

Role Of Social Media And Video Conferencing Tools In Library Services During Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT : *The popularity of social media and online video conferencing in times of global pandemic of Covid-19 is increasing. Social distancing challenges have rendered these tools as primary sources of information. Corona virus has affected student's life very badly due to the closure of all schools, colleges, and universities. COVID-19 has challenged the education sector for continuing teaching-learning processes through online mode. Today the usage of Social media and video conferencing tools is increasing for online learning. Libraries also have the challenge of using various digital tools and resources to deliver information service to its users when the walls of libraries are closed. With social media and video conferencing tools, a librarian can deliver information effectively to its users. COVID-19 has challenged librarians to know social media and video conferencing tools in this situation. In the 21st-century information technology revolution, libraries can easily deliver library services creating accounts in different social media and video conferencing applications. This paper highlights some of the significant features of social media and video conferencing tools and their applications in library service during the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper also highlights the digital learning initiatives of the Ministry of HRD and UGC, Govt. of India during COVID-19 to learning online education.*

Keywords: *-Social Media, Video conferencing, COVID-19, Library Services*

1. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 (Corona Virus) is a new virus and disease outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. In India first case was reported on 30 January 2020 from Kerala. Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi declared curfew from 22nd March 2020 stating "Janata Curfew is just the beginning of a long battle against COVID-19". He addressed the nation on 22 March 2020 on nationwide lockdown from midnight of 24th March for 21 days followed by three more phases from 15 April to 3rd May 2020 (19 days), 4 May to 17 May 2020 (14 days) and 18 May to 31 May (14 days) in a aim to control spread with social distancing. The pandemic put the whole world under lockdown and India as well.

The education institution, schools, colleges, universities become closed worldwide to break the chain of spread. It affected 150 crore students world wide and 32 crore students alone from India by May 2020 (UNESCO, 2020). University Grant Commission (UGC) circulated advisory on use of ICT tools online classes for students. The benefit of students using various social media platform like Zoom, Google meet, Facebook, Youtube, Skype etc. for better

communication Whatsapp group of parents and teachers were created. This put the challenges before library staff to fulfill the information to the students and faculty members. Against with library started offering remote and virtual information services in digital form i.e. ebook, ejournal, online database, e-newspaper, e-theses, CD-DVD etc.

Objectives:-

- To highlight the digital learning initiatives of MHRD and UGC, Govt. of India during COVID-19 pandemic for online education.
- To know how social media and video conferencing tools are used to library services during COVID-19 pandemic.
- To know the different social media and video conferencing tools features and use that features to library services.

Methodology

To write this article some authentic journals and e-contents websites are preferred. All articles for writing this paper are searched and downloaded by Google search engine and Research Gate PDF (Portable Document Format). Mostly articles and information are taken relating to topic use of social media and video conferencing tools in library services especially during COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital Learning Initiatives of Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India during COVID-19

Ministry of HRD and UGC, Govt. of India promoted digital learning so that student can continue their learning by making full use of the available Digital / e-Learning Platforms during the period the educational institutions are closed as a precautionary measure to fight COVID-19. A list of key Digital / e-Learning Platforms which are provided by MHRD for online education is as under: (MHRD, 2020)

- **DIKSHA:** Diksha has more than 80,000 e-Books for classes I to XII created by CBSE, NCERT and States / UT which are available in multiple languages. The contents can also be viewed through QR codes on textbooks. The app can be downloaded from IOS and Google Play Store. (Website: <https://diksha.gov.in> or <https://seshaqun.gov.in/shaqun>)
- **e-PATHSHALA:** In this web portal NCERT has deployed 1886 audios, 2000 videos, 696 e-Books (ePubs) and 504 Flip Books for classes I to XII in different languages. Mobile Apps is available. (Website: <http://epathshala.nic.in> or <http://epathshala.gov.in>.)
- **National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER):** NROER portal has a total of 14527 files including 401 collections, 2779 documents, 1345 interactive, 1664 audios, 2586 images and 6153 videos on different languages. (Website: <http://nroer.gov.in/welcome>)
- **SWAYAM:** SWAYAM is the national online education platform hosting 1900 courses covering both school (classes IX to XII) and higher education (under graduate, post graduate programs) in all subjects including engineering, humanities and social sciences, law and management courses. A unique feature of SWAYAM is that, it is integrated with the conventional education. Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses (max. 20%). (Website: <https://swayam.gov.in>)

- **SWAYAM PRABHA:** SWAYAM Prabha has 32 DTH TV channels transmitting educational contents on 24 x 7 basis. These channels are available for viewing all across the country using DD Free Dish Set Top Box and Antenna. The channel schedule and other details are available in the portal. The channels cover both school education (classes IX to XII) and higher education (undergraduate, postgraduate, engineering Out-of-school children, vocational courses and teacher training) in arts, science, commerce, performing arts, social sciences and humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture. (Website: <https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/>)
- **UG/PG MOOCs:** -<http://ugcmoocs.inflibnet.ac.in/ugcmoocs/courses.php> hosts learning material of the SWAYAM UG and PG (Non-Technology) archived courses.
- **e-Content courseware in UG subjects:-** e-content in 87 Undergraduate courses with about 24,110 e-content modules is available on the CEC website at <http://cec.nic.in/>
- **CEC-UGC YouTube channel:** - <http://www.youtube.com/user/cecedusat> provides access to unlimited educational curriculum based lectures absolutely free.
- **National Digital Library:** -<https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/> is a digital repository of vast amount of academic content in different formats and provides interface support for leading Indian languages for all academic level including researchers and life-long learners, all disciplines, all popular form of access devices and differently-abled learners.
- **Shodhganga:** -<https://shodhganaa.inflibnet.ac.in/> is a digital repository platform of 260,000 Indian Electronic Theses and Dissertations for research students to deposit their Ph.D theses and make it available to the entire scholarly community in open access.
- **e-ShodhSindhu:** -<https://ess.inflibnet.ac.in/> provides current as well as archives of more than 15,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and number of bibliographic, citation and factual databases in different disciplines from a large number of publishers and aggregators to its member institutions including centrally-funded technical institutions, universities and colleges that are covered under 12(B) and 2(f) sections of the UGC Act.
- **Vidwan:** - <https://vidwan.inflibnet.ac.in/> is a database of experts which provides information about experts to peers, prospective collaborators, funding agencies, policy makers and research scholars in the country.

Social Media Tools used in Libraries

Nowadays, social media platforms have become a major source of information sharing due to its unique features and regular use by information users. Social media is “a term used to describe a variety of [Web](#)-based platforms, applications and technologies that enable people to socially interact with one another online. Some examples of social media sites and

applications include [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Del.icio.us](#), [Twitter](#), [Digg](#), [blogs](#) and other sites that have content based on user participation and [user-generated content \(UGC\)](#)”(Beal, 2020).

(Hamzat & Otulugbu, 2020) in their study “Social Media Use and the Challenges of Information Dissemination during Emergencies: Experience of Library and Information Scientists on Covid-19 in Nigeria” analysed that 92% of the respondents adopted social media as an immediate mechanism for accessing and sharing information on COVID-19, 94.5% of the respondents believed that the use of social media helped them to reach and obtain information from places on pandemics such as COVID-19 while 90.4% of them suggested that social media use has enhanced their library services and improved users’ knowledge about COVID-19.

Social media networks are growing rapidly as channels of communication and interaction among individuals. The major advantages of social media networks are their abilities to establish and build relationships and build social interaction; thus helping libraries to connect with the information needs of users. For online users, social networks help libraries to create awareness and promote new information material and services. Social networks also promote the exchange of queries and answers among librarians and library users; thus librarians can provide answers to the queries of online users. Some of the social networks used by libraries include Facebook, YouTube, Blogging, Whatsapp, telegram, twitter, and others. Online orientation and user training programs can be promoted through these platforms (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020).

Recently, National Digital Library of India (NDLI) has initiated of specially designed collections of e-resources for specific group of students to help the student community in the difficult situation rising out of the suspension of physical classes and closure of physical libraries arising out of COVID-19 lockdown. The services are provided through the library social networking pages. (Ladan, Haruna, &Madu, 2020)

Some of these social media tools which are popularly used by libraries to meet the information needs of the users include:

- **Facebook:** - An American online social media and social networking service founded by Mark Zuckerberg on 4th February 2004 (Wikipedia). Facebook has become very popular among the young generation and all have their Facebook login. Facebook is most popular now because it is a librarian- friendly, with many applications like JSTOR search, World Cat, and much more. Librarians can interact with users for their information needs. Facebook can be used for many types of library services sharing the links of open access resources, reference service, conference; seminar; workshop videos, CAS, and all library-related instructions in individuals or groups. Thus, Facebook provides quality library services in the virtual world.
- **Twitter:-**is an American micro blogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets" available in various languages. Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams on 21st March 2006. Twitter is a popular breaking news tool. Users of Twitter can share their thoughts in posts limited to 280 characters and users are also able to upload photos or short videos. Libraries can keep their patrons updated by sharing information about daily activities,

updated collection, new books, links for materials, new groups, meetings, and any current information.

- **YouTube:**-is an American online video-sharing platform found by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim in February 2005. It offers a wide variety of user-generated and corporate media videos. Available content includes video clips, TV show clips, music videos, short and documentary films, audio recordings, movie trailers, live streams, and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, and educational video (Wikipedia). These help the Libraries for marketing the information products; share their programs, conferences, workshops videos, and guidelines for the use of library resources. YouTube in the library improves the services through tutorials and other video modes.
- **LinkedIn:** -is the world's largest professional network with 706+ million users in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide founded as of 28th December 2002 by Reid Hoffman. Through LinkedIn librarian can connect library professional association e.g. ALA, SLA, ACRL etc. to promote collaboration; Career development and strengthen their skills. This social networking site for professionals is a great way to get library patrons connected with the people who can find information. Whether that's you, faculty, authors, historians, or other sources, they can find them in your LinkedIn network.
- **Blog:** - A blog or weblog is a discussion or informational website published on the World Wide Web. The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Barger on December 17, 1997. The short form, "blog", was coined by Peter Merholz. A typical blog combines text, digital images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. Thus, libraries can use this tool to marketing library services i.e. reference, SDI, CAS, e-resources, database, conference, seminar, webinar etc. There are many blogs are created by LIS professional e.g. LIS news, LIS links, Library Soup, LIS CAFÉ.
- **Instagram:**- is an American photo and video sharing social networking service owned by Facebook, created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in October 2010(Wikipedia). Instagram added messaging features, the ability to include multiple images or videos in a single post, and a Stories feature. Library can share photos, short funny videos, or behind the scenes photos of what's happening at the library. Moreover library can share information regarding introduction of librarian, show library space, storytelling, library events and services, collections etc.
- **WhatsApp:**- is an American freeware, cross-platform messaging and Voice over IP (VoIP) service owned by Facebook, Inc. WhatsApp was founded in January 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum. It allows users to send text and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images, documents, user locations, and other media. WhatsApp's client application runs on mobile devices but is also accessible from desktop computers through WhatsApp Web from 2015 (Wikipedia). As it is widely popular among users, library can provide service e.g. CAS, SDI, Reference Service, Ask Librarian, User Discussion Forum, Reminder Notification, Library news and events, link to e-resources, etc. in individually or groups.
- **Pinterest:**- is an American image sharing and social media service designed to enable saving and discovery of information specifically "ideas" on the World Wide Web using images and, on a smaller scale, animated GIFs and videos, in the form of pin boards. The site was created

by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra, and Evan Sharp and had over 400 million monthly active users as of August 2020 (Wikipedia). A library can make its own profile and create boards, pinning photos, videos showcasing, inviting the library and attract users through pinning pictures of library events, lib-guides, and other services.

Video Conferencing Tools used in Libraries during COVID-19

COVID-19 outbreak has closures all schools, colleges, universities in all over the world. In this lockdown situation, the ICT (Information Communication Technology) has challenged all to learn various technologies. Now, educators are engaged to use video conferencing technology to stay connected with students and collaborate from distance learning. Video conferencing platforms are proved as the best option for online learning. Video conferencing is “a system that enables people in different parts of the world to have a meeting by watching and listening to each other using video screens” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries, 2020).

The concept Virtual or Digital library services are not a new concept but COVID-19 has challenged all libraries for applying these concepts for providing library service to their user interacting face to face. All academic, public, and special libraries can use video conferencing tools during this lockdown due to libraries building closed. For examples Vancouver Public Library, Canada is using remote communication tools such as apple facetime, Facebook video calling, WhatsApp, Google hangouts, Skype, zoom and web ex video & web conferencing. VPL Canada uses zoom meetings for book discussion, virtual story time, author talks and any library programme during this COVID-19 crisis(Vancouver Public Library, 2020).

Some of the usages of video conferencing tools in the library are listed:-

- A library orientation or user study program can be organized for library services, resources, databases, books, journals, etc.
- Ask the Librarian a distance reference service through video conferencing direct face-to-face communication between librarians and users possible and service can be provided in real-time.
- Storytelling sessions can be organized by the librarian for their users especially for children.
- Book club can be possible by group of people to discuss about books, express their opinions, likes, and dislikes joining online meetings.
- Webinar, conference, workshop can be organized an online presentation into real-time face to face for the develop skills of library users and professionals.
- Marketing library service and resource via video conferencing.
- Guiding the users about web catalogue, searching information, collection, resources etc.

Free Video conferencing tools:-

- **Zoom:** -is an American video conferencing technology founded by Eric Yuan on 21st April 2011. It is the most popular video conferencing software. It is an easy, reliable platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, and support in web, mobile, desktops, tablet. It helps to connect for online meetings and training,. It can easily create and share a private meeting link with an individual or group. Features include hosting up to 100 participants and 40 minutes for free, Host controls, HD video and audio, screen sharing, scheduled

meetings, record meetings, private and group chat, Integration with Google, apps, dropbox. Microsoft office etc. (“Zoom Meetings - Zoom,” 2020).

- **Google Meet:** -Google Meet (formerly known as Hangouts Meet) is a video-communication service developed by Google and launched in March 2017. (Wikipedia). Google shut down Google Hangouts in October 2019. Google meet enables to start a video meeting from any modern web browser and download the app on your digital devices . Anyone with a Google Account can organise an online meeting. Features include up to 100 participants and 60 free minutes, unlimited number of meetings, recording meeting, control for meeting hosts, adjusting layout or screen, screen sharing and messages with participants.
- **Cisco Webex:**-is an American web conferencing and video conferencing application company. it was founded by Subrah Iyar and Min Zhu as WebEx in 1995 then taken over by Cisco System in 2007. Cisco WebEx Meetings is the best video conferencing and online meeting software. It works across web, desktop, mobile, and video systems. Features include up to 100 participants and 50 minutes for free, HD video and audio, content sharing, digital whiteboard, recordings of meeting locally or cloud storage, easy schedule, customize the layout, AI (artificial intelligence) assistant, message to privately or in public, integration with Google and Microsoft office apps and more.
- **Microsoft Teams:**-is a video conferencing platform developed by Microsoft as a part of the Microsoft 365 family of products launched on March 14, 2017. Microsoft teams video conferencing can access digital devices and is ideal for online classes, meetings, assignments, sharing files, collaboration, etc.. It enables 250 participants host meetings without time limit in the free version. Features include meetings & webinar, calling, screen sharing, file sharing, custom background, participant list, instant messaging, recording of video & audio, integration with more than 250 apps and services.
- **Skype:** is a telecommunication application founded in 2003 by Niklas Zennstrom and created by PriitKasesalu and Jaan Tallinn. It is built for both one-on-one and group conversations and works via the web, desktop, mobile. It is easily accessible for organizing meetings. Features include host up to 50 participants, screen sharing, messaging, call recording, HD audio & video calling, cell phones, private conversation.
- **Ring Central Meetings:** -is an American cloud-based communications and collaboration company founded by Vlad Shmunis and Vlad Vendrow in 1999. It works on digital devices to connect seamlessly.. Features include host up to 100 participants and 40-minute group meeting, unlimited 1:1 meeting, screen sharing, recording, HD video & audio, chat with an individual or entire group, integration with Outlook one-click scheduling(“Video Conferencing, Screen Sharing, and Team Messaging.

2. CONCLUSION:

COVID-19 has affected the education systems in the entire world and all schools, colleges, and universities are closed. Today, social distancing is the first step to fight against Coronavirus infection. In this situation, Social media and video conferencing tools are becoming the primary source of information for searching, disseminate, and sharing among general populations as well as students. Libraries have the challenge of providing information to their users. Social media and video conferencing tools are not new; now the real practice of this platform is realizing in all libraries. Libraries have proved to the best source of

information in this COVID-19 pandemic crisis not only for library users but among all general populations. Nowadays, Libraries are using social media and video conferencing tools to provide library service. In the age of information, the library should create social media account and video conferencing tools to deliver information services in a virtual environment. Library website plays an essential role in marketing their service to its users. A librarian should train in using social media and video conferencing tools to library service to its use

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