

Assessment of Effective use of Online Webinars, Workshop, Conference and Quizzes on Library Science Professionals during Covid Scenario: A Survey

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Abstract

Due Covid-19 virus around the globe all sectors have been jeopardized and came to halt. Libraries were not exceptions too, where library professionals started learning and sharing professional knowledge through different e-platforms on different Library Science themes, issues and challenges after a covid scenario in the libraries. The study explored the library science professionals on effective use of online webinars and other series during covid times. The study employed quantitative and qualitative designs to obtain the opinions of the respondents using a random sampling method to know the experience about attending online webinars in learning new themes and skills, where the respondents updated their professional subject knowledge, changing trends and applications that can be adapted by attending the webinars. The online questionnaires method was employed for data collection using random sampling method and the questionnaire was sent to dedicated whatsapp groups of (Library and Information Science) LIS professionals Karnataka and (Kuvempu University Library and Information Science) KULIS professionals Alumni groups and further 49 responses were scrutinized for the study. Where the major highlights of the study were 55.1% attended webinars on "COVID-19 and Libraries: issues and challenge, impact, and lock-down". 4.02% of professionals 'agreed' to the statement that they "understood the trends in the Profession" by webinars. 87.8% attended webinars to "acquire new knowledge" in professional activities.

Keywords: Online Webinars, Webinars, Library Professionals, Kuvempu University, COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

"COVID-19" virus subsequently named has "SARS-CoV-2" was the first official report by the officials of Wuhan city from China in December 2019 [1]. WHO declared it has global pandemic on 11th of march 2020 by reporting all countries to treat, detect and reduce the virus transmission through humans and save the lives of the citizens. This alerted all the countries to force them to lockdown, maintain social distancing, use sanitiser, regularly wash hands and wear a mask. India is not exceptional too like other countries; where due to the pandemic national economy crashed, only

tech-savvy employees worked through the "work from home" concept. Apart from that unemployment was the major concern raised during the pandemic time. The inconsistent change occurred during the pandemic time, which was unavoidable with the Covid scenario. So change is constant and inevitable, hence anything in the world tends to change quickly and the ability to adapt to change lies with human's intelligence which is ultimate and its need of the day with new development and advancement of technology [2]. Due to pandemic e-learning or online learning came into full force with the blend of technology and network communication to teaching and

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learning. Electronic devices like mobile, tab, laptops and desktops became the major platform of learning and teaching through distance mode, and it's also defined as technology-enabled transferring of knowledge and skills to a targeted audience in large numbers. All educational institutions took advantage of technology and the internet in imparting education by shifting completely from physical learning to online learning. Various digital and virtual platforms came in the limelight for imparting academic curriculum using different application software or android app, where students and professionals can learn the desired subject, discuss concerning issues with a fellow student, clarify doubts with the instructor or teacher, share study material and validate academic progress with help of internet-oriented technologies.

Due to the "COVID-19 pandemic" physically going to school or college attending classes were prohibited all over the world and forced to close educational institutions and took up online classes as a prominent way. In India, according to (Technavio market research analyst prediction) (<https://www.technavio.com/>) Indian online education market size will grow by USD 14.33bn between 2020–2024, which had impacted and created new opportunities due to the "COVID-19 pandemic" in online education. Another report published by "statista" a German company specialized in the market and consumer data (<https://www.statista.com/>) predicted that the around 700m internet users will be rapidly increased in India by 2020 and which is the second-highest internet users in the world followed by China.

In India, it has been noticed that all major government offices, corporate companies, industries and educational institutions came to halt with the rapid spread of the virus. As per the letter circulated by the 'University Grant Commission (UGC)' on 5th of March 2020 to all universities and colleges advised some primary issues for prevention and transmission of the virus to avoid large assembly in the campus. Later all reading rooms/halls were closed and access to the print collection of libraries were stopped [3]. Workshops, seminars, conferences and others stopped to bring down the spread of the virus, but it was not an end for learners, research scholars and academicians. To keep the knowledge updated various professionals started gradually moving towards online platforms or e-learning platforms so that they can share and present their work in their respective field using 'Information Communication and Technology (ICT) tools in covid days. In India and around the world library professionals started hosting online webinars, seminars, lecture series and workshops etc., by Library Associations, Government First Grade Colleges (GFGC), Aided degree colleges, Engineering colleges and others. All these webinar information provided through the text message and poster of the webinar circulated through various social media platforms or mail using google registration forms links. Registration was made mandatory to attend each webinar through various platforms such as Facebook live, YouTube live, Google meet, GoToMeeting, Microsoft teams, Cisco Webex, Zoom, Skype etc., submitting feedback forms was mandatory for each webinar and a certificate will be provided after feedback submission. The speakers or subject specialists from the LIS community or with different fields within the border or overseas invited for the talk on respected topics would present a presentation using PowerPoint slides or live demonstration and at the very end little time for questions session, further presented slides, recording or YouTube link will be shared with participants for future reference. So the present study tries to analyse the Library professional assessment of effective use of online workshops, seminars etc., and attendant during the "COVID-19" lockdown.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Very few studies have been conducted on online learning or e-learning in library science domain. However, some of the selected previous literature has been reviewed for the study. (Partlow & Gibbs, 2003) [4]. The study highlights the online programme should be learner-centric, group-based, creative, dynamic, relevant and balanced in time management [5]. The identified issues and challenges for the successful teaching online courses using cooper's framework and divided into three major categories: Learner's Issues (Expectation, Readiness, Identity, Participation) Content Issues (Instructors, development, content, multimedia, Instructional strategies, consideration) Instructor Issues (Changing role and faculty, shifting from face-to-face to online, time, teaching style) [6–7].

The reported findings in their study learners like learning online mode rather than face-to-face learning. The learner feels online learning is more flexible, time saving, can be assessed by remote location and opt for any number of courses globally according to the learners' interest. According to [3] the majority of respondent's attend webinars based on subject specialization and felt long-duration programmes create a burden. Geographical location and poor internet connectivity are major concerns. Participants feel organisers worked well on registration, theme selection, providing e-certificate, sharing PPT and other study material of resource persons. Respondents feel that resource persons must have both the content and technical skills for presenting webinars and some respondents feel the content is good but presenters do not have adequate technological skills [2]. Conducted study to know the perception of teachers and students to teach and attend online classes. Findings revealed that students are more comfortable with attending online classes and feel them getting enough support from teachers, but students do not believe that online classes can replace traditional classes. Teachers find it difficult in conducting online classes due to a lack of ICT skills and need proper training. Technical issues were major drawbacks during online classes for effective teaching. The case study carried out by [8] reported that due to the pandemic situation e-learning was confidently taken. The major concern learner arise that instruction and the instructional materials without the teacher's voice are not that effective, when compare to e-learning environment [9]. Discussed the learning pedagogy approach of online teaching and learning, further highlighted the "Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC)" of the e-learning model and explored the growth of EdTech start-ups during the time of the Covid crisis [10]. Distinctly stated that teachers and learners need to understand the techno-pedagogical skill required in their educational or academic activities, which is of utmost importance in the 21st-century education system. Learning information and communication technology (ICT) skills is crucial for attending workshops, webinars, and conferences is a major key for students, academicians, research scholars, and stakeholders to improve knowledge in handling technological skills and become tech-savvy personalities.

Objectives

- To examine the webinars attended by the library professionals during pandemic days and their attitude towards learning new content, skills and techniques.
- To examine the difficulties faced came across in attending webinars.
- To examine the most influenced topics on attending the webinars in library Science themes, covid related challenges and issues after the covid scenario.
- To know perceptions and influence of library professionals after attending the online webinars.

METHODOLOGY

The present study targeted LIS-Karnataka (an exclusive group for Library and Information Science professionals within Karnataka) and KULIS Alumni (exclusive group for Library and Information Science professionals of Kuvempu University Alumni) both the groups used the social networking application WhatsApp for communicating professional activities. The study mainly concerted to assess the perception on use of the online workshop, seminars, conference and series other attendants during the COVID-19 lockdown by Library professionals both group users were targeted for data collection. A structured questionnaire was formed using an online questionnaire using google form. The questionnaire link was circulated among two groups for data collection and collected data were kept confidential. The study employed quantitative and qualitative designs to obtain the opinions of the respondents using a random sampling method. The respondent of the study consists of all working library professionals, LIS professors and LIS students from different universities and institutions both from the private and government sector. The study considered 49 responses from the collected responses through a google form.

RESULTS

Gender-wise

Figure 1 display a total number of 49 responses were recorded for the study. The participants included in the research were further divided according to gender-wise participants, where the highest

numbers of participants were 67.3% male respondents and female respondents of 32.7%, where male respondents were dominant in participating in the study.

Gender

49 responses

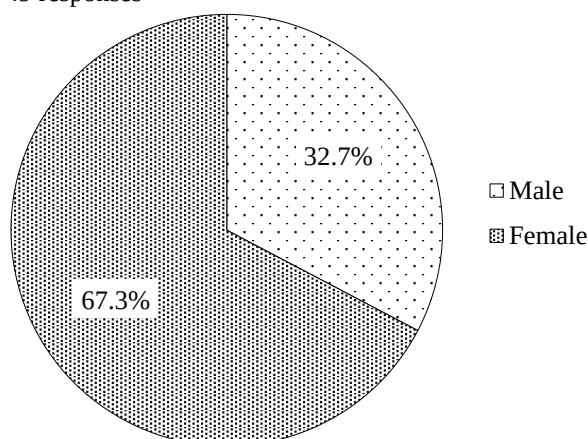


Figure 1. Gender-wise ratio of the respondents.

Qualification-wise

Figure 2 displays the respondent's qualification on the basis of the respective degree. The study restricted the basic or minimum qualification has to Master in Library and Information Science (M.LIS) and the higher degree of M.Phil. and PhD of the respondent, where the highest percentage 83.7% of respondents had a master's degree, followed by both M. Phil and PhD degree of 8.2%.

Qualification

49 responses

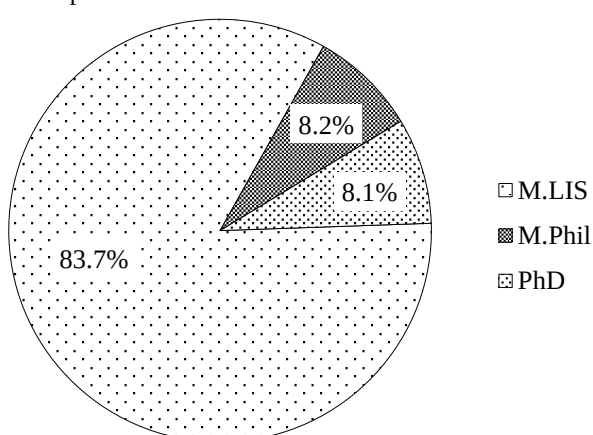


Figure 2. Qualification of the respondents.

Designation-Wise

Figure 3 highlights the designation of professionals in the library science domain who work in various designations in their respective organization or institute like Teacher or Professor, Chief Librarian, Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Library Assistant, Student, Research, Scholar, Job Seekers, Trainees, Documentalist etc. Where, the highest number of respondents who work has Librarians 40.8% followed by Assistant Librarians 20.4%. Apart from that our professionals are working as data entry operators, admin and officers in different sectors.

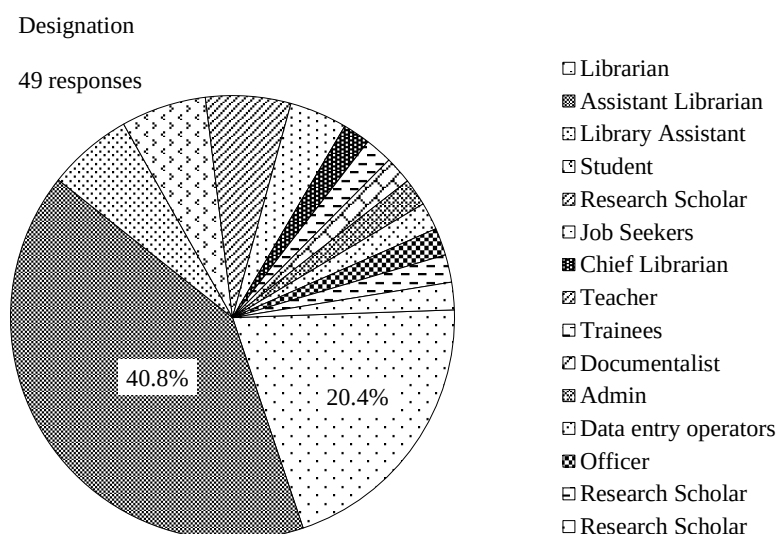


Figure 3. Designation of the respondents.

Device used in Attending Webinar

Major hurdles during the covid lockdown availability of electronic gadgets were the major problems for the respondents to attend the various sessions and programs. Figure 4 lists out the highest numbers of respondents who used mobile phones 91.8% followed by laptops 26.5%, Desktop 18.4% and Tablet 2%. Where a mobile phone was the only device that could be the easily available device for the respondents to reach out to the rest of the virtual world through different parts of the world to learn and improve their professional skills themselves in lockdown period non-stop.

The device used in attending webinar

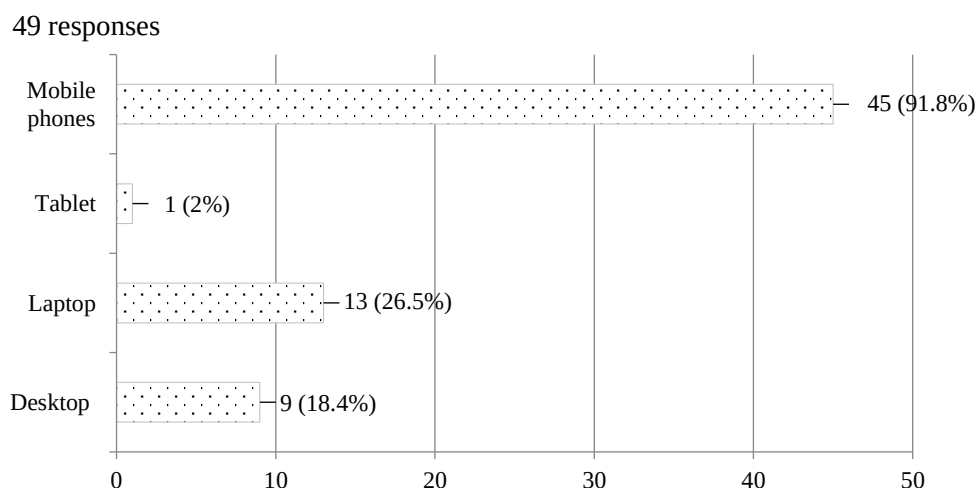


Figure 4. Devices used by the respondents.

Mode of Internet Access

The internet came to help for all the education academicians, software or corporate companies during the pandemic days, where the “work from home” concept revolutionized and all work processed online. Similarly library science professionals too used the internet as a mode of connectivity [Figure 5] to learn and be connected through the fellow professionals, where they asked about the mode of internet accessibility the highest number of respondents used mobile data 95.9% for attending all online sessions and programs followed by Wi-Fi 26.5% and 14.3% used LAN.

Mode of Internet Accessibility

49 responses

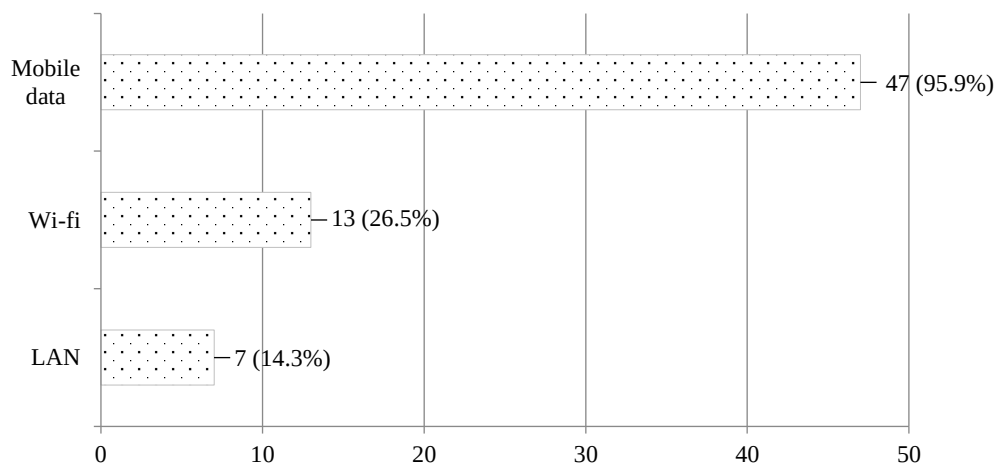


Figure 5. Mode of internet accessibility by respondents.

Frequency of Attending Webinars

During the pandemic period Library professionals, reputed libraries and professional associations used to conduct a number of online programs and live sessions related to Library Science themes around across the state, nation and world [Figure 6]. When asked the frequency of attending the webinars other sessions, where highest numbers of respondents used to attend the webinars on weekly 36.7% basics followed by monthly basics 30.6%, fortnightly basics 26.6% and daily basics 22.4%.

Frequency of attending webinars

49 responses

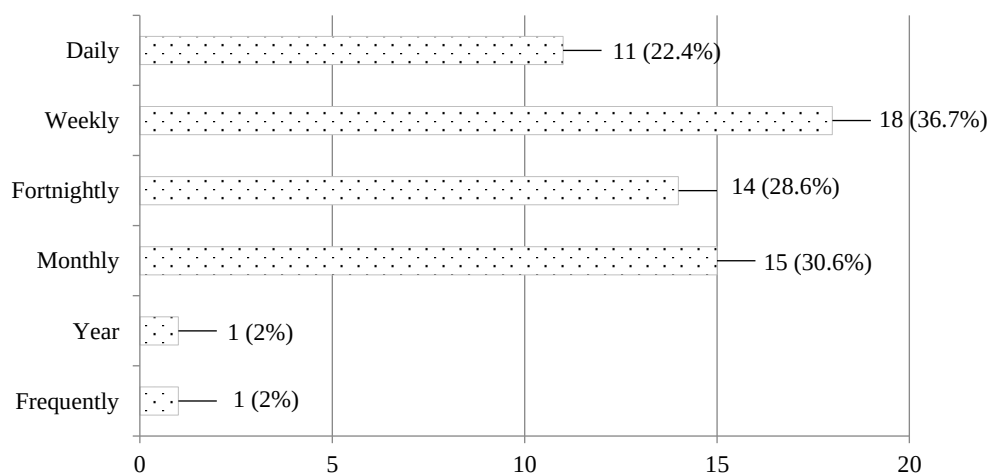


Figure 6. Frequency of attending webinars by respondents.

Different forms of Webinars Attended

The different kinds of webinars were posted during the pandemic period to learn and improve professional skills, while much of the webinars used to be free and some of the webinars were on paid basics [Figure 7]. The highest number of respondents used to attend 65.3% free registered webinars followed by 38.8% respondents who attended both paid and free webinars, rest 4.1% respondents attended paid webinars.

Types of webinars attended

49 responses

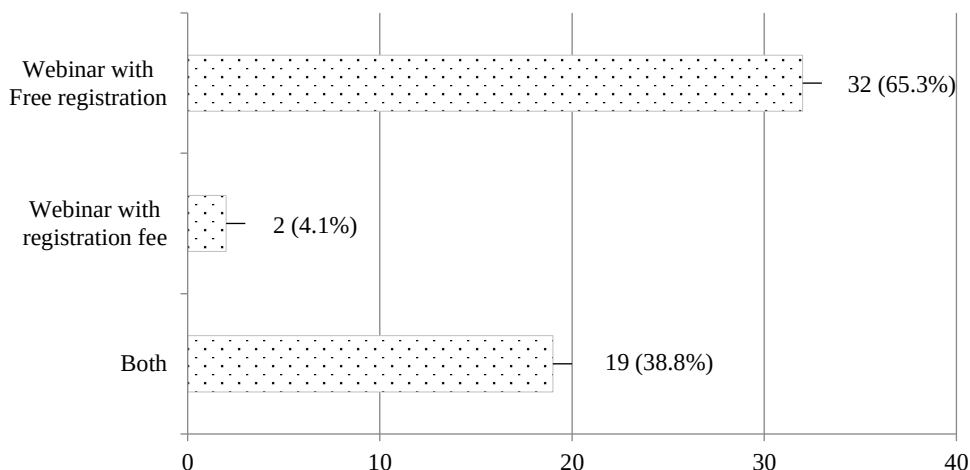


Figure 7. Types of webinars by respondents.

Reasons for Participation in Webinars

Figure 8 clearly specifies the reason behind attending the webinars by the professionals. 87.8% of respondents have hunger of acquiring new knowledge to improve the professional's knowledge, skills and to learn new things, followed by 69.4% respondents who feel that they updated or improve the existing knowledge, 46.9% respondents feel that with help of attending webinars they can apply the practical application in their work, 30.6% respondents attend for the sake of getting certificates and 24.5% respondents attend due to their professional's friends and colleagues.

Reasons for attending webinars

49 responses

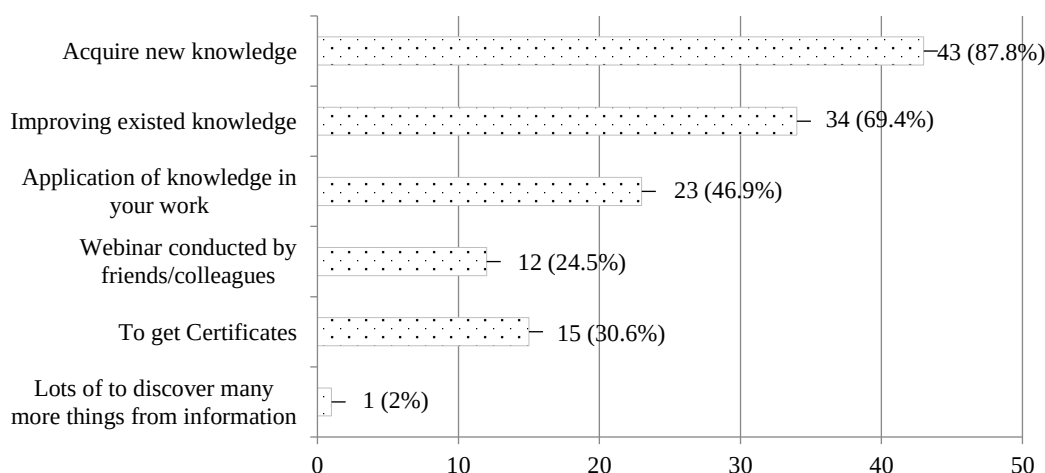


Figure 8. Reasons for attending webinars.

Kinds of Webinars Attendant

The different types of online sessions were conducted related to Library Science themes, where some of the important kinds that respondents attended are: webinars 83.7% which were highest in the list were respondents single series of webinar followed by 63.3% of attended online Quiz to measure

themselves about Library Sciences topics or subjects, 51% of respondents attended webinar lecture series, 49% respondents attended the workshop and 40.8% respondents attended a-conference or virtual conference [Figure 9].

Kinds of webinars attendant

49 responses

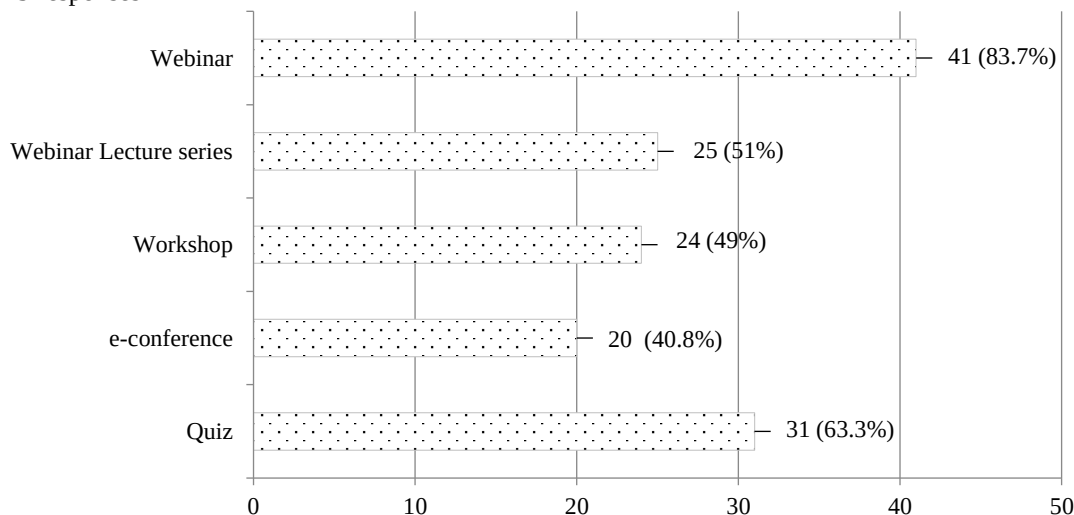


Figure 9. Different kinds of webinars attendant by the respondents.

Problems Faced by during Attending Respondents

While attending online sessions is much dependent on electronic gadgets, application software and the internet. Figure 10 specifies that the highest 65.3% number of respondents felt that technical difficulties followed by 49% of respondents who feels lack of interaction with the speaker, 30.6% of respondents felt that short duration of sessions with they have attended, 36.5% of respondents feel that the webinars don't cover in-depth concepts during the webinars sessions and 24.5% lacks practicality in the webinars, 18.4% respondents were unable to get the certificate.

Problems faced by during attending the Webinars

49 responses

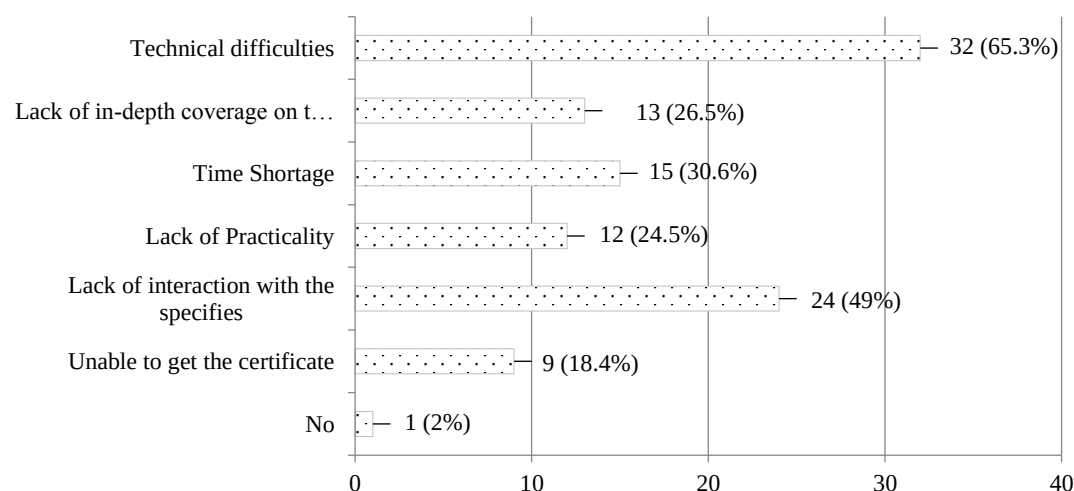


Figure 10. Problems occurred during attending the webinars.

Topics-Wise Selection of In-depth Themes

Table 1 summarised the most used topics on attending webinars by library science professionals. The topics covered in the table are divided into main themes and related concepts. The highest number percentage 55.1% of respondents attended webinars on “COVID-19 & Libraries: issues & challenge, impact, lock-down” topics followed by 53.1% of respondents on “ICT & Library: e-resources, social media, automation, website and portal”, 51% of the respondent on “Library Science Education: library system & library Management”, 49% of respondents on “Digital Library: IR (Institutional Repository), e-content/e-learning and advanced library services” 46.9% of respondents on “LIS Professionals & Development: Librarianship, role of LIS professionals & association”, 42.9% of respondents on “Information Literacy: skills, library services, sources and services”, 40.8% of respondents on “National Education Policy (NEP)”, 36.7% of respondents on both “Research Methodology: metrics and tools, reference management software” and “Copyright & Publication: ethics, IPR, plagiarism, research writing & publication” 32.7% “Bibliometrics studies and other related metrics studies and software’s” 26.5% “NAAC & Libraries: awareness, preparation & best practices”.

Table 1. Topics Selected in attending webinars

S.N.	Topics Covered	Percentage
1	COVID-19 and Libraries: issues and challenges, impact, lock-down.	55.1%
2	Library Science Education: library system and library management.	51%
3	LIS Professionals & Development: librarianship, role of LIS professionals and association.	46.9%
4	Research: Methodology, metrics and tools, reference management software.	36.7%
5	Copyright & Publication: ethics, IPR, plagiarism, research writing & publication.	36.7%
6	ICT & Library: e-resources, social media, automation, website and portal.	53.1%
7	Information Literacy: skills, library services, sources and services.	42.9%
8	Digital Library: IR (Institutional Repository), e-content/e-learning and advanced library services.	49%
9	Bibliometrics studies and other related metrics studies and softwares etc.	32.7%
10	NAAC and Libraries: awareness, preparation and best practices.	26.5%
11	National Education Policy (NEP)	40.8%
12	Others	12.2%

How have the Webinars Attended have Influenced your Profession?

Table 2 refers to the influence of webinars that respondents felt after attending the online sessions. All the statements using the Likert scale method interpret the given data ‘Strongly Agree’ ‘Agree’ ‘Somewhat Agree’ ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly Disagree’. Where all the statements got a positive response in the form of an ‘Agree’ statement. The Q1 (I gained new knowledge) 3.98% mean of respondents followed by Q2 (I enhanced my skills) 3.84% respondents, Q3 (I understood the trends in the Profession) 4.02% respondents, Q4 (I have developed professional contacts) 3.84% respondents, Q5 (Increased my API (Academic Performance Indicator)) 3.53% respondents, Q6 (My communication skill has improved) 3.59% respondents, Q7 (I have implemented the knowledge in my work) 3.80% respondents, Q8 (Webinars promoted me to join for new courses) 3.50% respondents, Q9 (My research abilities have improved) 3.88% respondents.

Table 2. Influence of webinars

S.N.	Statements	Mean	Interpretation
Q1	I gained new knowledge	3.98	Agree
Q2	I enhanced my skills	3.84	Agree
Q3	I understood the trends in the Profession	4.02	Agree
Q4	I have developed professional contacts	3.84	Agree
Q5	Increased my API (Academic Performance Indicator)	3.53	Agree

S.N.	Statements	Mean	Interpretation
Q6	My communication skill has improved	3.59	Agree
Q7	I have implemented the knowledge in my work	3.80	Agree
Q8	Webinars promoted me to join for new courses	3.50	Agree
Q9	My research abilities have improved	3.88	Agree

Range: Strongly agree: 4.30–5.00; Agree: 3.50–4.20; Somewhat Agree: 2.70–3.40; Disagree: 1.90–2.60; Strongly Disagree: 1.00–1.80

The major findings of the study

- The highest respondents were male 67.3% of respondents in attending online webinars.
- The highest of 83.7% of respondents who had a master's degree in 'Library and Information Science' who have attended webinars.
- The highest respondents were 40.8% Librarians attending the webinars.
- The highest 91.8% of respondents used mobile phones in attending webinars.
- 95.9% of internet users used mobile data for attending webinars.
- The highest 65.3% of respondents used to attend free registered webinars.
- The highest 87.8% of respondents who have a hunger for acquiring new knowledge was the reason for attending webinars.
- The highest of 36.7% respondents attended the webinars on weekly basics.
- The highest 83.7% of respondents used a single series of webinars in attending the webinars.
- The highest 65.3% of respondents felt technical difficulties in attending the webinars.
- The highest 55.1% of respondents attended webinars on "COVID-19 and Libraries: issues and challenge, impact, lock-down".
- The highest 4.02% of respondents felt that they (I understood the trends in the Profession) by attending webinars.

CONCLUSION

In today's 21st-century bio-war has emerged and has new trends in demolishing the enemy nation by spreading different kinds of viruses by affecting its people and its system around the globe. To secure the people and the system, the government has taken various steps by imposing a lockdown throughout the nation that resulted in economic depression, unemployment, hunger, etc. due to the spread of the virus. Simultaneously the education sector also got disturbed and shifted physical learning to online learning using ICT and the Internet. In the meantime, libraries were closed and library professionals were unable to serve the users during the Lockdown. Due to this many Library associations and other skilled library professionals started conducting webinars on various topics and themes. To upgrade fellow professionals and themselves to know the trends in the profession through conducting online webinars. By this pandemic, it was a learning time for young and outdated professionals to keep up learning in changing scenarios.

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