CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Most of the earlier systems of classification of Angiosperms were based mainly on the external characters of the flowers, fruits and seeds. Such systems of classification, which are based on a single set of characters is now considered as artificial. In a recent systems of classification evidences like embryology, anatomy, palynology, chemistry, cytology etc., are also taken into consideration along with morphological characters while classifying the Angiosperms.

Bjørnstad (1970) states that an embryological study can be helpful to the taxonomist in three ways.

1. Systematic questions may be decided when two or more positions have been proposed on the basis of other characters.

2. New research may be prompted on a taxon when embryological data make the present systematic position doubtful or improbable and

3. Confirmation of the present systematic position of a taxon by embryological information.
Maheshwari (1950) listed a number of embryological features of taxonomic significance which are taken into consideration for evaluating phylogenetic relationships. Similarly Falser (1975) listed many embryological characteristics that may be useful, when employed judiciously and in connection with other characters, in arriving at taxonomic conclusions.

In spite of the extensive embryological work in Angiosperms many members remain uninvestigated embryologically. Although several papers have appeared on the embryology of Aizoaceae, Fabaceae and Lamiaceae many genera and species remain uninvestigated. Hence the present investigation has been undertaken. One species each belonging to the families Aizoaceae, Fabaceae and Lamiaceae have been investigated embryologically. An attempt has been made to discuss the embryological bearing on the systematic position of the family Aizoaceae.
REFERENCES

