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# **Alternative ways for providing library services to support teaching learning process during Covid-19 pandemic: a study of degree Colleges affiliated to Assam University, Silchar**

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose:** *The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 enforced the libraries to rethink, and prepare our libraries to overcome such situation occurs in coming days. The alternative ways of providing library services through social media or digital libraries on doorstep for the continuation of teaching learning process. Re design our libraries according to the standard operation protocol (SOP) such as social distancing, regular sanitization of library, wearing mask and vaccinate users and end users to prevent, secure and continue our library services while resume again.*

**Findings:** *The college libraries have utilized different Social Media Networks as an alternative for providing library services. Mostly used Whatsapp 100% and 45.5% used facebook remaining used Youtube for the continuation of academic affairs. The respondents are the view point that libraries should procure health related material, open a health section, conduct webinar, etc to aware Covid-19 and authentic information for Healthcare and knowledge.*

**Originality:** *This is an original research work carried out by the researcher based on the qualitative and quantitative data collected through Google Form distributed to the college librarians of affiliated colleges of Assam University, Silchar.*

**Keywords:** *Alternative ways for Providing Library Services, Effect of Covid-19 in Libraries, Academic Library, College Library, Assam University.*

## **1. Introduction**

“Change is inevitable, change is constant”, especially after the Covid-19 Pandemic in every sector including library service in all around the Globe. Today being as a professional we should find out the alternatives for providing our library service in the need of the user community to support teaching learning process during the lockdown period. Covid-19 is not the end is a message for the coming future to develop, prepare our library infrastructure to remain proactive in any situation occurs like Covid-19 for the

generation to come. The present study tries to understand the alternative way of library services provided during the lockdown period to continue the library service to support teaching learning fraternity. The online library services through social media and its effects on library user have been largely observed and its future expectations on libraries are quite positive for the days to come.

## **2. Background of the Study**

During the lockdown period library services were disturbed due to rapid spread of Corona viruses. Therefore, the library used different online media to provide teaching learning material and library services. The use of social media largely been used in the pandemic situations. The library develops some preventive measure for the safety and security of the user community to resume the regular services. The study aims to find out the best and effective way as an alternative to provide library service in that situation and the preparation of libraries while resume the regular services.

## **3. Scope of the Study**

The present study is to understand the best and easier way of providing library service followed by the college librarians during the pandemic situation. Social media has a large impact on providing library services during lockdown period. This study is to understand best alternative way of providing library service in such situation and its effectiveness. The experience of handling such situation and the precaution for the future libraries will help to overcome such situation when regular library services will resume. This study is limited to degree colleges affiliated to Assam University only.

## **4. Related Literature Review**

**Jana, Anupta and Rout, Rosalien (2021)** the outbreak of Covid-19 has interrupted the physical mode of library services. The study preparedness of libraries have addressed recent pandemic of top 100 academic institutions in India. The findings of the study depicted that 64% of the libraries have failed to secure their score of 50% on predefined criteria.

**Friday, James, Chidozie, Oluchi and Chukwuma, Laretta Ngozi (2020)** they discussed the use of social media for library services, adoption of social media for library services in the Covid-19 and issues of social media for library services in the Covid-19. The outbreak has given the rise to the adoption of social media tools such as Facebook,

WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Podcasts, Flickr and blogs, Instant Messaging (IM), and Rich Site Summary (RSS) in libraries.

**Neog, Shekorjoti (2020)** has conducted a study on ‘library services through social media during lockdown’. He found that open Access resources were most delivered library services during lockdown, WhatsApp is the most used social media in that time.

**Mestri Deelip D (2020)** has conducted a study on ‘Reopening libraries in Covid-19 pandemic: challenges and recommendations’. The study suggests to revise the library policy based on the recommendations of SOP and the level of the intensity of the pandemic while reopening the services.

**Ladan, Haruna and Madu (2020)** the study ‘Covid-19 Pandemic and Social Media News in Nigeria: the role of libraries and library Associations in Dissemination of Information’ found that the libraries and library associations have a role to play as genuine information source against all the fake news and conspiracy theories to fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **5. Objectives of the Study**

- i) To find out the alternative ways for providing library services during the pandemic situation in the degree colleges affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.
- ii) To identify the different social media services used to provide library services during the pandemic.
- iii) To understand the different types of library services provided during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- iv) To study the effectiveness of delivering library services through social media in the degree colleges affiliated to Assam University, Silchar

## **6. Research Methodology**

The present study is a descriptive research based on Google survey using Google Form among the college libraries of affiliated degree colleges of Assam University, Silchar. There are 29 degree colleges in the jurisdiction of Assam University. The quantitative and qualitative primary data collected from the college librarian as per the questionnaire distributed through Google form during the survey.

- i) **Sample Selection:** For the convenient and the better study outcome the present study selected the whole population of 29 Degree Colleges affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.

- ii) **Data Sources:** The entire data sources are the College library data provided by the college librarian as per the questionnaire distributed through Google Form during the survey.
- iii) **Data Collection Tools:** An online scheduled questionnaire was designed and distributed using Google form to the College Librarians of the whole population in the study.
- iv) **Data Collection:** Both qualitative and quantitative primary data provided by the college librarian as per the scheduled questionnaire distributed using Google form during the survey are collected as per the study objectives for research outcome.
- v) **Data Analysis:** The collected data were analyzed using the statistical technique of ranking, rating, frequency distribution and percentage and graphical representation to find out the research outcome as per study objectives.

## 7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

In the present study the total populations are the affiliated degree colleges of Assam University. There total numbers of 29 degree colleges selected as a whole population and distributed scheduled questionnaire in the form of Google Form to collect the data as per research objectives. There are total numbers of 22 (75.86%) colleges responded and participated in this study.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaire and Responses

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Total Distributed questionnaire</b>	29	100%
<b>Responses Received</b>	22	75.86%
<b>Not Responses</b>	7	24.14%%

### 7.1 Alternative Ways for Providing Library Resources and Services.

Due to the breakup of regular library services by Covid-19, libraries have to find out alternative ways for providing library services during the pandemic to continue its day to day activities. Social media has been largely used for providing library services due its large accessibility among the library users and the common people in general. The present study shows the maximum numbers of respondents used social media networks for library

services. 81.8% used Social Networking, 9.1% used Google meet, 4.5% used Google meet for providing library services.

Table 2: Alternative ways for library services during Covid-19

Sl. No.	Alternative used for Library Service	Frequency	Percentage
1	Digital Library	1	4.50%
2	Social Networking	18	81.80%
3	Google meet	2	9.10%
4	Zoom	1	4.50%

### 7.1.1 Graphical representation of alternative ways for library services

From the pie chart given below reveals that social media is the common and most usable platform to provide library services in the study population due its large popularity and availability. So social media such as Whatsapp and Facebook can be a better option incoming days for providing library services at least possible efforts in right time to the right user in a right manner.

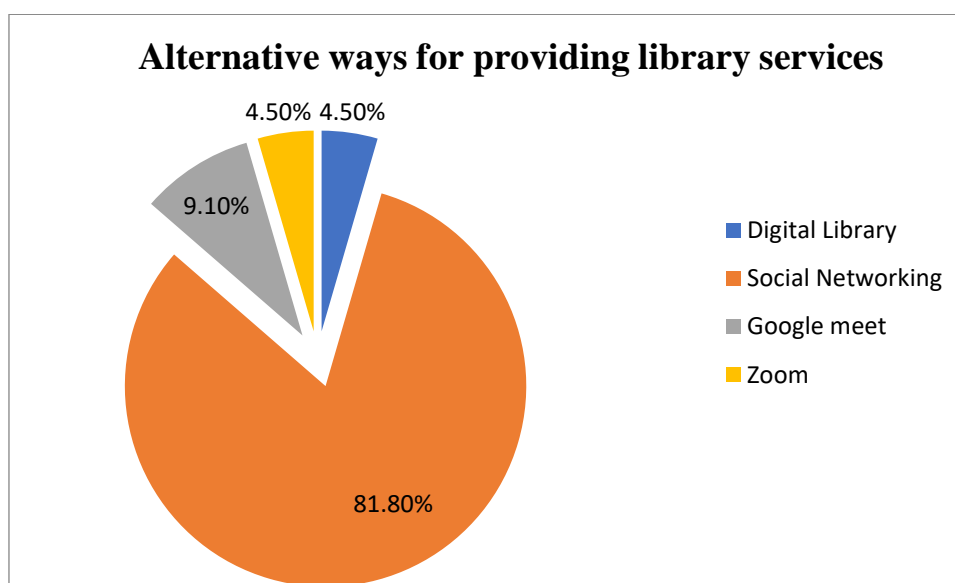


Figure 1: Alternative ways for providing library services during Covid-19

### 7.2 Active Use of SNS in Libraries

In this study, 6 parameters were given to find out how actively the library provides information through social networking services. 68.2% responds Moderately Active in providing information through SNS. 22.7% responds as Active only on some issues and 4.5% are very active on proving information through SNS.

Table 3: Active use of SNS for providing information

Sl. No.	Use of SNS for providing information	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very active	1	4.50%
2	Moderately active	15	68.20%
3	Less active	0	0%
4	Active only on some issues	5	22.70%
5	Not active at all	0	0%
6	Don't know/ Unavailable	1	4.50%

### 7.2.1 Graphical representation active use of SNS for providing services

In the following graph it can be seen that active use of SNS for providing information. Most of the respondents are very comfortable and reliable for providing information through social Networking Sites. 68.2% moderately active using SNS for providing information. The impacts of social networking sites are very effective among the college librarians of Barak valley to share information during Covid-19.

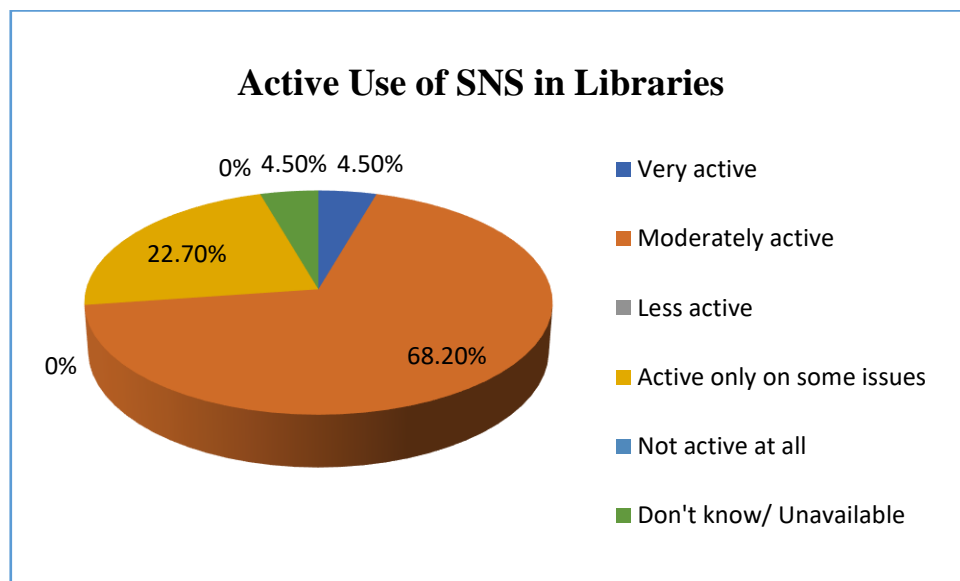


Figure 2: Active use of SNS for providing information

### 7.3 Different Social Media Used as Tool for Delivering Library Services

Social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook became a part of our life to be associated with the people we need, therefore these platform has been used as a tool for providing library resources and services during the pandemic by the librarian of study area as usually. Data revealed that 100% of the present population used Whatsapp and 45.5% used facebook remaining used Youtube for the continuation of academic affairs.

Table 4: Different Social Media used for providing library resources and services

Sl. No.	Different Social Media Used for Delivering Library Services	Frequency	Percentage
1	Facebook	10	45.50%
2	Whatsapp	22	100%
3	YouTube	5	22.70%
4	MySpace	0	0%
5	LinkedIn	3	13.60%

### 7.3.1 Graphical representation different social media used for providing library resources and services

In the Bar diagram all (100%) respondents used Whatsapp 45.5% used facebook, 22.70% use Youtube and 13.60% used LinkedIn social media sites for providing library services at doorstep in the lockdown time.

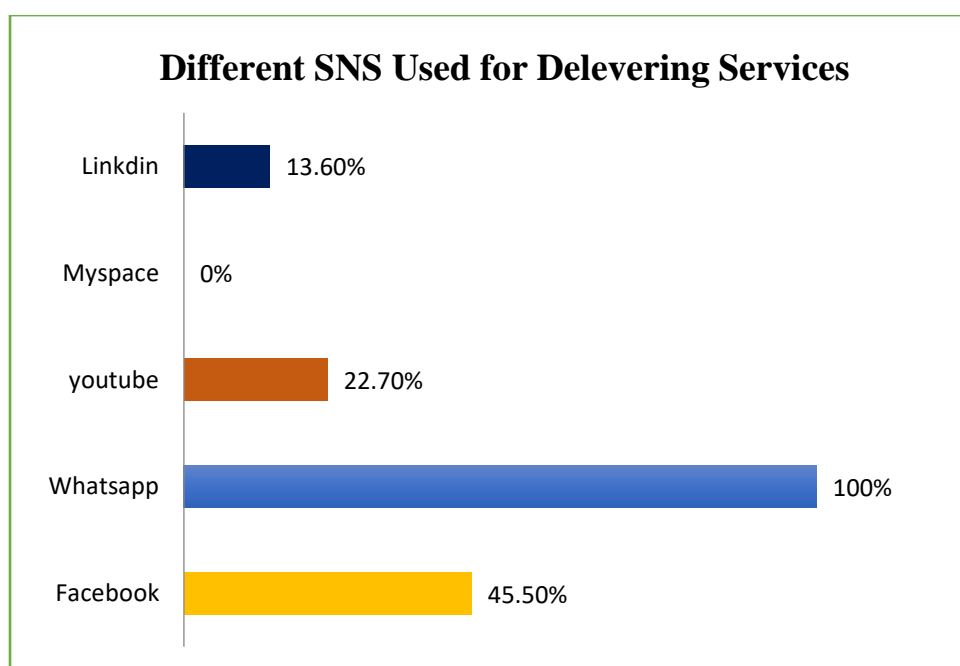


Figure 3: Different social media used for providing library services

### 7.4 Different Library Services Provided via SNS

From the above discussion we can generalized that social media has been largely used for providing library services and this is going to be the better option in coming days. In the present table the respondents have used SNS for providing different services. Most of them 72.70% have delivered current awareness services, 59.10% provided Newspaper clipping



Service 54.50% provided SDI, Reference Service and NLIST Services. 50% respondents delivered document delivery service and notifications of new information.

Table 5: Different library services provided via SNS

Sl. No.	Different library services	Frequency	Percentage
1	Current awareness Service(CAS)	16	72.70%
2	Selective dissemination o information (SDI)	12	54.50%
3	Document Delivery services	11	50%
4	Newspaper clippings	13	59.10%
5	Notification of newly published resources	11	50.00%
6	Reference services	12	54.50%
7	YouTube videos	3	13.60%
8	N-List Services	12	54.50%
9	E-content	6	27.30%

#### 7.4.1 Graphical representation of different library services provided via SNS

In the following graph current awareness service has extensively delivered through SNS followed by Newspaper Clipping services, SDI, Reference service and N-List services as per the data received.

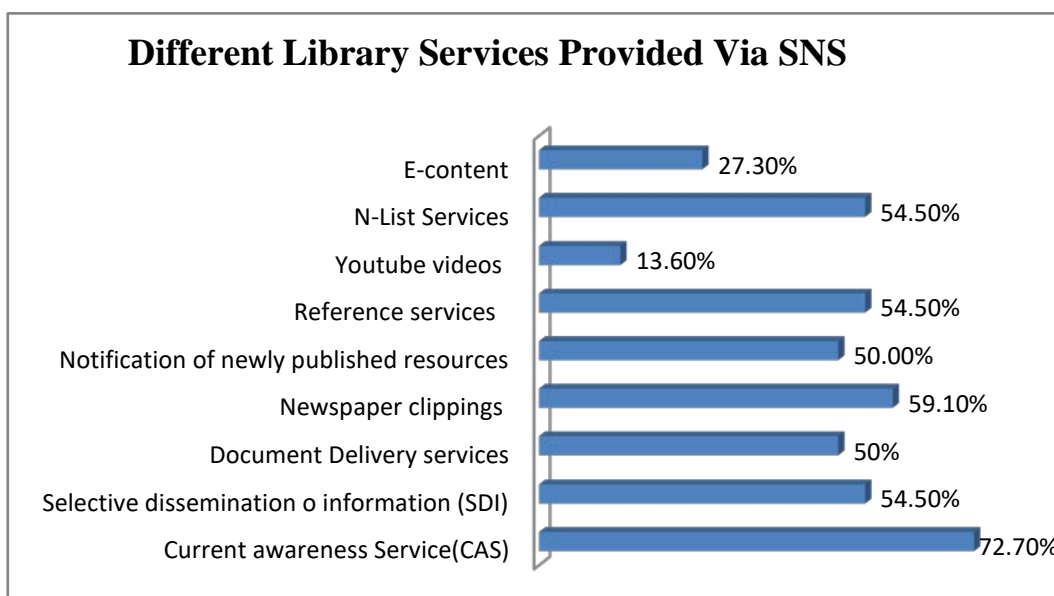


Figure 4: Different library services provided via SNS

## 7.5 Effectiveness of Library Services Provided through SNS

To find out the usage and effectiveness of library services provided online to support teaching learning process. The services provided online through social media are very much effective. 81.80% satisfied with the service provided while 9.1% responded excellent feedback on the services they provided and only 4.5% received outstanding feedback.

Table 6: Effectiveness of Library Services Provided through SNS

Sl. No.	Effectiveness of Library Services Provided through SNS	Frequency	Percentage
1	Outstanding	1	4.50%
2	Satisfactory	18	81.80%
3	Excellent	2	9.10%
4	Poor	0	0%
5	No idea	1	4.50%

### 7.5.1 Graphical Representation of Effectiveness of Library Services Provided

The following graph depicts that 81.8% of the library users are satisfied according to the feedback taken by the college librarians about their library services provided through online. Therefore, the data reveals that the library services provided through social media are effective and fulfilled the need of the user in the pandemic.

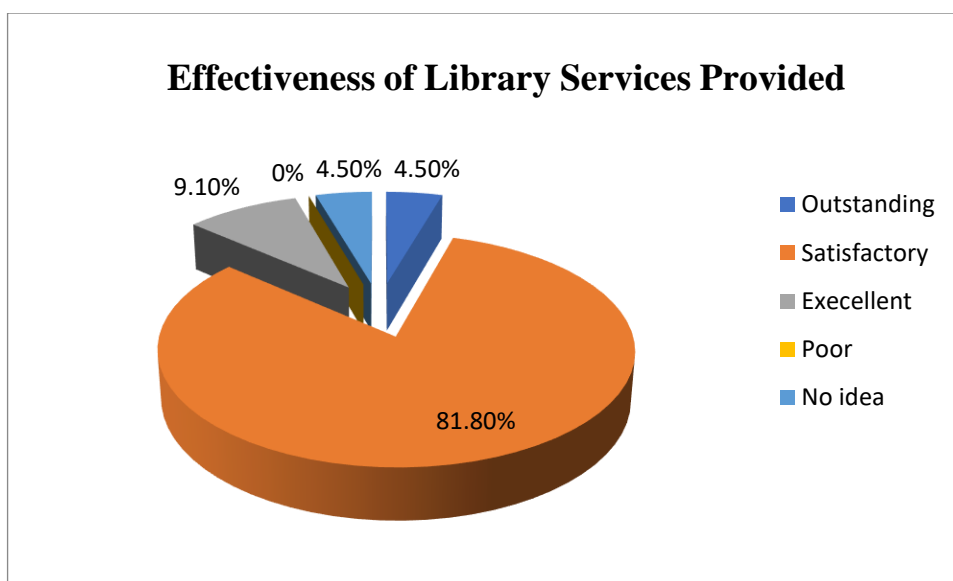


Figure 5: Effectiveness of Library Services Provided

## 7.6 Reasons for Using Social Networking Site of Library

To find out the reasons for social media has been used for providing library services, responses asked, 72.70% responded that they are using SNS for providing news on library services, 68.2% to provide information about library events 54.5% used to provide door step information and online reference services. 59.1 used SNS to provide information about Library new Arrivals.

Table 7: Reasons for using social networking site of library

Sl. No.	Reasons for Using Social Networking Site	Frequency	Percentage
1	Provide door step information	12	54.50%
2	Provide information about Library events	15	68.20%
3	Provide information about Library new arrivals	13	59.10%
4	provide news on library services	16	72.70%
5	Provide online reference services	12	54.50%
6	Time saving	11	50%

## 7.7 Suggestion to Improve Access to Health Information

Suggestions were asked in the survey from the respondents how a library can improve health related information and its access to the users. 90.90% suggested that library should procure health related library materials, 63.60 % suggested to Establish Health section for in the library for health related information and organize webinar and awareness programmes etc.

Table 8: Suggestion to improve access to health information

Suggestion to Improve Access to Health Information	Frequency	Percentage
A Health-Related Section should be established in the library	14	63.60%
Health Center of institution Should organize health awareness program regularly	14	63.60%
Doctor or Health-Care workers should be Friendly	12	54.50%
Library should procure basic health-related reading materials	20	90.90%
Health Center Should organize Health-Literacy Webinar	16	72.70%

## 7.8 Different Online Sources of Awareness of Covid-19

Prevention is better than cure, it is more effective in relation with corona virus as there are no authentic medicine so far. The source of awareness can lead you to the correct direction

or may mislead. Therefore the authentic source of materials can play a vital role for correct awareness. The study shows that 59.1% used Ministry of Health Bulletin, 54.5% used Whatsapp information, 40.9% read WHO report or Television News for getting awareness of covid-19.

Table 9: Different online sources of awareness of covid-19

Sl. No.	Different Sources of Awareness of Covid-19	Frequency	Percentage
1	Advertisement on face book	6	27.30%
2	Message received in WhatsApp	12	54.50%
3	Ministry of health bulletin	13	59.10%
4	News on television	9	40.90%
5	Medical journal report	5	22.70%
6	WHO report	9	40.90%
7	Internet	11	50%
8	Aarogya Setu App	10	45.50%

### 7.9 Technical Support Provided for Conducting Online Classes

The way of teaching learning online took place in the pandemic and the role of libraries and the librarians become more active for supporting the entire teaching learning process. There many more duties came to the librarian for conducting online classes and providing reading materials. Being as a technically sound professional librarian plays vital role in training for conducting classes on Zoom/ Google Meet, supporting digital classes, generating e contents and creating videos etc.

Table 10: Technical Support provided for conducting online classes

Technical Support provided to Faculties	Frequency	Percentage
Hands-on Zoom/Google meet	16	72.70%
Webinars on a different topic	13	59.10%
Supporting for handling digital classes	6	27.30%
Supporting for creating videos	7	31.80%
Supporting to generate e-content.	8	36.40%
Planning to do.	1	4.50%

### 7.9.1 Graphical representation of Technical Support provided for conducting online classes

Form the following chart we can understand that librarians are playing a crucial role in conducting online classes and support in the teaching learning process. 72.7% of respondents have provided hands on Zoom or Google Meet, 59.1% conducted Webinars on different topic and other support such as handling digital classes, generating e-content, and videos etc.

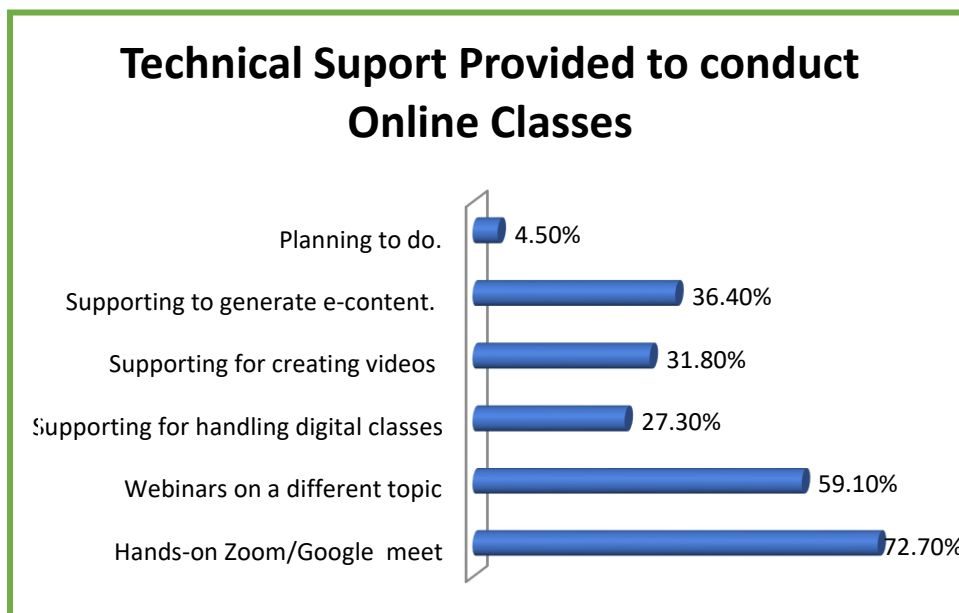


Figure 6: Technical Support provided for conducting online classes

### 7.10 Suggestions Received for the Preparation of Libraries While Services Resume

Suggestions were asked from the respondents about the preparation of libraries to resume regular services. 86.4% of the respondents suggested organizing Webinars for college students and Faculties for making them aware about Covid-19 and 86.4% suggested to inform the college authority if any symptoms occurs for better safety and security of the entire user community. 81.8% suggested to follow Standard Operation Protocol issued by the Govt. such as making social distancing, wearing musk and frequently sanitize the hands and the library etc. 59% of the view point that adequate financial assistance should be provided by the College Authority to develop necessary infrastructure to fight Covid-19 pandemic. 72.7% suggested that Library should also Procure E- Resources with Remote Access Facility.

Table 11: Suggestions Received for the preparation of libraries while resume

Sl. No.	Suggestions Received to Fight Covid-19	Frequency	Percentage
1	To Observe Covid-19 Appropriate Behavior.	14	63.6%
2	Need to organize Online Webinar for College Students and Faculty Members for making them aware about all the matter related to Covid-19.	19	86.4%
3	Adequate financial Assistance Should be provided by the College Authority to Develop Necessary Infrastructure to fight covid-19 pandemic.	13	59.1%
4	To Follow all Sops Issued by the Govt.	18	81.8%
5	After Opening the Library, all Precautions of Social Distancing, Wearing of Mask and Frequent Sanitize the Hands should be Followed.	18	81.8%
6	Library Should also Procure E- Resources with Remote Access Facility.	16	72.7%
7	In case of any Symptoms of Covid-19, Immediately College Authority should be Informed and Take Necessary Help from the Doctors.	19	86.4%

## 8. Major Findings

- i) The present study shows the maximum numbers of respondents used social media networks for library services. 81.8% used Social Networking, 9.1% used Google meet, 4.5% used Google meet for providing library services.
- ii) Most of the respondents are very comfortable and reliable for providing information through social Networking Sites. 68.2% moderately active using SNS for providing information and 4.5% are very active on proving information through SNS.
- iii) Data revealed that 100% of the present population used Whatsapp and 45.5% used facebook remaining used Youtube for the continuation of academic affairs.
- iv) In the present study the respondents have used SNS for providing different services. Most of them 72.70% have delivered current awareness services, 59.10% provided Newspaper clipping Service 54.50% provided SDI, Reference Service and NLIST Services.
- v) The services provided online through social media are very much effective. 81.80% satisfied with the service provided while 9.1% responded excellent feedback on the services they provided and only 4.5% received outstanding feedback.

- vi) Out of total population 72.70% of the respondents are using SNS for providing news on library services, 68.2% to provide information about library events 54.5% used to provide door step information and online reference services.
- vii) From the total respondents 90.90% suggested that library should procure health related library materials, 63.60 % suggested to Establish Health section for in the library for health related information and organize webinar and awareness programmes etc. 72.7% suggested that Library should also Procure E- Resources with Remote Access Facility.

## **9. Suggestions**

The present study suggests to keep in mind the following suggestion while resuming the regular library services.

- i) Follow Standard Operation Protocol issued by the Govt. such as making social distancing, wearing mask and frequently sanitize the hands and the library etc.
- ii) To inform the college authority if any symptoms occurs for better safety and security of the entire user community
- iii) Adequate financial assistance should be provided by the College Authority to develop necessary infrastructure to fight Covid-19 pandemic.
- iv) Library should also Procure E- Resources with Remote Access Facility to overcome any situation arise.
- v) Library should open Health Section and procure Health related library material for the Health information and awareness and also conduct webinar etc.

## **10. Conclusion**

From the above discussion, analysis and interpretation it can be concluded that the use of social media are largely been used in the pandemic situations for providing library services. Librarians have contributed in the online teaching learning process for supporting technical guidance and creating e-content and handling of digital classes etc. The suggestions received from the respondents about Covid-19 awareness and how to fight are the view point that libraries should procure health related material, open a health section, conduct webinar, etc. For conducting smooth functioning of the library, the authority should develop some Sops and use frequent Sanitizer in the library and the wearing of compulsory face mask and hand sanitizer etc.

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