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Changing Pattern of Library Policies and Procedures During Covid-19 Pandemic in Selected College Libraries of Delhi NCR

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Abstract: The study explores the changing pattern of Delhi NCR College libraries policies and procedures during the covid-19 pandemic by analyzing various multiple data set. The survey method was used to acquire data needed for the current investigation. For this purpose, a well-structured questionnaire consisting of nominal and ordinal data was designed. Covid-19 pandemic more impressively affected the overall functioning pattern of the college libraries and in response to this scenario the librarians and library authority adopted new approach to provide better services to their patrons by using modern digital technology. The present study outcome will definitely a readymade guide for the librarians or library authority to overcome from any emergency and providing the standard level services to their patrons or library users. Covid-19 pandemic impacted the traditional pattern of libraries in term of budget, ICTs application, collection development and provided opportunities to librarians with a new approach of library service model. This study will direct and provide information on how College libraries should be ready for post-pandemic scenario**.**

Keywords: Covid-19 Outbreak, College Libraries, Library Policies, Library Procedures

I. INTRODUCTION

As per World Health Organization (WHO) report, Corona virus or SARS-CoV-2 was first noted in the city of Wuhan, China, where the cases of mysterious pneumonia were coming rapidly in various hospitals of the city and gradually spread all over the world. **(WHO, 2021)**. SARS 2 had turbulence all the sections of human setup, including business, services, entertainment, politics, and many more. Information centres and libraries are not exempt from this pandemic. The pandemic situation makes it impossible for traditional library services to meet user needs; as a result, libraries has moved to a virtual platform. Libraries were looking into modifying policies and procedures as a requirement, due to corona virus pandemic, in which online library services played a significant part in direct dialogue between libraries and users**. (Abubakar, 2021).** In other side of corona virus pandemic, which was to be considered as positive impact in term of using digital technology usage enhancement of e-resources for the betterment of library users. **(Lobo and Dhuri, 2022)**. Libraries policies and procedures had modified or created in the light of health crisis so that consumers could receive better services using contemporary technology in such context the pattern of information provided on the library websites, use of electronic resources pattern and use of social media were changed as per needs and requirements of library patrons. **(Connell, 2021).** In scenario of reaching to library consumers the librarians and library authority adopted new approach to marketing their products and services with special reference to covid-19 outbreak. All the information associated with spread of corona virus uploaded on the library websites, GOI guidelines, rules, regulations and were also uploaded, policies of issue, return, renewal fine remote access were also uploaded so that a new service model of library can be provided for the betterment of library and its users in the health emergency

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, libraries had specific policies regarding daily operations in various sections of the library, such as Acquisition, where a greater emphasis is placed on the purchase of library materials. However, the policy was changed in the context of the SARS 2 outbreak to lead the possibility of purchasing more electronic items in the event of a health emergency. Similar changes were made in the section of circulation, including extending the lending term, waiving penalties, reducing library hours, and introducing online circulation. The phenomena of change from tradition to modern library policies was quite difficult in term of formulating, implementing of policies for the betterment of library users for the librarian and library authority, various obstacles and challenges were also faced by them such as hosting large programme, administrative difficulties, less opportunity for personal assistance, guide to library users, internet limited access, difficulty in adopted new technology, providing individualized services just to a select few customers, having trouble finding appropriate materials, addressing the digital divide and making technology accessible, limiting oneself to in-person support.

In response to problems and obstacles, librarians and library authority formulated various policies and procedures to provide better services to library users along with more focus on remote services which was the demand of covid-19 phenomena. Social media like Facebook, twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp was the main theme on which the more focus was given so that the personal communication can be accomplished with the users for the betterment of user's perspective and library perspective as well. In order to trace which policies were affected, the present study found that all the policies which were formulated or modified during the

covid-19 were significantly played a vital role for the user's perspective along with high standard of service model in the context of covid-19 outbreak. Therefore, the present study investigates that how library policies and procedures were formulated or modified during the covid-19 outbreak specially in college libraries of Delhi NCR and how these policies were beneficial form the perspective of users so it tried to answers below investigation enquiry.

RQ1: How SARS 2 change pattern of Library policies from tradition to modern with new approach.

RQ2: How much did librarians struggle to use ICTs when implementing a new strategy during SARS 2 Scenario

RQ3: Is SARS 2 epidemic a disaster for librarians or a chance to provide better services by adopting a new approach

II. Literature review

Prior to conducting the research on the topic library policies and procedures during the covid-19 outbreak, a variety of reports, articles, books, and other materials were carefully read to determine the trends of library policies and procedures over the previous ten years, particularly in the context of covid-19 as literature is growing on the theme covid-19 outbreak and libraries. During the health emergency librarians and library authority followed the precautionary instructions of GOI and accordance to these library policies and procedures with new approach were created and modifies in order to provide services to library users at any circumstances **(Heady C, 2021**) and officer more services and service models by specially college libraries to their patrons **(Ashiq M, 2022).** In order to response to unique circumstances libraries were provided services and change their library policies through online mode channels with a purpose to personal touch with their users and also tried to reopening the library as and when required with accordance to government rules and regulations (**Samanta, M., 2020)** along with a hope that world wild web is the only channel or point which can be helpful to reach library users and find out the requirements of library patrons by more focusing on reference service model which would be based on digital technology which is the necessary requirement of current scenario (**Yu, P. Y., 2022**). Covid-19 impacted not only business service model, at global level, various institutions and association but also library and information centres in the context of service and its operations in the scenario of covid-19 outbreak. In such circumstances library employees' skills and competencies played a significant role to provide library services (**Asif, M., & K. Singh, K., 2020)** in this scenario the role of health institutions librarian's increased critically to provide the services to their clientele by using digital information technology (**Ali, M., 2020).** Prior to SARS 2 outbreak, e-resources played a significant role from the library's perspective. However, during the covid-19 outbreak, their significance increased as different subscription models were introduced by librarians who modified existing policies in order to obtain the most e-resources at the lowest possible cost and make them available to library users (**Craft, A. R., 2021)** along with marketing of these services and products various methods were used like descriptive qualitative analysis, content analysis of library websites and many more **Puspitasari, D. I., 2021)**. With the help of various multimedia platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and other social media tools, the librarian or library in charge introduced digital education initiatives to the patrons of the library. From the perspective of library staff, various social media trainings were also introduced **(Teolis, M. G., 2021).** Prior to the covid-19 outbreak and throughout the outbreak, all services and amenities were evaluated from the viewpoint of library patrons in order to provide the finest services in accordance with changed existing regulations so that a clear-cut image can be traced in terms of usage analysis of library materials **(Beglou, R. R., 2022**)

III. Methodology

The survey method was used to acquire data needed for the current investigation. For this purpose, a well-structured questionnaire consisting of nominal and ordinal data was designed. The basic random sampling approach, which emphasizes that every unit or proportion had an opportunity to be chosen in the sample, was utilized as the sampling methodology or method for the current investigation or study. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents through email and personal visit and data was analysed by using MS Excel and SPSS 21.0

IV. Sample Size

The formula developed by Rehman Bukhari in the year 2020 was employed for the current research investigation to represent the appropriate sample size. The whole detail is represented in pictorial form as given below

Bukhari Sample Size Calculator 2020	
Confidence Level	95%
Sample Proportion (p)	0.5
Margin of Error (e)	0.05
Population Size (N)	856
Alpha divide by 2	0.025
Z-Score (z)	1.96
Sample Size	265

Formula for known population;

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\frac{z^2 \times p\,(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left(\frac{z^2 \times p\,(1-p)}{e^2 N}\right)}$$

As shown in the visual representation, the current research study's sample size must be at least 265 colleges for a population of 856 to be considered legitimate and valid**. 285** College Libraries were selected for the study

V. COVERAGE

Library changing policies, procedures during covid-19 outbreak and how these changes impacted the Library Services and library patrons were traced. The study is limited to only Delhi NCR Colleges libraries

VI. Findings/Results

The result or finding was derived on the basis of two category changing pattern of library policies and changing pattern of library operation during covid-19 outbreak. Each section was comprised of North Worthy Findings regarding Library Policies and Practices during SARS 2 Scenario

1. Demographic Profile of Librarians

Information was collected from librarians who provided library services during SARS 2 Scenario. During data collection, librarians had offered to answer questions regarding their age, gender, education level, salary scale, grants, and work status. The respondent's demographic data indicates in Table 1 which shows population involved in providing library services. Most of the respondents were male (64%) and Female percentage was (36%). Respondents from age group of 20-30 (19%) followed by 31-40 (41%), 41-50 (29%) and 51-60 (11%). The (58.5%) of respondent were having a post graduate degree, graduate were (8.5%), M.Phil. were (16.5%) and Ph. D (16.5%). (20.4%) respondents were 6th pay and (37.1%) were having 7th pay as well as (25.3%) were of respondent from consolidated pay and rest of the respondent (17.2%). Employment status of respondents was (53.3%) Regular, (30.5%) Ad hoc, (9%) guest and (7%) were other

Table 1 Demographic Data of Librarians

Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	190	**64%**
	Female	95	**36%**
Age Group	20-30	55	**19.3%**
	31-40	117	**41.1%**
	41-50	82	**28.8%**
	51-60	31	**10.9%**
Education	Graduate	24	**8.4%**
	Postgraduate	167	**58.6%**
	M. Phil	47	**16.5%**
	Ph. D	47	**16.5%**
Pay scale	6th pay	58	**20.4%**
	7th pay	106	**37.2%**
	Consolidated	72	**25.3%**
	Any other	49	**17.2%**
Grants	Government grant	89	**31.2%**
	Institutional grant	195	**68.4%**
Employment status	Regular	152	**53.3%**
	Ad hoc	87	**30.5%**
	Guest	**26**	**9.1%**

2. Creation of Library Policies During Covid-19

The functioning style of library from traditional to recent modernity was changed because of SARS 2. Prior to SARS 2 outbreak the college libraries were also using the modern technology but in the context of health emergency librarians were adopted new policies or regulation for providing library services in better way. Covid-19 outbreak gave an opportunity to librarian or library authority to use ultramodern technology for the betterment of academic information centres patrons. The current investigation found that librarians or respondents were created new policies or modified existing policies in the context of covid-19 outbreak as shown in table 2.

Table 2 Have you created any specific regulations for your library according to the recent COVID-19 a global outbreak?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	285	100.0	100.0	100.0

3. Library Key Policies

For every section of library a well defined policies were made for smooth functiong of library keeping in mind the user perspective. Table 3 provides insights into the key policies that respondents consider important in the context of library operations. Among the 1,030 responses, 227 respondents (22.0% of the cases) mentioned the significance of acquisition policies. This suggests that a portion of respondents believes that well-defined and effective acquisition policies are crucial for guiding the process of acquiring new materials and resources for the library. Acquisition policies often outline criteria for selecting materials, budget allocation, and vendor relations. The largest group of respondents, 285 respondents (27.7% of the cases), emphasized the importance of circulation policies. Circulation policies govern how library materials are checked out, renewed, and returned by patrons. These policies impact the accessibility and borrowing experience for library users. Similar to circulation policies, 285 respondents (27.7% of the cases) highlighted the significance of access policies. Access policies typically cover areas such as library hours, user privileges, access to digital resources, and the use of library facilities. These policies are essential for ensuring equitable access to library services and resources. Administrative policies were mentioned by 233 respondents (22.6% of the cases). Administrative policies encompass a

wide range of guidelines that govern the overall management and operation of the library. These policies can relate to staffing, budgeting, safety, and other administrative functions. In summary, the data in Table 12 indicates that respondents place importance on various policies within the library context. Acquisition policies, circulation policies, access policies, and administrative policies were all mentioned as key areas that contribute to effective library management and service provision. These policies help ensure that libraries operate efficiently, provide equitable access to resources, and meet the needs of their patrons

Table 3 Library Key Policies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	Acquisition Policies	227	22.0%	79.6%
	Circulation Policies	285	27.7%	100.0%
	Access Policies	285	27.7%	100.0%
	Administrative Policies	233	22.6%	81.8%
Total		1030	100.0%	361.4%

4. Safety Measurement for Library Staff

Safety measures implemented by librarians to provide safety to library staff and users so that the spread of COVID-19 can be restricetd. A quarter of the respondents, which amounts to 285 cases (25.0% of the total), mentioned the implementation of sanitization measures. This likely includes regular cleaning and disinfection of library facilities and materials to reduce the risk of virus transmission. An equal percentage of respondents, 285 cases (25.0% of the total), emphasized the importance of social distancing. Social distancing measures in libraries may involve rearranging furniture and workspaces to ensure that staff and patrons can maintain a safe physical distance from each other. Another 25.0% of respondents, equivalent to 285 cases, mentioned the requirement or recommendation of mask-wearing within the library premises. This is a common safety measure to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets that may contain the virus. The "other" category also accounts for 25.0% of responses, with 285 cases. This category likely includes a variety of additional safety measures that were implemented by libraries but not specified in the options provided. These measures could include contactless services, temperature checks, capacity limits, and more. In summary, the data in Table 4 indicates that libraries have taken a multi-faceted approach to to provide safety to library employees in the scenario of SARS 2. Sanitization, social distancing, and mask-wearing are some of the key safety measures implemented. Additionally, libraries have adopted various other measures to adapt to the changing circumstances and prioritize the health and safety of their communities during the pandemic as shown in table 4

Table 4 What safety measures did your library implement to Safe Employees and Users from the spread of COVID-19

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	Sanitization	285	25.0%	100.0%
	Social Distancing	285	25.0%	100.0%
	Mask	285	25.0%	100.0%
	other	285	25.0%	100.0%
Total		1140	100.0%	400.0%

5. Digital Transformation Initiated by Libraries

During th ecovid-19 outbreak college libraries were introduced digital transformation for the betterment of library users. Table 5 provides insights into the digital transformation initiatives undertaken by libraries in terms of regulation during SARS 2 Scenario. Approximately 28.5% of the surveyed respondents, or 185 cases, reported initiating policies related to "Digital Services to Library Patrons." This likely refers to policies and guidelines developed to enhance digital services provided to library users. These policies could include the expansion of online resources, virtual programming, or other digital initiatives to better serve patrons remotely. About 35.6% of the libraries, or 231 cases, introduced policies to facilitate "Remote Access to Library Collection." These policies likely aimed to ensure that library users could access and borrow digital materials, such as e-books, journals, and databases, from off-site locations. This was essential to support user which had not visit the traditional library during lockdowns and isolation.

A similar percentage, 35.8% or 232 cases, reported policies related to "Providing Material Through Social Media Tools." These policies likely involved guidelines on how information centres utilized social gathering platforms to communicate with their patrons and share library resources, updates, and virtual programming through these channels. In summary, Table 17 highlights that many libraries recognized the importance of digital transformation during the pandemic and implemented policies to support remote access to library collections, enhance digital services, and utilize social gathering platform for engaging to library consumers in digital space. These initiatives were crucial in adapting to the changing needs and preferences of library users during the pandemic

Table 5 What digital transformation initiated by your Library in term of policy?

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	Digital Services to Library Patrons	185	28.5%	64.9%
	Remote Access to Library collection	231	35.6%	81.1%
	Providing material through Social Media Tools	232	35.8%	81.4%
Total		648	100.0%	227.4%

6. Change in the Pattern of Library Procedures

Prior to the Covid-19 epidemic, college libraries operated normally. However, in response to the health emergency caused by the virus, librarians tried to change the pattern of ordinary procedures by reducing library hours, allowing for remote work, altering circulation policies, and offering value-added services. The impact of library hours during the COVID-19 epidemic is shown in Table 6 which indicates that all librarians reported that covid-19 affected library hours

Table 6 Library Hours Affected by Corona Virus

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
285	100.0	100.0	100.0

7. Library Offerings Added during SARS 2 Scenario

In the context of health emergency librarians tried to offer various library services to their patrons. Table 7 presents information about the library services that have been maintained or added by libraries throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. One third of the respondents (33.3%, or 285 responses) mentioned that they have continued or added audio book and e-book services during the pandemic. This indicates that providing access to digital reading materials has been a priority for libraries to ensure that patrons can access books and other resources remotely. An equal percentage of respondents (33.3%, or 285 responses) have maintained or added virtual services. Virtual services likely include a range of offerings such as virtual reference assistance, virtual events, and online access to library resources. These services have been crucial in maintaining library engagement with patrons in digital or online scenario. Another librarian (33.3%, or 285 responses) has kept up or introduced online programs. These online programs may include virtual workshops, lectures, and educational sessions offered to library users, contributing to their learning and engagement. In summary, libraries have made efforts to face the problem imposed by SARS 2 by offering and maintaining services such as access to digital books, virtual services, and online programs to continue serving their patrons effectively, even in a remote setting.

Table 7 Which library services from the list below have you kept up or added throughout the pandemic?

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	Audio book/e-book	285	33.3%	100.0%
	Virtual	285	33.3%	100.0%
	Online Program	285	33.3%	100.0%
Total		855	100.0%	300.0%

8. Remotely Offering of Library Products

Library in current scenario of digital modernity offers various products to their patrons in accordance to their needs and requirements using various digital technology, which increased in present circumstances due to pandemic. Table 8 provides insights into how libraries have modified their offerings to cater to patrons accessing library services remotely or online during SARS 2 Scenario. Nearly one-third of the respondents (30.6%, or 229 responses) stated that their libraries have increased their digital collection offerings. This suggests that libraries have expanded their digital material to provide a broader and more diverse range of resources for patrons who access the library remotely. Over one-third of the respondents (34.3%, or 259 responses) indicated that their libraries have enhanced their online catalogue and tools. This likely involves improving the library's online search and discovery tools, making it very simple for library user to use materials from the library's digital collection. A similar percentage of respondents (35.1%, or 259 responses) mentioned that their libraries have increased virtual programs. This suggests that libraries have been proactive in offering virtual events, workshops, and educational programs to engage and serve patrons who cannot visit the physical library. In summary, libraries have adapted to the remote and online needs of their patrons by expanding digital collections, improving online catalogue and search capabilities, and increasing virtual programs to maintain engagement and provide valuable services even in a remote setting.

Table 8 How has your library modified its offerings to serve patrons who access it remotely or online?

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	Increased Digital Collection Offerings	229	30.6%	80.0%
	Increased online catalog and tools	259	34.3%	90.0%
	Increased Virtual Program	259	35.1%	90.0%
Total		747	100.0%	300.0%

VII. Discussion

The findings, which are derived from the various tables indicates that SARS 2 Scenario effectively impacted the pattern of library policies and procedures. All college librarian reported that they have changed the existing library policies and procedures or created new one for the betterment of library users. Traditionally library had various policies with regard to various section of library like acquisition, administration, circulation, catalogue and many more, the policies regarding this section were created new or modified but more focus was given on acquisition and circulation policies because it directly affects the need and demand of library users or patrons. As per the instructions of GOI regarding Covid-19 all institutes or association were closed in such situation librarians tried to dissemination of information to their staff about safety measurement through various mode. Sanitization, social distancing and mask wearing instructions were given to library staff in view of their safety. For the betterment of library user's librarian initiated digital transformation in which more focus was given on social media tools, acquisition of digital materials and using them through remote access. Apart from library policies, library procedures pattern was also change in which more was given on library hours, remote access of library products and services. From discussion point of view, it is evident that SARS 2 Scenario surely changed the pattern of library policies and procedures.

VIII. Practical Implication

The results of present investigation came in a scenario that covid-19 provided opportunities to librarians to look into new approach in the context of service model under the health emergency like Covid-19 pandemic. Digital collection along with digital technology for high level service to the library users is theme of modern library. The present study will be a handy guide for the librarians or library authority in term of how library services with high level can be provided to modern library users by using different technology tools and method in scenario of SARS 2

IX. Conclusion

This investigation highlights the significance of changing pattern of library policies and procedures during covid-19 which help library users to get library service in the situation of health emergency like SARS2. Library policies and procedures pattern have difference prior to covid-19, during covid-19 and aftermath of covid-19. The data which was collected from the librarians focused more on library policies and procedures perspective. It is no doubt that during the covid-19 pandemic library physical access was not possible but virtual use was the true fact that gave librarians a new approach to provide better services. Physical reference service was not reality during SARS 2 but librarian tried to offer reference offering to library users in virtual mode where personal touch was missing between library staff and library users. Overall, the SARS 2 scenario may be seen as a chance for librarians or library authorities to implement a new service model for library patrons by utilizing cutting-edge digital technology.

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