Design and Development of Sikkim Library Network (SILIBNET): A Proposed Model

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ABSTRACT:- The paper describes about the proposed model of design and development of Sikkim Library Network (SILIBNET) which would cater to the needs of academic community of Sikkim and accelerating the process of developing library network for the Sikkim state where the development in the field of Library Automation and Networking of college and university libraries has not been in pace with the other North eastern States in particular and rest of India in general.The first part of the paper highlights the brief account of library networks for resources sharing, aims & objectives and various factors responsible for initiation of establishment of local, regional and national library networks in India. In the second part of the paper describes about the proposed model of Sikkim Library Network (SILIBNET) with various facets for resources sharing in the Sikkim in real sense for the overall development of the society. In the age of open access, open source and open libraries, the need for establishing such a important network at regional level is necessary. It is the responsibility of the LIS professionals of Sikkim to come forward and discuss the issues from different angles to establish such a network in this remote part of the country.

Key Words : *Library Automation and Networking, Sikkim –India , Library Network, Sikkim Library Network*

I.   INTRODUCTION

The areas of Library Networking in India have been witnessing remarkable changes and made considerable progress with the establishment of a number of library and information networks in India during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The library and information networks are playing an important role in collection development and resource sharing, organisation of information, retrievals and the dissemination of information across the country for the benefit of academic community of India. Due to financial crisis and resource crunch in Government as well as in private sectors, emphasis was given on the idea of resource sharing among the libraries and information centers through the library networks. The main purpose of all these networks is to acquire reading materials collectively, avoid duplication, consortia approach for costly foreign journals and databases, maximum utilization of reading materials available in libraries of a particular locality or region by the users (Sinha, 2004; Sinha and Satpathy 1998).

II.   LIBRARY NETWORKS AND RESOURCE SHARING

On the basis of sponsoring agencies the library & information networks may be categorized / classified (Sinha and Satpathy, 2004 A , B ; Sinha and Sahay, 2006, Sinha, 2008) under following types :

2.1General *Network*

➢ NICNET : National Informatics Centre Network , Planning Commission, Govt. of India
➢ INDONET : CMC , 1996 COALNET : Coal India Ltd., 1993
➢ ERNET : Education and Research Network, Dept. of Electronics, Govt. of India connects Academic Institutions, IISC/IITS, Dept of Electronics, Delhi, National Centre for Software Technology (NCST) Bombay
➢ SIRNET: Scientific and Industrial Research Network. Connects Major National Research Laboratories under CSIR/INSDOC

2.2   NISSAT Sponsored Library and Information Networks
➤DELNET: Delhi Library Network/ Developing Library Network, NISSAT, 1998-99 ;
➤CALIBNET: Calcutta Library Network, 1998 – INSDOC Regional Centre, Calcutta ;
➤PUNENET: Poona, 1992 ;
➤ADINET: Ahmadabad Library Network. Ahmedabad, 1993 ;
➤MALINET: Madras Library Network, INSDOC, 1993 ;
➤BONET: Bombay Library Network, 1992, NCST NISSAT;
➤BALNET: Bangalore Library Network, 1995
➤MYLIBNET: Mysore Library Network

2.3UGC - Sponsored Library Network
INFLIBNET: Information & Library Network, Ahmedabad, 1988 (Now in Gandjinagar , Gujarat)

3.0 Factors of Library Networking in India
There has been a spurt in activities on library networks development in activities on library networks development in the recent past. Some of the factors responsible for the promotion and support of such efforts in India are :

➤Growth in awareness of the need for resource sharing;
➤All round resource crunch;
➤Increase in computer installations, access facilities in library environment and Enhancement of the skills of library professionals;
➤Improvement in computer communication facilities within and across geographical regions, and availability of general data networks like NICNET (Planning Commission);
➤INDONET (Computer Maintenance Corporation) and more recently the INET (Department) of Tele communications) ; and
➤Creation of facilities of Electronic Mail by the ERNET (Department of Electronics), SIRNET (network of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research maintained by INSDOC) and more recently the ICNET, SPRINTMAIL etc. in private sector.

III.   DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY NETWORK IN INDIA
The library network development in India has taken the following three broad directions:
➤Development of Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN) in cities like Bombay (BONET), Calcutta (CALIBNET), Delhi (DELNET), Madras (MALIBNET), Pune (PUNENET) ,Ahmedabad (ADINET) and Hyderabad (HYLIBNET);

➤Development of countrywide networks like the INFLIBNET (for University libraries), DESINET (for Defense laboratories) and NISSAT (National Information System for Science and Technology); and

➤Development of sectoral facilities like the BTISNET (Biotechnology Information System Network), and the proposed ones for oil and natural gas, management science and environment.

IV.   SIKKIM LIBRARY NETWORK (SILIBNET): A PROPOSAL
         Although Sikkim is one of the State of North Eastern Region of India where Library Science course was introduced at Damber Singh College affiliated college of Sikkim University (Earlier the college was affiliated to North Bengal University, Darjeeling).In Sikkim the development of library science profession and library system is very poor in comparison of the states of South India (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala), West Bengal, Haryana, Punjab and other States of North East (Assam, Manipur, Mizoram) where Library Act has been enacted and considerable progress has been made in the area of development of library profession and library services in the states. At the professional level no active library association has been established. Library Act has not been introduced in the state of Sikkim. The Government of Sikkim has to think over the deplorable condition of library profession, public and academic library systems and in comparison to the considerable progress which has been made in other states. The library and Information Professionals of few states like Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal etc and with cooperation of the respective State Government and assistance from NISSAT (DSIR) have done excellent effort to establish the Metropolitan or Regional Library Networks like ADINET, MALIBNET, MYLIBNET, BONET, DELNET, CALIBNET etc for resource sharing among the member libraries and for full utilization of library resources without any duplication in efforts. On the pattern of national, regional and local library network like

INFLIBNET, DELNET, CALIBNET etc. there is a proposal for design and development of the Library and Information Network for the electronically in Sikkim. The proposed library network may be named as Sikkim Library and Information Network. The acronym would be SILIBNET, which may be a registered society and would be a joint venture of the Govt of Sikkim and support from the INFLIBNET Centre, MHRD/ UGC , Govt. of India. Therefore there is a need for taking initiatives both from the library science professionals working within the state or out side the state and also the State Government and Central Government for establishing regional library network of Sikkim under the proposed name of SILIBNET. From a study on status of ICT application in libraries of higher educational institutions of Sikkim conducted by the author for his Ph.D. research work , it has been observed that the status of computerisation of library and information activities of the higher educational libraries located in the state is very poor and no initiative has been taken from state govt. in this regard.

V.   NEED AND PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR ESTABLISHING SIKKIM LIBRARY NETWORK

3.1   Need and Purpose of Establishing SILIBNET
The main purpose of all the library networks is to acquire reading materials collectively, avoid duplication, consortia approach for costly foreign journals and databases, maximum utilization of reading materials available in libraries of a particular locality or region by the users. Since the no steps have been initiated to establish a State Library Network of Sikkim covering all the districts of Sikkim , in the study an attempt has been taken to put forward a proposal for the design and development of Sikkim Library & Information Network (SILIBNET) to look into the sharing of learning resources and information amongst the different academic , public and special libraries located in Sikkim in particular and other NER states and entire country in general for the for the extensive resource sharing of learning resources , manpower and infrastructure.

5.2   Need of Establishment of the Sikkim State Library and Information Network: SILIBNET
The information infrastructure available in the higher educational libraries of Sikkim is poor and except few central govt funded institutions. There is perhaps a lack of confidence and commitment among the library and information professionals working in the state of Sikkim. Therefore the library and information professionals, academician have to come forward and join the hand of local professionals to establish the Sikkim State library and information network which will take care of resource sharing of documents, manpower and infrastructure for computerisation of library activities of libraries located in Sikkim. On the basis of the other national, regional, metropolitan, local library network the SILIBNET can be established and the financial assistance may be sought from the NISSAT, Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, Ministry of Information Technology, Govt. of India, and the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Science and Technology of respective State Govt. The professional assistance for manpower training may be had from the existing various library and information networks, library professional organisations like ILA, IASLIC, MALAI, SIS etc. for providing basic training to the library professionals on the application of Information and Communication Technology in library activities and services. On the basis of experience from other library networks, the proposed library network, SILIBNET can be established which might be a part or extension of national library network like INFLIBNET Centre or Regional Library Network of INFLIBNET. The network can better look after the computerised library and information activities of libraries located in Sikkim. This network may also work under the guidance and financial assistance from the INFLIBNET , MHRD/UGC, Govt. of India and NISSAT, DSIR, Govt. of India. Although very recently INFLIBNET has established SOUL Coordinator on regional basis which has been extending support for data creation using SOUL software but this will be applicable to those libraries which have started developing necessary ICT infrastructure and creating databases of book, serials, theses and reports. INFLIBNET has started many programmes for libraries located in North Eastern Region of India. We should take this opportunity to work with the INFLIBNET Centre and establish State Library and Information Network of Sikkim under the overall guidance and support from the INFLIBNET Centre for smooth functioning of the libraries located in the State of Sikkim and development of other ICT infrastructure , manpower / HRD training for implementation of developing online databases of books theses , reports and other rare manuscripts available in this state.

3.2   Aims of SILIBNET: The aims are based on the well defined aims of INFLIBNET (www.inflibnet.ac.in) :
➢ To promote and establish communication facilities to improve capability in information transfer and access, that provide support to scholarship, learning, research and academic pursuit through cooperation and involvement of agencies concerned;

➢ To establish Library Network "SILIBNET " a computer communication network for linking academic, public and technical/ specialised libraries/ library and information centres associated with school, universities, technical institutions deemed to be universities, colleges, etc. for avoiding duplication of efforts.

3.3 **Objectives of SILIBNET :** These objectives are based on the Objectives of INFLIBNET(www.inflibnet.ac.in) :

➢ To evolve a regional network, interconnecting various academic, public and technical/specialised libraries/institutional libraries and information centres associated with universities, deemed to be universities, institutions of national, regional importance and R & D institutions etc. in the state and NE Region for efficient sharing of information resources available with them and to improve capability of information handling and services;

➢ To provide reliable access to document collection of libraries by creating online union catalogues of monographs, serials, and non-book materials (manuscripts, audio-visuals, computer media etc.) in various libraries Sikkim;

➢ To provide better access to worldwide bibliographic information sources with citations and abstracts, such as periodical articles, conference papers, preprints, technical reports, standards and specifications, patents, monographs etc. through indigenously created databases and by establishing gateways for online accessing of international databases held by international information networks and centres.

➢ To provide document delivery service by establishing resource centres in the libraries having rich collection of documents;

➢ To optimize information resource utilization through shared cataloguing, inter- library loan service, catalogue production, collection development and avoiding duplication in acquisition to the extent possible;

➢ To implement computerization of library operations of participating libraries following a uniform standards for data capturing;

➢ To enable users to have access to information regarding books monographs, serials, theses, projects and experts by using new information and communication technologies;

➢ To encourage co-operation among libraries, documentation centres and information centres in the Sikkim state, other NE states or throughout the country with other networks, so that the resources can be pooled for the benefit of helping the weaker resource centres by well resourceful libraries;

➢ To train and develop human resources in the field of computerized library operations and networking to participate in SILIBNET programme; and

➢ To evolve standards and uniform guidelines in techniques, methods and procedures, hardware and software services in order to facilitate pooling, sharing and exchanging resources and facilities towards optimizations.

5.5 Proposed Headquarter of SILIBNET Centre, Sikkim
SILIBNET will be established as a Registered Society with its Governing Body Committee. It's headquarter can be established at Sikkim University 9A Central University) in Gangtok.

5.6 Proposed Membership of SILIBNET, Sikkim
These are the institution; libraries are located in Sikkim for Membership (Fig-1 and Fig-2) :

➢ Sikkim University, Gangtok
➢ Sikkim Manipal University, Gangtok
➢ ICFAI University, Gangtok
➢ EIILM University, West Sikkim
➢ Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University, Gangtok
➢ SRM University, Gangtok
➢ Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences, Gangtok
➢ Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology, Rangpo
➢ National Institute of Technology, Ravangla
➢ District Institute of Education & Training, Gangtok
➢ Sikkim Government College, Tadong, Gangtok
➢ Namchi Government College, Namchi, South Sikkim
➢ Rhenock Government College, Rhenock, East Sikkim
➢ Government College, Geysing, West Sikkim
➢ Government B.Ed. College, Geysing, West Sikkim
➢ Sanskrit College, Geysing, West Sikkim
➢ Teachers Training Institute, Geysing, West Sikkim
➢ SHEDA College, Deorali, Gangtok

➢ Dambar Singh College, Gangtok
➢ Harkamaya College of Education, Gangtok
➢ Himalayan Pharmacy Institute, Majhitar, East Sikkim
➢ Loyala College of Education, Namchi, South Sikkim
➢ Palatine College, Pakyong, East Sikkim
➢ ATTC, Burdang, East Sikkim
➢ CCCT, Chisopani, Namchi, South Sikkim
➢ Industrial Training Institute, Rangpo, East Sikkim
➢ Industrial Training Institute, Namchi, South Sikkim
➢ College of Agriculture Engineering and Post Harvest Technology
➢ Institute of Hotel Management, Gangtok
➢ Government Law College, Burtuk, East Sikkim
➢ Namgyal Institute of Tibetology
➢ State Central Library, Gangtok
➢ North Sikkim District Library, Mangan
➢ South Sikkim District Library, Namchi
➢ West Sikkim District Library, Geyzing, West Sikkim
➢ Pemayangtsi Monastery Library, Geyzing, West Sikkim
➢ Sub-Divisional Library, Chungthang, North Sikkim
➢ Sub-Divisional Library, Pakyong, East Sikkim
➢ Sub-Divisional Library Ravongla, South Sikkim
➢ Sub-Divisional Library Soreng, West Sikkim
➢ Kendriya Vidyalaya, Tadong, Gangtok
➢ Kendriya Vidyala NHPC, Singtam, East Sikkim
➢ Jawahar Navodaya Vidyala, Ravangla, South Sikkim
➢ Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Rothak, West Sikkim
➢ Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Pakyoong, East Sikkim
➢ Government Senior Secondary Schools
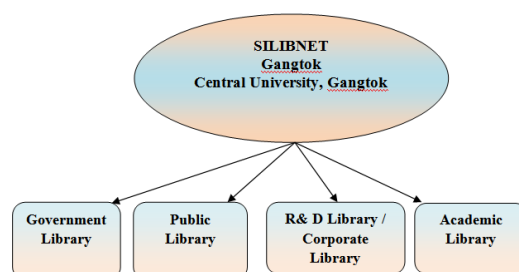➢ enior Secondary Schools (Private and Un aided)

Figure: 1 Membership Model of SILIBNET

5.7   Formation of High Level Committee to submit the Prospects and Feasibility for Establishing Sikkim Library and Information Network (SILIBNET)
A high level committee should be established by the Government of Sikkim comprising of eminent library and information professionals not only from Sikkim rather than also from the other parts of the North East Region and country, members from the other library networking agencies, NISSAT, NISCAIR, INFLIBNET, and UGC, member from Culture & Tourism, Education, Higher Education, Department of Sikkim, and Librarians of the participating institutions / libraries to make a draft proposal for feasibility study.

5.71   Feasibility Study and Report
The high Level Committee will make proposal for Feasibility Study and after going in details covering all aspects, the report will be submitted to the Government of Sikkim for its implementation

5.72   Proposed Source of Financial Assistance
Financial Assistance can be made available from the Department of Higher Education of the state, MHRD/ UGC / INFLIBNET, DBT, NISSAT (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, DSIR), Ministry of Culture, National Library, Kolkata from public enterprises, donation from the professionals and library science students

.**5.73   Proposed Activities of SILIBNET**

The High Level Committee will submit the proposed activities of SILIBNET, which would be like other library networks. Followings would be the proposed Activities of SILIBNET

➢ Information Infrastructural Development of Member Libraries
➢ Development of Databases of Member Libraries
➢ Resource Sharing and Inter-Library Loan
➢ Union catalogue of different types of documents like :
  ♦ Books ;
  ♦ Serials ;
  ♦ Theses and Dissertations;
  ♦ Non-Book Materials;
  ♦ Specialised Databases of Sikkim; and
  ♦ Expert Databases
➢ Awareness Training for Information Technology Application in Libraries
➢ Professional Development / Human Resource Development/Manpower Development by organising workshop, training, conference, seminar and lecture

5.74   Proposed Services of SILIBNET

SILIBNET should offer following Services:
 Union Catalogue based Bibliographic Services
➢ Database Services,
➢ Provision of Access of Internet Services.
➢ Promotion of computerisation of Library Services

5.75   Implementation of the Programme of SILIBNET

SILIBNET should be a Registered Society and the Act of Sikkim State should create this Library Networking Agency and Headquarter at Gangtok.

VI.   ROLE OF LIS PROFESSIONALS FOR DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIKKIM LIBRARY & INFORMATION NETWORK (SILIBNET)

6.0   Participation and Motivation of Library and Information Professionals

For successful implementation of the SILIBNET Programme, library and information professionals of the state should come forward and take initiatives for creation of this library networking agency and also they should try for enactment of Library Legislation.

Fig - 2: A Proposed Model for Sikkim Library Network (SILIBNET)

VII.   SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are some suggestions and recommendations proposed by the researchers which would help in smooth functioning of the network:

✓ This should be the initiative of Govt. of Sikkim;
✓ The LIS Professionals both at senior and junior level should be consulted and their feedback should be taken into consideration;
✓ The financial support from many Corporate houses like, NHPC, Hydel Projects and many other industries should be sought for the establishment of SILIBNET;
✓ This Network should be established on the line of National Networks like INFLIBNET and DELNET and their expert opinion should be taken;
✓ All Libraries like school, colleges, university, public special and technical libraries should be included in this programme;
✓ Financial Support from the Ministry of HRD, Information Technology, Culture and Tourism and Ministry of Education of the state should be taken;
✓ Senior Experienced and qualified LIS Professionals who are having enough background of ICT implementation in Academic/ Technical Libraries should be included in core and supporting staff of SILIBNET.
✓ Many Open Source Software are available which should be customized and used for implementation of the SILIBNET Project; and
✓ Appeal all the LIS professionals of Sikkim to come together and extend all support for the successful implementation of the Programme.

VIII.   CONCLUSION

From the study, it has been observed that there is need of establishing the Regional Library Network "SILIBNET" for resource sharing, the implementation of computerisation of library operations, and services. This proposal should get support from the library professionals of Sikkim and also from other parts of the country. The national network should open its Regional Network or help establishing local or regional networks for smooth computerisation and networking of library for resource sharing and optimum utilization of the available resources both printed and electronic by the academic community of the state.

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