CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is an essential step in the research process. The main purpose of literature review is to know what other researchers have done. As shown by Charles Busha and Stephen P. Harter in their book entitled, *Research Methods in Librarianship: Techniques of Interpretation* and also in many books on research methodology, the following points emphasise the importance of review of literature or literature study or literature survey.

i. Review of literature helps to know what work has been done by others in the selected broad subject area.

ii. This exercise reduces duplication of research and thus saves time, money and other resources.

iii. It also helps to define specific objectives based on what other researchers have not done.

iv. It directly or indirectly helps in deciding the method to be adopted for the research.
v. Knowledge of the work done by others help in avoiding some pitfalls and also to be in line with some commonly accepted beliefs and concepts in the subject field. Even if one wants to contradict these, he has to justify his move.

Review of literature was carried out with this understanding about the basic purpose. The broad subject of the present thesis, "The Role of Library in Enhancing Agricultural Research and Education" was the area focussed for the review of literature.

A set of books about Agricultural Librarianship were identified by visiting different university libraries as a first step. Further, a set of articles were selected on various aspects of agricultural librarianship using Library and Information Science Abstract of ten years (1982-1992). While several aspects such as collection development, computerisation, reference service etc. of agricultural libraries were listed, there was no reference to the role aspect. Hence, only a few articles which were likely to have dealt with the role aspect were selected.

Alan Fusonie and Leila Moran have edited ten papers presented to an International Symposium held at National Agricultural Library under the title, International Agricultural Librarianship
In India during early 1950s, the Indo-American Team on Agricultural Research and Education recommended that agricultural library services ought to be improved, for the inadequacies were far too well-known. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) invited Ralph R. Shaw to give his recommendations. He surveyed a number of libraries attached to agricultural colleges/universities/centres. He was accompanied by Prof. D. B. Krishna Rao. The report of their survey was published as, Report on Library and Bibliographical Services for Agricultural Teaching and Research in India (1957). This publication published by the ICAR gives profiles of all the agricultural libraries in India visited by these two experts and also lists their recommendations.

A similar publication, Final Report of the ICAR Institutes and Agricultural University Libraries (1969) appeared 12 years later. This study also surveys the agricultural libraries in India and gives the profiles of these libraries. It also
recommends the phase-wise steps to be taken to set-up and improve agricultural libraries.

These two publications give their recommendations in general; no recommendation was aimed at any specific library. Further, these were too indirect evaluations, because there was no reference to the actual users of the libraries.

The three publications by Dr. R. Subbaiah were a step forward in understanding the users' reading habits. His Ph.D. Thesis, 'Conceptual Framework For an Indian National Agricultural Information System', submitted to the University of Kerala, probes to find out what agricultural scientists prefer to read. The facts and figures collected by him are presented in two other titles by him.

Agricultural Librarianship in India (1988) is an overview of the three major components of agricultural librarianship viz., users of agricultural information, agricultural literature and agricultural library profession in India. It is truely a comprehensive book on this theme. He deals with agricultural libraries in India with reference to norms and standards, resources and services and role of the libraries in transfer of agricultural information. He has used the data from his own thesis to support his ideas.
Dr. Subbaiah's other book, *Agricultural Library Users: An Analytical Study* (1989) is also partly based on his Ph.D. Thesis. Here the emphasis is entirely on the users of agricultural libraries. He has collected opinions of 285 users - out of 556 approached, scattered in 11 institutions. He finds various aspects of agricultural information, considered to be significant from the users' point of view. Also, he gives their expectations besides giving the general details like age, experience and qualifications of the users.

Besides, there were some selected articles reflecting the Indian scenario.

Many papers presented at the All India Seminar on Agricultural Libraries and Information Services touched various aspects of agricultural librarianship in India. This seminar was held at Pantnagar from 26 - 29 December 1988. Prof. P. B. Mangala's keynote address, which subsequently appeared in the *Journal of Library and Information Science*, was an overview of all aspects of agricultural librarianship in India. The four day seminar came out with recommendations regarding automation, combating the hike in prices of books and subscription rates, essential services to readers etc.

Perhaps one observation about all these recommendations could be that, these appear more academic in nature. In other words, the
recommendations were so general in nature that it appears dogmatic.

On the other hand, there were articles, on specific practical areas like press clipping and networking etc. in relation to agricultural libraries. Mr. M. A. Prodhani’s 'Press Clipping Service and its importance in Agricultural Research Library', Annals of Library Science and Documentation Vol. 29, No. 3, 1982, p. 135-137 was too general in nature for the purpose of present study.

Library Trends devoted their Winter 1990 issue entirely to agricultural libraries and information. Two articles, among others, were very good. The first was by Rita C Fisher and Michael R. Kinch and was titled 'Agricultural Reference Service'. The second was, 'User Needs and Library Services in Agricultural Sciences' by Beverlee A French. The other articles were about management, networking etc. Although these articles were not written with the Indian libraries in mind, there were many useful bits of information.

Journal of Library and Information Science (Vol. 12, No. 1, 1987) carried an article titled, 'The role of Agricultural Information in Research and Training in Tanzania' by S. S. Mbwana. This goes on to list the use of information in agriculture which is
crucial for the progress of any country. The role of information was discussed but not much of libraries.

In short, the review of literature shows that there was no document on role of libraries in agricultural education and research. Wherever, it was attempted indirectly, the details of cause and effect angles were absent. In other words, what is the role in the specific situation was not discussed. Further, it is too obvious that libraries play a significant role in research and education. But do users know its role in their work? Do authorities of the parent body or funding agencies see the role? How should library protect its interests in the days of financial crunches and retrenchments. This angle was not dealt with in any document. Hence, the present study aims at looking at the role of library in these days of escalating prices of books and periodicals, when there is a vast output of relevant literature available and every researcher aims at accessing information available from any part of the globe. This, therefore, is the specific area of research for the thesis and the next chapter sets the precise objectives.