CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Information has been described as the fifth need of human beings ranked after air, water, food and shelter. Knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally, consciously or unconsciously, all of us most of the time of our life and work are concerned with information - generation, recording, processing, repackaging, transfer, receiving, use and its application. The information that is generated is communicated through various channels – formal and informal, published in various formats – print, non-print and machine readable, reported in multiplicity of languages and published from different countries of the world. The role of information in education, research and development, decision-making and recreation is fully acknowledged and the role of libraries in providing access to information is well documented.

Libraries – the centers of learning – are playing an important role in sustaining and satisfying the information requirements of parent institutions. For the efficient, effective and scientific development of information resources and services, the libraries need to be designed and developed systematically based on the inputs from studies on existing resources and services, and the studies on users of libraries. From the review of literature (Vide Chapter-3), it was discovered that few surveys on health science libraries’ resources and services and several on users of libraries in health science were reported from Western Countries. Although, few studies on resources and services as part of Master’s program have been reported, but no in-depth study on information gathering and
use habits of users of health science libraries in India in general and Karnataka in particular is reported. So, the present study has been undertaken to fill this gap.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Resources and Services, Information Gathering and Use Habits of Users of Health Science Libraries in Karnataka State"

1.3 OBJECTIVES:

The primary objectives of the study are to:

(i) **know the present status of resources and services of health science libraries in Karnataka State.** Particularly, the study aims to know the status of:

(a) courses offered, total strength - students and staff, type of management, working hours, provision of departmental and hospital libraries;

(b) manpower, information, financial and physical resources including furniture and equipments and library committee;

(c) collection development, organization and management;

(d) information services and resource sharing;

(e) use of information technology - computers, Internet, audio-visual and micrographics;

(f) user education programs, user studies undertaken, exhibition of books, in-house training, organization of conferences/seminars/workshops and publication programs of health sciences libraries in Karnataka State

(ii) **identify the information gathering and use habits of users of health science libraries in Karnataka state.** In particular, the study aims to identify the:

(a) characteristics of users - age, sex, specialization, specialty, position, publications, attendance at conferences/symposia/seminars; continuing education programs;
membership to learned societies; foreign languages - read and write; personal library and knowledge of computers;

(b) time spent on various activities and the types of information that they gather and use;

(c) purpose/s of information gathering and use;

(d) methods used for keeping up-to-date;

(e) use of sources of information;

(f) literature searching habits, delegation of searching to others and the methods/techniques used;

(g) important books, primary scientific journals, abstracting and indexing journals used;

(h) use of foreign language materials and method/s used to locate;

(i) most important and significant academic/research/patient care related situation encountered by them; the sources they depended to solve and the reasons for the same;

(j) frequency of visits to their college library and success; frequency of visits to other libraries (in a month) and success; frequency of consultations with library and information workers and success in getting information;

(k) reasons for use and purpose/s of using library and information centers;

(l) use, approaches to and usefulness of different parts of a library catalogue;

(m) awareness, use and usefulness of services of National Medical Library (NML), New Delhi, National Informatics Center (NIC), New Delhi, Indian National Scientific Documentation Center (INSDOC), New Delhi, and National Center for Science Information (NCSI), Bangalore;
difficulties encountered, user education received and the need for such training in
gathering and use of information and:

(iii) to give suggestions/recommendations for planning and development of resources
and services, and for promoting the information gathering and use habits of users
of health science libraries in Karnataka State.

1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS:

The scope of the present work falls in the area of Library and Information Science
particularly the survey research – survey of libraries and their resources and services, and
study of users of health science libraries in Karnataka. It covers the libraries and users of
libraries of medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy colleges/institutions and excludes
ayurvedic, homeopathy, physiotherapy, unani college libraries and their users. It is an
exploratory study, as there are no comprehensive studies, reported based on the data
collected through questionnaire directly from the librarians of ninety-two libraries and one
thousand five hundred and forty eight users of health science libraries in Karnataka. It
covers ninety-two of One hundred and forty seven libraries in the state, and based on the
sample size of 2000 users drawn employing proportionate stratified sampling technique.

As the study is exploratory in nature i.e., to know the status of libraries and IG & UH of
users, the data has been collected through questionnaire and at the nominal level of
measurement; to a certain extent they share the inherent limitations of the data collection
tool.

1.5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS:

This section provides definitions for the various concepts and terms used in the
study.
Collection Development: It signifies all the process from formulation of policy/ies for systematic identification, selection and procurement of varieties of documents in different formats and languages in the core and allied area/s of interest to health science libraries.

Collection Organization: It is used to include classification, cataloguing, indexing and arrangement of documents in libraries.

Collection Management: It includes all those activities performed in order to store, maintain, conserve, preserve, evaluation, weeding and binding of documents in the contest of libraries under study.

Health Science Libraries: It is used to represent libraries attached to institutions of higher learning such as college, deemed universities in the field of medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy.

Information Gathering and Use Habits: It is defined as the pattern of the use a user or a group of users make of the different information sources including libraries for study, teaching, research, guidance, practice and patient management care within a subject field or organization.

Resources: The term resources refer to manpower, information, financial, physical, furniture and equipments including availability of computer, Internet, audiovisual and micrographic facilities in the context of libraries under study.

Services: It denotes all types of library and information services – traditional and computer based services provided by libraries.

Users: The term users include students of undergraduate, post-graduate courses including super specialty and members of faculty of medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy college/institution libraries in Karnataka.