CHAPTER XIII

THE COLLEGE LIBRARY

(1) Introduction
(2) Availability of reading material in the college libraries.
(3) Selection Procedure
(4) Orientation to students
(5) Activities conducive to reading
(6) Open Shelf library
(7) Suggestions from the College Librarians
(8) Review of the Chapter.
Libraries are national resources for the transfer of information and knowledge, for the enjoyment of wisdom and beauty.

Charter of Books.

I am sure Paradise is very much like a library; stacks of books stretching away to infinity with eons of time to browse among the starlit shelves.

Kenneth Harris.

The true university of these days is a collection of books.

Thomas Carlyle.
1. Introduction:

1.1 A questionnaire (Appendix V) was administered to the librarians of 43 colleges from which data were collected in respect of students. Out of 43 colleges, 30 returns that is 69.76% were received. The percentage of returns to the total number of colleges affiliated to the University of Poona amounts to 39.47.

1.2 Objectives for issuing the questionnaire were -

(i) to determine the availability of reading material in the college library.

(ii) to ascertain the activities conducive to reading arranged by the college authorities.

(iii) To seek suggestions from the librarians for cultivating reading interests and habits in the students.

1.3 In order to collect data on above mentioned objectives in all 25 questions were asked.

Question No. 1 and 2 sought the name and place of college. Question from 3 to 18 dealt with the availability of reading material. Question from 19 to 24 were about the activities conducive to reading. Question No. 25, an open question was about suggestions from the college librarians.

1.4 It should be admitted with regret that two omissions remained in the questionnaire. They were about omissions of questions regarding availability of Hindi daily papers and
English magazines/quarterlies and annuals, in the college library, but these omissions were made good by subsequent enquiries.

2. Availability of reading material:

2.1 Question 3:
Total No. of students in the college.

Question 4:
Total No. of books in the college library.
Total No. of study books
Total No. of books for leisure time reading.

2.2 Out of 30 returns 19 returns furnished informations on all the three points referred to above.

Table 13.1 - Availability of books in the college Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No. of students in the 19 colleges</th>
<th>Total No. of books</th>
<th>Total No. of study books</th>
<th>Total No. of books for leisure reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15,931</td>
<td>1,90,844</td>
<td>81,122</td>
<td>1,09,722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Books per student

2.3 Comments:
Total number of books per student for leisure time reading are more than the study books. The possible reason is that in the category of study books only prescribed books
for the college courses are included. All other books are placed in the second category. This naturally inflated the number of books for leisure reading per student.

2.4 **Question 5:**
Subscription to Marathi newspapers

**Question 7:**
Subscription to English newspapers

**Question 8:**
Subscription to Marathi weeklies

**Question 9:**
Subscription to Hindi weeklies

**Question 10:**
Subscription to English weeklies

**Question 11:**
Subscription to Marathi fortnightlies

**Question 12:**
Subscription to Hindi fortnightlies

**Question 13:**
Subscription to English fortnightlies

**Question 14:**
Subscription to Marathi monthlies/quarterlies/annuallys

**Question 15:**
Subscription to Hindi monthlies/quarterlies/annuallys

**Question 16:**
Availability of books for home reading

**Question 17:**

Availability of magazines for home reading.

**Question 18:**

Availability of newspapers in the college library.

**Subsequent Enquiries:**

- Availability of Hindi daily/ies in the college library
- Availability of English Magazines/Quarterlies/Annals in the college library

2.5 **Table 13.2 - Subscription to Newspapers/Periodicals by the College Library.**

N: 28 (28 out of 30 returns received answered all the questions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Type of Periodicals</th>
<th>No. of Colleges where Subscription is Made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Marathi daily/ies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>English daily/ies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Marathi weekly/ies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Hindi weekly/ies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>English weekly/ies</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Marathi fortnightly/ies</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Hindi fortnightly/ies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>English fortnightly/ies</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Periodicals</th>
<th>No. of Colleges where Subscription is Made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>92.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>60.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of periodicals</th>
<th>No. of colleges where subscription is made</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marathi Monthlies/quarterlies/annuals</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi Monthlies/quarterlies/annuals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi Dailies</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Monthlies/quarterlies/annuals</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) Marathi dailies/weeklies/monthlies are subscribed to by all the colleges.

(ii) English dailies are subscribed to by all the colleges; English weeklies by at least 60.71% colleges, English fortnightlylies by 50.00% colleges, and English monthlies/quarterlies/annuals by 75.00%.

(iii) Hindi weeklies are subscribed to by at least 96.43% colleges, Hindi fortnightlylies by 3.57% colleges, Hindi magazines by 71.42% colleges, and Hindi dailies by 60.71% colleges.

2.6 Comments:

(i) Subscription to Marathi, Hindi, and English fortnightlylies is not as widespread as subscription to Marathi, Hindi, and English dailies. This non-availability of fortnightlylies might be one of the causes of meagre reading of fortnightlylies. (Chapter VI.3). In the interview majority of the stu-
Dents reported that they had never seen fortnightlies.

(ii) Hindi magazines are subscribed to by only 71.42% colleges. On the whole Hindi reading is also meagre. Non-availability of material might be one of the causes for this state of affairs.

2.7 Question:
Are books of leisure-time reading available for home reading?

2.8 Table 13.3 - Availability of books for home reading from the college library.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is heartening to note that in all the colleges books are available for home reading.

2.9 Question:
Are magazines available for home reading?

2.10 Table 13.4 - Availability of magazines for home reading from the college library.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 23.33% colleges provide magazines for home reading.

2.11 **Comments:**

If the responsibility of providing material for leisure-time reading is accepted by college libraries, then some arrangement should be made for giving magazines for home reading. This is particularly so in case of rural colleges where outside agencies for providing reading material like public libraries, subscription libraries are either not easily available or they are beyond the means of students. When material is readily and easily available then only, barring the cases where motivation is very strong, one tends to read. In this light college libraries should accept this responsibility of providing magazines for home reading.

2.12 **Question:**

Are dailies available for reading in the college library?

2.13 – Table 13.5 – Availability of daily papers in the
96.67% colleges provide dailies for reading in the college library.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

96.67% colleges provide dailies for reading in the college library.

2.14 Comments:

Availability of dailies is quite impressive. There should not be any complaint on the part of the students, except science students who are busy with practical work, for not reading dailies or for non-availability of newspapers. B.A., and B.Com. students have ample time at their disposal to visit library and enjoy reading newspapers if the latter are otherwise available. In spite of this facility only 58.03% students are regular readers of newspapers (Chapter IV : 2.1).

3. Selection Procedure:

3.1 Question:

What is the procedure for the selection of reading material namely books, magazines, etc. for the college library? Tick off within the appropriate brackets.
(i) Professor's recommendation  
(ii) Students' recommendation  
(iii) Selection by the library  
(iv) Any other way

3.2 Table 13.6 - Selection of reading material. N : 30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Way of selection</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Professor's recommendation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Students' recommendation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Selection by the library</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Review published</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Comments:

73.33% colleges take into consideration students' recommendation for the selection of material. In fact all the college libraries should involve students in the selection of reading material. No extra energy or staff would be required for following this suggestion. What would be required is a small suggestion box. This small gesture on the part of the college library would create proper feeling and attitude towards college library and thus help in spreading reading movement.

4.1 Orientation to students:

Question:
Do you orient the students with the library services at the beginning of academic year? Yes/No.

4.2 Table 13.7 - Orientation to students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 60% of the college libraries arrange for orientation.

4.3 Comments:

There are some activities which must be done as a routine by all the college libraries. Orientation is one of such activities. But only 60% of the colleges give orientation to students regarding the use of college libraries.

When a student joins an institution for higher learning, he is at first bewildered and does not know about the facilities available to him. It is the sacred duty of college library to give him necessary information and create a positive feeling towards library. One of the ways for achieving this is to orient him properly. Orientation should be arranged for every new entrant to the college.

5. Activities conducive to reading:
5.1 **Question:**

Are following activities arranged either by college or college library? Put a tick within the appropriate brackets.

(i) Book exhibition 

(ii) Discussion on books 

(iii) Essay competition on books 

(iv) Talks by poets or authors on their own writing 

(v) Competition arranged in connection with the celebration of specific days 

(vi) Any other 

5.2 Table 13.8 - Activities conducive to reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Book exhibition</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion on books</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Essay competition on books</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Talk by poet or author on their own writing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Competition arranged in connection with celebration of a specific day</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 Comments:

(i) Above table makes it clear that activities related to reading are arranged by a few colleges. The moral responsibility of colleges does not end by just providing reading material to students. Colleges are the seats of higher learning, and much depends on creating proper atmosphere. Activities are helpful in creating proper atmosphere. Yet this aspect of spreading reading movement is neglected in the colleges. Library and academic staff should work together for arranging the activities.

(ii) Library staff on its own can at least arrange a book exhibition on specific occasions. This would require little energy and imagination. Yet only in 36.67% colleges, book exhibitions were arranged.

6. Open shelf library:

6.1 Question:
Are the students allowed to select books by browsing among them? Yes / No.

6.2 Table 13.9 - Facility for browsing books. N: 30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3 **Comments:**

50% colleges allow their students to select their own books by going through them. The importance of open shelf library is beyond dispute as the middle agency of the library staff between the student and the book, is eliminated. To the lover of reading the time spent in a good library, browsing various books, gives immense joy. This facility of open shelf library should be provided to all the students.

While making the suggestion the researcher is aware that there are practical difficulties in the implementation of the suggestion. It would be better to say that provision for providing open shelf library should be the aim of the college library and this aim should be never lost sight of.

6.4 **Facility for browsing room:**

**Question:**

Is facility of browsing room or corner available?

Yes / No.

6.5 **Table 13.10 - Facility of browsing room**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.6 **Comments:**

Question No. 23 and 24 are closely related. It is made clear in the comments to the previous question that facility of open shelf library for all the books in the library should be our aim but it is beset with practical difficulties. A via media should be found by which students can come into direct contact with the books without the interference of a middle agency and which is practicable within the available means of staff, space, etc. Providing Browsing Room, or a corner in the library, where selected titles are kept, is just possible. No extra staff is required for the implementation of this suggestion. This should be the first step towards open shelf library. Yet only 30% of the colleges provide this facility.

7. **Suggestions from the college librarians for creating and broadening reading interests and cultivating reading habits.**

7.1 **Question:**

What should be done by the colleges and college libraries for creating reading interests among the students, and strengthening the same in the students who are already interested in reading? Give your suggestions in brief.

7.2 25 out of 30 college librarians were kind enough to respond to the question. The suggestions are presented
below under suitable categories without any elaboration.

(i) **Physical facilities**:
- Library should have a spacious independent accommodation of its own having different required rooms.
- Provision for browsing room should be made.
- There should be a separate room for periodicals in which old issues of periodicals, current periodicals, weeklies, etc. should be made available to the students.
- Much depends on the physical facilities in the library. Separate reading room, good furniture, proper ventilation, adequate light and quiet atmosphere are essential requirements.

(ii) **Budget provisions**:
- Sufficient funds should be made available for the purchase of required number of copies of a book.
- Provision for the purchase of books for leisure time reading in the annual budget of the college should be made.

(iii) **Staff requirements**:
- Provision for sufficient staff should be made. Trained assistant librarian should be put in charge of the reference work. He/she should satisfy students in their queries regarding leisure time reading and give guidance in this regard.

(iv) **Co-operation from teaching staff**:
- Teaching staff should recommend books beyond those prescribed for the regular study.

- Teaching staff in charge of the various cultural and co-curricular activities like elocution competition, etc. should bring the students and the library staff together and seek their help within their field for various activities.

- Competition of projects should be arranged with the help of science departments.

(v) Co-curricular activities:

- Different types of competitions connected with reading should be organized.

- Reading circle should be established and books should be discussed in the circle under the guidance of teachers and librarian.

- Cultural activities like symposium, poetry reading, talks, elocution competition, reading of plays and one-act plays, essay competition should be organized.

- Prizes for reading should be constituted.

(vi) Time table:

- Provision of one period for leisure-time reading be made in the college time table.

(vii) Membership of the library:

- Membership of the library should be made compulsory.

(viii) Publicity:
- College should compile a list of books that the students must read and competition based on the reading of these books should be constituted.

- At least one book exhibition in a year should be arranged.

- List of publications should be displayed on the notice board and students should be advised to recommend books from the list.

- Reviews, review articles, notes on books should be displayed on the notice board.

- List of new additions, book jackets or covers should be displayed in the library.

- Up-to-date catalogue of books of various categories should be made available to the students.

- Book reviews specially written by critical readers should be displayed on the notice board.

- New arrivals in the library should be exhibited in the library.

- Representative exhibition of books at the beginning of the year should be arranged so that students would get an idea regarding the scope of the library.

- Books devoted to a particular subject written by authors should be brought to the notice of the students on special occasions like anniversary, festivals, etc.
(ix) **Research**:
- College should undertake a survey of reading interests of its students.

(x) **Students' involvement and co-operation**:
- Librarian should seek out from the students names of books they are interested in and try to purchase books in the year to come.
- A note-book should be kept in the library and students should be advised to write down their suggestions regarding new purchases. These demands should be satisfied as far as possible.
- Students should be encouraged to write review articles.
- Books should be purchased according to the demands of students.
- Students should be asked to keep diary of their reading and give prizes to good readers.
- There should be a feeling of cooperation between the students and the library staff.

(xi) **Library facilities**:
- Provision for open-shelf library or at least browsing room should be made for the benefit of all the students.
- Magazines and dailies should be made available in the library as well as for home-reading.
Books for leisure time reading should be kept in the study room.

(xii) **Guidance and orientation:**
- Some arrangement should be made to impart guidance to students regarding reading material.
- Students should be oriented for getting acquainted with the library work.

(xiii) **Arrangement for low priced editions:**
- College authorities, with the help of publishers, should arrange for the low priced editions of good books and encourage students to purchase them.

7.3 **Comments:**

(i) Suggestions regarding physical facilities are worth consideration. Library building, furniture in the library, arrangements for seating, and fresh, cool drinking water, sanitary arrangements within the library, light, ventilation, etc., have an indirect but potent influence on the reading of the students. All these facilities must be attractive to the students. Much depends on financial resources if these facilities are to be adequately provided for. At least a beginning should be made while purchasing new equipment for the library. If proper outlook is developed, these facilities can be provided though step by step, in course of time.
(ii) One cannot suggest anything regarding budget provisions for library as money cannot be easily found but many innovations can be introduced which are independent of financial involvements; for example co-operation of the teaching staff can be sought and the teaching staff should be encouraged to work hand in hand with the library staff as far as reading of students is concerned.

(iii) Before making membership of the college library compulsory adequate reading material should be made available to the students. There is no use in making library membership compulsory when demands of students cannot be satisfied, otherwise there should not be any hitch in the implementation of this simple suggestion.

(iv) Suggestions regarding publicity of reading material can be easily implemented. They are within the scope of the library staff. The same point is applicable with regard to orientation.

(v) Every endeavour should be made to involve students in the library activities. It would create in them a sense of oneness which would lead to further reading.

(vi) If open shelf library is not possible at least some space for browsing new books should be provided and this is just possible.
(vii) Three suggestions are very important. The first is provision for guidance since students are at a loss to know what to read. Guidance is highly required in this matter. The arrangement for giving guidance can be made by allocating fixed number of students to each member of the teaching staff. It would be the responsibility of the teacher concerned to guide the students regarding leisure time reading. He should also try to solve their specific problems. This type of arrangement helped a college student to read more, according to her remarks in the interview held in connection with this research.

(viii) The second important suggestion is about reading surveys to be undertaken by college authorities. Each teacher can find out easily likes and dislikes, difficulties, etc. of the students and try to cultivate reading interests among the students by giving him guidance and helping him in his difficulties. Such small action research would be very useful in cultivating reading interests among the students.

(ix) The third important suggestion is regarding arrangement for the low priced editions. Ours is not a book-minded society. General apathy towards reading, high prices of books, lack of proper perspective are the reasons for the little interest in leisure-time reading. One of the characteristics of a cultured society is its love for books. If
the habit of purchasing books is not formed in the age of formal schooling then it is unlikely to be cultivated afterwards. A beginning should be made in this regard and one librarian is at least conscious of this. His suggestion that college authorities, with the help of publishers, should arrange for the low-priced editions of good books and encourage students to purchase the books should be accepted and implemented by at least the leading colleges.

8. **Review of the Chapter**

(1) A questionnaire was administered to the librarians of 43 colleges in order to:

(i) Determine availability of reading material in the college library,

(ii) to ascertain the activities conducive to reading arranged by the college authorities,

(iii) to seek suggestions from the librarians for cultivating and strengthening reading interests and habits in the students. (1)

(2) (i) Total number of books available per student for leisure-time reading are more than the total number of study books available per student. (2.2)

(ii) Marathi dailies/weeklies and monthlies are subscribed to by all the colleges.

(iii) English dailies are subscribed to by all the colleges,
English weeklies by 60-71% colleges, English fortnightlies by 50.00% colleges, and English Monthlies/quarterlies/annuals by 75.00%.

(iv) Hindi weeklies are available in 96.43% colleges, Hindi fortnightlies in 3.57% colleges, Hindi magazines by 71.42% colleges, and Hindi dailies in 60.71% colleges.

(v) In all the colleges books are available to the students for home-reading.

(vi) Only in 23.33% colleges dailies are available for home-reading.

(vii) 96.67% colleges provide dailies for reading in the college library.

(3) Selection of the material for reading is done on the recommendation of teaching staff in 100.00% colleges, recommendation of students' in 73.33% colleges, selection by the library staff in 73.33% colleges, and on the basis of review published in 3.33% colleges.

(4) Only 60% of the college libraries orient the students with the library service.

(5) 36.67% colleges arrange for book exhibition, 26.67% for discussion on books, 13.33% for essay competition on books, 46.67% talks by poets, or authors on their own writing, 15.33% for competition arranged in connection with the celebration of a specific day.
(6) College librarians gave suggestions on the following aspects of library service and allied aspects.