CHAPTER – 1
INTRODUCTION

A library is an important agency for information and knowledge for the universal characteristics. The libraries are meant as the heart centre of any institutions for promoting higher education. The popularity of library mainly depends of the kinds of materials collected and on the degree of intensity in collection. However, it is evident that the library cannot provide everything that the users need and it has become more apparent in the light of present financial constraints and unprecedented increase in the published documents.

A library of technical institute can change educational environment through its’ good services to the different categories of user community. It is established fact that science and technology is an area of this new millennium for which we cannot think to run an institute without a functional library. It is mentioned that most of the libraries are not in proper line in comparison to advanced countries like USA, UK, Australia, etc. To find out a solution of this big and interesting area I have chosen this interesting topic for my study.

This study is a survey of libraries of technical institutes in Assam. The survey seeks to determine the nature of the collection, tools that are used to access it, maintenance of collection, services offer by them, Information Communication Technology application and the characteristics of the user population. Technical institutes generally offer diploma courses and degrees courses in different engineering, technology, management etc.
Collection development indicates the selection and acquisition of library materials for developing the holding of the library within the framework of a collection development policy considering the various aspects of the existing holding according to the needs and requirements of the users, both present and future. Better, effective and efficient collection development requires management of all types of resources with short-range and long-range planning, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, implementation of collection development policies and use of collection development techniques and procedures.

Library acquires a lot of reading materials in various forms from traditional resources to e-resources and to manage the growth and development of this collection is one of the most challenging tasks for library professionals. The collection determines the character of the library. Effectiveness and quality of library service depend upon the collection. Collection development is a continuous activity and it signifies the quality and performance of a library.

The standard of collection development is also based on the variety and numbers of readers served and on the goals on which the library operate. The basis of this development and growth is of course financial support, availability of space, readers demand both in the present and future and well equipped staff. Developing a sound collection is one of the most challenging and imaginative process of the library professionals whereby, the library staff acquires a variety of materials to meet the demand of its users. The main task of a library is to collect, store, and distribute the reading materials keeping in view the user requirements. The efficiency of the library service is governed by the quantity and quality of its collection.
In the traditional libraries, users have to spend more time for searching a small piece of information and for that they have to depend mainly on the library professional or library staff. But in the age of Information and Communication Technology, computers are being used for day to day house-keeping activity of the library, which saves the time of the end users, and library professionals also and at the same time avoid duplication of work and make the library service smooth and effective.

The advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has made a tremendous improvement and change almost in all walks of life. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being increasingly used in library and information services for the acquisition, storing, processing and dissemination of information. Information and Communication Technology can be used in libraries and information centers for the development of new information services and computerized library services.

Libraries and information centers have been using ICT based resources and services to satisfy the diverse information needs of their users. At the same time it is found that the use of Information and Communication Technology has become increasingly important in the libraries of technical institutes. Libraries of technical institutes are switching over to ICT based resources and services at an accelerated pace. E-journals, CD-ROM databases, online databases, e-books, web based resources and a variety of other electronic resources are fast replacing the traditional resources of libraries of technical institutes. The challenges of integrating electronic resources and technologies into the process of collection development are many, and many-faceted.
By the application of information technology in the process of library work, the job of the library staff becomes easy, interesting and pleasurable. Electronic technologies and collection development are two of the top concerns in library and information science today.

There is a great impact of ICT on the functioning of all types of libraries. The services of libraries of technical institutes have been drastically changed due to the impact of ICT to serve its academic community. There are various prospects in the application of ICT in library activities to provide pinpointed, exhaustive and expeditious information from within and outside sources to the users in anticipation or on demand. It has become imperative to have an understanding of the prospects of application of ICT in the libraries of technical institutes in Assam and also the impact of the attitude of library users and library professionals toward ICT so that appropriate measures can be adopted to improve the services in a better way.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

Libraries of technical institutes are no longer in a position to provide efficient service to the users without taking help of application of ICT in their libraries. Of course, it has been observed that there is variety of problems in application of ICT in library activities. Due to emerging concept of ICT based library services, the study has been carried out to find out the scope for collection development of the libraries of technical institutes in Assam. It is high time to discuss the different problems, issues and programmes confronting of the libraries of technical institutes of Assam at high level stage, so that these libraries of Assam will act in an ICT based environment in the 21st century. The library professionals have to be aware with the various
components of ICT so that they may familiarize about their usefulness in library activities. The different objectives have been determined for conducting the study as follows-

- To reveal the present status of total collection availability in the libraries of technical institutes under the study.

- To assess to what extent users are satisfied with the collection and services of libraries of technical institutes.

- To understand the application of modern information and communication technologies in the libraries of technical institutes.

- To study the prospective of library consortia for effective resource sharing.

- To suggest suitable measures for adoption of collection development in ICT based Library and Information Centre.

1.2 Scope of the Study

In Assam, there is wide variability in acquisition of learning resources among different types of libraries of technical institutes and overall collection of these libraries is not adequate. In view of financial crunch and explosion of literature, it is becoming imperative for the libraries of technical institute to be very sensitive to adopt modern ICT in collection development programme in the libraries of technical institute of Assam and also to make suggestions to the concerned authorities to make the libraries as a sheltering place to meet the educational needs of the users.

Although, all types of libraries of technical institutes should have been
included for investigation in the present study the emphasis is given only on the libraries of engineering and polytechnic institutes under state government and under private sector. Though the private institutes namely DBCET, RSET, NITS, GIMT established very recently, still these have been covered under the study as because they have established and organized their libraries in a scientific way, their libraries are quite sound to compete with any modern scientific libraries. The study attempts to cover 16 libraries of technical institutes in Assam. Utmost care has been taken in selecting the sample from the groups to make the study unbiased.

1.3 Hypotheses

In this study, the following hypotheses have been formulated-

**H1**: Collection development in the libraries of technical institutes is affected mainly due to shortage of fund.

**H2**: Because of shortage of qualified manpower, the technical libraries have not been able to adopt ICT for collection development and to extend modern services.

**H3**: Lack of weeding out policy is a major barrier in collection maintenance of the libraries of technical institutes in Assam.

1.4 Methodology Used

The nature of the present study requires the data to be collected from the different libraries of technical institutes to find out the prevailing situations. Macro and micro literature in printed form as well as in digital form in both online and offline are searched to get the overview of the existing work done in the field of
collection development in the libraries of technical institutes and management & organization of libraries. For solving the present research problem, survey or descriptive method has been adopted. Besides, questionnaire along with observation have been chosen as appropriate tools for collecting data. Personal interview is also used to supplement data collection. Apart from that I have chosen journals, annual reports, theses, dissertations, brochures, newsletters, etc. to collect required data. Two well designed questionnaires, one for librarian and another for user are used as principal tool for the collection of data.

Moreover, the nature of the problem also requires a look in the past. This necessitated the adoption of the historical method in a limited away. Taking into considerations the advantages and feasibility of survey method, it has been decided to administer this method of research in the study also.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The field that I have undertaken to study is a vast one in its scope and coverage and it is quite difficult for an individual to cover everything of all aspects in a limited period. The state government technical institutes under the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), Assam, approved by AICTE and selected private engineering institutions established before 2010 have been covered for the purpose of the study.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

No academic institution can survive without a library, which is indispensible for the achievement of the vision and mission of its parent body. The library is said to
be the heart of an academic institution. The information explosion prevailing in the present day world has created different problems to the society. Firstly, it has become impossible for any individual reader to scan even a part of published information in his specific field. Secondly, it is neither possible nor feasible for any single library to acquire each and every published document. Thirdly, there is great emphasis on production and distribution of information through non printed or non-conventional materials i.e. digital or electronic materials. Lastly, there is increase in changing needs of the library clientele. In order to cope up with these problems libraries have to drastically modify their information collection and handling techniques.

Library of technical institute is a special type and is quite distinct from other types of libraries, e.g. public and academic libraries. Unlike other libraries of general nature, they are characterized by their flexibility and adaptability to their own particular requirements. The demand of libraries of technical institutes goes on changing from time to time because of new services, new products, developments, new approaches of marketing, etc. adapted by their organisations and agencies. Libraries of technical institutes like Assam Engineering College (AEC), Guwahati, Jorhat Engineering College (JEC), Jorhat, Assam Engineering Institute (AEI), Guwahati, Nowgong Polytechnic (NP), Nagaon, Bongaigaon Polytechnic (BP), Bongaigaon, Don Bosco College of Engineering and Technology (DBCET), Azara, Guwahati, Girijananda Choudhury Institute of Management and Technology (GIMT), Azara, Guwahati etc. have already build library collections of their own. Because of financial crunch, geographical hindrances and lack of collection development policies, the speed of collection development is not up to expectation in most of the institutions.

It is observed that some library and information professionals are in such a
state of mind that they really do not understand when and from where to start and how to proceed for adopting new technology in their library activities. Some of the libraries of these institutions are still being away from the introduction of computers fully in their activities and as a result they are unable to meet the challenges of the information age to provide the users with pinpointed and expeditious information. It is right time to study the problems and prospects of collection development policy in the different libraries of technical institutes in Assam in the context of emerging ICT so that various remedial measures can be adopted in future.

1.7 Chapter Plan

The study has been divided into six chapters with further divisions into sections with their subheading for ease of the study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the first chapter, the subject has been introduced wherein background of the problem, objective of the study, scope of the study, hypotheses formed, methodology used, limitation of the study, statement of the problem. The first chapter has been accordingly names as introduction.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A review of the existing literature is made in this chapter, whenever possible, the researchers opinion are also appended. In literature review, the citation within text has been rendered according to APA citation style. The whole literature review activity has been subcategorized according to the development of the idea or concept in the subject. The article/ books have been arranged within each subheading chronologically according to the table of publication.
Chapter 3: Collection Development and Its Role on Libraries of Technical Institutes.

This chapter deals with the concept of collection development, trends of collection development, factors of collection development, collection development policy and weeding out policy, collection development in ICT environment, etc. The chapter also discusses different problems of collection development.

Chapter 4: Technical Education and Libraries of Technical Institutes in Assam.

In this chapter, the following heads have been discussed: technical education in India, libraries of technical institutes, importance of libraries of technical institutes, objectives of the libraries of technical institutes, functions of libraries of technical institutes, need for development of collection in libraries of technical institutes, emerging ICT in libraries of technical institutes, etc.

Chapter 5: Status of Collection Development and Users’ Satisfaction in the Libraries of Technical Institutes in Assam

The chapter presents the status of different categories of collection availability in the libraries of technical in Assam and services they are offering. The status of libraries of engineering institutions in Assam is not similar with the libraries of polytechnic institutions in terms of size, users, services, collections, staff etc. Therefore, the tables and figures are made differently in this chapter to show present status of different libraries of technical institutes in Assam. In this chapter, the study has been conducted using different questionnaires also to analyse strengths and weakness of the libraries of technical institutes in Assam. Analysis and interpretations of the whole survey are made throughout the chapter.
Chapter 6: Conclusions and Suggestions

In this chapter, the conclusions and suggestions are presented. Overall conclusions, recommendations and scope for further research suggestions are forwarded which may be consulted in future. Fulfilment of the objectives and validity of the hypotheses of the study are examined here. References and annexure are added in the last part of the study.

As we are in the 21st century, achieving self sufficiency, library/information centre is becoming a challenging task everywhere around the globe. I hope that the present study will throw some lights in understanding the drawbacks and the findings and suggestions will enable the concerned authority to take necessary steps for development of collection in the context of ICT. Considering all these things, it is found that the study has a great scope by implementing various services and programmes to overcome the present problems of the libraries of technical institutes in Assam.