

ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN LIBRARY SERVICES DURING LOCKDOWN DUE TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC

Dr. Prasanta Kumar Deka *

* Librarian (Associate)

K. C. Das Commerce College, Guwahati, Assam, India

QR Code



Abstract: - *The paper mainly deals with the role of social media and its application for library services. The paper highlights the various activities of social media used in the libraries. Libraries are providing different types of social media services using web-based platforms like Chat, Blogs, WhatApps, Face book, Twitter, Wikis, YouTube etc. The roles of librarians in the changing environment are unique and remarkable. Library services are available to users on 24x7 at anytime and anywhere in the digital era even during this lockdown, where the users are widely utilizing the benefits of social media by sharing e-resources and other services among themselves. The use of social media is the unique and latest example of library outreach to students, research scholars and teaching communities throughout the world in general and India in particular.*

Keywords: Library, Social Media, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twiter, YouTube

1. Introduction:

Today we are living in the information era. Since lat part of March 2020, we all are under lockdown in various phases due to the COVID 19 Pandemic which has brought fear psychosis among the mind of common people of not only India but almost all the countries of the world. All of us witnessed its terror and interference in our livelihood. It is an invisible silent killer disease whose initial symptoms cannot be detected at the initial attack. And it has compelled all to remain inside his/her house. As we all know that “Time and Tide wait

for none” and the precious time is changing very fast. Today we live in a rapidly transforming world where tremendous changes are visible in-universe of knowledge due explosion of literature and documents. Libraries are also not untouched to it. The then prime minister of India Late Lal Bahadur Shastri ji had given slogan as “*Jai Jawan and Jai Kishan*”. Later just a few years back the existing prime minister of India Sri Narendra Modi Ji has added a new term as “*Jai Bigyan*” (Science and Technology) and the slogan becomes “*Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan and Jai Bigyan*”.

Again our honourable prime minister added one more term in that slogan as “*Jai Anushandhan*” (Research and Development), thus completing the slogan in a new form as “*Jai Jawan, Jai Kishan, Jai Bigyan and Jai Anushandan*”.

Sri Narendra Modiji has given the emphasis on Development of Science and Technology, and in the development of Research in India. He is talking about “Make in India” in the concept of Think Globally and Act Locally and become ‘*swablambi*’ and ‘*atmanirbhar*’. And especially during lockdown, more emphasis has been given to local manufacturing and production of local products in India. As we have witnessed various revolution namely Green Revolution, White Revolution, Industrial Revolution, etc. for the economic and social development of the nation. So, here among various revolutions, the emphasis on the use of social media is related to the industrial revolution, which is mentioned as during the first industrial revolution in the 1700s the steam engine was invented. During the second industrial revolution in the 1800s, the electricity was invented. During the third industrial revolution in 1990s computing, digital, electronic gadgets, etc were in limelight. In the mid 1995 the INTERNET also came to India. During that time nobody had thought that this Internet is going to rule over the entire globe and today we all are fully dependent on it, rather we can say ‘*we are slave of Internet in this changing world*’. And finally during the fourth industrial revolution i.e. today Intelligence leading to Artificial Intelligence, 5G, 3D Printing, Biotech, Robotics,

Autonomous Vehicles, Nanotechnology, Quantum Computing, ICT, etc. are in great demand which is ruling over the digital world for our all day to day need and requirements. Social Media is one of the developments of today’s industrial revolution where people from all over the world can connect and interact with each other.

2. Social Media:

Social Media has gained a lot of momentum in the last few years. Social Media plays a key role in everyone’s life. Students are also using this media extensively. It can be used for many benefits. There are some disadvantages of Social Media also. Libraries are providing different types of social media services using web-based platforms like Chat, Blogs, WhatApps, Face book, Twitter, Wikis, YouTube etc. The roles of librarians in the digital environment are unique. Library services are available to users on 24x7 at anytime and anywhere in the digital era even during this lockdown. The Library Services mainly Web-based Online Public Access Catalogues (Web-OPAC), Internet Service, Digital Library Service, Electronic Document Delivery Service, Institutional Repository Service, Current Awareness Service (CAS), Audio-Visual Services, E-Resource Services, Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs), Electronic Journals, Electronic Books, Reprographic Service, Open Source Software Service, Library Web-based Services, etc can be disseminated and accessed through this media. It refers to websites and applications that allow people to share content

quickly, efficiently, and in real-time, which are very amazing and exciting. A few examples of social media are Facebook, Blogging, Delicious, Podcast, Flickr, Instagram, LinkedIn, Online group/Forum, RSS, Slide Share, Twitter, Wikis, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc.

3. Important Social Media Platforms:

Some of the important Social Media Platforms & Library Services are highlighted here in brief which is widely used throughout the world.

3.1 Blogs:

It presents an opportunity for individuals to express their views, opinion, ideas, share their expertise; they also offer opportunities for thought leadership on a topic. Many institutional blogs can be used as: Notice Board (Latest Update), CAS and SDI services, Upcoming events (Orientation/training etc. program), User awareness training schedule can be uploaded. Blogs are very powerful tool, when combined with RSS.

3.2 Facebook:

It is a social media communication platform which provides social interactions between individual and group of the user; FB i.e. *Facebook* in abbreviated form allows information with members and their group can share text, audio, video and other digital materials. Librarian can use Facebook as an extension of library services; Facebook is one of the quickest and easiest modes of communication of information in detail.

3.3 LinkedIn:

It is a social networking site for professionals to get connected with the people that can help them to find information; whether that's you, faculty, authors, historians, or other sources, they can find them in your LinkedIn network. It is also widely used.

3.4 Twitter:

It facilitates online interactive notice board; micro blogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages are known as **tweet** and **re-tweet**, but unregistered users can only read messages those who posted on tweeter account. The library can provide information about library activities through tweeter account.

3.5 WhatsApp:

It is a social media platform with instant free messaging and voice over telephonic services. It is sending the text files, pdf files/ voice messages/ audio/video clip and calling audio & video in the quickest time. It is the world's most popular messaging application at the present time and it allows a person to make a telephonic/video call to any parts of the world without having ISD connections. This has become the primary means of communication in multiple languages in multiple countries. A librarian can use this technology for delivering quick information services to the users. But there are certain group of people who always believe in spreading fake news, misinformation, disinformation among the

society. This is one of the side effects of WhatApps.

3.6 YouTube:

Library video and e-learning information tutorials, events and other videos of library services can be promoted and webcast through YouTube. Today people are very crazy to upload any video of any nature may be related to education, cooking, gardening, advertisement, adventures, gaming, tourism, etc. with narration. These are viewed and further shared by hundreds and thousands people throughout the world. Through YouTube also some fake news, etc are circulated at quickest time in the society.

3.7 Google+:

This is a profile based social media platforms where people can be connected to other profiles on request. It is available with other Google products and services.

3.8 Podcast:

It supports visually impaired users for accessing the library resources in audio format; it is an audio file made available on the internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device.

3.9 Wikis:

It is a free online encyclopaedia that gives a background knowledge and definition of concepts. It offers a platform for users to access, edit and contribute to content. Wiki provides any type of information in the quickest time in detail. There is no area untouched by the wiki where one

can find any type of information which is very much reliable also.

3.10 Flickr:

Similar to YouTube it can be used to make communities based mainly for images. One can create profile and upload, manipulate, edit and share as per need.

4. Factors for using Social Media:

There are various factors for using social media in Library Services which are

- Perception
- Developing better library services
- Attitude beliefs
- Increasing demand
- Extensive use of social media

5. Benefits of Social Media:

There are enormous benefits of Social Media basically for the students. Here a few of them are highlighted:

- Educational Tools
- News Updates
- Networking
- Experience Global Exposure
- Employment Opportunities
- For Creative Expression
- Social Media Marketing

6. Social Media includes:

We all know the use and applicability of social media which includes the following areas

- Social Networking includes Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+
- Micro Blogging includes Twitter, Tumblr
- Photo Sharing includes Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Canva
- Video-Sharing includes YouTube, Facebook-live, WhatsApp, Periscope, Vimeo

7. Users of Social Media:

The users of social media throughout the globe reflects as

- Facebook- 96%
- YouTube- 84%
- Blogs- 30%
- Twitter- 40%
- MySpace-12%
- LinkedIn- 10%
- Instagram- 35%
- WhatsApp- 84%

(Collected from various online resources)

The major region behind the use of social media for library services are expressed as

- Plenty of research on social media is going on throughout the world
- Excitement among new users about social media tools and the challenges behind it
- Data collection in a particular subject is becoming easier through social media

- Recording of data from feedback is becoming very easier because one can collect data automatically through social media
- More and more demand from the users of Library
- A better, fast and easier way to magnify library services

It has become one of the convenient ways for the survival of the library profession. The prospects of using social media in the library can be round the clock which may reflect User Engagement, Quick and Prompt Information Delivery, Marketing the Product and Services, User Orientation and Visual Content, CAS Service via social media, and Multimedia and Visual Environment.

8. Constraints of Social Media:

There are certain constraints of using SM in the library which can be reflected as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp is addictive and clienteles can waste valuable time. There is a need to develop specific policy and guideline for proper management. It is also known for its bias content, diversion of facts, etc. Contents posted in social media are also difficult to gain trust, authenticity and also copyright, digital right and IPR related issue matters. In many occasions, a group of anti-social people create fake accounts and post bad, irrelevant comments on a Facebook post, YouTube, WhatsApp and Tweet. Spamming is

very difficult to control in social media. Protection from criticism and protecting data privacy is not easy and secure. No authentications of information, data, etc. are seen. The excess of anything is too much and this is perfectly well-matched with social media also.

9. Importance of Social Media:

The librarian is an active intermediary between users and resources. Professional and continuing education of the librarian is indispensable to ensure adequate services. The individual library and information professional is primarily responsible for pursuing ongoing learning that constantly improves knowledge and skills. In the life of a person every obstacle is an opportunity where change is inevitable and every change brings a new opportunity, so come out of your “*Comfort Zone*” and start facing the challenges coming in your way in the form of obstacle. We all are enjoying what we are or what we have today in this crisis period caused due to the spread of COVID19 Pandemic. So, if you accept the challenge of obstacle in your academic, social life certainly success is on the other side of your comfort zone. Social media is facilitating effective two-way communications among the users and it provides a virtual tour for the online workshop and other electronic services of the library. We can say that the library who use social media channel for communication, they use it as an institution, not as an individual, and while posting messages the *style of language should always need to be formal and decent*. Their main aim is

usability, promotion and marketing of services & product and develops interaction with users. These are the most important aspects of social media for everybody in the society. One message must be conveyed to all is that always respect the fare use of this media for propter utilization among the society. A clear message should be communicated to all those who are misusing the social media platform for personal benefits.

10. Conclusion:

Social media acts as a bridge between valuable content and audience. Library uses all posts which are relevant and add value to its clientele. The services from the library to the library may vary because of its diverse nature. Use of social media by a library can be a model for other libraries to use social media as a platform for communication, dissemination and marketing of library products during this lockdown period. Lockdown has taught us to ***Think Globally and Act Locally***. Everybody must plan for Personal Learning and emphasis should be given to WHAT you need to learn? WHY do you need to learn it? How you are going to learn it? What is the time frame to learn it? During Lockdown it is the best investment you will ever make. Role of social media are visible to all during this crisis period and this will take the world in different directions by playing a major role for the development of academic society in coming days. Let us wait and watch the further better services rendered through it to the entire communities.

References:

1. Ash, Moumita and Panighrahi, Pijushkanti (2016). Effectuation of image tools to enhance visibility of library on social media platforms. In Chatterjee, Amitabha ...et.al (Eds), *Social Networking and Libraries: Proceedings and papers of IASLIC 27th National Seminar 2016* (pp 64-69). Kolkata, IASLIC. (ISSN-09723668).
2. Borah, Bondana and Singh, Sanjay Kumar (2019). Marketing of LIS Products and Services through Social Media for North Eastern States of India: A Primary Approach. In Rath, Pravakar and Kumar, Amit (Eds), *Social Media and Librarianship: Connecting the Communities* (pp 93-99). New Delhi, Today & Tomorrow's Printers and Publishers. (ISBN-9788170196631)
3. Mazumdar, Nirmal Ranjan and Singh, Sanjay Kumar (2016). Google: A mobile friendly platform for libraries in digital environment. In Chatterjee, Amitabha ...et.al (Eds), *Social Networking and Libraries: Proceedings and papers of IASLIC 27th National Seminar 2016* (pp-139-144). Kolkata, IASLIC. (ISSN-09723668)
4. Munigal, Achala (2016). WhatsApp features and the role of library and information professionals. In Chatterjee, Amitabha ...et.al (Eds), *Social Networking and Libraries: Proceedings and papers of IASLIC 27th National Seminar 2016* (pp-145-152). Kolkata, IASLIC. (ISSN- 09723668)