CHAPTER 8
A Proposed Model

Public library is considered as an important institution that exists ultimately to form and develop the central awakening of the human knowledge and the flowering of the human facilities. It has become a nerve-centre of the modern society and the people enjoy the benefit from the services offered by it. Public library serves the community irrespective to their caste, creed, color, age, gender and geographical locations. It is open to all. However, there would be some variations in establishments, organizations and functioning of public libraries, when the geographical location and area of operations is considered into account. In hilly areas, because of various factors such as topography, peoples’ inhabitants and their varied information demand, the functioning of public libraries differ from other plain areas. Except some principal town areas the hill regions usually have scattered population. The landform structure of hilly region consists high hill top, slopes, terraces, valleys, forest land, etc. so, the information requirements of hill people will also vary.

The proposed model plan for public library and community information services in the hilly areas has been based on the findings of the study, and keeping in mind the recommendations of National Knowledge Commission to revitalize the libraries in the country. The model may include the following components:

- Library building & equipments: planning and designing
- Library activities.
- Library services.
- Library administration and management
- Automation and networking
- Public library and community information services
8.1 Library Building & Equipments: The planning and designing

Certain specific needs of the libraries have grown with times to enrich the human society. Out of the three important elements of library viz. books, building and personnel the building has a significant role to play. Even there are ample resources, trained and experienced library personnel, the ill-planned library building will hamper the adoption of various modern library techniques and service-methods which will lead to fade the utility of library’s existence in the society. Better technique and improved methods will definitely increase the efficiency of services provided by the library. The un-functional design of the building will ultimately result to wastage of time, money and energy. This will handicap the efficient functioning of the library. Therefore, the library building must be well-planned considering all the physical facilities and environment, like space requirements for various activities that are to be carried-out within a library, the items of furniture necessary and their characteristics, the equipments and tools that assist in carrying out these activities quickly and efficiently. A functional library building ultimately enhances the quality of services in libraries.

It has been observed that the planning and designing of library building for hilly areas has to be different to suit the climatic condition of the region and the needs of the hill community. It is not possible to frame equal plan and design of library building and other physical materials which are equally applicable in other geographical landscape. Designing a new library set up at the hilly areas of Darjeeling district involves a number of factors while planning like landform, weather, attractiveness, cost-effectiveness and user friendly.

8.1.1 Preplanning Considerations

While planning a new library’s physical facilities, it first involves the pre-planning activity which is followed by other activities like selection of site, exterior-interior layout of the building, allocation and utilization of space, selection of furniture and equipments, illuminations and furnishing etc. The pre-planning activities include gathering of detailed information through existing libraries, nature of users and pattern of usage of library, resources required, discussion with experts and colleague, reading literature, economic
aspects, composition of planning team etc. Before attempting to create physical facilities of libraries in the hilly areas it is very necessary to identify and understands the nature and characteristics of services provided by the library. Efforts should be made to understand in detail the users in terms of their nature, characteristics, age and status differences, styles, needs, opinions, priorities, preferences, pattern of usage, evaluations, attitudes, psychological and behavioral pattern of the users etc. Selection and choice of location or site of the library is vital while planning a new library set-up especially in the hilly region. Various factors relating to this activities are to be given due consideration in planning a library building. Details about the land, soil, architect, engineer, contractor and other crucial resources should be taken into account for planning purpose.

Another foremost pre-planning activity is the formation of building committee which should consist of the librarian, the architect and the library authority or the management committee member. This committee is meant to discuss the activities and the functions of the library about the shape it is going to take. The appointment of qualified architect who has knowledge about library building construction in hill areas is essential. The librarian should have the clear picture of the present and prospective library services which is going to offer to its users, as the shape of the building adversely affects the service of the library. He/she should spell out all the requirements to architect in terms of space allocation for interior arrangements and anticipated future, interrelationship of various service areas, reading areas, stack areas, equipments requirements, staff and service requirements and also the pleasant exterior layout of the building within the limitation of resources available. The librarian further seek help from consultants, library staffs, electricians, telecommunications staffs, interior decorators etc. for better planning of the library building. The factors of elegance should be taken into account while laying emphasis on the functionalism of the building. An ugly look of the library will not inspire and attract readers to enter into it.

Taking all detail requirements from the librarian it is the duty of the architect to transform the requirements into a functionally layout interior and aesthetically pleasing exterior of a library building within the limitation of
resources available. A well design and functional library building is the outcome of a close relationship between the librarian and the architect. Another important factor in pre-planning activities of library building is economic aspects which should be made earlier conformed and secured.

After discussing the major activities and functions of the library, the architect may be asked to draft a plan which may be handed over to the librarian for his/her comments. The recommendation and improvements of the plan by the librarian is considered important because it is he/she who has to administer and use the building to the best advantage of the readers. His active participation and deliberation helps in avoiding difficulties and shortcoming at the preliminary stages. Otherwise the finalized wrong building plan will adversely affect the smooth functioning of the library for the ages to come. There would also be difficult to enact any significant modifications or improvements in the existing structure of the building if wrongly planned. So every effort should be made to make the plan flexible and liberal in order to secure future development and expansion when necessary.

8.1.2 Selection of site and exterior lay-out of the building

The selection of site or location for the construction of library building is an important task. In hilly areas with uneven distribution of landform the choice of site depends upon various factors like soil texture, slope alignment, natural calamities and other geographical aspects along with convenience, proximity to users, availability of communications and transport facility, environmental factors like noise, traffic, weather, etc.

Usually in hilly areas, with scattered distribution of population, a library as far as possible should be centrally located so that it is easily accessible to its users. While selecting the site, the primary consideration would be the shape of the land and nature of soil and topography to avoid untoward possible natural calamities like landslide, earthquake etc. So the thorough examination of land and soil is must to ensure hesselfree library building. It should be set up in serene surrounding, plants, flowers etc. insulated from dust and din. There should be sizable land for lawns and flowers beds around the building. The choosing of site for constructing the library building
should also consider the aspects of safety, cost factors, scope for future expansion related measures etc.

The soil of the selected site must be tested to ensure the bearing capacity of the soil. The material used for building purpose like bricks, cement, rod, wood, and other materials should be the high quality product which helps library to stay longer period. Damp-proof materials must be used in construction and plastering of the walls. The area chosen should be free from calamities like landslides and other natural hazards. A structural engineer may be consulted for more information if required. The size of the building should be based on the number of clientele it is going to serve and area of operations of the library. The exterior of the library should be simple, dignified, pleasant and attractive. These raise the reverence in the mind of the readers and invite them to enter into the library.

8.1.3 Entrance and the interior of the building

The architecture of library should be based upon and co-related with the functions and the services of the library. In order to provide effective library services the entrance of the library building should be impressive and spacious enough as possible to provide adequate space for movement of people and for other library activities. The existing spectre of entrance of public libraries in Darjeeling hill shows a very poor maintenance of building entrance area. The entrance area is an important place where from every movement into the library commences. So, it should be attractive and spacious one. The space for display of various charts, paper clipping and other materials relating to the activities of the library also raise the importance of entrance of the building. It would be better if public catalogue, lending desk and reference room is visible right from the entrance. A guidance chart showing the location of various sections may also be hung at some prominent place of the entrance. There should be a depositing centre or property centre technically known as cloak room to deposit personal belonging of the users at the entrance of the library. In addition, some pictures, wall-painting and landscape inside the library will enhance the grace of library building.
8.1.4 Public catalogue

Catalogue is an important tool to retrieve document from the collection of the library. Readers frequently use the catalogue to know the document available in the library. So the public catalogue should be maintained and installed at some suitable place near the entrance of the library. It should not be placed far from the issue counter and reading room so that the readers may not have to walk for long to take a reference. Sufficient space should be left near the catalogue cabinets to make consultations easier. The cabinet on which the catalogue is to be placed should be made either by wooden or steel depend upon the availability of material and cost. Anthony Thompson suggested that there should be the following dimensions for the drawers of catalogue cabinets to held 5” x 3” card 6” wide x 4” high x 1.6” deep. The height of the cabinet should not be more than 4.6” at the top and its leg base should not be less than 2.6” high so that the persons of all heights can use the catalogue with convenience. In order to avoid congestion, each catalogue tray should not hold more than 1,000 catalogue cards and necessary provision should be made such that the people do not place the trays outside the catalogue cabinet. A printed chart, entitled “how to use the catalogue” should be placed on the top of the cabinet for the general guidance of readers. Catalogues grow with the book stock, hence sufficient space should be provided for future expansion also. In addition adequate care and supervision of cabinet should be made at regular intervals to ensure its effective usage by the users.

8.1.5 Circulation counter

The circulation counter is considered the most important part of the library, since it is the place where the readers come in direct contact with the library personnel and facilities. So, due attention should be given to plan its location, size and shape. It should normally be located near the entrance in such a way that the control and general supervision of other sections becomes possible from there. It should be so designed that the most important activities like issue and return of books are conducted unhindered and smoothly. The size of the counter will depend on the number of users to be served at one time. These could be either semicircular or rectangular
measuring 3 feet high and its top should be 1.6" wide. There should be sufficient space inside the counter for placing the books returned as well as to store all essential records, including the charging trays and other materials. If possible few drawers may be fitted at the counter with locks for placing important files and records. In a Public library in the hilly areas 50-80 sq. ft should be considered to be sufficient area for an issue counter.

8.1.6 Reading Room

Every public library must have the reading room facility. It is an important and indispensable adjunct of a public library. It depends on the nature and size of the library. In library, readers need some arrangement to sit and read not only the books but also the journals and newspapers. There are certain reference and reserved books which cannot be lent out for home reading, so to avail such facilities every library should have the reading room. The reading room and the stacks have close relationships. It should be located near the document collection as far as possible, so that the reader has the convenience of choosing books from stacks and the staff member has the advantage of overall supervision of the room. The space of reading room depends upon the maximum numbers of users who may be using the reading room at a time. It is advisable that for books and periodicals reading rooms roughly 1 sq. meter area is to be provided for each reader in a public library. If possible there should be another reading room for magazines and newspaper so that the crowd does not disturb the serious readers. There should be the suitable type of tables and chairs in the reading room which should be properly arranged in sufficient number. Adequate space should be left for moving around without disturbing other readers. The windows and wall structure of the building should be designed in such a way that maximum natural light and air be poured into the reading table. If the buildings do not provide natural light then arrangement should be made for artificial light. In order to provide adequate light on the tables there should be provision of hanging light tube at the height of 8 or 9 feet at the maximum. Also there should be the extra arrangement of emergency light in case of power failure and evening services. In addition, decorated
beautiful curtains, artistic framed pictures on the wall increase the charm and dignity to the atmosphere in the reading room.

8.1.7 Stack Areas

While planning the stack area efforts should be made not only to adjust the existing stock of books, journals and other reading materials but also permits the future growth of collection. The collection in the library always grows with the passage of time. The storage and display devices for these diverse materials of various size, shape, format and characteristics could not be the same. So the area and the number of storage units required for each type of documents have to be differentiated earlier. The miscalculation at the planning stage can lead to serious problem at the future date. The racks for storage of documents may be open racks or closed almirahs made up of steel or wood. A standard open stack of 78” height, 34” width and 15” deep has five to six shelves for books and five shelves for bound volume of periodicals.

While calculating the space requirement, not only the dimensions of the book racks but the adequate gangway about 1.30 meters space has to be considered for free passage of reader and staff between the racks rows. The closed wooden or steel almirahs may be used to stack the documents but certain subject indicators and wide gangways must be provided to allow the staff and readers to open the doors of almirahs to take and replace the books with convenience. The almirahs should be fitted with long and clean glasses so, that books are visible from outside. The standard specification of steel almairahs should be 72” height, 40” width and 12” deep. The stack area should be located at a little bit away from the reading and reference section so as to avoid the diversion of attention of serious readers. At the same time it should not be far away from the reading room. The readers should have the convenience to choose their books from the stack and read it in the nearby reading room.

Considering the affordable cost and the space, the racks and almirahs in the stack areas should be arranged in such a way that the little effort may be employed to supervise the section. The window and ventilation should be well furnished so, that maximum natural light and air enters into
the stack areas. The windows should have sizable sun-shades to protect the books from the showers of rainfall. Proper illumination facilities should be followed in stack area. The sky light is less suited to the stacks. The hanging light in between two racks of the standard height of 8 feet will be most suitable, as the light directly fall on the books and this helps the reader to locate the books properly. The sky light may be fitted in gangways. The indicators and other forms of guide should be affixed on the ends of the racks or at the top of the almirahs for the guidance of the readers. The wooden or steel racks and almirahs should be standard material product to ensure longevity. The periodical check up of racks and almirahs should be followed for the protection and preservation of books particularly in rainy season.

8.1.8 Organization of other sections

8.1.81 Periodical sections

Required space for periodical section should be calculated while planning the library. In this section the activities involves the receiving, storing and displaying of periodicals, magazines, newspaper etc. The display rack of periodical may be of wooden or steel and should have standard dimension of 72” height, 34” width and 15” deep. The inclined display racks is perhaps the best type which display the magazines on the sloping shelves which also serve as the covering sheets to the pigeon-hole wherein back issues are stored.

If possible a separate section for this purpose would be an ideal planning. But it may be difficult for each and every library to arrange a separate space for this section. It depends upon the availability of space in the library. Consequently the location of periodicals should be in proximity to the stacks; reference section and reading room, so that the reader can take journals and magazines from display rack and read it at the reading table.

8.1.82 Reference section

Reference section is another important section in any public library. While planning a library, space requirement for various sections should be taken into account. A public library should strive to collect number of
standard reference books like encyclopedia, dictionaries, directories, handbooks, yearbooks, atlas and other, so that all sorts of information can be made available to the inquisitor. It should be in close proximity of the stack areas and the periodical sections. Depending on the staff strength of the library if possible a qualified reference librarian should be employed in reference sections to provide documentation and information services like Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services and other instant and exhaustive information services to the users. To provide these services the reference librarian should have the knowledge of various reference tools and should scan regularly the current periodicals and maintain a file containing information to be enquired by the users. The equipments used for filing these records and furniture used in the section should be properly arranged to provide effective and efficient reference services to the people.

8.1.83 Technical section

Technical services are basically essential for any library activity. The technical services like classification, cataloging, mechanical preparation of catalogue cards, labeling, filing catalogue cards etc. is being carried out in the technical section of the library. It should be properly maintained and equipped with various technical tools necessary to carry out the functions. In some cases the acquisition activities will combine with the technical activities in the section. Appropriate classification scheme, catalogue code, catalogue card, book card and book pocket, date slip, spine label and other necessary equipments for processing purpose should be standard. Ceiling height in staff areas should not be more than 8 ft. Adequate space and furniture necessary to carry out the activities in the section should be considered while planning the library.

8.1.84 Children Section

The library building plan should consider the space require for a separate children section. In this section adequate collection of children literature, handcrafts, dolls, puppets and other materials should be furnished to help children to develop the skills they need to learn to read and
communicate. Appropriate furniture suitable for children reader should be properly arranged in this section of the library to provide effective services to this user group. For instance a craft table where children can create small projects should be provided in the section. Lighting, heating, ventilation in the section should be properly maintained so that the children can avail full benefits from the services of the library.

8.1.85 Rare book section

The library’s rare book collection is an eclectic accumulation of rare books oddities and old antique volumes of great value. It represents a significant asset in the library. Rare books should be appropriately focused and housed in the section allotted for the purpose. Adequate space should be provided for rare book sections which have future value to human knowledge. Restricted access limited to some people is allowed in this section, considering the preservation of the rare books.

8.1.91 Arrangement of Furniture and Equipments in the library

Choosing the right type of furniture can add to a great extent to the functional effectiveness of the library. Needs and usage of users as well as staff members should be considered when selecting furniture for the public library. Whatever the design and variety is chosen the furniture should be durable, comfortable, functionally adequate, aesthetically dignified and economic. Tables are manufactured by woods, plastic, metal or a combination of materials. It must be measured, marked and placed carefully on a layout wherever necessary in the library. The size and dimension of the tables may vary according to its locations inside the library. It is the librarian who decides the measurement of reading and other tables that suit him best in relation to library building structure. Whatever the table uses in the library should follow a universal standard. The standard size of the double sided table for six persons (3 on each side) should be 3'3"×7'3" and the single sided table for 3 people should be 6'6"×2'3". The height of the table should not exceed 30 inches. The aisles between the two tables should not be less than five feet.
The chairs use in the library should be sturdy, comfortable and elegant. Wood chairs are the most durable and comfortable than plastic and metal chairs. The design and dimension of the chair should be according to the comfort of the readers and staff members of the library. The standard height of the chair should be about 18” high from the ground. The lower tips of the chairs should be fitted with rubber pads to reduce noise in the library. So, adequate chairs should be provided at various sections of the library. Other items of furniture like desks for technical, circulation and reference services, stands for dictionaries or encyclopedias, periodical and newspaper stands should be standard size and best suited to the need of the library. There are many more small items of furniture need to carry out the daily functions of the library such as stools, waste-paper baskets, flower vase stands, map-stands etc. should be according to the requirements of the library.

Besides furniture there are various equipments which are important in its own ways in the library. So, whatever equipments are choosen they should be according to the need and resources available in the library.

8.1.92 Lighting and heating arrangements

There should be a proper light arrangement followed in the library. While planning the library building provision of natural lights inside the library from the various windows should be made as far as possible. If the design and the structure of the building do not provide sufficient natural light then the arrangement should be made for artificial lighting. To provide electrical power various aspects like wiring, circuits, switch locations, plugs, closets etc. should be adopted carefully during planning. For that professional electrical engineers may be consulted for installing. The electrical light tubes will be best suited and be fitted in various areas in the library. The hanging light tube at the height of 8 ft will be most suitable to provide adequate light on the reading table and stack areas. Keeping in view the frequent failure of electric current there should be provision of extra arrangement of emergency lights to avoid inconvenience to the users and staff members in the library.

Taking into account the cool weather of hilly areas the provision of heating arrangement should be considered while planning the library
building. Fire oven or room heater at the right place may be used to keep the room temperature comfortable within the library.

8.1.93 Provision of Urinal, Drinking Water and Fire Safety measures in the Library

While planning the provision of urinal and drinking water should be made so that the readers may not have to move to distance place for the purpose. These will hamper the services of the library. If possible separate urinal for gents and ladies should be provided depending upon the availability of space and resources. Otherwise a common urinal is must for each and every public library. To avoid untoward accident of fire, necessary safety measures should be adopted in the library which should be taken into account while planning the library building. Provision of these kinds of facilities will certainly help the library to provide effective library services to the community it serves.

8.2 Library Activities

Talking about the library activities it means that what the library actually does to serve its users properly. Public libraries are known for their services to user community. It is free to all. It should provide usually the reading and lending of book service along with the information services related to the daily life needs of the community it serves.

Activities in the public library may vary from one to another, but some sorts of activity are basically essential for each and every public library. In Darjeeling hilly areas people have their own distinct needs and the public library have to serve these needs accordingly. In order to provide proper library service, public library in the region has to reconsider its activities in a planned manner. Various activities involve in sectionwise like selection, acquisition, processing, reference, serial, children’s, audio-visual etc. can be assigned for public library in the hilly areas are as follows;

8.2.1 Acquisition Activities

Acquisition section is concerned with various activities relating to collection development. It involves mainly the selection of documents,
processing and accessioning of documents. Judicious and timely acquisition of documents enhances the delivery of books to the users. The components of acquisition system are as follows;

8.2.1.1 Ascertaining users demand: The foremost activity is to obtain knowledge about users’ requirements. Before the selection of materials for the public library, the librarian who is the central controlling authority of all activities should obtain the knowledge about the variety of taste and interest of readers. He/ she should have the endeavors to select materials which serve the maximum number of readers with minimum cost. Similarly, needs of both actual and potential readers should be taken into account.

8.2.1.2 Selection of books & other materials: Selection of materials everything from books and periodicals to non-book materials in the public library is a tough job which requires experience, intelligence and proper judgment. The selection should be well planned and judicious one to avoid unnecessary wastage of time, money and energy. It should be based on the varied needs of the user community it serve. At the same time, it should also be based on the resources available such as budget, manpower and space. Consultation of various selection tools like publishers’ and booksellers’ catalogs, bibliographies, reviews, current lists of books in the form of pamphlets, leaflets, bulletins etc. may give impetus to the selection process. Suggestion from learned people, experts, scholars, staffs may be taken while selecting the documents in the library.

8.2.1.3 Preparation of list of selected books: Detailed lists of books should be prepared before final decisions are taken by the competent authority for selection and purchase.

8.2.1.4 Checking of library collection: Library collections should be checked to know the actual status of reading materials, which is available in the library or not. This process avoids the duplication of reading materials in the library.

8.2.1.5 Calling and receiving quotations: Latest quotations from the leading book sellers, publishers and local vendors should be called in advanced to obtain information on publications, special discount available to libraries, foreign exchange rates, etc. Deadlines of receiving quotations by
the library should be mentioned so that the acquisition process can be handled properly. If a local vendor can give prompt and satisfactory service and can give discount as much as those received from outside suppliers the library may find beneficial to deal with these local vendors.

8.2.1.6 Checking prices with the quotations: On receipt of quotation from the book sellers, publishers or local vendors, the price of listed books should be checked for authentication of prices of the said books to be ordered in near future.

8.2.1.7 Preparation of preference list of vendors or suppliers: The preference list of vendor or suppliers should be made on the basis of past performance of the respective vendors or suppliers to ensure the timely delivery of reading materials to the library serving the hilly areas. Performance of vendor includes the cost, timely delivery, service charges, sincerity and good dealings with the library.

8.2.1.8 Finalizing the books list and obtaining approval from the chairperson of the library committee: The book list should be finalized and get approved from the chair person of the library committee before issuing the purchase order.

8.2.1.91 Issuance of purchase order: After completing all necessary formalities the purchase order should be issued in favour of the respective vendors or suppliers through post or by hand. A separate file should be maintained to keep the record of ordered books.

8.2.1.92 Delivery of books by the suppliers or vendors: In order to secure efficiency in supply, the suppliers or vendors should be given a reasonable date for the supply of books to the library. If the vendor fails to supply books on time, some additional time may be given to the vendor to supply the said books. If the vendor fails again to supply the books in the additional period, the scope of necessary alternative should be there.

8.2.1.93 Receiving of books by the library: Ordered books should be received by the library as per the supply order given. After receiving the books, these should be checked physically and matched against order placed. Care should be taken to ensure that the correct lists and the correct orders have been supplied. While checking physically care should be given to check missing pages of the respective books, print quality, page quality,
hand binding/paper binding, etc. The defective copies are to be separated for claiming replacement.

8.2.1.94 Accessioning of books: After these preliminaries, the books received in the library are taken into its stack by a process called accessioning, which involves the assignment of a serial number called accession number be given on the back of the title page and some confidential page of the book. The records in which books are accessioned are called accession register. All the books received in the library whether ordered or donated or gifted by any person or institution, must be entered in the accession register which usually includes columnwise the date of accessioning, accession number, author, title of the book, place, publisher, year, source, price, volume, ISBN, bill or voucher number and date, remarks etc. Accuracy in maintaining the accession register is very essential because it is regarded as the master record of the documents in the library. Processing job will be started after completion of all activities of acquisition process.

8.2.1.95 Payment of bill in favor of respective vendor or supplier: After completion of acquisition of reading materials, the payment process starts. The accession number given to the books should be recorded on the bill and the bill may be processed for payment. During processing of receipt, tracking of budget should be kept in proper path. So, the payment of bill could be arranged properly.

8.2.2 Processing Activities

After the books acquired are accessioned and the bill is passed for payment, the next step is to send the books to the technical section for technical and physical processing of the documents. The following steps are involved in the processing jobs:

8.2.2.1 Stamping of books: Different types of stamp must be put inside the book for determining the ownership of book by the library. These stamps are official seal, date seal, accession seal, call number seal, etc. Stamping should be done without disfiguring printed matters inside the book.

8.2.2.2 Cataloguing and classification of books: Classification and cataloging are deemed to be the most important of all, because they tend to
enable a library to achieve its objective to serve its readers efficiently. After accession, the subject of the said book should be determined for giving classification number to the book which make easier to arrange books in a helpful sequence on the shelves. So, the reader can find the books of his/her subject together without much loss of time and strain on memory. Standard classification schemes should be followed during classification, such as Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) scheme, Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) scheme, or Library of Congress Classification (LC) Schemes etc. The next step after classification is cataloging of the books which help the readers to locate the particular book in the library. Standard cataloging code should be followed while preparing catalogs, such as Anglo American Cataloging Rules (AACR) with revised edition or Classified Catalog Code (CCC).

8.2.2.3 Physical preparation of documents: After stamping every book should be provided with a date slip for issue and return of the book, a book pocket and a book card. These are required to facilitate circulation activities of the library. A book pocket usually mentioning library rules on the front side should be pasted on the inside of the front or at the back cover of the book. The book card which is to be kept in the book pocket should be typed the author, title, accession number, call number and name of the library. A due date slip should be pasted on the fly-leaf opposite to the cover in the book pocket.

8.2.2.4 Writing particular information inside the book: Particular information of the books, such as accession number, date, call number, etc. should be written usually in the back side of the title page of the book. Another one particular page of the book should be identified for writing accession number and other detail could be kept secret to ensure security of the books. Only library personnel will be acquainted with that page.

8.2.2.5 Assigning the book label: A Call numbers which include the class number and the book number should be lettered in book label and pasted on the spine of the book. This is necessary to proper location and replacement of document. Lettering should be done at a uniform height in all books from one and a half to two inches from the lower edge is advisable. If
the book is too narrow, lettering should be done on the front at the same level near the hinge.

8.2.2.6 Ready for shelving and use: After completion of all processing jobs and final check the books are forwarded for shelving and ready for use to the readers.

8.2.3 Circulation Activities

After finishing the processing job the circulation activities will be started. It is the most common activity of almost all service libraries. The section has to deal with its users directly in several ways. It is regarded as mirror of the library and the popularity of a library mainly depends on the activities of this section. The mechanism of issue and return of books, keeping records of their movements, making reservation of the book, maintaining statistics of the use of books and other documents, inter-library loan are the principal functions of a circulation desk in a library. The following activities are involved with circulation jobs:

8.2.3.1 Registration of members: The membership of public library is open to all irrespective of their age, caste, religion, status, creed, etc. Public libraries are free to all but some libraries charge nominal membership fee as well as a deposit which is refundable at the time of termination of membership. The borrower to be should be given an application form to fill. The information usually requested are the name, age, address, contact number, occupation, etc. Such information is essential at the time of recovery of issued books, charging dues and in obtaining an accurate statistical description of the user population.

8.2.3.2 Borrower’s card: After registration, each member should be provided a ‘borrower card’ or ‘membership card’ which enables the user to enter the library and make use of the privileges of the library.

8.2.3.3 Book issue and return: Books or any other library materials could be issued to users as well as returned to the library, through the mechanism of an ideal charging and discharging system. It is this service that brings users into direct contact with the operating system of the library. The adopted system should develop a mechanism for the generation and
maintenance of records of loan transactions and files routine operation and collection of circulation statistics etc.

8.2.3.4 Renewal of books: It represents the extension of the loan period by recharging the same item to the same borrower. Readers are nearly always allowed to renew the books, if they are not reserved by other people. Books may be renewed by presenting the book in person or by telephone if available depending upon the library policy. But provision should be there that the book would be returned immediately if recalled.

8.2.3.5 Reservation service: The reservation of books is also an important activity in any lending service. A reader may reserve any book which is in stock of the library but not on the shelves at the time of asking. When the requested book is returned, it should be kept separately and a notification to the requesting patron should be sent who made the request.

8.2.3.6 Recall process: Recall is another controlling activity concern with circulation of books. It deals with the activity of calling books back from the user into the library, so that they can be lent to another person who requests or reserves the said book.

8.2.3.7 Reminder process: Sending regular reminders for overdue books is another important job of circulation counter. To avoid long issue of books by people and to serve every reader a fair chance to use books, reminders in the form of printed letters or telephone call should be sent at regular interval. A separate record of overdue books and the concerned reader’s details must be made regularly in making the process more effective.

8.2.3.8 Fines/ overdue charges: To control the proper use of books the provision of fines/over dues should be practiced in the library. The amount of fines/over dues and their collecting activities depends upon the library policy. The procedure of collecting over dues is either by issuing receipts or by enabling defaulter to put the amount in a locked box called conscience box which is kept nearby the circulation counter. The collection in the conscience box should be taken out at regular interval and entered in the cash book of the library.

8.2.3.91 Renewal of library card: There should be the provision of renewal of library card at periodic interval to provide effective library
services. Issue of duplicate borrower’s card should be introduced at nominal fees in case of loss of original card to encourage readers to use the library efficiently.

8.2.3.92 Maintaining records: The maintenance of records and statistics on documents transaction, the range of usage by users, defaulters, etc. in the circulation counter is very important, which provides valuable input to the annual report of the library. At the same time various registers like patron register, issue register, over-due or fine register, inter library loan register, suggestion register should be maintained by the circulation counter. In addition because of the proximity to the entrance/exit gate, the circulation counter should be entrusted with the task of supervising or maintaining of gate register and the property counter to ensure smooth functioning of the library.

8.2.3.93 Inter library loan: A library could not be totally self-sufficient, so it has to co-operate with another library in the area or region, to obtain books and other reading materials required by the patron. The programs of borrowing materials from the other libraries are known as inter-library loan or resource sharing. To satisfy the varied demand of reader, an effective and continuous scheme of co operation must be initiated. It is the responsibility that falls within the activity of the circulation department of the library.

8.2.4 Reference Section Activities

Reference activity is one of the most important activities of a library. It is considered as a hub of all activities within a library. The reference section should be organized in such a way, so that all types of services could be provided to the users with care and ease. Reference collection like encyclopedias, dictionaries, hand books, yearbooks, gazetteers, maps, atlas, reports, biographies, indexes and news digests, etc. should be properly arranged and consult regularly to find out a readymade information to meet the variety of enquires from all corners. The person engaged in providing reference services should regularly scan contents of current periodicals and maintain a file of pertinent information gathered. Development of various techniques of library profession should be engaged to provide information services to the readers. Activities like literature
searching, preparation of documentation lists, indexing and abstracting service, content analysis, current awareness service (CAS), selective dissemination of information service (SDI), make it possible for the libraries to provide pinpointed and exhaustive information services to the users. The public library should take the advantage of modern information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, to provide appropriate information services to the user community.

8.2.5 Serial section

The periodic literature which includes the newspaper, journals and magazines published after a specified time has come to occupy an important place in the field of reading materials of a library’s collection. These materials usually contain the primary information, which assumes great value and importance to the readers. In a public library the serial section should be maintained duly, otherwise services of the library will be hampered. The following are the activities involved in the serial section:

8.2.5.1 Selection of periodical and newspapers: The selection of periodical seems more difficult than book selection because it appears in successive volumes. The selection of periodical depends upon the factors like scope of library, demand of the user and the financial resources available in the library. The periodical which attracts a larger number of readers should be selected ones. The selection should be based on the interests and the intellectual development of the people it serves. While selecting the periodicals the person engaged in this activity may seek help from subject specialists, library staffs, directories, announcements and reviews of new journals, etc. The selection of newspapers should be made on the basic of news contained and the language followed by the large portion of users.

8.2.5.2 Acquisition of periodicals & newspaper: Periodicals can be acquired in the library by more than one ways. It can be procured through gifts from learned societies at free of cost, through institutional membership at free of cost or at concessional prices and generally through subscription purchase. After preparing the list of selected journals to be ordered the signing of contract and other negotiation with publisher or vendor regarding
discount rates, timely delivery etc., should be finalized. The annual subscription may be paid direct to the publisher or to the agent who deals in arranging supply of the periodicals. If the periodicals are to be subscribed directly from the publishers, their bills should be obtained before the beginning of the calendar or financial year. The bills should be compared with the list to ensure the correctness of the name, periodicity and duplication. If the bill is correct, the bills may be passed for payment after entering necessary details in the records. If the arrangements of supplying journal are to be made with new vendors, the calling and receiving of quotations should be carried out with much importance. Having taken all precautions the approved vendor should be asked to send the bills. The correctness of the year, the volumes and rates entered in the bills should be confirmed. In case of any discrepancy, the vendor may be asked to send the duplicate bill or the proof of rates charged. Then the bill may be passed for the payment. The advance should be paid to the vendor only after he has executed a bond on stamped paper incorporating the terms and conditions of supply and the details of the advance amount taken. Necessary entries should be made in the subscription register for convenience.

News paper may be procured from local news agents and agreement should be reached between two parties on daily, timely supply of newspaper and mode of payment which may be monthly, quarterly or annually, etc.

8.2.5.3 Maintenance of records: For the purpose of ensuring the regular receipt of periodicals, the library should maintain some sort of records of the journals being subscribed by it. Whatever the form of record followed, it should be able to give particulars like name of the journal, publisher, supplier, periodicity, rate of subscription, etc. Columns should be provided to make the receipt of the issue or to locate the non-receipt of any number. In case of non-receipt of any number the follow-up actions like sending reminders and claiming replacements should be done as a regular routine. Some common methods used by libraries for recording periodicals are; the ledger system, the card system and the kardex system. The selection of methods for recording periodicals depends upon the type and size of the library, and convenience in operation by the library. For the news
8.2.5.4 Treatment of periodicals: After receiving the journals in the library the foremost activity involves the stamping of journals to determine the ownership of the documents. The stamp, bearing the name of the library and the initial of the person associated with the job, must be affixed on the journal at one or two places. One should be vigilant enough to note the change, if any, that takes place in the frequency, subscription rates, address or the title of the journal. An entry of this effect should be made in the record followed. It should be better to arrange journals in an alphabetical order to ensure effective services.

In the case of daily newspaper, it must be stamped with office seal just after the receipt and kept on the table for users reading purpose.

8.2.5.5 Display and self arrangements: The method of displaying the periodicals varies from library to library. Usually in some libraries the periodicals are placed on the reading table along with the newspaper. If it so, the proper placing should be followed and close supervision must be made to ensure maximum utilization of the periodical and newspaper. The modern trend is to give a scientific treatment to displaying and preserving the periodicals. Periodicals could be displayed in the racks, made of wood or steel, which displays the magazines on the sloping shelves and also serve as the covering sheets to the pigeon-holes wherein back issues could be stored.

In order to locate the journal properly, some sort of shelving system should be followed. The periodical could be shelved either alphabetically by the title or classified by subject whichever would be easy to follow. In case of newspaper, it can be shelved by date wise. The library could retain the paper of current one month. Otherwise, it could be disposed by way of selling.

8.2.5.6 Binding and accessioning: The current journals with different periodicity are displayed on the racks till they are replaced by the new one. The old ones are to be stored number-wise in the pigeon-holes till they complete their volumes, get ready to be bound and accessioned. Decision should be taken about the policy of retention of periodical titles.
Periodicals decided to be preserved for a particular period should be bound properly and accessioned like books in a separate magazine register. Distinct title, volumes, year etc. should be printed on the spine of the bound volumes to facilitate the location. The bound volume should be shelved separately either alphabetically by the title or classified by subject. This could be made available for reference purpose in the library or may be issued conditionally, looking to the importance and urgency of the demand.

8.2.6 Children sections

Children users should be given an utmost importance. Because the reading habit they can develop lead them to active membership of the library in future. So the various activities involve in this section of the library include;

- Procurement and organizations of adequate children’s literature according to their age groups.
- Arrangement of baby rhyme time and story time session at regular interval.
- Organizing children book week.
- Organizing weekly reading programe where children of various age groups can read aloud to.
- Displaying of various pictorial materials at prominent places in the section.
- Celebrating famous people’s birthday with children.
- Organizing reading, recitation, art competition among the children.
- Arranging award to local kids who read the most books.
- Planning field trip to local attractions like museum, historical places, palces of importance etc.

8.2.7 Audio – visual and IT section

Keeping in view the advancement of modern day technology, the varied demand of users and the appearance of information in various formats, the public library should have the provision of keeping audio visual materials and their displaying devices in the library. Stock of such materials
may include films, video tapes/cassettes, wall charts, CDs, DVDs, television, radio, CD and DVD player, projectors, etc. Every component of this section should be maintained duly to provide effective library services.

It has been observed that there is increasing demand of such facilities from the public libraries by the users in the hilly areas of Darjeeling. So, public libraries in the region should take the advantage of modern day technology to cater the information needful to the people by organizing and maintaining audio visual and Information Technology (IT) section in the library.

8.3 Library Services

The mission of any public library is to support the lifelong informal education to every citizen irrespective of age, race, caste, creed, gender, religion, language, geographical locations etc. by providing wide array of reading materials, programes, and professional assistance within the library and beyond the library. The nature and efficiency of services provided by the public library would vary from library to library based on the area of operation, collection, geographical locations and demographic profile of the region. But some services are common in all public libraries. However, with the emergence of information and communication technology, especially the computer technology, the public libraries are now in a position to provide a variety of services to the people of the community.

Usually the public library in the hilly areas of Darjeeling district should provide the following services to its user community;

1. Reading room services within the library is obligatory and for that end adequate collection and necessary arrangements should be made so that readers can avail full benefit of the services.

2. Lending service of books, periodicals and other reading materials should be accessible, so that readers would be able to make use of them at their convenience. Circulation section should be fully equipped with various necessary tools, like issue register, return records, borrowers status record, fine generation system, reminder system to users, reserve of book system etc.
3. Reference and bibliographic service should be provided as per the requirements of the readers. So a well organized reference section with adequate collection of reference books should be maintained by each library in the region.

4. Text book and carrier guidance services should be provided to the readers, especially to the students members to meet their requirements.

5. Children’s service should be dealt with utmost importance. If possible, a separate children section with appropriate collection and arrangement should be established to provide services like story telling, art competitions, and other activities to attract child members to the library.

6. The public library should also actively provide services to neo-literate readers by providing appropriate materials that develop their skills.

7. The library should provide inter-library loan service among district/sub-divisional/town/area/rural and other libraries in the region.

8. Necessary steps should be taken to collect and organize information to provide community information services on life and livelihood of the people in the community.

9. Extension services should be provided by the library in close co-operation with local self government, other government departments, non-government organizations, educational institutions, local clubs, religious bodies etc. to market the services and attract members to the library.

10. The library should provide the service on local culture by collecting, organizing, preserving and promoting the local history and related collections.

11. Reader’s guidance service should be provided to the library members for efficient use of the library and the resources available.

12. The library should provide special service to differently abled persons of the society and for that it should be well equipped with collections of appropriate formats and special arrangements, for eg. the collection like braille and talking books for sightless and shortsighted people. The library staffs should be properly trained to familiarize with
important aspects of disability and disabled users in a library environment.

Public libraries will not realize their existence in the society if their services are not properly enjoyed by the community. The public library should be service-focused, as such the priority should be given to develop services according to user’s requirements and deliver them where and in the way that they will be most effective. Full advantage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) should be taken by the public library in order to provide effective and efficient services to the people it serves.

8.4 Library Administration and Management
8.4.1 Library Committee and the Librarian

Library Committees are a fairly common entity in the world of public library. A library committee is necessary for the smooth functioning of the library. It may serve both as a co-coordinating and policy making body. The members of this committee should represent the community it serves. The members of the committee may be either elected or nominated from persons like teachers, literary persons, experts and registered borrower in the area served by the library. The size of the committee as suggested by Ranganathan is a five to eight member committee which is typical. The tenure of the committee should be for a period of three years or until their successors are nominated or elected. Generally library committee meets once in a month. Frequency of meeting depends upon the service transaction of the library. A newly formed committee should elect or select its chairman and the librarian should act as ex-officio secretary or the convener of the committee. The librarian who is the sole responsible for the administration should have the knowledge of formation of the committee, how the agenda are prepared, how the meetings are conducted and how the minutes are recorded. A library committee is responsible for policy making and the librarian is to implement the policy for smooth functioning of the library.

Among the various functions of the library committee includes: the formulation of library policy and objectives; the appointment of library staffs;
making provisions for sufficient funds for procurement of documents; purchase of furniture and equipment; maintenance of building; checking library expenditure and preparing estimates of anticipated expenditure; keeping watch over the implementation of library policy by the library officials; compilation and revision of rules and regulations for library use; consider the annual reports and other statistical reports submitted by the librarian; dealing with staff welfare matters like promotions, dismissals, transfer, sick leave, retirements, etc.; make provision for adequate library services in fulfilling the objectives of the library; dealing with the matters raised by the librarian when he requires the support of the committee to back him up; representing the library with higher authorities or bodies and pleading the library cause in that body and in public; finding ways and means of securing library’s co-operation with various organizations within a locality, specially educational ones, and to raise the image of the library in the society.

8.4.2 Library rules and ethics

An organization to be run successfully and efficiently requires certain guiding principles. These must be followed to achieve the desired result. Library as a service institution should frame certain rules and regulations which govern the management of conduct. The library rules empower the most efficient use of the library, prevent its abuse and help to protect its various resources. The library rules should be few, simple, flexible and plausible. It should be worked in such a way that an average user can understand them. The language of the rules should be expressive and legalistic. It should not be a rigid one. Flexibility in rules is essential to cope with the changing situation. It should be enforceable as law, if necessity arises; there should be the provision of by laws. In order to make the borrower understand about the rules and regulation of the library, the main rules should be printed on reader’s tickets, book label, book pocket and back cover of the book.

Library rules should be clearly framed covering the following aspects in detail;
a. free access to its contents to all men and women irrespective of age, race, creed, political persuasion, etc.,
b. working days and hours,
c. membership,
d. loan privileges,
e. condition of loan,
f. issue and return of books,
g. admission to the library,
h. loss of book,
i. loss of library card/ticket,
j. change of address,
k. reading privileges and disciplines,
l. overdue charges for the infringement of regulations,
a. system of arrangement of books and the forms of catalogues and method of using them,
m. use of reference and other sections,
n. security issues, etc.

The library rules should be formulated carefully keeping in view the various factors considered in relation to the type of users, resources and philosophy of the librarian. Another important thing is library ethics which is a code of conduct to be observed by the readers in their own part, while in the library, users should be informed and guided regularly by the library personnel about library ethics.

8.4.3 Library Personnel

Library personnel are considered vital among the three components – books, building and staff. It is the library staffs who put the books and building to the best use of public. The success of the library in providing effective and efficient services to the people largely depends upon the expertise and qualities of library personnel. Library staff, with socio-cultural and educational background of the region, coupled with library techniques and skills, can create a better image of the public libraries and serve the people satisfactorily. The best qualified person should be recruited on the
basis of merit on his/her qualification, testing and interview (personality, intelligence, aptitude tests etc.).

The following staff structure is suggested for a public library in Darjeeling hilly areas;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Scale of pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Graduate in library &amp; Information science</td>
<td>Rs. 7100-37600/- + GP Rs. 3200/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma in library science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Assistant</td>
<td>Higher Secondary &amp; Certificate in Library &amp; Information Science</td>
<td>Rs. 5400-25200/- + Rs. 2900/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Attendant</td>
<td>Madhyamik passed</td>
<td>Rs. 5400-25200/- + Rs. 1900/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwan/Nightguard</td>
<td>At least middle passed</td>
<td>Rs. 4900-16200/- + Rs. 1700/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4.3.1 Working hours:

a. The public library should work at least seven hours per day. i.e. 10:30 a.m. – 05:30 p.m.

b. The library should open in all holidays except in a few national holidays and local religious festivals.

c. Remuneration should be paid according to rules to the staffs who work on holidays.

8.4.3.2 Functions:

The duties and responsibilities of librarian and other semi professional staffs are suggested as below;

Librarian:

i. To formulate and administer policies, rules and regulations with a view to secure the full use of the library by the user community.

ii. To conduct meeting of the library committee as ex-officio secretary of the committee.

iii. To control and supervise all matters connected with the techniques of library work and service, and the organization and management of the library.
iv. To formulate the estimates of annual budget and prepare
details of allocation and expenditure on different heads.
v. To control and supervise the staff working in the library and to
make recommendations to the library committee in all matters
relating to their services.
vi. To be responsible to the library committee in the matters of
satisfactory management and administration of the library.
vii. To prepare plans for the improvements of the library and
execute them to fulfill the objectives of public libraries.

Library Assistant:
i. To assist the librarian on all routine works to run the library
smoothly.
ii. To process the procured books and periodicals and organize
them on the shelves.
iii. To conduct issue and return of books.

Library Attendant:
i. To assist the librarian and library assistant on all routine works
to run the library smoothly.

Darwan/Nightguard:
i. To open and close the library in time.
ii. To carry the strict watch and guard the library.

Training and workshops of library personnel is very essential,
because upon whom the success of library depends. There should be a
provision of orientation training and staff development programs at regular
intervals. Motivation of personnel through promotion, recognition and
incentive plays an important role. Such motivational activities help to create
an environment for employers to put in their best efforts. The library should
have a sound policy regarding the staff development and welfare purposes.
8.4.4 Library finance and budget

Finance plays a vital role in the organization and management of any institution. Libraries as a service institution depend heavily on a continuous supply of funds for organizing their activities, programmes and services. It is observed that in Darjeeling hill areas the major sources of finance for public libraries is government grants because the Public Libraries Act of West Bengal has not proposed any library cess. Though, it is found that some sort of membership fees, fines, gifts/donations, endowments from charitable trusts and private benefactions etc. which forms a minor portion of library finance have been practised by the public libraries in Darjeeling hills. It is also found that Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundations (RRRLF), an autonomous organization provides grant through their various programs to the public libraries in the region. So the public library services are to be totally supported by regular budget of the government.

On the other hand some major heads of expenditure of public libraries in the region are: salaries of the staff; purchase of books and periodicals; maintenance of library building and furniture; binding of books and journals; organization of fairs, exhibitions and other extension activities; library contingencies; heating, cooling and lighting expenses; postal and telephone charges; etc.

Proper method of financial estimate should be followed in the library. The expenditure usually falls under two categories – recurring or current expenditure and non-recurring or capital expenditure. Money spent on items which occur almost throughout the year like books and periodicals, stationeries and postage, binding, salaries and wages, etc. should be shown against recurring or current expenditure, while the expenditure on building, costly equipment and furniture, which are capital oriented, should be shown in non- recurring or capital expenditure.

Like other institution libraries should have its own budget which includes the sources of income and items of expenditure. It is a reflection of the current and future activities, programs and plans of the library. The preparation of budget is a major responsibility of the librarian. While preparing budget estimate for a particular period the librarian should be well versed about the past experience and the present and the future
requirements to run the library smoothly. The estimate should take into account the actual expenditure of the previous financial year and the expenditure to be made on different heads for the coming financial year in a detail manner. The librarian should discuss the budget proposal with the library committee and after approval from the committee it is to be sent to the higher authorities for final approval and sanction.

A carefully developed budget will ensure that available funds are effectively utilized to realize the library’s service objectives. The budget should be accurate, clear and comprehensive. All sources of income and expenditure categories should be included in the budget. The library should keep an accurate record of money spent and the balance remaining in the library account in any Nationalized Bank or Local Co-operative Bank. The library expenditure is subject to audit, so the library should carry the process of audit by reputed external/central/statutory auditors to ensure that the expenditure has been according to norms, rules and procedures.

8.4.5 Library maintenance work

Maintenance work is another important activity in the library. After the completion of procurement and processing work, the proper care should be taken to organize and maintain the collection to make them serviceable to users. The various activities which constitutes the maintenance work are; shelving, location of the documents, dusting and cleaning, preparation and maintenance of the guides, maintenance of routine work, shelf rectification, maintenance of shelf list or register, stock verification, binding, vigilance, weeding, conservation and preservation, etc.

The above component may be summarized as follows:

8.4.5.1 Shelving: To achieve economy of space and ease of access, the books on the stacks should be properly shelved. Books on the racks could be shelved according to any one of alphabetical order by author/title, classified by subject, by accession number or by broken order arrangement. Public libraries usually fallow the shelving of books according to some classification scheme or by subject. The subject approach is most predominant approach in public libraries and thus a classified arrangement is generally followed so that readers can find all the related materials at one
place. Special care should be given while shelving over-size books, under-size books, maps, films, tapes, etc. Besides, there should be separate collection and arrangement of periodicals, reference books; books in great demand and other special collection in the library.

8.4.5.2 Location of documents: To ensure easy location and replacement, the books on the shelves should be arranged according to class numbers. The class number assigned to every book should be clearly written on back side of title page and on book label and pasted it at about 1½” from the foot of the spine of the books. These help to locate books from the shelves and replace them back to the shelves. Separate sequence should be followed to locate over-sized books, under sized books, maps, films, tapes and other non-book materials.

8.4.5.3 Dusting and cleaning: The dust and the dirt minimize the age and use of books. The collections in the stack should be kept free of dust and dirt. Routine dusting and cleaning of the shelves should be followed in the library.

8.4.5.4 Preparation and maintenance of guides: Various guides should be prepared and provided at different places in the stack areas. Such guides are;

8.4.5.4.1 Tier guide: Each tier of stacks should be given one tier guide. It should include the subject covered in the respective tier giving the inclusive class numbers and their verbal headings.

8.4.5.4.2 Bay guide: Every bay of the shelves should be provided with a bay guide containing the concerned class numbers and their verbal headings.

8.4.5.4.3 Gangway guide: Each gangway should be provided with a gangway guide, indicating the subject covered in the particular gangway.

8.4.5.4.4 Shelf guide: Every shelf should be provided with a shelf guide, indicating the subject on which the books are found in a particular shelf.

8.4.5.4.5 General guide: A general guide giving an overall view of the stacks and the arrangements of books should be provided. In addition general instructional or message guide should also be at prominent place in the library.
8.4.5.5 Maintenance of routine work: Besides the other works there should be the day to day routine maintenance of documents, which includes the following works;

i. dusting and cleaning of the books on the shelves;

ii. shelving of newly processed books and the books returned by the borrowers, collected from the circulation counter;

iii. identifying and separating the damaged books for binding;

iv. shifting and re-shifting books whenever required;

v. maintenance of book tags;

vi. locating particular book on the shelves upon request by readers when they are unable to find them;

vii. various repairing related works includes, putting on missing tabs, labels, putting labels on new books and covers, sewing in loose pages, etc.

8.4.5.6 Self rectification: Restoring order among the books is essential and the process is called self rectification. Wrongly placed or misplaced books should be regularly checked and restored on the shelves. Readers should be instructed not to replace the books on the shelves.

8.4.5.7 Maintenance of shelf list: The shelf list is a record of books as they stand on the shelves, and is the main guide used in stock-taking and otherwise checking of the books. In order to control the movement of books in a library, a shelf list should be made to use of. A standard size card could be used for these purposes, which are arranged parallel to the corresponding arrangements of books on the shelves. The cards could be grouped and arranged in trays in order of classification. Another method is to use shelf register, which may occupy a very little space. A single sheet could be used for each class, division, or sub-division and the books in the section are entered in author- alphabetical order against their classification number. Since the shelf list is an important record, it should be kept under the safe custody and also kept up to date.
8.4.5.8 Stock Verification: A library is an institution which aims at maximum use of books by the community it serves throughout the year. Stock verification’s main objective is to know that all the books that have been stocked are in the library or not. It also implies the physical check-up of the articles on record. At the end of each year it is necessary to take account of the total stock in the library in order to trace the book lost, books which are in heavy demand or much read, misplaced and not returned. The methodology of stock verification should be decided by the library according to library practices. The following methods may be employed;

8.4.5.8.1 Stock verification by accession register: It is one of the popular methods of stock checking. It involves one person speaks out the accession number of each books on the shelves and another one checks and tick marks the corresponding accession number in the register with pencil. When all the books in the library and out in circulation are checked in this manner, the remaining untraced books may be treated as lost.

8.4.5.8.2 Stock verification by shelf list: Shelf list facilitates the speedy stock verifications. It involves one person take to the stack and reads the call number of each book and another person either ticks it or takes out the cards and keeps it in another tray. The cards of missing books can be removed and kept separately. Simultaneous stock verification of various sections can be done by distribution the trays of self register cards among a number of people in the library.

8.4.5.8.3 Stock verification by numerical counting method: This is the simple methods of counting all the books on the shelves and books out on loan and tallied with the total number of books as per records. It usually gives the rough idea of loss of books in terms of only numbers.

8.4.5.8.4 Stock verification by loose sheet method: In this method the accession number should be written on loose sheets in more than one column on the same page. As each
book is found a tick is made in the appropriate accession number on the sheet.

Whatever the method of stock verification being employed, some issues should be considered into account while going for stock verification. Such issues are:

a) regular routine of library work should not get disturbed;
b) reader’s convenience should be maintained;
c) un-necessary wastage of time, money and energy should be avoided etc.

8.4.5.91 Loss of books and vigilance: Loss of books is inevitable both in open and closed access libraries. This is more in open access libraries. The reason for the loss of books may be summarized as follows;

i. Some readers are regular thieves and steal books deliberately;
ii. Poor vigilance helps some people to steal the books from the library;
iii. Very strict rules and regulation regarding the use of books may also induce people to steal;
iv. Some book lovers may have pervert possessive attitude toward books and they may steal them;
v. Lack of proper security policy in the libraries;
vi. Not only the readers, but some library staffs may also involve in stealing the books.

Realizing the reasons for loss of books in the library, various measures should be adopted to tackle this nuisance. Every library should formulate a definite well spelled security policy covering every aspect in the library. The outlets and windows at stack areas should be guarded by fitting of wire gauze or the expanded metal. Strict vigilance at the exit or in interior of the library should be deployed by an alert out attendant or by every member of the staff while doing their regular duties. The library staffs should be posted in different sections to keep continuous vigil upon library records.

Application of close circuit cameras, a product of modern day technology at prominent places like the stack areas, entrance, reading room
etc. will greatly help the library to track the movement of readers at various places and also to minimize the loss of books in the library.

8.4.5.92 Withdrawal and Weeding

To maintain strong and efficient book stock in the library the withdrawal and weeding of books is very essential activities. The library should have a definite policy statement spelling out the withdrawal and weeding of unused books from the library. A clear decision should be made regarding the withdrawal of documents from the stacks. A book may be withdrawn from the collection if it is unused, outdated, found lost in stock verification, damaged and worn out beyond repair. When a decision is made, those books which have been rejected for further use must be entered in a withdrawal register. The entries in the register may be condensed or expanded and sometime the replacement of better books should be made as per library policy.

After the decision to weed out the books all necessary entries bearing the details of the books should be corrected in accession register. The cards should be withdrawn. The word withdrawn should be written or stamped in the remark column along with the date of withdrawal in the accession register. The books to be weeded out should be stamped ‘withdrawn’ or ‘weeded out’ over all identification or ownership marks. Then the weeded out books should be disposed of according to decision taken by the library.

8.4.5.93 Binding

Libraries have been experiencing the wear and tear of books and other documents, because of continuous use. Binding and repair of damaged books for longer use are essential in any library. A judicious and continuous book binding policy should be formulated. Valuable and heaviest used materials should be bound according to prescribed standard and specifications.

Binding of books can be done either by in-house bindery or by the external commercial bindery. If the library has its own bindery section then the damaged books could be bound in close control and speedily. But every library is not in a position to procure machinery and equipment of binding. So
the decision regarding whether to make in-house binding or to send materials to a commercial binder should be decided first.

The decision as to which method a library should follow depends upon the binding policy of the library. Whatever the method followed the binding process should include: collecting all the parts of volume have to be arranged in its correct sequence; sewing the arranged pages with quality thread; attaching covers to the volume; fixing of end papers before and after the text of the book; gilding or colouring edges of pages either at the time of trimming or after cutting the boards; fixing head bonds as decorative pieces involves smoothing of the surface of the spine by gluing a soft kraft paper over it; providing hollows back, which helps save the spine from cracking; covering the binding either wholly or partially by leather, cloth or paper; providing imaginative design for the cover; fixing the title; putting call number of the books on the spine or at any other place on the cover; and giving final touch to get an artistic finish.

The material used for binding purpose such as leather, cloth, paper, thread, paste, glue, gum, dust cover and lettering materials, should be of high quality. Repairing or partial rehabilitation of a worn volume should be practiced when required.

Binding of damaged books through external or outside binders normally starts with the process of selection of preference list of binders. Outside binders are normally selected through competitive bidding or through free selection. While choosing the outside binders the preference should be made on the basis of binder’s reputation for good workmanship, accessibility, the price schedule and quality of materials. After the final selection of binders the librarian should provide specific data to the binder regarding the size and condition of the volumes to be bound and also the expected workmanship and quality of materials. After completing all formalities the damaged books should be sent to the binder for binding and asked the binder to supply the bound books on time. When the binder supplies the bound books, the books should be checked properly and kept for other necessary processing activities. After assigning title, call number, spine label, etc. the book should be sent for shelving with the other books according to the arrangement followed in the library. Organization and
management of binding work in the library assumes greater significance in view of preserving and conserving the materials for longer and future use.

8.4.5.94 Preservation of library materials

Proper care of library collection is essential with a view to prolong its life. This requires preserving and protecting books against decay and deterioration. Besides binding, various measures should be adopted by the library to protect its resource from deterioration. The destructive agencies of library materials are mainly either climatic variation in temperature and moisture or various insects including cockroaches, white ants, mildew, silver fish, mice, etc.

As preventive measures, dusting and cleaning of books and shelves must be carried out on regular basis. Books should not be kept on damp places. To cope with environmental hazards the designs and the structures of the library building should be well planned. In the stack areas where document collection are kept should be designed in such a way that natural air and light be poured in from the windows and ventilators. These will reduce the dampness in the stack area. The windows should have sizable sun shades to protect the books from the shower of rain fall. Proper ventilation should be assured by fixing suitable parallel windows. In hilly areas, there is more chance of dampness, so proper care should be taken while planning the stack areas in the library. To control the fungal attack the book should be exposed to adequate light and air for a short time. Over exposure will damage considerably both binding and paper.

As a preventive measure against various insects a library should be dusted with D.D.T or gammaxine powder and sprayed with flit at regular intervals. Camphor, naphthalene balls, borax, etc. in little linen bags, should be kept on the shelves. Phenyl or crude creosote diluted with kerosene oil should be sprinkled or sprayed to driving out the insects and pests. Dry neem leaves and tobacco leaves should be placed inside the fold of the books. If the book racks are made of wood, some insecticide should be applied to the shelves to keep of the white ants and silver fish. In this way the books can be preserved and passed on to the future posterity.
8.4.6 Library statistics

Library statistics provide the administration with the basic facts about a library. It contributes a lot to the basis of library development. It gives interesting portrait of the library and helps to shape its future policy for smooth functioning of a library. Statistical data in the form of tables, graphs, charts, symbolic diagrams reveals the weaknesses and strength of a library.

Library statistics should be maintained under following heads: population of the area served; income from various sources like government grants and other sources, grants from endowments or charitable institution, membership fees, fines and overdue charges, money received from the sale of publication, waste papers, etc.; expenditure of a library on a book, periodicals, printing and binding, salary and wages, installments of loan and any insurance, heating, lighting, drinking water and other miscellaneous expenditure; total stock in the library; strength of the staff; average attendance of users; issue of books; books lent and borrowed through the inter library loan system, etc.

Library statistics is vital for library development. So, it has to be maintained duly, otherwise smooth administration of the library will be hampered.

8.4.7 Annual report and the library record

An Annual report is a type of report prepared by the library to review its working during the preceding year. It summarizes the activities and achievements of the various sections of the library. Its preparation is an administrative necessity. It is a means, by which, a librarian who is a sole responsible administrator of a library will inform his/her superior authority about the achievements, shortcomings and problems of the library. It helps the administrator to calculate the future programme of work for smooth functioning of a library.

Usually a good Annual report should be prepared in two parts, i.e. descriptive part and statistical part. Basic features to be included in an annual report of a library are:

i. a brief introduction of the library,
ii. authority and brief account of the functioning of authority, i.e. meeting of the library committee, important decision of the committee etc.

iii. users of the library,

iv. collection of the library,

v. technical services of the library,

vi. public services,

vii. extension activities of the library,

viii. activities of the various units of the library,

ix. library finances, income and expenditure;

x. library building, furniture and equipments,

xi. staff activities of the library;

xii. other activities like, functions organized, important visitors, achievements and shortcoming of the library, etc.

The report should be attractive and presented in a manner that could be understood by everybody. The narrative text should be supported with statistical tables, graphs, diagrams, etc. in order to make it easy to understand. There should be continuity in presentation with supportive illustrations. An annual report should be maintained duly in a library to know the achievements and shortcomings of the library services along with the reasons thereby to make require efforts to speed up the development activities. It can be a best medium by which a public library can justify its value to the public.

8.5 Automation and Networking

Automation refers to the use of computer and other automated machinery for the execution of operation or activity. Library automation usually refers to a strategy designed to remove the repetitive manual activities performed by library staff and to pass this to automated system of various sorts. It basically means the computerization of library activity. With the help of machine people perform job comfortably, quickly and ultimately it increases people’s efficiency and effectiveness. In Darjeeling hilly areas it is hardly seen any public libraries that has initiated any automation activities.
8.5.1 Why automation?

Automation is one of the important Information Technology based activities by which we can manage and run a library smoothly, efficiently and effectively. We need automation in the public libraries, particularly in the hilly areas for the following reasons:

i. To obtain increased operational efficiencies.
ii. To improve the quality, speed and effectiveness of services.
iii. To relieve professional staff from clerical task, making them available for user oriented services.
iv. To avoid waste of time in repetitive works.
v. To improve access to remote users and other stockholders, eg. the general public.
vi. To provide new services to users earlier which are not provided by the library.
vii. To improve the management of physical and financial resources of the library.
viii. To provide extensive and flexible reports for the management.
ix. To increase the storage capacity.
x. To organize vast amount of information easily and quickly.
xi. To facilitate wider access of information to users.
xii. To increase communication facility.
xiii. To facilitate wider dissemination of information products and services.
xiv. To save time of library personnel and also users of library.
xv. To improve access to resources on other networks and systems, including the web.
xvi. To enable library’s participation in resource sharing library networks.
xvii. To enable rapid communication with other libraries and professional persons.
xviii. To facilitate marketing of library service.
xix. To upheld the library’s position in the changing society.
8.5.1.1 Different areas of library automation in public libraries in hilly areas:
The following areas and tasks of the public library should be computerized:-

8.5.1.1.1 Administration and maintenance:-
- Making employee’s directory
- Duty chart preparation
- Duty roster for weekend/holidays
- Drafting library policies
- Recording of library committee’s meeting minutes
- Preparing library rules and regulations
- Maintaining library statistics
- Maintaining periodicals statistics
- Taking stock verification
- Maintaining leave record of employees
- Maintaining binders directory
- Publishing internal office order/ letters/ memo/ notice, etc.

8.5.1.1.2 Acquisition:-
- List of books selected
- List of books recommended
- List of books approved
- Vendor directory
- Prepare the purchase order
- Placing orders to vendors
- Receiving lists of reading materials
- Handle claims for late or non-delivered orders
- Maintain and update the order/in process file
- Record receipts of orders and check for competence of the order
- Making accession
- Prepare payment authorization forms for orders
• Prepare the necessary financial and statistical reports for the sections
• Integration of acquisition data with other library service module of library software may be installed.

8.5.1.1.3 Classification:
Though the selection of notation is done manually, but the computer can support in choosing the respective key words. Stored classification number may be used for subsequent volumes which have the similar details.

8.5.1.1.4 Cataloguing:
• Integration with acquisition module of the software may be installed.
• Printing catalog cards when needed
• Provide cataloging products such as computer output microfilm, book catalogues and catalogues on machine readable magnetic tape, etc.
• Searching a document from various angels
• Preparing reading list on the basis of catalogs
• Creating an updated listing of library holding
• Establishing open access catalog with user friendly menus
• Provide common means to library materials across the libraries
• Introducing the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) to search the catalog database.

8.5.1.1.5 Circulation:
• Integration with acquisition and cataloging modules of the software may be installed
• Issuing and returning of library materials with use of Patron Identification Number (PIN) and Document Identification Number (DIN) for borrower and materials
• Imposing maximum limit of materials to be issued to a particular borrower
• Maintaining different category of borrower with different borrowing limits
• Upholding blockade system for different types of users
• Over-riding the maximum limit, if necessary
• Generating fines/overdue charges system for overdue books and other reading materials
• Sending suitable reminders through e-mail for returning of books in time
• Charging and discharging of library materials with the introduction of barcode system
• Introducing inter-library loan system
• Generating the necessary statistical as well as management reports for the departments

8.5.1.1.6 Serial control:
• Maintaining ordering, renewing and cancelling subscriptions of serials
• Supporting the check-in of serials
• Input of bibliographical details of serials
• Editing, addition, deletion, updating of serials etc.
• Having output in various forms such as subject-wise list, frequency-wise list, area of origin-wise list, consolidated list, etc.
• Searching a particular issue
• Identifying a missing issue
• Issuing reminder in respect of missing issues
• Inputting articles information
• Searching articles from different ways
• Maintaining binding activities (such as list of serials to be bind, binders directory, placing binding orders, receiving list of bound volumes and other details, etc.)
• Maintaining fund accounting and audit trial records
• Generating various reports like daily activity reports, vendor performance reports, financial reports, etc. for the departments.

8.5.1.1.7 Documentation:
• Preparation of documentation list
• Current awareness services
• Selective dissemination of information services
• Preparation of subject bibliography
• Electronic alert services

8.5.1.1.8 Reporting:
• Generation of various reports which will help in managing the library smoothly
• Compilation of annual report to understand the success and failure of the library
• Compilation of new arrivals from the databases
• Stock checking report generated from the databases
• Prepare defaulter list of borrowers etc.

8.5.1.1.9 Electronic Access:
• Maintaining CD/DVD library
• Internet access in the library
• In house digitization
• Subscription to electronic journals, e-books and various databases
• Library web-page maintenance etc.

8.5.2 Networking
• Local area network (LAN)
• Metropolitan area network (MAN)
• Wide area network (WAN)
Through the mechanism of Hill Areas Public Library Networking (HAPLNET) system the concerned public library can share resources and services to and from any other participating libraries within the network. A proposed model figure for hill area public library networking in the Darjeeling hill area is shown in figure-8.

8.5.3 Library software

Library software is one of the important issues of library automation. Taking into account the available resources in terms of finance, skill, collections, user’s need, and the library should consider the area of automation. The software required to automate the library may be purchased either from reputed vendor or from internally development. There are many trusted library software available in the market. Their price rates are high on the basis of their reputation in operations. If a library decided to have readymade software from outside market then it should purchase the reputed library software because of easy installation and the capabilities to handle the various library activities smoothly with little maintenance initiative. The selection of library software should be made on the basis of matching the library’s requirements, product quality, cost features, functions, installation procedures, hardware and other software requirements, staff training and support services etc. To determine the best software package in the library, the library should analyse and identify the needs and match it with the features and functions of the available integrated library management software.

If a library opts to develop the software in house, it will take time to complete the process. The software development process should go through system analysis, programme development, testing, implementation and maintenance. So, sufficient finance and skilled manpower is needed for both the development and maintenance of the library software. Open source software is another noted development. So, that library can procure the source code of the software from the internet and can customize it according to their specific needs.
8.5.3.1 Other software requires

Operating software: Windows 98, windows 2000, professional, windows XP, windows 2007, Microsoft office, etc.
Operating software for server: windows 2000 server, linux, unix, etc.
Word processing software: word 97, word 2003, word 2007, etc.
Database software: ms access, oracle, dbase, etc.

8.5.4 Hardware Requirements

A hardware requirement is another prime necessity for library automation. Whatever the library software is chosen it must be installed in a computer. Number of computers to be procured depends on the load of usage, library’s operations, facilities available, collections, procedures, staff expertise and space of the library. Dedicated computer with minimum configuration like 500 mhz dual processor; 500 + mb RAM; 120 gb Hard disk space; database backup solution; UPS with atleast 2 hour battery back up time; CD/DVD ROM; OCR Scanner and Printer with network compatibility, Barcode reader or chips technology for automatic circulation etc. In addition, at least one server machine will be needed to be connected through Local Area Network (LAN) and some other accessories like network card, connector etc. to establish network.

8.5.5 Connecting with Internet Service Provider (ISP)

Internet has become a very essential tool to every organization. Libraries now a day are using this tool in ever increasing ways to provide effective services to its users. For the internet connection one library needs to have connection with the Inter Service Provider (ISP) usually provided by the telephone company but there are many private service providers offering this facility. Broadband connection proves much efficiency over dial-up connection in terms of faster data transfer, speed and accuracy of services.

8.5.6 Security

Adopting a secure measure for library computers is more important. Library policy should include a definite security principles which involves creating a multi tiered security system that addresses general security issues as well as user security, workstation security, server security and network
security. At the same time libraries may introduce the Integrated Book Protection System (IBPS) for safeguarding the loss of books from the library. So, specific security measures and procedures must be implemented to protect the library and to keep the operation of library’s computer system smooth.

### 8.5.7 Power Support
Supply of stable and continuous electrical power is must for any automation activity in the library. In case of power failure there must be the provision of emergency power supply within the library. UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) is a solution for a short period. So arrangement of system which ensure power back up for a long period may be installed to cope with the power interruption in the library.

### 8.5.8 Skilled Human Resources
Library automation depends upon the availability of efficient, effective and skilled manpower. Without appropriate skilled personnel the automation activities will be collapsed. Therefore the personnel should have a proper training. In fact before procuring and developing a computerized system the person associated with the automation activities in the library should be made familiar with computers and computerized database system. Adequate renumeration provision and status should be ensured to the skilled manpower for the sake of sustainability of the system. Continuing education and training and retraining should be an integral part of the automation process and should be provided on a regular basis in order to keep the person abreast of new developments so that they can effectively manage the ongoing technical changes.

Library automation has been an effective solution in providing speedy and accurate information and services by the libraries. Inspite of some limitations of computerized system like installation cost, resources and skilled manpower needed, the library automation is growing fast day by day. Public libraries are now experiencing the full advantage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in their services which are meant to cater the changing demand of user community.
8.5.9 Hill Area Public Library Networking (HAPLNET)

Today’s world is experiencing an exponential growth of information in every sphere of development. Growth of information has also resulted in the number of literature coming scatterly, rising prices of reading materials, growing varied demand of users, inability of libraries to organize, preserve and handle them in the library. It is also found that no library can claim that they are self sufficient in its resources. Every library has to depend on other libraries to supplement its resources in order to meet the information needs of its clientele. So there is a need of library co-operation through establishing library network programmes with the ultimate use of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) to facilitate, promote and enhance library operation, use of resources and services to users. It is hardly seen any such efforts has been undertaken by Library Authorities at different level to established Public Library Networking in Darjeeling Hill Region.

Networking of Public Libraries of the Darjeeling hill areas would be the best way to make the resources sharing very effective and also to ensure equitable availability of required information.

8.5.91 Mission of HAPLNET will be;

- To develop a resource sharing network among the public libraries in Darjeeling Hill Areas.
- To take the full advantage of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) facilities in providing information services to the hill community.
- To establish co-operation among the public libraries of different levels in the region.
- To achieve economy in the use of resources, such as money, man and materials.
- To promote and establish uniform standard in library network and operations.
- To develop a centralized database of information resources, specialists and institutions for providing search and on-line information services.
• To assist member libraries on all aspects of resource sharing activities like co-operative cataloguing, co-ordinated collection development, inter-library loan and document delivery, reference services, training, expertise sharing etc.

8.5.92 Development of HAPLNET may include the following activities;

• Directorate of Library Service, Government of West Bengal should take the initiative to develop Hill Area Public Library Networking by providing sufficient financial and infrastructural facilities to all the public libraries serving the hilly areas.
• All Public Libraries should be immediately provided with computer and other technologies necessary to establish networking of libraries.
• Each individual library should be connected to the network.
• Each individual library should automate its library collection and its bibliographic databases should be accessible through network.
• Deshbandhu District Library, Darjeeling should be made the hub of the network for co-ordinating all networking activities in the region.
• Each entity of the network should follow the Z39.50 standard protocol for resource sharing.
• The District Library, Darjeeling as a hub of the network should maintain a central Union bibliographic database of books, serials, non-book and other reading materials of all the participating libraries.
• All the libraries should follow a standard MARC format, RDA, a standard thesaurus like LCHS or SLSH for bringing uniformity in information handling activities within the network system.
• Library personnel should be given adequate training to work under the network system and to be abreast with the latest development of information & communication technologies coming to the libraries.

• The HALPNET should be connected with immediate state level Public Library Network and other national level network.

Figure 8: Proposed Hill Area Public Library Network (HAPLNET)

So, the above model can be best alternative model integrating the current scenario prevailing for the development of overall library services for public libraries. Territorial obstacles vivid in the study zone, reveals that initial infrastructural cost would obviously be higher, but it is certain in the finite long run that the Hill Area Public Library Networking (HAPLNET) in Darjeeling Hill region of West Bengal will be the ultimate beneficiary if the proposed model is implemented, both in cost and utility segment.
8.6 Public Library and Community Information Services

Public library is regarded as social institution. It has become an integral part of national socio-economic development of any country which is dedicated to improving the quality of life of the people by providing wide array of services. Among the ranges of services provided by the public library, Community Information Services (CIS) is one by which a public library can cater the ever-growing information need of the people of the community it serves. Community Information Services defined by the Americal Library Association as “the process of linking an individual with a need to a service or a source of information or advice which can fill that need”. (ALA, 1989). IFLA/UNESCO Public Library manifesto 1994 envisages some key mission that relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services. It stated that the public library should ensure access for citizens to all sorts of community information. It also stresses that the public library is the local center of information making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users.

Information is very important for the development of the individual and the society. Community Information Services (CIS) is basically concerned with the provision of problem-oriented information. People need various types of information to live their daily lives. They gather their required information from various sources. The public library has the responsibility to collect local information and make it readily available to its users. It has a vital role in collecting, organizing and disseminating information as well as providing access to a wide range of information sources. It appears from the study that organized Community Information Services (CIS) activities by the public libraries in the Darjeeling hilly areas is almost non-existence. Only few libraries has been found providing CIS with available resources and self developed methods, though it is not upto the level of satisfaction. It is therefore imperative that the Public Libraries should develop organized CIS activities to cater the information needs of the people in the region. Library authority should be more active in providing necessary assistance in both finances and infrastructures required by the libraries in providing effective community information services.
Based on the conceptual framework developed by Katni Kitab (1990) for a Community Information & Referral Services for the rural areas of Southeast Asia, the public libraries in Darjeeling hill areas should perform the following line of activities to provide an organized community information services for its user community.

8.6.1 Ascertaining information: First the public library should conduct a comprehensive study of the information need of the society to construct a community profile. The profile should contain in detail the users to be served, their varied information needs and the sources of that information. This profile can be derived from distributing and collecting filled in questionnaire, personal interviews, visiting the spot and arranging discussions with community groups etc.

8.6.2 Categorization of information: Second the information required by the community should be categorized separately. In Darjeeling hill areas people usually need the following information;

8.6.2.1 Livelihood Information: Agriculture/ farming (plantation and cultivation of tea, cinchona, orange, cardamom, vegetables and suitable crops, various crop diseases, fertilizers, harvesting and preservation, agro-forestry, farming and livestock management), Animal husbandry (cattle rearing, common animal diseases, veterinary services, etc.).

8.6.2.2 Medical Information: Health facilities, immunization schedule/ programmes, basic hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, first aid, child health, women health, common diseases, family welfare and planning, Doctor’s advice, etc.

8.6.2.3 Environmental Information: Drinking water supply and sanitation, environmental protection measures, soil conservation, forest conservation, water conservation, plantation projects, disaster management, rehabilitation measures, sources of assistance in case
of disaster, pollution control, biodiversity and proper utilization of natural resources, etc.

**8.6.2.4 Educational Information:** Educational facilities, illiteracy eradication programme, formal, non-formal and adult education, distance education, career counseling and training courses, local history and news, etc.

**8.6.2.5 Economical and Commercial Information:** Public finance / local government finance, credit system for rural economic development, market price of various agricultural and industrial products, business and trade information, pre-requisite for obtaining bank loans, etc.

**8.6.2.6 Scientific & Technological Information:** Introduction and development of indigenous technology, application of biotechnology, telecommunication and electrifications, technology for small scale industries, agro-irrigation, farming tools, cottage industries, application of information and communication technologies for sustainable development, etc.

**8.6.2.7 Community Development Information:** Caste system and untouchability, illiteracy and drop out of schooling, poverty and child labour, early marriage and multiple motherhood, population explosion and underdevelopment, uncultured environment and social evils, alcoholism and addiction to narcotic drugs, communalism and disintegration, unemployment and unsocial activities, digital divide, etc.

**8.6.2.8 Miscellaneous Information:** Citizen rights and responsibilities, various legal matters, court cases, politics and panchayati raj, social surveys and statistics, land records and uses, road maps and transport, employment opportunities, various government schemes; rules, policies and plans, insurance policies, sports and cultural facilities, welfare schemes for child, women, youth, handicapped, SC, ST, OBCs and other
minority classes, Integrated Rural Development Pragramme (IRDP), below poverty line family list and voters list, job forms, certificates, licenses and permits, matrimonial, entertainments, etc.

8.6.3 Mechanism of information transfer: The next step is the mechanism of information transfer by the public library which involves several activities as follows;

8.6.3.1 Resource files preparation and maintenance: After conducting a comprehensive community study and identifying the information need of the community, a crossed indexed file of services and programs should be prepared and maintained properly. It can be done with the help of computer if the library has the facility of computerized system.

8.6.3.2 Information Giving Services: This service provides information tailored to an individual’s need. While giving information services the user’s profile should be consulted to know inquirer’s background which helps the library to provide factual information in answer to straightforward inquiries.

8.6.3.3 Reference services: In this service the library can direct or steer inquirer to the appropriate agencies capable of handling his/her problems. The service also involves the fixing an appointment between the client and the respective agencies to find out the required information.

8.6.3.4 Follow up service: After steering a client to an agency for help the library should ensure that the client has whether been helped by respective agencies or not through follow up services. From this service the library can determine whether the inquirer has properly reached the agency, whether the referral was
appropriate and whether the client received the service from the agency etc.

8.6.3.5 Escort service: By this service the library can provide help to the enquirer by making available transportation facilities to the agencies being referred. It also helps the enquirer to fill the forms if necessary or to answer the questions at the agency on behalf of the enquirer. To provide this service there is a strong need of professional commitment from side of the library personnel delivering the service.

8.6.3.6 Outreach service: By this service the library can reach the potential enquirer in the community to encourage and stimulate him to use the existing services of the library. Outreach can be done by means of advertising, producing leaflets, radio spots, displays, talks, discussions, campaign of services and facilities provided by the library etc.

8.6.3.7 Advocacy services: This service helps the library in mediating with an agency for the benefits of enquirer. It involve speaking, letter writing, e-mailing and acting on behalf of the enquirers to see that appropriate services or benefits are in fact provided to enquirer by respective agencies.

8.6.4 Staff Development program: For the success of the community information service programs initiated by the public library, a strong commitment by the staff is very crucial. The person associated with such programme should be devoted to the public services. For that necessary training or continuing professional development programme at regular interval should be designed or organized by the respective library authorities. Training should also be given to the staff on working with other professional activitists like social workers, welfare groups, Gram
Sahayaks who are involved in various community development activities in the society.

8.6.5 Evaluation mechanism: Finally the public library should develop a continuous evaluation mechanism to examine whether the community information services provided by the library is successful or not and to take measures for the improvement of overall services provided by the library.

8.6.6 Development of co-operation with other Information providing Agencies: The public library should develop a close co-operation with other information providing agencies or groups active in CIS in the area of its operation. Such agencies are various non-government / voluntary organizations, trustees, religious bodies, local clubs, government departments, village panchayats, nationalized or local co-operative banks, educational and research institutions etc. The library should prepare and maintain in detail the comprehensive list or directory of all these agencies including their area of operations, their locations, activities, person in charges, addresses, branches, contact numbers, publications available etc. The direct linkage with these agencies or groups helps the library to provide effective community information services to the public.

However with the emergence and rapid development of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) especially computer technology, the public library are now in a comfortable position to provide an organized and effective community information services to the people of the community. This modern day facilities have revolutionized the way for the public libraries to collect, organize and disseminate information required by its clientele. Therefore, in Darjeeling Hill areas the public libraries should take the full advantage of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) facilities and opportunities to cater the various information needs of the people by
organizing computer-based community information services in the libraries across the region.

Figure 9: Activities involve in providing Community Information Services by Public Library
References:


