CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of higher education, Role of libraries in higher education, Objectives of a college library, Background of the study, Problem and Terminology, Scope and Limitation
INTRODUCTION

The role of libraries in learning is rather well-accepted. Class room instructions, which till recently was the major medium for acquiring knowledge, has given place to more effective alternatives. The vast explosion of knowledge has made it difficult or impossible for class room instruction to fulfil all or even a part of the learning needs of individuals. Hence it is that libraries have now come to be recognized as the real centres of learning at all levels of education.

Learning in higher education is probably more dependent upon libraries than at lower levels. The realisation of the importance of libraries in higher education has resulted in increased attention being paid to its organization and functioning in all the educational systems of the world. Higher education in India has been very slow to recognise the importance of this vital auxiliary to the process of education. As a result, functioning of libraries in institutions of higher learning in India has been very unsatisfactory. They
function mostly as passive store houses of knowledge. By and large, learning has been identified with classroom instruction in the country and hence the libraries have been mostly ignored or alienated from the mainstream of education.

Barring a few exceptions, most of the libraries attached to colleges in India are little more than mere show pieces. The total lack of awareness of the importance of libraries in most of the people concerned with higher education - teachers, students and the general public - led to their gradual degeneration and malfunctioning. Any improvement of the system will be possible only if a thorough empirical investigation of the different aspects of their functioning is made, and research-based correctives are applied. Many of the enlightened educational systems of the West have attempted to improve their libraries using the results of research.

Studies on the functioning of libraries in the educational systems of the country have been few and often of doubtful validity. They are often nothing more than administrative reports. Judging from available evidence, studies of functioning and utilization of libraries in higher education are very inadequate. No worthwhile study relating to libraries in higher education
in Kerala is in evidence. This is a serious drawback for a State that stands foremost in the matter of literacy, and in other forms of educational attainments. The present study is an attempt to close this gap. The investigator is convinced that a scientific study of the organization and utilization of libraries in higher educational institutions in Kerala will reveal many of the weaknesses of the system and help to work out remedial measures for stepping up their efficiency and utility. Till then, investment in the libraries will remain a dead investment, which an economically backward country like India can ill afford.

Objectives of Higher Education

We may note that the concept of libraries cannot be separated from the concept of education. Any realization of the true objectives of education will not be possible without an adequately conceived system of libraries. The objectives of higher education as laid down by the Education Commission (1964-66) would clarify this point. The objectives of higher education according to this Commission\(^1\) are:

(i) To seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries;

(ii) To provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life, to identify the gifted youth and help them develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of the mind and cultivating right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values;

(iii) To provide the society with competent men and women trained in agriculture, arts, medicine, science and technology and various other professions, who will also be cultivated individuals imbued with a sense of social purpose;

(iv) To strive to promote equality and social justice and to reduce social and cultural differences through diffusion of education;

(v) To foster in teachers and students, and through them in society in general, the attitudes and values needed for developing the good life in individuals and society.

Cultivation of new knowledge, developing the potential in the youth, providing competent men and women who can give leadership in different walks of life, reducing socio-cultural differences, developing the right values and attitudes etc. are all depend upon the correct use of available knowledge. Libraries are the sources of all available knowledge of a society.

Role of Libraries in Higher Education

Unfortunately, the method of teaching and learning in vogue in most of the educational institutions in the country acts as serious deterrent to the attainment of
these objectives. Teaching has been reduced to an one-way talk or a monologue. Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, the father of Library Science in India, has very significantly argued for the need for an immediate change of teaching method from the textbook-centred teaching to the library-centred learning. In his words:

The present social impact on education calls for an immediate change of the 'memory filling textbook centred mass talk method' of teaching method to the intellect sharpening, library centred, individual and group guidance method of instruction.

John Dewey, the great educational philosopher, as far back as 1894 had anticipated the futility of the memory filling mass lecturing method of teaching in a democracy. In his book 'School and Society', he has strongly emphasised the need for individual instruction and learning through work and experience. On the basis of this new philosophical concept, Ranganathan\(^3\) argues as follows:

(1) Education is not equal to memory - training, but is equal to training for the use of externalized memory which requires library work at schools and colleges;


\(^3\) ibid., pp.315-316
(ii) Education is not equal to mass-lecturing, absorbing the same field of knowledge and learning by one and all at uniform speed, but is equal to individual learning by each at his own speed, which requires library work at schools and colleges;

(iii) Education is not equal to passive and partial transmission inhibiting anti-social process, but is equal to an active, global, experimental and creative socialising process which is helped by library work at schools and colleges.

Education, especially at higher levels has been described more as a process of learning than of teaching, signifying the self-efforts to be put in by the students. According to this concept, students in higher education are to be provided with necessary facilities and provision for mastering the subject matter, techniques, skills, habits of thought and methods of work in their chosen field. Classroom instruction alone will not provide all the needed opportunities for attaining all these complex educational objectives. It is exactly here that the libraries come to help the students. This fact has been aptly highlighted by Isaac\(^4\) in his fitting observation:

> The college library has a prominent role to play in helping the higher education to fulfil all the objectives enumerated but perhaps, it is in respect of the first objective, that is the

\(^4\) K.A. Isaac, "What are College Libraries and What can They Be? A Blue Print for Action", *New Frontiers in Education*, 8 : 2 (1978)
seeking and cultivation of knowledge that it is called upon to play the most significant role. As a result of increased research activities all over the world, knowledge is expanding at tremendous pace. It is estimated that in the course of seven to eight years the total quantity of available knowledge almost doubles itself. This great expansion of knowledge tends to place a heavy load on the curriculum which has to reflect in some measure at least the existing state of knowledge. The implication of this is that the present day student has to acquire a much larger quantum of knowledge than his brother or sister student some years ago. One of the problems of higher education today which apparently defies a solution is how best to enable the student to acquire this increased quantum of knowledge without extending the total period of higher education. This has rendered the traditional teaching methods and total reliance of the students on class room lectures obsolete. What is called for in this situation is the provision of facilities for self study by the students to a much larger extent than hitherto by the establishment of well equipped libraries and their closer integration with the teaching programmes.

In the present day world, it is humanly impossible for a teacher to communicate to his students all that is essential in what he is trying to communicate. Modern education expects a teacher only to initiate the students in the new vistas of the universe of knowledge, but leaving it to them to explore further and give final shape and totality to what has been presented already. The search begins with the close of the first phase of learning, that is the class room lecturing. It is in the library that the second and possibly the more vital phase of learning takes place. As such, a heavy responsibility lies on libraries
to keep the candle always burning. The college library
is not only the connecting link between teaching and learn-
ing, but, where students are intelligent and inquisitive the
library can supplement from its rich resources what the
class room has failed to supply. Ranganathan 5 explains
this phase in the fifty statement:

In the library, each student will have the
freedom to grow at his own speed and along
his own lines, to his own fullness, with the
help of books just suited to him under the
guidance of the teacher and the librarian.

Objectives of a College Library

The objectives of college libraries have been
broadened to include the new responsibilities placed on
them. The objectives of a library in a higher educational
institution, as set out by the Education Commission 6 are
the following:

(i) Provide resources necessary for research in the
fields of special interests to the college.

(ii) Aid the teacher in keeping abreast of develop-
ment in his field;

(iii) Provide library facilities and services necessary
for the success of all formal programmes of
instructions;

5 Ranganathan, op.cit., p.297
6 Government of India, op.cit., p.521
(iv) Open the door to the wide world of books that lie beyond the borders of one’s own field of specialisation; and

(v) To bring books, students and scholars together under conditions which encourage reading for pleasure, self discovery, personal growth and the sharpening of intellectual curiosity.

The complexity of the functions to be performed by a college library requires that it is conceived and operated in a most enlightened manner. Kaul7 underlines the functions of a college library in the following terms:

(i) To secure, organise and service books and other materials required for the instructional programme;

(ii) To provide the reading materials for keeping the teachers abreast of their field of teaching and to do individual research;

(iii) To instruct students in the effective and efficient use of the library and library materials;

(iv) To encourage students to develop the habit of self-education in order that books and libraries may contribute to their intellectual development;

(v) To co-operate with other libraries in the community, region and elsewhere.

The role and importance of libraries in university education have also been emphasised by all the Education Commissions appointed by the Government of India. The Uni-

7 B.K. Kaul, "College Library and Instruction", *Herald of Library Science* 8: 205 (1965)
University Education Commission\(^8\) makes the following observations about the role of libraries in higher education:

Teaching is a co-operative enterprise. Teachers must have the necessary tools for teaching purposes in the shape of libraries and laboratories and also the right type of students. The library is the heart of all the University's work; directly so as regards its research work, and indirectly as regards its educational work. Scientific research needs a library as well as its laboratories while for humanistic research, the library is both the library and laboratory in one. Training in higher branches of learning and research is mainly a question of learning how to use the tools, and if the library tools are not there, how can the student learn to use them. President Truman's Commission on higher education says: The library is second only to the instructional staff in its importance for high quality instruction and research. Both for humanistic and scientific studies a first class library is essential in a University.

The Education Commission (1964-66)\(^9\) probably stress the same idea when they observe that:

No university, college or department should be set up without taking into account its library needs in terms of staff, books, journals, space etc. Nothing could be more damaging to a growing department than to neglect its library or to give it a low priority. On the contrary, the library should be an important centre of attraction on the college or university campus.

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The Commission\textsuperscript{10} further cautions that:

A collection of books, even a collection of good books does not constitute a library. Given enthusiastic teachers 'who teach with books', and librarians who can co-operate with them converting the library into an intellectual workshop, even a comparatively small collection of sensibly chosen books may work wonders in the life of students.

In summary, it may be observed that a college library has a very significant role to play in higher education. But the sad truism remains that these lofty principles have not been incorporated in the working of higher education in India.

\textbf{Background of the Study}

A survey of published literature on college libraries in the country and his own personal experience in the field as a college librarian, teacher of library science and librarian of one of the Universities in Kerala for about fifteen years provided the investigator an adequate insight into the functioning of college libraries and utilization of library resources and facilities by students and teachers. In the contemporary educational setting in the country, it is painful to note that libraries

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p.287}
are not getting the importance that they deserve. The existing state of college libraries in the country is far from satisfactory.

Ranganathan\textsuperscript{11} describes the position of college libraries over a half century ago in the following words:

College library consisted of closed cupboards. Most of them were concentrated in one or two rooms called general library. Hardly any student cared to go to the general library. A student could at best reach up to the barrier, select all by himself a title from a tattered volume of printed catalogue, and drop an application form for it into a tray, one morning each week. By the evening, the available books would all stand piled up on the desk. A lucky student might find his book in the pile, but he would often feel disappointed by the book not suiting his standard or by its being something different from what he thought it to be.

This is more or less true of the present condition of college libraries in the country. The role of a college library in dissemination of knowledge as augmentor to class instruction is very much related to the method and level of teaching. According to another authority in the field\textsuperscript{12}:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} S.R. Ranganathan, "Norms for College Library", Proceedings of the Seminar on College Libraries in Rajasthan, Jaipur, 1965, p.14
\item \textsuperscript{12} Y. Viswanathan, "Library and College Climate", In Libraries as Educational Tool (Tirupathi: Sree Venkateswara University, 1971), p.18
\end{itemize}
Present curriculum in India is text-book centred and methods of teaching adopted are examination oriented, emphasising on the mark getting devices. The main objective of a student is to get through the university examination. For this he depends on the class notes and guides. He seldom reads even the text-books prescribed.

Reading habit of students in higher education needs to be consciously developed so that they can benefit fully from the instruction provided to them. But it is not unusual for a student to read not more than one or two books prescribed for a subject. The books recommended for reference are never consulted. As a result, 'the major book stock of the college library becomes idle.' 13 If few students visit the library it is mainly for recreational reading. Therefore, it is no wonder that standard subject books and valuable literary classics remain untouched and unknown to the students.

It has been observed that the attitude of teachers towards the library is also not very encouraging. They seldom visit the college libraries as they are not much interested in reading the latest books and journals in their subject to make themselves up to date in their field. Most often they function as mere transmitters of knowledge

given in text-books and no genuine attempt is made by them to create real love of reading in their students.

In the present context, teaching is getting more importance than learning. The students do not have the urge, interest and curiosity for further exploration of a subject. The college library in this set-up functions as a ritual appendage to the institution.

The college library is considered to be an administrative unit like the college office, but seldom conceived as an academic department. This is contrary to the nature of services expected of the college library. This results in creating an authoritarian attitude which stands in the way of running the library on right lines so that the expected instructional functions can be performed with ease and facility.

In certain colleges, a Professor is given additional charge of the library. He is vested with all the authority for running the library. The librarian is never consulted in making either policy decisions or in deciding its mode of operation. As Rege rightly pointed out 'it

15 Rege, op. cit., p. 103
is, therefore, no wonder, if the college librarian in spite of his qualifications, abilities and status remains but an awkward dangling figure in the puppet show of the professor-in-charge'.

Finance is another serious hindrance to the growth of college libraries. The funds are often inadequate, but the available funds are not always wisely spent. 'The main source of revenue for the college library today is the library fee collected from the students supplemented by periodical Government or U.G.C. grants. The library fee varies from state to state and within the same state from college to college, with the result that there is wide variation in the financial resources available to the different college libraries'.16 Again it is commonly known that the U.G.C. grants received for the development of book collection and construction of library buildings were not properly utilised.

Book selection is yet another thorny issue in the functioning of libraries. There is no scientific basis for book selection. Observation of Ranganathan with respect to book selection is worth quoting:17

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16 Isaac, op.cit., p.6
17 Ranganathan, op.cit., p.16
Book sellers often contact the principal and/or the heads of the departments and try to tempt in getting such books selected as would decrease the quality and utility of the book stock. During their busy academic engagements they fail to verify the up-to-dateness of the book. The result is that outmoded and unwanted books often enter into the library.

Selection of books for college libraries is mainly made from publisher's catalogue. Books of high standard or of research value are often not purchased. What little is purchased is not properly utilized. According to Ranganathan\(^\text{18}\) '90% of the books selected through these methods remain in a virgin state without being used by the academic community'. It is surprising to note that 'there are colleges in the country offering post-graduate courses where the students do not have access even to a selected few of the most important journals in their respective areas of specialisation and are not even aware of them'.\(^\text{19}\)

'Every year physical verification of the book stock is done; but in almost all the colleges it is done by the college teachers who do not undertake it seriously. They merely go on indicating a large number of losses. Every year a large number of books recorded by them as

\(^{18}\text{ibid.}, \text{p.18}\)
\(^{19}\text{Isaac, op.cit.}, \text{p.4}\)
'lost' are traced out and in this way it causes waste of time and energy of the library staff.'\textsuperscript{20} The annual ritual of stock verification also causes the college library to be closed for service for about two months.

In most of the college libraries, books are neither properly classified nor catalogued. In several libraries no systematic classification is followed for arranging the library collection. This is explained by saying that 'as the teachers get certain new books issued immediately when acquired they remain unclassified and uncatalogued'.\textsuperscript{21} Dasgupta points out the defects of the library catalogue in the following words:\textsuperscript{22}

For many colleges, the card catalogue still is a luxury on the ground of economy. The catalogues used in most of the college libraries cannot be termed a catalogue proper as in most cases they are not made on any sound cataloguing principle. They may rather be called inventory of library books. As they are in printed form, they become out of date as soon as they are made.

Most of the college library buildings are so located that there is no scope for expansion. Facilities

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ranganathan, \textit{op.cit.}, p.17
\item \textsuperscript{21} R.N. Ser, "College Libraries in Delhi", \textit{Herald of Library Science} 10 : 56 (1971)
\item \textsuperscript{22} R.K. Dasgupta, "Aspects of the College Library System in India", \textit{Indian Librarian} 22 : 206 (1968)
\end{itemize}
originally meant for a small number of students are now utilized by large numbers. In some libraries books are arranged in two or three rows on the shelves. Sometimes books are dumped in some corner table or even on the floor. The difficulty in extricating books from such heaps can be imagined. Locating a required reading material from a hodge-podge of assorted materials is nothing but a matter of chance.

"The only library service mostly found rendered to the clientele in a college library is book lending. In several college libraries reading facilities are not provided. There are colleges where students are not even allowed inside the library." 23 According to Girija Kumar et.al. 24 in several colleges, books can be borrowed from the library on a particular day in a week, thus denying the students the privilege of borrowing books on other six days. Reference service is also not provided due to the lack of basic reference books and sufficient professional staff. It is also reported that most of the students are


 ignorant of effective use of the book collection aids and tools available in the library. 

Certain college libraries exist almost exclusively for the use of teachers. The books are purchased for teachers' requirements and no consideration is given for the needs of the students. Some teachers feel a proprietary right in the college library and monopolize it as far as they wish. "There are teachers who regard the borrowing of an advanced book by a student as a personal affront." 

College librarians often find great difficulty in dealing with teachers. The rules of the library which are rigid and sometimes oppressive in the case of needy students are totally ineffective in the case of teachers. The number of books a teacher can borrow from the library, the length of time he may retain them in his possession and the unscrupulous manner in which he is expected to use them are some of the major problems for which a college librarian is normally unable to find desirable solutions. The reminders of the librarian to return the books are often disregarded and neglected. Underlining, scoring of blank space with notes and meanings and folding the corners 

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26 Ranganathan, *op.cit.*, p.18
of pages are regularly seen in the books returned by teachers.\textsuperscript{27}

The staff position in a college library is far from satisfactory. It seems that the authorities have not yet gone beyond the librarian. The necessity and sufficiency of other professional, semi-professional and non-professional staff in a college library have been completely overlooked. 'The seriousness of the problem can be understood when we know that the college library is closed when the librarian takes leave'.\textsuperscript{28}

As the library is an administrative unit, so the library staff, including the professionally qualified librarian, are treated as ministerial staff. 'The old notion of librarian being the 'store keeper' is still continuing in many colleges and librarians are made to pay for the lost books'.\textsuperscript{29}

Regarding the status of college librarians, it has been observed that "the college librarian has hardly ever been treated as a responsible and trustworthy person

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} Rege, \textit{op.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Baskutty, \textit{op.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Sar, \textit{op.
\end{itemize}
by the college authorities. He does not have an independent and authoritative status even in his small domain. Teachers, even junior lecturers think themselves superior and expect respect from the librarian.

In this uncongenial and non-co-operative atmosphere where the college librarian sets to work he finds it extremely difficult to practice whatever he learnt about modern librarianship in his pursuit of professional studies.

In many colleges there is neither a library hall nor a sufficiently big room, not to think of a separate building for the library. The room which is unfit for a class room is usually converted into the college library. Susheela Kumar describes the present physical set up of a college library thus:

Any unused room, quite often some where out of sight, would be considered adequate to house a few shelves of books. And in most college libraries the furniture provided tends to be austere. In some libraries there is complete darkness even during day time as the windows are closed with a fear that the books may be stolen away.

From the foregoing discussions, we may easily conclude that the conditions prevailing in college libraries

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30 Rege, op.cit., p.108
in India are far from satisfactory. The library plays no
significant role in the academic preparation, and education
does not involve the students in anything more than listen-
ing to the lectures and reading the lecture notes dictated
by the teachers. In brief, 'a large majority of the college
libraries suffer from grossly inadequate book stocks and
annual book grants, unscientific technical organization,
inadequate staff provision, poor services, unsatisfactory
physical facilities and, above all, a lack of recognition
of their important academic role'.

They are far from
being the hearts of colleges from where the invigorating
blood of knowledge should flow to nourish and sustain
life in all the teaching departments of the colleges.

The condition of college libraries in the State
of Kerala is not much different from the national scene.
This should cause some alarm among the academic community
since Kerala is one of the most advanced States in respect
of education. In the interests of proper development of
higher education in the State it is important to make a
detailed study of the functioning of college libraries
and utilization of library resources and facilities by

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32 K.A. Isaac, "Need for an Academic Library System in
Higher Education", Kerala Library Association National
Library Week Souvenir, 1976, p.76
students and teachers. This will help to prepare more realistic and operational policies and programmes needed for ensuring proper functioning, utilization and development of the college libraries in the state. Each college library has to be made the intellectual hub of the institution serving equally to both for students and teachers. This is all the more necessary because about 90 per cent of the students in higher education in India are undergoing their studies in colleges and they have only very meagre and substandard college library resources to fall back upon. A substantial improvement of the situation is a matter that calls for the urgent attention of the authorities concerned. The college library, as an effective instrument for the improvement of educational standards, will be able to make its presence felt and exert its whole-some influence on the academic community only if library facilities are scientifically reorganized. Only then can we think of making education library-centred than classroom-centred.

An examination of research studies conducted in the country reveals that research on libraries has been scanty and superficial. It is true that a small number of studies have been conducted by library professionals. But most of them are limited to particular aspects of the problem. It is astounding to note the total neglect of
this crucial area of educational activity by researchers. Library, the heart of any educational set up, has not been taken as a topic for Ph.D. research in education in any of the universities in the country. In the University of Kerala, out of about 650 Master's Dissertations submitted there is only one touching on academic libraries, and that too is on school libraries. All these clearly show that the present area of study is an unexplored field which merits immediate attention of educational researchers in the country.

**Problem and Terminology**

The study is entitled "A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE ORGANIZATION AND UTILIZATION OF LIBRARIES IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA". The important terms have been defined below:

The term 'organization of libraries' as used in the study stands for the study of the existing state of college libraries with respect to administrative and organizational set up, finance, selection and acquisition of books, collection, technical processing, services, personnel and physical facilities and the envisaged changes and improvements sought to be made in these areas of college libraries so as to make the college library the
'heart' of higher education.

'Utilization of Libraries' stands for the use of the college library resources and facilities made by students for their educational attainments and by teachers for keeping themselves abreast of the subject they teach.

By 'Higher Educational Institutions in Kerala' is meant, the Arts and Science Colleges affiliated to the University of Calicut and forming constituents thereof, preparing students for different examinations of the University, following the academic and official patterns and routines prescribed by it.

Scope and Limitation

The present study has been designed to answer a series of questions relating to (i) the existing state of libraries in the colleges under study with respect to their administrative set-up, organizational efficiency, mode of financing, method of book selection and acquisition, technical processing, servicing, personnel, and physical facilities and (ii) the use of library resources and facilities by students and teachers in the Arts and Sciences colleges affiliated to the University of Calicut, and evolving measures and methods which would improve the efficiency of the library system. Professional colleges
such as Medical Colleges, Engineering Colleges, Law Colleges and Teacher's Training Colleges and Colleges of Oriental Languages are excluded from the scope of the study. The details of the specific questions sought to be answered through the study have been laid down as objectives in Chapter IV. The study, therefore, is confined only to the specific objectives laid down therein.

Data for the study were collected from various sources, namely librarians, students and teachers of the affiliated colleges, original records and statistics available in the offices of the colleges and the University, offices of the Director and Deputy Director of Collegiate Education at Trivandrum and Calicut respectively, office of the Accountant General and several other secondary sources.

The present study is basically a status survey of the libraries and utilization of library resources and facilities in the colleges affiliated to the University of Calicut excluding the professional and oriental colleges. This being a pioneering study of this kind in the state, an earnest attempt has been made to cover all administrative and organizational aspects of the college libraries. Though some attention has been paid in the study to the use of libraries by the students and teachers, a detailed
study of their reading habits is not attempted. Finding relationships between the educational attainments of the colleges (percentage of pass in the university examinations etc.) and adequacy of library resources and facilities has also not been included within the purview of the present study. Studying the relationship between the library resources and facilities available in the colleges and the teaching methods employed has also been excluded from the purview of the study.

This study has been taken up in the belief that an objective study of the organization of libraries in terms of administrative and organizational set up, finance, selection and acquisition of books, collection, technical processing, services, personnel and physical facilities and utilization of library resources and facilities by students and teachers in the colleges under study would provide the basic data for reorganizing and restructuring this neglected area. Also it has great significance in planning for future development of higher education in the country as a whole. This would bring to light, it is hoped, many important findings which will help to make the college libraries the real heart of higher educational institutions and provide them broad guidelines for even
reorganising the teaching methods in vogue not only in the colleges of the state but also in institutions of higher education all over the country.