CHAPTER V

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5.1 Introduction

The rare collections in libraries are the treasures of local heritage. They reflect the heritage and culture of the society. The information in these is valuable from the point of retrospect and prospect of the society. The rare collections are in variety of forms such as palm leaves, manuscripts, out of print books and so on. Preservation requirements of these library holdings are obviously different from those of libraries established during recent past. These libraries have special responsibilities of primary heritage and culture and it is the duty of the library staff from the head of the library down to the last worker at the bottom to safe guard, protect, preserve and conserve the holdings in their respective library. There are various methods and techniques of preserving rare materials these include from simple to complex processes i.e. fumigation, binding, handling, chemical de-acidification, digital imaging, microfilming, digitization and so on. Preservation measures have to be endorsed supported and encouraged by the top authority and should be carried out by all the staff from most senior level to the most junior in the library. The preservation needs of these rare materials have to be considered in line with the social environmental and political climate in which the library operates. The parent organizations purpose, document collection policies and available resources also matter in preserving this wealth of resources.

In Karnataka there are few libraries possessing rare materials of high value and importance. Some of these libraries include Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, Divisional Archives Office, Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore, Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad, State Central Library etc. The holding in these libraries are treasures of the cultural heritage of the Karnataka. The rare documents in these libraries are in different forms containing original information on variety of subjects, such as ancient history, culture, tradition, yogic science, medicine, ancient philosophy, the public administration. They are in various forms, such as palm leaves, manuscripts, printed books & news papers, dairies of correspondence, debates of assemblies and so on. It is therefore felt necessary to understand more in detail the type of rare materials available in different libraries in Karnataka and how they are preserved. It is also felt desirable to know basic requirements of preserving these
materials such as manpower, infrastructure facility, finance, digitization and so on. It was conceived that such a study would unfold various issues relating to wealth of information in the form rare materials and its preservation. It is under this notion that the present research was undertaken.

5.2 Issue Studied

The present study was initiated with an objective of identifying variety of rare materials in different libraries in Karnataka. It also aimed to know how these rare materials are preserved, techniques adopted for preservation and so on. Further intended to understand the usability of these rare materials to accomplish these objectives the investigator studied the following issues.

1. Availability of rare materials in select libraries in Karnataka and their worthiness for usefulness:
2. The type of rare materials and the need to preserve them for posterity:
3. Availability of selected manpower, their knowledge and experience in handling and preserving rare documents in different forms:
4. Infrastructure facility including equipment and other modern gadgets for modernizing the library to facilitate better usage of rare materials:
5. The status of digitization of rare materials and the financial assistance for digitizing these valuable resources.

5.3 Research Methodology

The investigator began her study with literature survey and the field study by visiting various libraries in the State of Karnataka to understand the availability of rare collections in different libraries. She scanned LISA database, browsed internet and consulted published literature in various print forms and prepared a review of literature on related areas of preservation & conservation of rare materials. Having visited various libraries in Karnataka where in rare documents are available and made preliminary survey the researcher restricted the scope of the study to 9 libraries in different parts of Karnataka which are possessing valuable rare materials. These include:

1. Oriental Research Institute, Mysore
2. Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore
3. Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore
4. Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote
5. Mysore University Library
6. Kannada Research Institute, Dharwad
7. State Central Library, Bangalore
8. City Central Library, Mysore
9. Indian Council of Historical Research, Bangalore.

In the next step investigator prepared a questionnaire cum interview schedule to collect primary data from different libraries. She visited all the 9 libraries and collected primary data from the available records in the respective library. This was supported by the personal interview with the librarians and library staff. She tabulated and analyzed the data so collected.

A second questionnaire was designed to administer to the users of rare materials so as to seek their opinion about the value and importance of rare materials, their usage and the need for preservation for future use. She visited again to all the 9 libraries and personally administered the questionnaire to 561 users and obtained them in return. This was also supported by personal interviews with users and as well as observation. The data so collected through questionnaire is tabulated and analyzed in the light of the objectives of the present research. Findings on basis of the data collected through questionnaire, from the records, interviews with the librarians, and users are recorded in the form of report.

5.4 Findings
The summary of the findings of the study are as under:
1. Among 9 libraries covered under the present study, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore and Oriental Research Institute library Mysore are the oldest, established in the year 1847 and 1891 respectively. Another four libraries, namely State Central Library Bangalore, City Central Library, Mysore, Mysore University Library and Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad were established before independence. Remaining three Libraries have been established after independence (Table-1).
2. The working days of the libraries under study range between 240 days and 355 days and working hours range between 7 hours and 12 hours per day. (Table-3).

3. Out of 9 libraries, two are headed by the Chief Librarians, one is headed by University Librarian, Archivist, and Library & Information & assistant and Librarian in charge. Remaining three libraries are under the in-charge of Director’s of respective institutions (Table-5).

4. Out of 9 heads of libraries, 6 possess qualification & experience in library and information science field, two are scholars in Sanskrit possessing doctoral degree and have long standing experience and one has master’s degree in history with experience in managing Archives (Table-6).

5. The experience of Library staff other than heads of libraries range between 5 years & 20 years and those who have put in more than 10 years of experience account for nearly 58% of the total. (Table-9).

6. In all the 9 libraries together 71 staff members with 11 designations are working. From among them, Library Assistants are the largest representing nearly 31%. Followed by them are Assistant Librarians (18.31%) clerks (15.49%) and attenders (14.08%). Others include Operators, Project Co-coordinators, Museum curators, Library and Senior Research assistant and Assistant Archivist. They together with are 15 in number and represent about 21% of the total library staff. (Table-7).

7. Among total 80 library staff including heads of libraries 26 representing 32.5% have undergone training on various aspects of Library & library management & preservation & conservation of library materials. (Table-12).

8. There are 13 training programmes undergone by 26 library staff. Out of these 13 training programmes 3 are on basics of computers and their duration ranges between 2-3 weeks, 2 are on library software, 2 are on library automation, 4 are on preservation and conservation of rare materials, one is on internet access and one is refresher course in library & information science. (Table-14).

9. Those who are involved in preserving, organizing and managing rare book materials are Museum Curators(2), Project coordinators(2), Senior Research
Assistant(1), Librarian(1), Assistant archivist(1), Assistant librarians(3), Library assistants(7), and Attenders(2). (Table-16).

10. Total users of all the 9 libraries under the present study are 3,284, of whom 917 are found to be users of rare materials. Among them 499 (54.4%) are students, 129 (14.1%) are research scholars, 103 (11.2%) are writers & general public, 97 (10.6%) are teachers, 54 (5.9%) are government officers, and 35 (3.8%) are foreign scholars. (Table-18)

11. Average number of users of rare materials per day ranges between 29 and 53. It varies from library to library. The lowest number of rare material users are the users of City Central Library and the highest number of users are from Mysore university library. (Table-19).

12. There are about 361 users who come from 25 different institutions to use resources in the libraries covered under this study. These institution, departments & others include: Department of Archaeology, Govt of India(43), Sanskrit Patashala, Mysore(23), Dravidian University, Kuppam(21), Kannada University, Hampi(19), Bangalore University(18), CIIL, Mysore(18), ISEC, Bangalore(17), SIIL, Mysore(16) Telugu University, AP(13), Secretariat, Govt of Karnataka(11), High Court of Karnataka, Bangalore(9), Kuvempu University(6), Govt Ayurveda college, Mysore(6) & Bangalore university(5), Mangalore university(5), District court(5), News paper reporters(5), Forest Dept, Govt of Karnataka(4), Mysore City Corporation(3), DFRL, Mysore(2) and individual authors & scholars(19). (Table-22).

13. There are 86 foreign scholars who visited these libraries to use rare resources. They belong to 10 countries such as USA, UK, Germany, France, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, Australia and Srilanka. (Table-25).

14. The document collection in libraries under study ranges between 18199 and 4,61,302. The largest collection being in Mysore University Library (i.e. 4,61,302), it is followed by the collection in SCL Bangalore (2,30,294document) and the lowest collection is in ICHR Bangalore (i.e. 18,198). (Table-28).

15. The total rare collection in all 9 libraries works out to 76,331 documents. These rare materials collection in nine libraries ranges between 730 and 26,534. The ORI has largest rare materials collection with 26,534 documents.
representing 34.49% of the total. Followed by it is collection in Academy of Sanskrit Research, Melukote has (25,020 documents representing 32.52%) and Divisional Archive Office Library, Mysore (11,122 14.1% document. (Table-29).

16. Various types of rare collections in 9 libraries covered under the present study include printed books (89%), manuscripts (5%), printed journals (4%) atlases (211), paintings (184) drawings (138) and others that include stones, coins & antiquities (30). (Table-30).

17. Users who used rare materials available in libraries under study belong to universities & other educational institutions (170 users), research institutions (90 users), Govt Departments including City corporations (63 users), Judiciary (14 users), news paper reporters, (5 users) and individual authors & scholars (19 users). (Table-23).

18. There are 7 libraries out of 9 which are said to have users from abroad. These libraries include Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore, Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore, Mysore University Library, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote, Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives Library, Mangalore and Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. The other 2 namely City Central Library and State Central Library did not have users from abroad particularly to use rare materials. (Table-24).

19. From among those foreigners who visited libraries to use rare materials stayed for period ranging from less than one week to 4 week. It is found that those who visited Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore stayed on an average 2 to 4 weeks, those who visited Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote and Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore stayed between 2 to 3 weeks. Those who visited Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore stayed 1 to 2 weeks and remaining those who visited Mysore University Library and Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad have spent less than 1 week time in these libraries. (Table-26).

20. Some of the libraries or their parent institutions facilitate accommodation for the stay of foreigners, where as some have not. Those who provide
accommodation facility to foreigners for their stay include Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, Mysore University Library, Academy of Sanskrit Research, Melukote, Kannada Research Institute, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore. (Table-27).

21. The rare documents in libraries under study are arranged in different convenient ways. While 4(44.44%) libraries namely Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore, Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote have arranged rare materials form wise and subject wise under each form. The 3(33.33%) libraries, viz City Central Library, Mysore, State Central Library, Bangalore and Mysore University Library have arranged rare books as per classification number according to Dewey decimal classification/Colon classification, while Kannada Research Institute, Dharwad arranged rare books subject wise irrespective of their form (except manuscripts). The Indian Council of Historical Research, Bangalore has arranged rare materials form wise irrespective of subjects. (Table-32).

22. The tools maintained to know the availability of rare materials in libraries include card catalogue, computerized catalogue and descriptive catalogue. While 4(44.44%) libraries have both card catalogue and computerized catalogue, 2(22.22%) libraries each have only card catalogue and descriptive catalogue. Remaining, 1(11.11%) library has card catalogue, computer catalogue and descriptive printed catalogue of manuscripts. (Table-33).

23. The schemes of classification used by libraries for classifying rare documents include Colon classification (2 libraries) and Dewey decimal classification (6 libraries). One library has not adopted any scheme of classification but documents are arranged subject wise and chronology wise. (Table-34).

24. The inner form of catalogue provide by libraries include author catalogue, alphabetical subject catalogue and classified subject catalogue. While 8(88.88%) libraries have author catalogue, 7(77.77%) have classified subject catalogue and one library has alphabetical subject catalogue. One library namely Oriental Institute Institute Library, Mysore has only author catalogue and another one library namely Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore
has only alphabetical subject catalogue. Remaining 7 libraries have both author catalogue and classified subject catalogue. (Table-36).

25. There are 3 libraries which have fully computerized the bibliographical details of the rare collections. Another 3(33.33%) libraries have partially developed the bibliographical database and remaining 3(33.33%) have not attempted for library automation. (Table-37).

26. Each one of the 6 libraries that have automated their operations have used different library software. The software’s used includes LIBSYS, WINISIS, Easy Lib, MS Access, SLIM and In-house Kendriya Sadana the software developed in-house. (Table-39).

27. Two libraries namely Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore and Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore have developed bibliographical database for the entire collection. The three libraries namely Mysore University Library, State Central Library, Bangalore and Indian Council of Historical Research, Bangalore have developed bibliographical database of their collection partially and one library has developed bibliographical database for printed book and backs volumes of journals. (Table-39).

28. 5 librarians/heads of libraries out of total 9 state that the rare materials in their respective libraries are used most frequently. They represent 55.6% of the total. These libraries include Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore, Divisional Archive Office Library, Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore, Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. Two librarians viz Mysore University Library and Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad state that rare documents in their libraries are used frequently, where as librarians of City Central Library, Mysore and State Central Library, Bangalore state that the rare materials in their respective libraries are used occasionally. (Table-42).

29. Librarians of 4(44.44%) libraries state that all rare documents are useful. These include Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore, Divisional Archives Office Library, Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote, and Karnataka Theological Library & Archives, Mangalore.
Librarians of 3 (33.33%) libraries state that large portion of their rare document collection is useful. These include Mysore University Library, Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad and Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. The librarians of remaining 2 libraries opine that small portion of their rare book collection is useful. These are City Central Library, Mysore and State Central Library, Bangalore. (Table - 43).

30. There are 3 (33.33%) libraries which have initiated digitization of rare collections. These are Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote and Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. Remaining 6 (66.66%) libraries have not initiated digitization of their rare collections. (Table - 44).

31. The total number of documents digitized by all the 3 libraries are 1850 of which 1300 belong to Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote, 350 are from Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore and 200 belong to Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. They represent 70.3%, 18.9% and 10.8%. Out of 1850 documents digitized 1000 are rare print documents and 850 are manuscripts. They represent 54.1% and 45.9% respectively. (Table - 45).

32. The comparison of digitized document collections with that of the total rare collections shows that 19.24% of the total collection of Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore have been digitized. As against this 5.19% of the total rare collections of Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote have been digitized and 1.13% of total rare collection Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore have been digitized. (Table - 46).

33. To digitize the rare book collection, the Academy of Sanskrit Research Library, Melukote has received financial assistance from Cargenie foundation USA, Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore has received assistance from National Manuscript Mission (NMM), whereas for digitization of the rare collections in Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore the ICHR itself has financed (Table - 47).

34. From among 561 user respondents covered under study 366 are male and 195 are female. They represent 65.24% and 34.75% respectively of the total respondents. (Table - 50)
35. Out of total 561 respondents 247 representing 44% are research scholars, 150(26.74%) are teachers, 57(10.16%) are students and 107 representing about 19% of the total are others. They include research assistants, resource persons, retired officers, research associates, museum curators, scientists, project heads and assistant editors. (Table-49)

36. Age wise distribution of user respondents shows that nearly 29%, are between age group 26 to 30, 22% are between age group of 31 to 35 nearly 13% each are between age group 36 to 40 and 21 to 25 years. Those who fall within the age group of 41 to 70 represent about 22% of the total respondents where as respondents aged between 16 to 20 are 1.24% of the total. (Table-51)

37. The users belong to as many as 19 subject areas. Among them there are 81 belonging to history and archaeology, 64 are from history, 59 are from archaeology and epigraph. They represent about 11.4% and 10.5% respectively. There are 51(9.1%) respondents belonging to anthropology 46(8.2%) are from linguistics 39(6.95) from theology and 31(5.52) are from inscriptions. Other areas to which users belong to include iconography, South Indian studies, manuscriptology, archaeology, antiquities, urdu, music, Sanskrit criticism and literature.(Table-54).

38. There are 459 respondents possessing post graduation, 66 are graduates, and 36 are doctorates. They represent 81.8%, 11.9% and 6.4% respectively.(Table-55)

39. The areas of interest of the respondents vary to a large extent. These areas are grouped under 62 sub headings. Some of the important areas of interests of the respondents include: ancient history, philosophy & literature, archaeology, manuscriptology and ancient Indian history, medieval Indian history, antiquities, epigraphy, religion, dance and sculptures, cultural anthropology, Indian civilization and so on. (Table-56).

40. The type of documents used by the respondents shows that printed rare documents and old manuscripts are used by large majority of respondents. They represent nearly 77% and 69% of the total respectively. Next in preference by the users are palm leaves, printed catalogue of rare books and reports. The number of users of these resources represent 38%, 29% and 22% respectively. Other type of documents used by the respondents include subject
books, reference books, archaeological stones, coins and CD-ROMs. (Table-60)

41. Subject wise usage of rare materials show that books on history, antiquity & archaeology and architecture have been used by large numbers users. They represent 74.5% each. Next in order are books on architecture (71%) archeology & epigraphy (62%), Sanskrit (29%), inscriptions (43%), religion(27%), folklore/folk tradition & linguistics (24%), and culture & tradition (21%). Other subjects include dance/drama, music, bibliography, fine & decorative arts, Ayurveda, pictography, yogic science, astrology, Indian medicine etc (Table-61)

42. The purpose for which the respondents used the rare documents include research, teaching, writing books to carry on assignments, preparing report, delivering special lectures, translations, preparation for conferences, seminars and workshops. As many as 340 users purpose of using rare materials is research. For 288 users the purpose is teaching and for 239 it is for writing books. They represent around 96%, 51% and 42% respectively. The respondents stating other purposes represent between 16% and 32% of the total respondents. (Table-62)

43. As many as 252 user respondents representing 44.9% of the total opine that information in rare materials is helpful to a great extent. For 190 respondents it is useful to a moderate extent and for 71 respondents it is useful to some extent. They represent 33.86% and 12.66% respectively. Remaining 48(8.55%) respondents state that the information in rare materials is not of help. (Table-63)

44. While 93% users of Oriental Research Institute Library Mysore state that the rare materials in this library are useful. All users (100%) of Divisional Archive Office Library Mysore, Academy of Sanskrit Research Library Melukote, Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore, Karnataka Theological Library & Archives Library, Mangalore have opined that the rare materials in these libraries are useful. While about 71% users of rare materials in Mysore University Library said that they are useful, about 43% users of State Central Library, Bangalore and 40% of City Central Library, Mysore have stated that the rare materials in these libraries are useful. (Table-64)
While nearly 39% users of Oriental Research Institute, Mysore state the content of all rare materials in ORI need to be preserved, 37% say that the content of 75% resources have to be preserved for posterity. Similarly, is the case with the users of Divisional Archive Office Library, Mysore and Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore. However, about 59% users of Academy of Sanskrit Research Library Melukote state that about 75% resources have to be preserved for posterity. More than 76% users of Karnataka Theological Library & Archives Library, Mangalore state the content of all the resources have to be preserved as against 13% users who have stated that about 75% rare materials need to be preserved for posterity. About 35% users of Mysore University Library opine that 75% of the rare materials in this library need preservation for future use. Another 31% users have stated that the content of about 50% resources should be preserved for posterity and only 14% users say that all rare resources in the library should be preserved. (Table-66).

Out of 561 users 440 have opined that the content of rare materials is important and they need to be preserved for future use. Among them, 128 are Mysore University Library users, 67 are Oriental Research Institute Library, Mysore users, 56 are users of Divisional Archive Office Library, Mysore, 54 are users of Academy of Sanskrit Research Library Melukote, 40 are Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Bangalore, 38 are Karnataka Theological Library & Archives Library, Mangalore, 30 are Kannada Research Institute Library, Dharwad, 15 are City Central Library, Mysore and 12 are State Central Library, Bangalore users. They represent 29%, 15.22%, 12.72%, 12.27%, 9.09%, 8.63%, 6.81%, 3.40%, and 2.72% respectively. (Table-67)

The target group of users of rare materials in future as conceived by user respondents belong to history, antiquities, culture & tradition, anthropology, dance, drama & music, folklore and folk tradition, religion & philosophy, Sanskrit, history of science, vedasastra, yogic science, linguistics, astronomy and astrology, and literature in the descending order of preference. (Table-68)

The geographical scope of the largest number of users of rare materials in future as identified by the respondents are from local and regional level. They
represent 64% of the total. National level of users are expected to be about 27% and international level would be about 8.6%. (Table-69)

49. The preferred form for preservation of rare materials is both digitization and original form of document. These respondents account for 67.95% as against (32.05%) who prefer only digitization. (Table-70)

50. The anticipated agencies who would come forward to provide financial assistance for digitization of rare materials include Department of Archaeology and Musicology, Govt. of India, Ford Foundation, ICSSR, ICHR, DST, Carnegie Foundation, Private trustees, and individuals, Alumni associations, Philanthropists, Microsoft Corporation, CSIR, INGCA, NMM and NCHS in that order of preference. (Table-71).

5.5 Suggestions

Following are some of the suggestions for preserving & conserving rare materials in various libraries in Karnataka and to facilitate better access of information contained in these rare materials.

1. Though some of the libraries have computerized and created bibliographical database of resources in their respective libraries there exist no separate bibliographical database for rare materials. Further some libraries do not have computerized bibliographical database. Therefore, it is suggested to initiate creation of a common union computerized database/catalogue of all rare materials available in all libraries in Karnataka. This will not only help to locate document availability but also reveals duplicate resources available in different libraries.

2. Creation of union computerized bibliographical database / catalogue calls for uniformity in bibliographic description since these documents are in different languages and in different forms. Some of them do not have even have proper bibliographic details. It is therefore suggested to adopt Unicode and standard bibliographic format such as MARC 2 or ISO 2709.

3. Some of the rare materials available in the libraries covered under study are original and are unpublished. These include literature in the form of palm leaves, manuscripts, office records of erstwhile Mysore State, assembly debates, correspondences etc. There are some printed books published
during end of 17th and 18th centuries, the copies of which are not available anywhere. The paper used in printing these books is no more durable. They are in fragile condition. Therefore, it is suggested that the Government of Karnataka should establish a Karnataka State Archives and bring together all these rare resources. It is also suggested to find financial resources and initiate digitization of all these rare materials.

4. Individual libraries that have not created computerized database should initiate to do so as it is a prime requirement of any library.

5. All libraries holding rare materials should initiate popularising the usage of their collection, as many scholars are not aware of these resources.

6. Some of the libraries including ORI, Mysore do not have trained professional staff. Hence recruiting trained professional staff should be mandatory.

7. The data reveals that out of 80 library staff only 26 have undergone training in modern library management techniques, particularly those who have undergone training in preservation and conservation activities are hardly 6. Preservation and Conservation of rare requires materials entirely different knowledge, about materials and chemicals used, their handling organization, techniques/methods of preservation and conservation. Hence, all those who are handling, managing rare materials in libraries have to be provided in depth practical training in preservation and conservation of library materials.

8. Since many staff members working in libraries containing rare materials do not have training, select library & information schools should come forward to organize practical training programmes in association with such of the library/agency possessing such a facility.

5.6 Suggestions for Future Research

1. The present study revealed that there are more than 80,000 rare materials in 9 libraries covered under study. These are in different languages, in different forms and are brought out over centuries. There is no systematic bibliometric study covering these rare materials. Therefore, a bibliometric study of rare materials available in different libraries in Karnataka is suggested.

2. Users opinion as well as librarians opinion revealed that majority of documents in these libraries are being used. It is necessary to assess exactly to
what extent these resources are used and also to understand their value in the context of global society. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct citation study of select rare documents which are said to be used most.

5.7. Conclusion

Rare materials in libraries reflect culture and heritage of our society. Preservation and conservation of this wealth of information for posterity needs no emphasis. Many scholars and national and international agencies have emphasized the need for preservation of these resources. UNESCO has brought out the guidelines for preservation of rare materials. Governments of many countries such as UK, USA, France etc., have formulated national Preservation and Conservation policy and they have established National Archives to protect and preserve these resources. Newer techniques and methods are being investigated and adopted not only to preserve and conserve these rare materials but also to facilitate better access to this wealth of information. As such, many projects on digitization of rare materials have been initiated both by the various Governments & other institutions & agencies.

The present study reveals that there are as many as 86,000 rare materials, together with all nine libraries under study. These rare materials are in different forms such as palm leaves, manuscripts, out of print books and journals, atlases, rare photographs, drawings, stones, coins and antiquities. These have been organized differently in different libraries. While some of the libraries have arranged them form wise and subject wise under each form, some have arranged these materials form wise irrespective of subjects and some others have organized these materials subject wise irrespective of forms. The tools maintained to know the availability of rare documents in respective libraries include card catalogue, computerized catalogue and descriptive catalogue of manuscripts. While 3 libraries have fully automated their operations and have created bibliographical details of rare materials, another 3 have partially automated their activities and they are in the process of creating bibliographical details of their collections. However, remaining 3 libraries have not attempted for library automation. The software’s used for library automation vary from library to library and they include LibSys, WINISIS, Easy Lib, MS-Access, Slim and Kendriya Sadana. While 6 libraries have adopted totally closed access to rare materials, one
library has partially closed access and remaining 2 have open access to rare materials. Librarians of 5 libraries state that the rare materials in their libraries are most frequently used. As against them, 2 librarians have stated that rare materials in their respective libraries are used frequently and remaining 2 librarians have stated that these rare materials are occasionally used. While 3 libraries have initiated digitization of rare collections, the other 6 libraries have not initiated such activity. For digitizing rare materials these 3 libraries have received financial assistance from Carnegie Foundation, USA, National Manuscripts Mission, New Delhi and ICHR, New Delhi.

The 561 respondents from whom the opinion on different issues relating to rare materials sought reveal that majority of them use out of print rare books, old manuscripts, palm leaves, printed catalogue of books, reports, antiquities, archaeological stones, coins and CD ROM in that order of preference. They use these materials for research, teaching, for writing books, for carrying on assignments, for preparing reports, for delivering special lectures and so on. Nearly 55% of users opine that these rare materials are helpful to a great extent, nearly 34% users say that these rare materials are helpful to moderate extent and about 12.6% users say that they are helpful to some extent. As against them, about 8.5% users contend that these rare materials are not helpful. More than 78% users who used these rare materials have expressed that these materials were useful and served their purpose, whereas about 21% users said they were not much useful. More than 91% users contend that there is a need to popularize the usage of these rare materials. The preferred form of preservation of materials by large number of users is digitization of the entire rare collection and as well to preserve original documents.

Thus, large majority of rare collection available in almost all 9 libraries are found to be important, useful and need proper preservation. Therefore, the study concludes that there is a greater need to establish a state archive and bring together this wealth of resources. Also there is a need to digitize these rare materials and establish a digital library of these resources to facilitate better access to this wealth of information by all those interested in them. It is thus recommended that the policy makers will take note of this and will initiate state policy for preserving and conserving rare materials available in different institutions in the entire state.