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**Challenges and Opportunities for
Libraries in the New Normal**



**National Institute of Library and Information
Sciences (NILIS)
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Challenges and Opportunities for Libraries in the New Normal



National Institute of Library and Information Sciences
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Mr. L.A. Jayatissa
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**SUSTAINABILITY OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE OF SOUTH EASTERN
UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA (SEUSL) LIBRARIES**

Mohamed Majeed Mashroofa

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

E Mail: mashroof@seu.ac.lk

COVID-19 pandemic has created a crisis that drastically impacts academic library services in various aspects. Continuous lockdowns, closure of libraries, social distancing and restricted access to circulation services of print materials has paved ways to rethink new paradigms. The objective of this study is to showcase the initiatives made by SEUSL libraries to provide efficient services to library patrons during the crisis of pandemics. Methodology of this study is based on a review of literature, documentary analysis, and usage statistics of SEUSL libraries. SEUSL libraries sustained to provide virtual library and information services during the first wave of lockdown. Subsequently, during the new normalcy situation these libraries provided both traditional and virtual services by observing the health guidelines and exit strategies formulated by NILIS, University of Colombo as well as IFLA guidelines. In particular, SEUSL libraries offer digital information such as, remote access to scholarly databases, e-books, access to repository, e-theses, online past question papers and subject gateways. User education is conducted through a series of ZOOM webinars, and circulated access guides to e-databases. Virtual teaching of information literacy for undergraduates and postgraduate students is continued through virtual learning environment. Furthermore, SEUSL libraries provide scholarly communication support services to the university researchers through assistance in literature search, delivering articles, coordinating ISBNs, plagiarism checking, finding authentic journals and archiving. However, these libraries were not in a position to home deliver print materials and to offer study spaces. The use of social media was also limited. In conclusion, the SEUSL libraries have successfully strategized its services to a new paradigm of digital transformation that ensures a sustainable library and information services.

Keywords: *Covid-19 pandemic; Corona outbreak; New normalcy; Library & information services; Sustainability of library services.*



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