in 15% of the libraries, medium in 45% and lowest in 40% of the provincialised college libraries of the area.

6. The standard of quality manuals has been found high among 1.67% of the libraries, medium in 26.67% and low in 71.67% of the libraries.

7. The status of suggestion/feedback has been found high in 8.33% followed by 45% (medium) and 46.67% (low) in these libraries.
8. The status of quality circles has been found high in 28.33% of the college libraries, medium in 50% and low in 21.67%.

9. The status of individual ethics for management and learning has been found high in 13.33% respondents. It has been found medium in 45% of the libraries and low in 41.67%.

10. QML of the respondents has been found high in 1.67% of the libraries, followed by 55% to be medium and 43.33% to be low in the provincialised college libraries of the area.

11. It has been established that provincialised college libraries (40%) with insufficient number of employees (1-4) showed medium QML; moreover, 15% of the respondents with a modest number of employees (5-10) showed QML to be medium and only 1.67% of the respondents with insufficient number of employees showed QML as being high.

12. It has come to light that majority of the library professionals having PG degree in Library Science as professional course and degree from different academic courses have got medium QML. Moreover, 1.67% of these professionals who had PG degree both in Library Science and in other subjects recorded high QML.

13. The QML has been found to be medium among maximum respondents within the experience group of 1-10 years. Apart from this, 1.67% respondents showing high QML have been found to be within the experience group of 11-20 years.

14. Out of all the respondents with high QAL, 1.67% has been found to have low QML and 8.33% has got medium QML. Moreover, 25% of the respondents
with medium QAL responded QML as being low and 40% with medium QAL responded to QML as medium.

15. Finally it has been seen that the presence of high QML among the respondents has been found to be very low. Maximum of the respondents of the study recorded QML as being medium and low.

5.1.4.

Objective 4. Users Perception of Quality Services in the Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam

Major findings

1. It has been found from the study that user awareness and positive response to quality service dimension scored highest in ‘Tangible’ i.e. (74.01%), followed by ‘Reliability’ (68.28%), ‘Assurance’(67.83%), ‘Communication’ (67.45%), ‘Responsiveness’ (65.19%) and ‘Access’ scored the lowest positive response i.e only 64.19%.

2. It has been seen that a good number of users have been found to be aware who responded negatively to the dimension of services which has been maximum in ‘Access’ (29%), followed by ‘Responsiveness’ (28.05%), Communication’ (24.66%), ‘Assurance’ (23.69%), ‘Reliability’ (22.09%) while ‘Tangible’ scored the lowest negative response i.e only 19.85%.

3. Number of users that indicated not sure response about quality service dimension was highest ‘Reliability’(9.61%) followed by ‘Assurance’ (8.47%), ‘Communication’(7.88%), ‘Access’ (6.8%), ‘Responsiveness’ (6.74%) and ‘Tangible’ scored the lowest response (6.13%).
5.1.5.

Objective 5. Best Practices of Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam

Major findings

1. It has been found that 15% of libraries of the area have not yet initiated computerization.

2. The prevalence of the best practices within the provincialised colleges have not found to be similar in nature. Some of the best practices like inclusion of library information in the college prospectus, compiling of students’ attendance statistics, displaying newspaper clipping on the notice board periodically, display of new arrivals, different information services relating to career and employment, internet service, timely response to suggestion box queries/ feedback, best user award etc. have been found to be practised by almost all the college libraries in the area.

3. Frequency of services like organizing competitions, compilation and circulation of subject bibliography, circulation of the list of newly purchased / accessioned documents to the concerned departments, compiling teacher’s attendance statistics, organizing book exhibitions, book talk etc. have not been found satisfactory in these libraries.

5.1.6.

Objective 6. Quality Indicators on Management and Services of Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam

Major findings

1. It has been found that 83.33% of the libraries maintained the open access system in their libraries. However, 16.67% of the libraries of the area have not practised it.
2. The opening hour and working hours of the libraries have been found to be different from college to college. Only 31.67% of these libraries have extended and appropriate working hours before the starting of regular classes and almost all the college libraries have extended and appropriate working hours after the classes.

3. Only 1.67% of the college libraries of the area have been kept open on Sundays.

4. Duly constituted Library Advisory Committee has been found almost in all the colleges. These committees have found to take part in policy making, framing and suggesting amendments to library rule, budgetary planning, and selection of books for the college library. The Library Committee has also found to take interest in disbursing the fund received from different organizations like UGC and State Government etc. Remarkably, 5% of the college libraries did not have any Library Advisory Committee.

5. It has been seen that 61.67% of the libraries of the provincialised colleges of the area have been found to have separate library premises.

6. Separate sections like acquisition, internet and technical sections have not been properly furnished in maximum libraries under the study. Most of them did not have periodical, manuscript and bound periodical sections.

7. Only a few college libraries (35%) have been equipped with proper locker facility for the users. Proper ventilation facility in the library building and toilet facility for the users inside the library were also not found in some of the libraries.
8. Seating capacity of the reading sections varied from college to college. Only 5% of these libraries have been found to have the capacity to accommodate more than 200 users at a time.

9. The rate of library resources issued and returned per day have been found to be very low in some libraries. Similarly, the daily visitors were very low in these libraries.

10. Services like translation, indexing, abstracting, digital document delivery and referral have rarely been found in the libraries covered by this study.

11. It has emerged that provincialised college libraries of the area have adopted different measures to keep their library clean. A few libraries have engaged regular cleaners to clean their libraries.

12. Apart from the grants received from the UGC, the State Government and fee collected at the time of admission, some of the college libraries tried to strengthen their fund by imposing levy collected from the students as book overdue charge, internet browsing charge, photocopying charge etc as well as from the donation from the ex-students and ex-employees of the colleges.

13. There were no standard norms/ guidelines for maintaining minimum requirements of documents and collection of resources in the provincialised college libraries of Assam. It has been found that the libraries of the area have tried to manage the volume of collection at their own discretion and capacity to make it accessible to more of the users.

14. There was no defined policy for training the library staff in the surveyed libraries. It has been found that majority of the college librarians have taken initiative to train up their library personnel in a non formal way only.
5.1.7.

**Objective 7.** Present Information Communication Technology Environment of the Provincialised College Libraries of Upper Assam

**Major findings**

1. It has been found that only 1.67% of the provincialised colleges have installed computers in their libraries just before the beginning of 21st century. 21.67% and 60% of the colleges have installed computer systems in their libraries during 2001-2005 and 2006-2010 respectively. Only 11.67% of the libraries have installed the same after 2010.

2. Again, 11.67% of the college libraries have acquired sufficient computers in their libraries. A very few college libraries have installed more than 15 computers to access the internet. The overall picture in the rest of the colleges was more discouraging. It needs to be added that some of the libraries of provincialised colleges have been located in a total rural setting and these have not yet been motivated towards the electronic revolution.

3. Library automation has not been a satisfactory one. Only 15% of the college libraries of the area have completed the library automation system. 58.33% of the college libraries have been found to be partially automated and 26.67% of the colleges have not started the library automation process at all. All the partially automated college libraries have, however, been providing different computerized services like OPAC, Cataloguing and Library Management operations. Apart from this, some of the college libraries have started practising Serial Control and Circulation service. For automation, all the
college libraries have been using the SOUL software provided by the INFLIBNET centre.

4. No libraries covered by this study have completed their digitization process. Only a few libraries (18.33%) have partially completed the process.

5. In the area of Networking and Communication, 85% of the provincialised college libraries have been connected by separate LAN facility and only 10% of them have been connected to different departments of the college.

6. Only 5% and 33.33% of the libraries of the area have been found to have dedicated library website and e-mail Ids. Information of the library holdings has been displayed by all the college libraries having their own URL. But none of the colleges have taken any measure for online publication of the holdings. Their web pages provide the link to open access e-journals, e-resources and e-databases.

7. Majority of the college libraries (56.67%) have been found to access electronic consortium named N-list sponsored by INFLIBNET. Moreover, 1.67% college libraries have accessed UGC-Infonet consortium.

8. It has been found that only a few college libraries have been using barcode scanner (61.67%) and barcode printer (53.33%). A good number of college libraries have not procured any projector, digital camera and camcorder. IT tools have been found available in these libraries to provide the reprographic services to its users. However, the libraries of the area have been unable to satisfy all the demands of the users because of lack of proper tools.
9. Majority of the college libraries have subscribed and downloaded e-books and e-journals, educational DVDs and CDs. On the other hand, only few college libraries have been equipped with floppy disks and Gramophone records.

5.1.8.

Objective 8. To study the benefit derived by the users from College Library

Major findings

1. Majority of the users visited library regularly. It has been seen that only a few users (21.43%) have visited library twice or more than twice daily, whereas 11.67% users have visited the library in every alternate day.

2. The discussion cleared that highest number of users i.e. 56.90% have been found to use the library to consult the text books. 50.59% and 44.05% of users have visited the library with a view to read the news papers and to prepare class assignments respectively. The purpose of users to use library with a view to preparation for competitive examination, seminar paper and access to e-resources were found very low.

3. It has been found from the study that majority of the users (i.e. 97.74%) have responded positively regarding the benefit gained from the college library.

4. A large number of users of the provincialised college libraries opined that library is the only part of the institute which helps the students in equipping and empowering them with the right resource at right time.

5. According to some other users, college libraries are the resource centres to create proper ambiance for learning with dedicated space to imbibe the spirit of learning.
6. It has been focused by a good number of users that college libraries play a great role in molding of character and personality. It plays an important role to make a student a good citizen.

7. It has also been expressed by the users that library is the only place for proper utilisation of the leisure time. It is the only place where access to otherwise inaccessible valuable books in and out of print has been possible.

8. Some of the users advocated that college libraries helped to sensitize about resources and with it provide exposure to new avenue of knowledge. According to some other, library is the informal class room. What has been taught in the classes by teachers can be interpreted broadly in the library with the help of different reference books available in the library.

9. It has been seen that college libraries play a very important role not only inculcating correct reading habit but also to develop ability to tackle problem through self study.

5.2 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study of quality management of college libraries and its role in higher education institutions is very limited in Assam. The review of literature also has revealed that there is much to be done in this area of study. Quality management of libraries can fulfill the expectations of its users, but there has been little of research in the area. The investigator feels that there is enough scope for taking this forward. Future research can be done to cover the following domains.

1. The present study covers only the provincialised college libraries of Upper Assam. So suggestion is put forwarded to undertake more study by covering all the higher educational institutions of Assam.
2. The present study covers only the key activities of QM to measure the QML of libraries. Hence, extensive study on Quality Management can be done.

3. Further research can be carried out on QM system of libraries on the basis of ISO 9000/NAAC quality guidelines.

4. Further research can be carried out on Quality Management of libraries taking LIBQUAL and SERVEQAL as tool of study.

5. Studies can be done on the satisfaction level of library users towards Quality Management of higher education institutions of Assam.

6. Studies can be done on the quality management of the libraries of technical education institutions of Assam.

7. Studies can be done on measuring service quality of academic libraries of the state.

5.3. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The study reveals many important facts about quality management in the provincialised college libraries of upper Assam. The investigator has analyzed the findings to underline educational implications to be noted and pursued for putting meaningful actions.

5.3.1. Infrastructure facility

For better management of the libraries, it is essential to provide adequate infrastructure facility in the libraries of provincialised colleges of the area. These should have proper technology for digitization of resources available in the library. ICT facilities must be developed in the area to integrate the libraries of higher educational institutions of Upper Assam with the global information society. Installing more computers will help for easy access of internet and other e-resources.
and services. Provincialised colleges should initiate to install adequate OPAC unit, bibliographic tools and uninterrupted power supply facility to run the ICT systems efficiently. More emphasis should be given on accessing e-resources, audio-visual documents for the use of the general users as well as for the visually-impaired users of the college.

5.3.2. Automation

Automation of the library with dedicated professional software will not only help in providing information in a fast, effective, and efficient way but also will help in providing quality services to its user. A fully automated library helps in generating statistical records in an uncomplicated way, ensures cooperation among libraries, cost reduction and improved services by sharing resources with other libraries. So, these libraries should focus on total automation of its services by applying standard library professional softwares.

5.3.3. Digitization

Process of digitization of libraries in the provincialised colleges of the area is still a far cry. Some of the college libraries have initiated the process. Digitalization with standard software will help these libraries to provide quality services to its users.

5.3.4. Librarian as a quality advisor

Librarian should work as a quality advisor to provide zero defect services to the users of the library. For quality management of the library, a librarian should work as the quality manager of the library as well. To carry out a hassle free service, he should go through required guidelines as provided by the different quality assessment organizations.
5.3.5. **Committee for quality assessment in libraries**

Apart from the library committee, separate expert committees with the Principal, Librarian and Coordinator of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the college must be formed to monitor the process of implementation of quality guidelines of NAAC / ISO etc. in the library as well as to take up proper measures for rectification of whatever necessary.

5.3.6. **User orientation classes and survey**

The library users of provincialised colleges covered by the study were not very aware of the services provided by these libraries. The librarian and the library staff should take initiative to sensitise users regarding the different services offered by the library, new policies adopted by the library, tools and technologies used and new arrivals of library resources by arranging special lectures and orientation classes for them.

To know the significance and importance of the resources and problems faced by the users in accessing / retrieving the resources, feedback of the users or user survey is required to be conducted periodically by the librarian. The librarian should have the motivation to meet the demands of the users after analysing the feedback received from them from time to time.

5.3.7. **Key Activities of quality management**

In order to ensure quality management, the library professionals should put due emphasis on various key activities of quality management viz. commitment in the way of management/ leadership, education and training, service standards, processes standards, customers’ survey, quality manuals, suggestions/ feedback system, quality circle and individual’s working ethics and learning.
5.3.8. **Training and schemes for quality improvement programme**

The Government of Assam, Directorate of Higher Education or the Governing Bodies and Administration of the colleges have not taken any step for the professional upliftment of the library staff. There is no planned scheme for training of the concerned persons. The government should take initiative for training of the manpower engaged. The Directorate of Higher Education should plan different schemes like workshops, seminars and conferences and special training programmes for skill development and management system of the library staff of the institutions concerned.

Training for library non professional staff is highly essential to make the organization successful in achieving its goal. It is essential to provide training in application of software used in the library, training on use of different IT tools available in the library, on-line searching, internet literacy, networking, trouble shooting etc. It will help in providing quality service to the users. It is required to carry out adequate training to library staff before implementation of a new project in the library.

5.3.9. **Manpower**

Due to lack of qualified and properly skilled library supporting staff, the quality of service of the libraries have been affected. Proper manpower is a crucial factor for effectiveness of the service of the library. Appointment of appropriate staff in the library to provide the right information at the right time to the right user is the call of the day.

“National Universities Commission, (NUC) Nigeria, recommended that the ratio of professional librarian to non-professional should be 1:3, total library staff to
student enrolment should be 1:50 and professional staff to student enrolment should be 1:200.” (Osinulu, L.F. and Amusa, O.I., 2010)

5.3.10. Financial support

All the libraries of provincialised colleges of Upper Assam have been facing the challenge of financial problems. A flexible and generous budget can help in proper functioning and providing better service to its users. Lack of availability of fund hinders in providing quality functions and services. The authority should pay attention to mobilize funds from different heads of the college to the library. 15% of total annual budget of the college should be allotted to the library of the institution.

5.3.11. Best practices

‘Guidelines on quality indicators in library and information centre: affiliated/constituent colleges’ by NAAC has listed some best practices for academic libraries. These best practices help to enhance the academic information environment and usability in the educational institutions. The provincialised college libraries of the area should give more emphasis for proper implementation of such practices.

5.3.12. Guidelines for enrichment of collection

No standard guidelines/ norms have been found in the provincialised college libraries of Assam to enrich their collection. Only an enriched academic library can satisfy the demands of the users. Introduction of standard guidelines for enrichment of collection will assist the libraries to strengthen their resources.

5.3.13. Management of services

The opening hours of the libraries should be early, so that it can increase the usability of the library. An open access library allows its users to search relevant documents in the library stack room. Moreover, it has been a fact that as early as the
library is opened, the usability of library increases. Therefore, the library should open one hour before starting of the classes and to keep it opened one hour after completion of college working hours.

5.3.14. Lack of space

Majority of the college libraries are facing the problems of lack of ample space thereby making it impossible to open different sections including making separate allocation of rooms for different services to be housed. Reading hall areas of some of the colleges are not sufficient to accommodate readers at the peak hours. On the other hand, a good number of college libraries don’t have separate staff area, technical sections, bound periodical sections, periodical sections, etc. The administration of the provincialised colleges should give more importance to set up the different library sections with required infrastructure in the library.

5.4. SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the study the investigator forwards the following suggestions

♦ Suggestion is made to give more emphasis on accessing e-resources, audio-visual documents for the use of the general users as well as for the visually-impaired users of the college.

♦ Suggestion is forwarded to install standard professional software to carry out all the library automation services.

♦ It is suggested that libraries of the area should give more emphasis to establish a well set digital library.

♦ It is suggested to install high bandwidth connectivity of internet and online uninterrupted power supply systems in the libraries of the area.

♦ Librarian should work as quality advisor to provide zero defect services.
♦ It is suggested that the librarian and the library staff should take initiative to make aware the users regarding the different services provided by the library, new policies adopted by the library, tools and technologies used and new arrivals of library resources by providing special talks and orientation classes to the users of the library.

♦ The Government of Assam or Directorate of Higher Education, Assam should take initiative to carry out some quality management awareness workshops on regular interval.

♦ It is suggested to carry out adequate training to library staff before implementation of a new project in the library.

♦ It is suggested to appoint properly qualified staff in the library to provide the right information at right time to right user. The Directorate of Higher Education should take initiatives for appointing more professionally qualified personnel as required in the libraries of the area.

♦ Suggestion is forwarded to generate substantial income in provincialised college libraries of the area through some profit making services like reprography service, internet service on payment, translation service, documentation service etc.

♦ It is suggested to evaluate the library users’ feedback / users’ survey regularly by the librarian to know the relevancy/ usefulness of resources and services provided by the library.

♦ It has been observed that a good number of library buildings are attached to other buildings of the college. It seems that the noises and disturbance raised
in those sections hinder in creating the required environment. Suggestion is forwarded to place the libraries in separate, independent premises.

♦ It is suggested that authority of the provincialised colleges should give more importance to set up the different library sections with required infrastructure.

♦ Suggestion is forwarded to provide proper locker facility, toilet facility and drinking water facility inside the library premises.

5.4. CONCLUSION

A library known as the repository of knowledge is expected to contain maximum of information for the users. In the present days of globalization and Information Technology, the library is no longer confined to a geographical space. It can have its own virtual space also. In its ideal form, it transcends the limitations of time and space. But for all this, it has to be ready to incorporate all the conventional and electronic information resources, Information Technology and related paraphernalia.

The present study has looked into different dimensions of the issues involved and has found that the application and management of resources in the College Libraries of Upper Assam have not been up to the expectation. Individually, a few of the college libraries are quite ahead of the majority of the libraries rendering quality services. While these few libraries could serve as ideal ones in the region, the others need strong revamping to respond to the fast changing scenario. Some of the libraries are also in total rural settings and these are not strongly tilted towards the electronic revolution even now. In brief, the emerging picture is neither very encouraging nor very disappointing. With the passage of time, it seems that things are set to change the course of events very soon.
Knowledge is and has to be empowering. A library is a storehouse of knowledge. Proper knowledge needs timely up-gradation. So updating of the libraries is a must not only for the colleges themselves but also to render dignified service to the society. In modern times, this can happen only if quality services and management are streamlined properly. It should also be kept in mind that digitization of the libraries is also on the rise. Without a proper infrastructure, the smaller libraries might face challenges that will be too powerful to tackle. It too calls for adoption of timely measures. In modern times, this can happen only if management of the library is done properly.