

Library Management in the University of Jammu post COVID-19: A Case Study of Students' Perspective

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Abstract

The current study attempts to build an analysis of frame of mind of the students concerning the library management in the University of Jammu post COVID-19. Management is an activity of planning and perpetuating suitable conditions to obtain the desired performance and effectiveness in achieving objectives of the organisation. Management is multifaceted and its stretch is huge as it encompasses resources such as infrastructure, technology-based resources, manpower and economic resources.

The survey method has been implemented to carry out the objectives of the study and hence a questionnaire has been created which would reflect the students' perspective regarding the management of the library. Google form is put to use to design the questionnaire and is given out to the students by virtue of online media. The outcomes of the survey present the perspective of the students pertaining to library management post COVID19 and work out as recommendations for designing and managing libraries to face future's challenges.

Keywords: Dhanvantri Library, COVID-19, Information, Library, Library Management, University of Jammu.

1. Introduction

Information is extremely important in the day to day life of an individual. It is information on which the pillars of success stand. Information can be sought-after to meet various motives, those can be academic or research endeavours or just for the overall development and to keep one-self up to date. The way an individual looks for information has been largely affected by the corona virus disease. The virtual ways of obtaining information such as online consulting and video conferencing, online databases, digital collections, etc. have attained greater importance.

Libraries and information centres are appraised as invaluable in meeting the needs of the information seeker. COVID-19 has affected every sphere and libraries are no exception. It is a challenging phase for libraries but they have to stand firm in this tough time by fulfilling requirements of students. The efficacious managing will pave the way to achieve objectives of the library and contentment of users of the library.

1.1 COVID-19

COVID-19 or the Corona virus disease is a contagious disease caused by a recently uncovered corona virus. People who are contaminated with the virus may feel respiratory ailments. The virus is more likely to affect elderly people and those having underlying diseases, for example, diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disorders, etc.

It can be prevented from spreading by maintaining certain physical distance from the infected person as it spreads mainly by saliva droplets or release from the nose on sneezing and coughing. Hence, washing hands with soap or rubbing hands with alcohol based sanitizers and avoiding touching sensory organs like nose, eyes, etc. can be helpful to prevent the spread of the disease.

1.2 Library Management

The term management implies to the overseeing of different activities and manpower in an organization. The different principles have to be applied for the efficient working of the organisation. Management is crucial for every type of institution/organization and libraries are no anomaly to this. The quality management of library and information centres provide a route of efficiency and fulfilment among users of libraries which they are supposed to achieve.

The management of libraries and information centres becomes more important than ever before due to the outbreak of the corona virus disease. The needs of users have to be fulfilled while ensuring their safety. The managers and the policy makers need to strategize the library system to face challenges during and post COVID- 19.

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Peter Vaill has rightly said, “Managers need to be prepared to confront a period of chaotic change.” According to him, “management of organizations used to be like a pleasant boat riding down a calm, quiet river, but the future will be different. It will be full of rapids, whirlpools, eddies and endless white water.”

1.3 About University of Jammu

The University of Jammu aspires for executing top class supremacy in academic and research ventures and offers up to the minute facilities to students, thereby making worthwhile contributions in the development of the individual, the society and the country. It provides opportunities for growth in academics and to conduct research owing to its state of the art facilities.

It is a University with a vision and a mission. It came into alive in 1969 following separation of former University of Jammu & Kashmir. It has been accredited as A+ Grade University by NAAC (National Assessment & Accreditation Council) of India. It is also the affiliating body of various colleges and institutions. The University works on objectives of carrying individuals from shadow to light and is unbarred for all irrespective of creed and class.

1.4 About Central Library, University of Jammu

The Central Library of the University, known as the Dhanvantri Library, is the pivot of academic and research pursuits. It is a multi storey building with capacious reading halls and firm stack areas. The library has a collection of more than 4.6 lakhs documents and offers access to different online journals. The Library owns provisions such as photocopying machines, projectors, interconnected computer terminals at certain areas, CD-ROM databases and the INFLIBNET.

Dhanvantri Library has three reading halls and can accumulate near about 500 readers in different sections. It provides access to various online databases including DELNET Union catalogue. For circulation related activities, the library incorporates Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

2. Objectives of the study

- To perceive whether studies have been affected due to absence of physical library services.
- To become aware of the ability of students with digital collections, video conferencing, online consulting, etc.
- To deduce the self issue return capability of students.
- To know about the students’ thinking regarding precautions that should be taken once library services are resumed.
- To bring into light the suggestions given by users of the library in the management of library.

3. Scope of the study

The cornerstone of the present study is to discover the viewpoint of the students of University of Jammu regarding management of the library post COVID-19 in a safe and effective way. The data acquired from questionnaires is scrutinized and systematized that can assist as a strategy and scheme for management of the library.

4. Research Methodology

The survey method of gathering data was followed in order to receive the primary data in respect to the present study. Google forms were put to use while framing a structured questionnaire as the library is closed for visitors considering the present environment of the COVID-19. It was disseminated online via online platforms and 93 responses were received.

The particulars collected from the responses were assessed to understand the perspective of students of the University of Jammu concerning the management of the library post COVID-19.

5. Analysis of data

5.1. Demography of respondents

(a) Age

Respondents were categorized into different age groups which are shown in Table 1(a). It can be clearly seen that respondents belong to mainly two age groups, i.e. the age group of 22-24 years (48.4%) and 25-28 years (32.3%) respectively.

Table 1(a): Age of respondents

Age	Percentage (%)
18-21	9.7
22-24	48.4
25-28	32.2
Above 28	9.7
Total	100

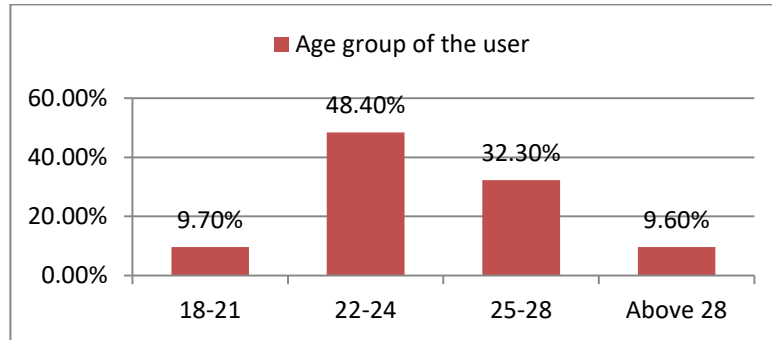


Fig.1 (a): Age of respondents

(b) Gender

Gender of the population under study is shown in Table 1(b) from which it is clearly evident that female respondents are more (64.5%) in comparison to that of male respondents (35.5%).

Table 1(b): Gender of respondents

Gender	Percentage (%)
Female	64.5
Male	35.5
Other	Nil
Total	100

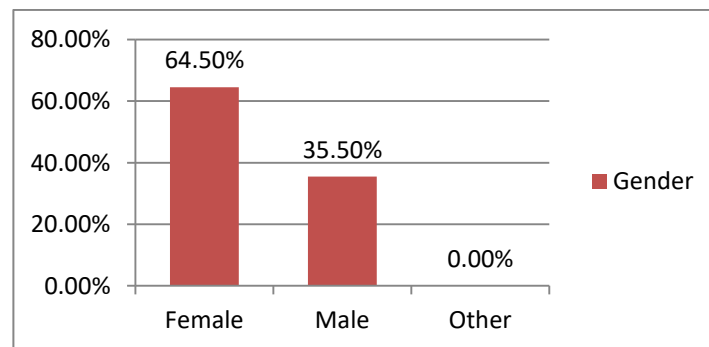


Fig.1 (b): Gender of respondents

5.2. Effect on studies due to absence of physical Library Services

The intended population were asked whether they feel that their studies have been affected due to absence of physical library services and the responses have been exhibited in Table 2. It is clearly evident that majority of target population (67.7%) have been effected.

Table 2
Effect on studies in absence of physical library services

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	67.8
No	16.1
Can't say	16.1
Total	100

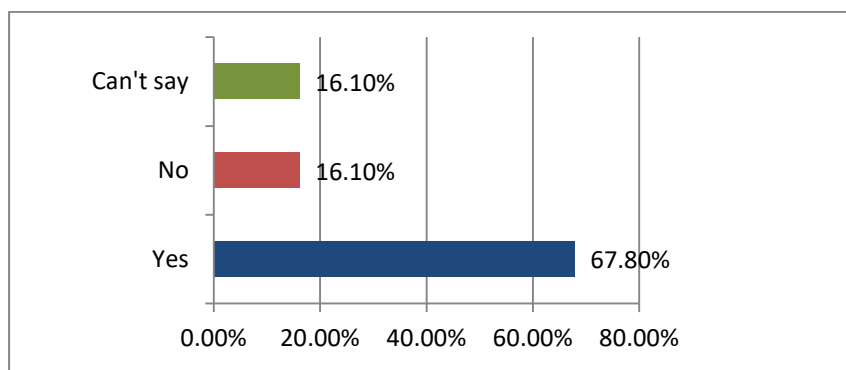


Figure 2: Effect on studies in absence of physical library services

5.3. Respondents' accordance with the statement, 'Digital is the new normal'

An attempt was made to know what the respondents feel about the digital ways of looking up information in comparison to physical forms of documents and were asked if they agree with the statement, 'Digital is the new normal'. Their response is shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Digital is the new normal

Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	16.1
Agree	48.4
Neutral	25.8
Disagree	9.7
Strongly disagree	Nil
Total	100

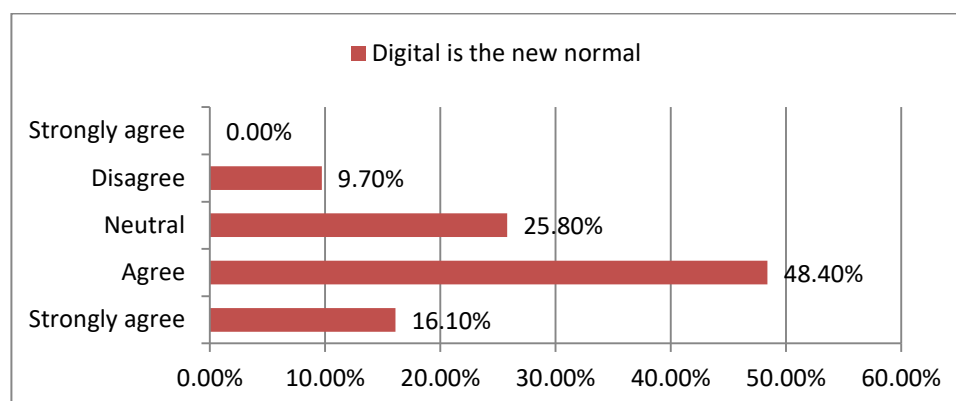


Figure 3: Digital is the new normal

5.4. Students' ability with digital collections, online consulting, video conferencing, and other ways of collecting information

The target population was asked to rate their ability (on a scale of 1 to 5) with digital collections, online consulting, video conferencing, and other similar ways of collecting information as these online methods will greatly help in the management of library during and post the pandemic period. The received responses have been shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Ability to use digital methods/platforms

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage (%)	9.7	9.7	22.6	38.7	19.5

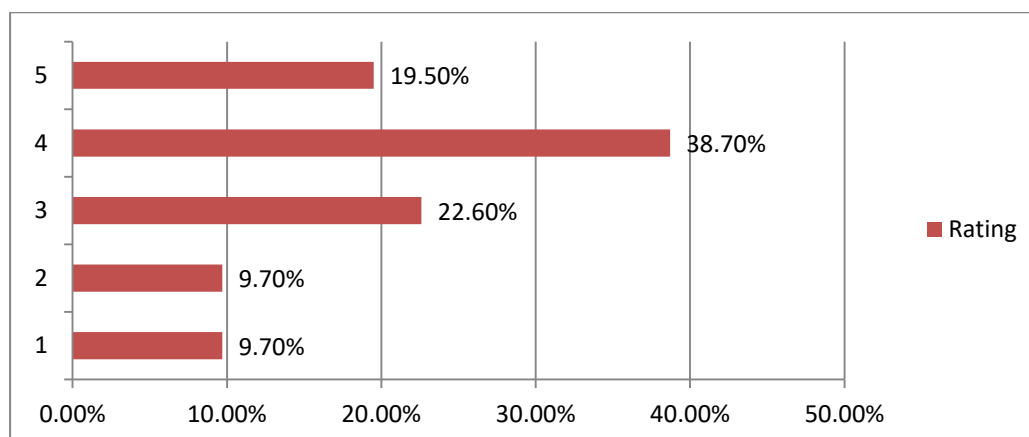


Figure 4: Ability to use digital methods/platforms

5.5. Capability of self issue and return

The students were inquired of their capability of self issue return as will minimise the human interaction which is an important factor to manage the library in the period during and even post COVID-19. The rating given by students to themselves (on a scale of 1 to 5) is shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Capability of self issue/return

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage (%)	6.4	19.4	35.5	32.3	6.4

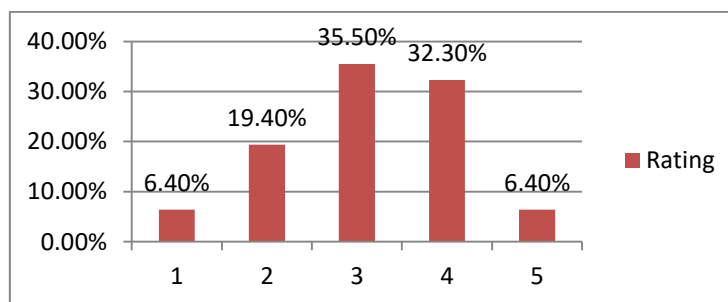


Figure 5: Capability of self issue/return

5.6. Installation of sanitization stations as control measures

Installing sanitization stations at designated locations can prove to be an important step to prevent and control infection, thereby aiding the management function. When students were asked about the same, a major portion of the population (77.4%) favoured installing sanitization stations as control measures. The response of students is shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Installing sanitization stations

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	77.4
No	12.9
Maybe	9.7
Total	100

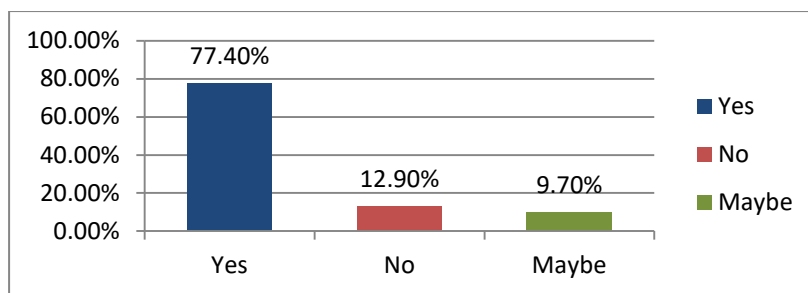


Figure 6: Installing sanitization stations

5.7. Development of mobile app to borrow materials directly from the library's collection

The development of mobile app can be an important step when it comes to manage the library and its working post pandemic period. The students were asked whether they would suggest the creation of a mobile app by the library officials and 87.1% of them suggested that the app should be developed (shown in table 7).

Table 7: Suggestion to develop mobile app

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	87.1
No	12.9
Total	100

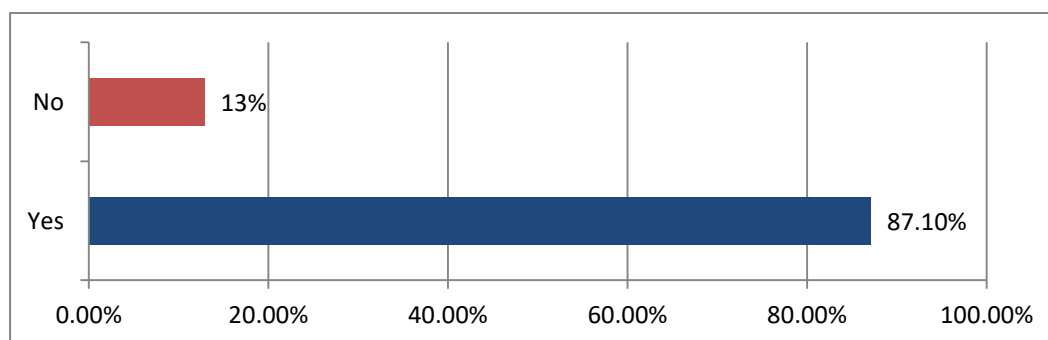


Figure 7: Suggestion to develop mobile app

5.8. Quarantine policy for different types of materials

The target population was asked about their suggestion pertaining to implementation of quarantine policy for different types of materials. Their response against this query is shown in Table 8, from which it is clear that 54.8% of students favoured quarantine policy, 9.7% did not and 35.5% were uncertain.

Table 8: Implementation of Quarantine policy

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	54.8
No	9.7
Not sure	35.5
Total	100

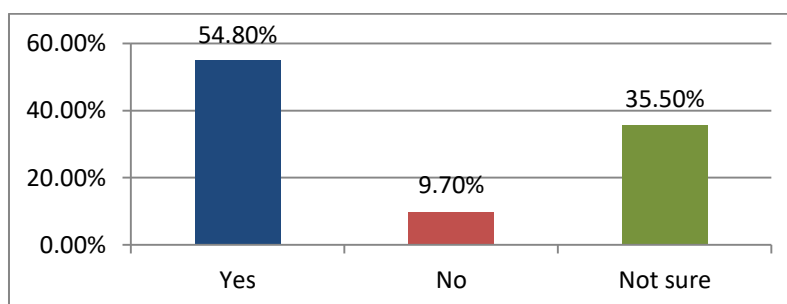


Figure 8: Implementation of Quarantine policy

5.9. Scheduled issue/return

Performing scheduled issue and return of materials will greatly help in management of the library. Students of the University of Jammu were asked whether they support scheduled issue/return of material for different semesters and types of students, as it will help in smooth functioning of the library. An affirmative response from most of the students (83.9%) was observed which is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Reinforcing scheduled issue/return

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	83.9
No	16.1
Total	100

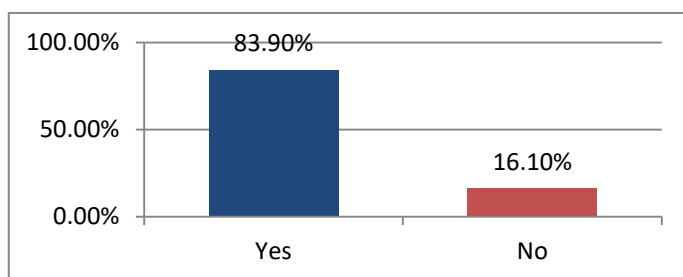


Figure 9: Reinforcing scheduled issue/return

5.10. Reopening of library in phases

The intended population was questioned regarding the extent to which they will support if the library gets reopened in phases. The information received from them is tabulated below (Table 10):

Table 10: Support to reopening of library in phases

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage (%)	12.9	6.5	32.3	32.3	16

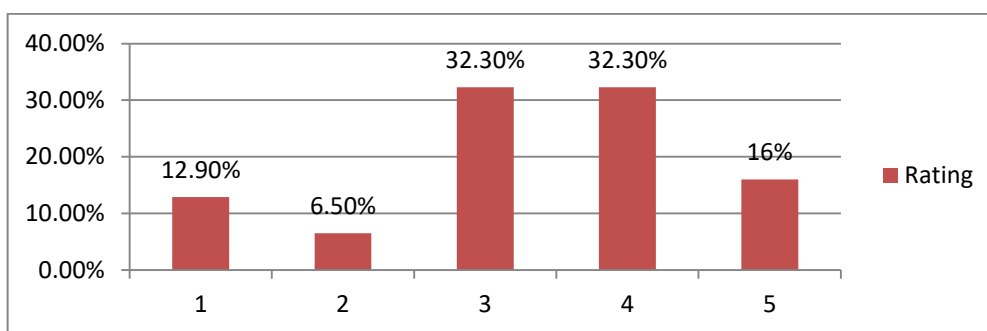


Figure 10: Support to reopening of library in phases

5.11. Seating arrangement with proper physical distancing

Seating arrangement with proper physical distancing should be implemented to ensure the safety of users. Students were asked whether they agree with implementing such an arrangement, to which majority of the students agreed (71%), 3.2% did not and 25.8% were uncertain.

Table 11: Maintaining physical distancing in seating arrangement

Response	Percentage (%)
Disagree	3.2
Uncertain	25.8
Agree	71
Total	100

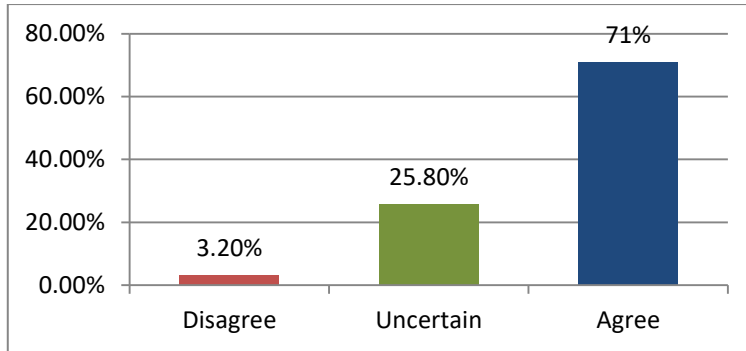


Figure 11: Maintaining physical distancing in seating arrangement

5.12. Library working in shifts

Students were asked whether they would suggest library working in shifts and it is found that 93.5% of students positively suggested the library working in shifts (Table 12).

Table 12: Respondents' suggestion regarding library working in shifts

Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	93.5
No	6.5
Total	100

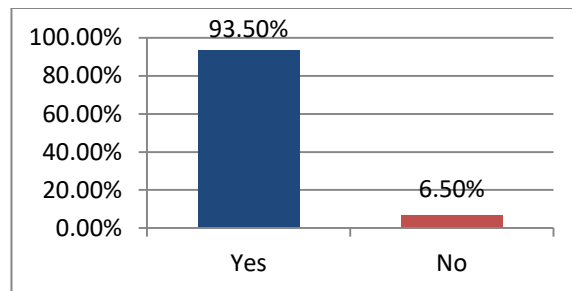


Figure 12: Respondents' suggestion regarding library working in shifts

5.13. Hesitation in using the library even if all the precautions are implemented

Students were asked whether they would still be hesitant in using the library when all precautions have been implemented, on which their response is shown in Table 13 below:

Table 13: Hesitation in using the library

Hesitation	Percentage (%)
To a great extent	22.6
Somewhat	38.7
Very little	25.8
Not at all	12.9
Total	100

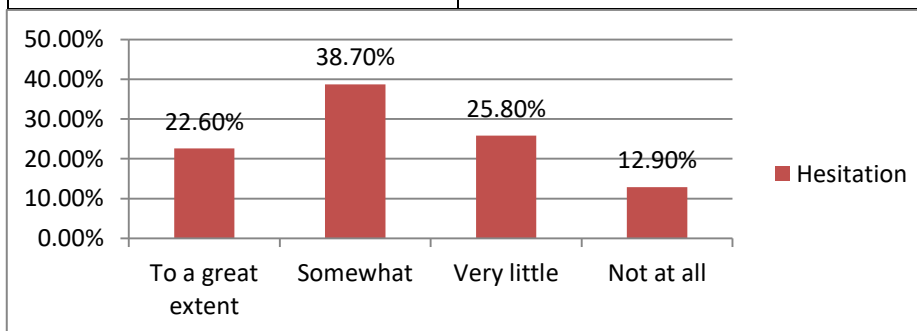


Figure 13: Hesitation in using the library

6. Recommendations/Suggestions

From analysis of the data submitted by students, installing sanitization stations and development of mobile app to access the library's collection is recommended. Students suggested quarantine policy for different types of materials, scheduled issue and return. They favoured the reopening of library in phases and implementation of seating arrangement with proper physical distancing. Working of library in shifts is also recommended.

7. Conclusion

The current study discloses the perspectives of students about the management of library in the University of Jammu post COVID-19. It can be clearly seen that the female participants (64.5%) outnumbered the male participants (35.5%). Studies of most of the students (67.7%) have been affected due to absence of physical library services. The ability of the students with digital collections, online consulting, video conferencing, and other virtual ways of collecting information is moderate. The capability of self issue/return is also middling. It is also concluded from the information supplied by students that even if all the necessary measures are taken, they will still be hesitated to some extent in using library.

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