

EDITORIAL

BUILDING AGILE AND RESILIENT LIBRARIES FOR THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

The first positive case of COVID-19 was reported in Kerala in January 2020 and later spread to other places in our country. The coronavirus pandemic forced governments of all nations to impose lockdown to avoid spreading the virus. As a precautionary measure, the government of India declared the closure of all institutions in the country from 16th March 2020 onwards. But the widespread of corona outbreak across the continent made this pandemic tragic. More than one million deaths reported from all over the World made this pandemic one of the worst in the history of mankind. India was one of the seriously affected countries. It was having a profound impact in the healthcare system, business, education, economies and all sectors of society. When thousands of people were infected with the virus across the globe, all human activities came to a halt. Many people lost their jobs as business activities remained closed. Educational institutions closed their door, and the process of learning was shifted from traditional to online mode.

Libraries of all types became closed across the country to contain the spread of the virus. The closing of libraries and stopping of access to physical collections forced our libraries to adopt new technology, which is the way out to resilience in this challenging time. Even though we all really missed our favourite libraries, we saw the creativity and dedication of our library

professionals taking steps to continue serving the customers beyond the library's four walls. Many libraries were shifted to digital in a short period during the pandemic period. Libraries expanded access to digital content in various forms viz. e-books, audiobooks, streaming services.

If not properly cleaned, coronavirus can survive on surfaces inside the library for days. Therefore regular process of wiping down the tables, desks, furniture, door handles and other surfaces is necessary. The facility for hand sanitizers is also essential. In fact, our library professionals have demonstrated their skills, empathy, and flexibility in this lockdown period.

In this situation, publishers and e-resource providers also responded quickly to this pandemic. They supported librarians in their mission to fulfil uninterrupted delivery and reliable information services to their patrons. Publishers created Covid hub that includes podcasts, presentations, legislations etc. Some of them even compiled e-resources packets that included toolkits and resources for librarians.

Almost two years into the global pandemic, just like the rest of the workforce, librarians are navigating through a drastic change within a short duration of time. Library services have

transformed in this short period. The changes we have enacted during the pandemic are still continuing, and a new service delivery model came into existence.

Resiliency is defined as the 'tendency to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change' (www.merriam-webster.com). It was found that those organisations that have a culture of resiliency have fared better. For building resilience into the daily professional work, standardisation of work is essential. Delivery of library and information services during the pandemic period has changed. We have to absorb the changes that has happened. Let us be efficient problem solvers and work together for the progress and strength of libraries and the needs and satisfaction of patrons. Let us instil resilience in our professional work and services.

In this issue

This issue carries ten papers and a book review. Four of the papers deal with the theme 'Agile and Resilient Libraries in the Post COVID-19 World'. The rest of the papers deal with bibliometrics, library use, Job stress, library websites, best practices, copyright etc.

Omorodion et al. in their paper, examined ICT competency and Perceived Ease of Use as determinants of LIS lecturers' willingness in adopting remote teaching amidst COVID-19 crisis in Nigeria. A joint study by Obinyan and Igbinovia investigated the work stress and job performance among library professionals in the Edo state of Nigeria. Citation

analysis of doctoral theses in Library and Information Science accepted by North Eastern Hill University has been studied jointly by Simte and Phuritsabam. What are the best practices followed in the libraries of Arts and Science colleges affiliated to Thiruvalluvar university? This aspect has been studied by Dr. Abdul Latheef of Islamiah College, Vaniambadi. A collaborative study by Narasappa and Dr. P. Dharani Kumar deals with the utilisation of library and information services by the faculty members of the pre-university colleges in the Shivamogga district of Karnataka.

The study by Bhavya Surendran is a content analysis of the library web pages of the polytechnic college websites in Kerala. A comparative analysis of copyright acts in India and Bangladesh has been studied by Md Sharif Hossain (Bangladesh) and Joseph I. Thomas (India).

The last three are the papers that secured top ranks in the 'KELPRO Best Student Paper Award 2021' competition. The competition's theme was 'Designing agile and resilient libraries for the post covid 19 World', The competition was held to encourage the students of LIS to contribute research papers on current trends in the discipline and promote communication, co-operation and unity among the budding professionals. An expert committee consisting of senior faculty members and senior librarians under the chairmanship of the editor adjudicated the papers. The papers were judged based on

- *The originality of thought and observation*

- *Depth of research and scholarship*
- *The topicality of the problem addressed*
- *Quality of ideas, research methods, results or argument*
- *Quality of writing and referencing*

The first prize of the KELPRO Best Student Paper – 2021 goes to Priya Vaidya of Aligarh Muslim University. In this study, the investigator determined the status of library services and functions during the lockdown in the state and deemed university libraries in India. Further, the study also elicited the librarians' experiences while rendering information needs of library users and evaluated the library programs.

The second prize winner is Vishnumaya R.S. of the University of Kerala. This paper explored the activities of Delhi Public Library System during COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the good practices done to the new normal era.

The paper which scored third prize is by Aysha Zakhiya, A. of the University of Calicut who analysed the blended skills requirement during COVID-19 and library professionals' role at the University of Calicut, Kerala.

The rest of the selected suitable papers in the competition will be published in the subsequent issues of this journal. Congratulations to all the winners and other students for participating in this competition.

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Editor