Library Networks and Information Centres

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Abstract:

A library network refers to a group of libraries that are connected through technology and collaboration. This network allows for efficient sharing of resources, information and services among libraries, leading to increased access for patron to an extensive collection of materials. The libraries in the network can be located in different geographical regions, but through the technology infrastructure, they can communicate and share resources, including physical material and digital content. Library networks provide value to both libraries and patrons by providing cost-effective access to a wider range resource. There are many library networks available at International and National level such as OCLC, WORLD CAT, JANET, INFLIBNET, DELNET, CALIBNET etc. These networks facilitate collaboration and resources sharing among library professional, empowering them to deliver better services to the communities they serve.

Introduction:

A network consists of two or more computers that are linked in order to share resources such as printers and CD ROM, exchange files, allow electronic communication etc. the computer network may be linked through cables, telephone lines, radio waves, satellites or infrared light beam. A technical definition would be that a device or nodes that can communicate with each other. The nodes may be computer, terminals, workstation or communication units. They communicate over communication channels that can be leased from common carriers. These channels may use variety of transmission media including optical fibre, coaxial cables twisted copper pairs or digital microwave radio signals.

Definition of Network:

In the context Library and Information resources and services, National Commission on libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) defines network as "Two or more libraries or other organisation engaged in a common pattern of information exchange, through communication for some functional purpose.

UNISIST-II working document defines Information network as a set of inter related information system associated with communication facilities, which are co-operating through more or less formal agreement in order to implement information handling operation to offer better services to users.

Objectives:

- To improve and implement the standard in library operation
- To improve on housekeeping activities more effectively and efficiently.
- To exchange and co-ordinate information and documents with other national and international networks
- To improve efficiency in existing services and to generate new services.
- To provide online information services to create database for project.

Advantage of Library Network:

➢ Library network allow libraries to share resources such as books, journals and documents effectively
➢ Library network provide access to a wide range of information resources and services including electronic database, digital collection, and online books
➢ It helps to provide opportunities for librarians to share their knowledge, expertise and ideas.
➢ It helps to improve the quality of library services and ensure that all patrons receive the best possible service.
➢ Library network can help to establish standard procedures and policies that ensure consistent services across all libraries in the network.

Disadvantages of Library Network:

1. Technical Issues: Technical issue such as server network connectivity an cause delay and inconveniences to library patron.
2. Resources Concerns: Library network may face resources constraints such as limited funding or staffing which can limit their ability to provide services.
3. Privacy concern: Library patrons may have concern about the privacy and security of their personal information when using library network services. There is a risk that information may be accessed by unauthorised users.

Perspective of Library Networks:

1) **Application Network:**
- Co-operative Network - Airline, Railways, Bank network etc
- Public Network - Cable T.V Network, TELEX etc

2) **Library Networks:**
- International Level Library Network
- National Level Library Network

International Level Library Network:

1. **OCLC (Online Computer Library Network):**
OCLC emerged as an international network from a regional computer system for 50) Ohio colleges. In the year 1981, the name of OCLC was changes to online computer library centre.

2. **World Cat:**
It is a World-Wide Union Catalogue developed and created collectively by more than 9000-member institution. Connexion, Prompt cat are some of the cataloguing tools of World Cat. World Cat is the authoritative source which helps in resource sharing services of OCLC.

3. **RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network):**
Research Libraries Information Network is a bibliographic information system, developed by the Research Libraries Group (RLG). The member of RLG use RLIN system for cataloguing work and manuscript processing.

4. **JANET (Joint Academy Network):**
JANET is an education and research network funded by U.K Government. All the higher education organisation and research councils are connected to this network. It is developed by United Kingdom Education and Research Network.

5. **CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries):**
CURL was established in the years 1987 with the mission to "increase the ability of research libraries to share resources for the benefits of the local, national and international research community.

6. **CALIS (China Academic and Library Information System):**
CALIS is a nationwide academic library consortium, funded by the Ministry of Education. CALIS is a resources sharing network based on CERNET (China Education and Research Network). Its members include academic libraries, public libraries and information service organisation.

National Level Library Network:

1. **INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network Centre):**
INFLIBNET Centre is an autonomous inter -university centre (IUC) of University Grant Commission, New Delhi, Ministry of Education, Govt of India. It is a major national programme initiated by the UGC in march 1991 and it became an independent inter university centre in 1996. INFLIBNET is involved in modernizing university libraries in India using the state of art technologies for the optimum utilisation of information.

2. **DELNET (Developing Library Network):**
DELNET has been in operation since 1988 and was registered as a society in 1992. It was initially sponsored by the National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT). DELNET has been established to promote resources sharing among libraries through the development of network of libraries.

3. **CALIBNET (Calcutta Library Network):**
CALIBNET project funded by NISSAT, DSIR and managed by Calcutta society. It was established in the year 1986 under the West Bengal Government's Societies Registration Act 1961, The CALIBNET activities provide access to materials and creation of databases particularly to intellectual assets of West Bengal.

4. **ADINET (Ahmedabad Library Network):**
ADINET is the abbreviation used for Ahmedabad Library Network (http://www.alibnet.org). It is a network of libraries located in Ahmedabad. It is registered as a society in 1993 and funded by NISSAT. Its membership is open to all institution libraries and information centre, Library professional and students.

5.   MYLIBNET (Mysore Library Network):
MALIBNET was registered as a society in 1993, INSDOC (Now NISCAIR) was the executing agency for MALIBNET project. The MALIBNET started in the year 1991

6.   BONET (Bombay Library Network):
BONET was established and set up in 1992 by National Centre for Software Technology (NCST) Mumbai sponsored by NISSAT.

7.   BALNET (Bangalore Academic Library Network):
Bangalore Academic Library Network was established in 1995 sponsored by JRD Tata Memorial Library Bengaluru. BALNET facilitates to share library information resources through this network.

8.   PUNENET Library Network (PUNENET):
PUNENET is a joint programme of the University of Pune, National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) funded by NISSAT and was established in 1992.

Conclusion:

In Conclusion library network provide a critical platform for libraries to connect and collaborate with one another leading to increase access to resources for users. Through technology infrastructure, network facilitate the sharing of physical material and digital content, serving as a cost-effective model for efficient resource sharing among libraries. The network also empowers library professionals to exchange best practices and collaboration on new projects that benefit their communities. Ultimately library network enriches the lives of individuals, communities and society as a whole by providing reliable access to information and resources.

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