CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

An education system of a country plays a key role in achieving the development of society. It determines the destiny of its nationals. Colleges are the first door steps towards higher education, opening new vistas of knowledge to learners and making them responsive and responsible to the problems of society. Apart from teaching the respective subjects, these are supposed to develop and sharpen the abilities of learning among students. Colleges range from small arts colleges to institutes of national importance. Among various types of colleges, the colleges of education train the future teachers to teach at school level. These aim at inculcating professional competencies among learners to enable them to shoulder the academic and social responsibility of building and developing the future scientists, doctors, researchers, engineers, etc. The effectiveness of a teaching system depends upon the teaching skills of teachers, which are acquired through teacher education programmes. Dash (2004) says, “If the teachers are well educated and trained and if they are intellectually alive and take keen interest in their job, then only, the success is ensured, but if on the other hand, they lack training in education and if they cannot give their heart to their job, the system is destined to fail.” Over the period, education system has undergone tremendous changes and these days there has been enormous emphasis on lifelong learning. Teachers are expected not only to impart
instructions to students but are required to initiate the learners into the art of learning and inspiring them for the overall development.

School education forms the base for higher education and it is at this level that a passion for learning can be created. The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) (2007) describes about the significance of school education that the, “School education has to be a crucial area of focus if the foundation of a knowledge based society is to be built.” Libraries are an inseparable organ of the colleges of education, meeting the intellectual curiosity of teachers and future teachers with a view to foster the capacities of comprehension and assimilation of ideas. College of education can not accomplish their objective without libraries and libraries have no meaning if these cannot support education. In addition to supporting the educational goals of their parent institutions, libraries cultivate and maintain the reading habits among users. Moreover, if the students of colleges of education will themselves be regular users of libraries only then they can promote this habit among the school children they are going to teach in future. Therefore, the quality academic pursuits require healthy organization of libraries to satisfy information needs of the users. The NKC (2007) states that “A library is not a building stacked with books – it is a repository and source of information and ideas, a place for learning and enquiry, and for the generation of thought and the creation of new knowledge.”
The organization of libraries and format of documents have seen fabulous changes. The Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have revolutionized the way people access and communicate information. It has abolished the constraints of space and time and made possible information access round the clock on click of mouse. To keep pace with the changing scenario and to meet the challenges of technological advancements, libraries are required to use ICTs to fulfill their professional responsibilities. The Working Group on Libraries (WGL) set up by National Knowledge Commission (2007) has emphasized that the “existing libraries must modernize their collection, services and facilities, become more pro-active and collaborate with other institutions and agencies.” Meeting information needs of the users is the ultimate aim of libraries. Users’ demand is ever increasing putting great pressure on libraries. All this makes job of libraries a challenging task. Hence, it becomes essential to find whether the libraries are fulfilling their objectives or not.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study entitled "A Study of the Use of Libraries of Colleges of Education in Punjab" has focused on assessing the use of libraries of colleges of education in the state. The study includes 19 colleges, covering 03 Government Colleges of Education (GCE), 15 Government Aided Colleges of Education (GACE) and a University College of Education (UCE) established up to August 2004. The study
includes colleges offering B.Ed. course and M.Ed. course wherever applicable.

**NEED OF THE STUDY**

The success of an education system depends upon the skills and capabilities of its teachers. It is a known fact that good teachers can improve the fate of a nation. Recognizing the significance of teacher education, the Education Commission (1966) emphasized that “Investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends because the financial resources required are small when measured against the resulting improvements in the education of millions.” Colleges of education are, in fact, workshops shaping up future teachers to teach future generations. Libraries of colleges of education supplement their parent institutes in attaining educational goals to meet the information needs of teachers and future teachers. It becomes essential to ascertain the use of libraries to find the strengths and gaps of libraries to plan for improvements in the future.

The WGL, NKC (2007) recommends that “A survey of user needs and reading habits should be conducted at the national level as part of the National Sample Survey.” User studies are an important and useful method of getting feedback from users of a system. These are the first and foremost step towards the systematic planning and development of library and information centres. Wilson (1981) highlights the place of user studies in the research in Library and Information Science that “Apart from information retrieval there is
virtually no other area of information science that has occasioned as much research effort and writing as ‘user studies’. The user studies provide empirical evidences for improving existing library services and planning new library services. Similar studies have been conducted by Swarna (2004) in Maharashtra and by Veer (2004) in Andhra Pradesh, but to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, no study of this nature has been attempted in Punjab at Doctorate level.

**OBJECTIVES**

Following are the main objectives of the study:

1. To ascertain how frequently users visit libraries and which resources and services do they use mostly.
2. To know for what purpose users use libraries.
3. To find whether libraries are adapting to IT environment and what impact it has made on library use.
4. To ascertain whether users are satisfied with their libraries or not.
5. To identify the problems being faced by users in using these libraries.
6. To find what attempts are being made by the library staff to promote library use and what problems do they face in doing so.
7. To make suggestions for improving inadequacies so as to increase library use.
HYPOTHESES

The main hypotheses in this study are given below:

1. Majority of the users are not aware about the services provided by libraries.
2. Majority of the users use textbooks and circulation service only.
3. Majority of users use libraries for preparing assignments/ notes.
4. Computers are used mainly for house keeping operations.
5. Majority of users are not satisfied with their respective libraries.
6. Working hours have an impact on the use of libraries.
7. Staff attitude towards users influences library use.
8. Library staff is inadequate in number to provide library services.
9. Lack of finances is major reason for inadequate library services.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is restricted to the libraries of 19 colleges of education, including 03 Govt. Colleges of Education, 15 Govt. Aided Colleges of Education and a University College of Education, established up to August 2004. In case of teachers, data has been collected from the permanent teachers of 18 colleges of education as the principal of a govt. aided college had not allowed researcher to conduct survey of teachers. All the self-financing private colleges have been excluded that almost all of these have been established during last few years and their libraries were still at infancy stage.

The present study has been an attempt to assess the use of libraries of colleges of education by students and teachers. In
addition, administration, organization, resources and services of these libraries have been examined. The present study is restricted to the libraries of only 19 colleges of education in Punjab because of the following reasons:

1. Evaluation of the libraries belonging to homogeneous group produces more reliable results.

2. No in depth study has been made earlier to ascertain the use of libraries of colleges of education in the state. Only a few studies focusing on the organizational and administrative aspects of these libraries at Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) level have been conducted.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The resources and services of libraries are channelized for users. The success of a library can be measured not by its attractive building or by well selected documents, but by the extent of use of its resources and services. It is important to know whether libraries are meeting the information needs of users. This study has been undertaken to ascertain the use of the resources and services of libraries of colleges of education by students and teachers. It is an attempt to find the users’ awareness and use of resources and services and their satisfaction with these. It will be helpful to formulate policies to fill gaps wherever needed.
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of study, to collect information from library staff, students and teachers, three questionnaires were designed. Questionnaire-I was administered to library staff to ascertain the organization, administration, resources and services of libraries of colleges of education under study. Questionnaire-II was distributed among B.Ed. and M.Ed. students, while Questionnaire-III was administered to permanent teachers to know their opinions about the resources and services of libraries. Keeping in view the significance of observation method, personal visits have been made to all 19 colleges regularly. Pilot studies were conducted to standardize all the three questionnaires used in this study. An attempt was made to keep the questions simple, clear and easy to understand.

The stratified sampling method was used to select sample from the universe of study including the students of B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses and permanent teachers of colleges under study. From each stratum, the sample was chosen randomly. Percentage calculations have been made to analyze the data. As the survey method is most appropriate to describe the existing state-of-the-art, a sample survey was conducted so that findings could be generalized for the whole population. Questionnaires were administered to the 1119 students of B.Ed. course (30% of 3730) and 144 students of M.Ed. course (40% of 360) wherever applicable of 19 colleges under study. On the other hand, in case of teachers, questionnaires were distributed among 64 permanent teachers (40% of 153) of 18 colleges of education. About
96.88% of the B.Ed. students, 100% M.Ed. students and 95.31% of the teachers surveyed responded.

Barring Khalsa College of Education, Mukatsar, where the principal did not allow the researcher to get the questionnaires filled up from the teachers, others cooperated very well. The questionnaires for students of the above said college were got filled with the help of an outsider who was known to the students of that college. The responses of the users are analyzed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters.
REFERENCES


