



New Technology in Library

Sanitization to Combat Covid-19

Vishal D. Bapte

Assistant Librarian, Knowledge Resource Centre, Sant Gadge
Baba Amravati University, Amravati

Although Covid-19 has changed virtual library into virtual reality, still libraries will always be in vogue to use as a place for study, reading and document access. When the spread of covid-19 is still persistent, academic librarians are expected to be committed to the safety and well being of its users. Libraries can use Automatic Hand Sanitizer Dispenser which can be easily placed on a wall. These works well with electricity and battery. They nebulize hand sanitizer or disinfectant liquid without any touch. They are equally beneficial in elimination of any chance of cross contamination and contribute to the optimal hand hygiene. There are also some touchless sanitizer dispensers such as by Zero-B which has been developed on WHO guidelines. The size can be from 2 liter to 50 liter. It can be placed at any place of the library. It is equally effective in sanitizing door and cupboard handles, stair railings, lifts and escalators. (<https://pdf.indiamart.com/impdf/22396335491/MY-10915803/automatic-hand-sanitizer-dispanser.pdf>).



(Source:<http://www.pikinc.biz/product/library-book-sanitizer/>)

The North-east Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) recommends a 24 to 48-hour quarantine of returned books as the safest and most effective way to disinfect them.

The studies currently indicated that COVID-19 may last on surfaces such as cardboard for 24 hours. (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.03.09.20033217v1.full.pdf>). To resolve this issue, library book sanitizer are also in the market costing up to Rs \$4300.00 per item. This machine is useful in that it kills pathogenic bacteria like Covid-19. It sanitizes 6 books at a time within 30 seconds. (pikinc.biz/product/library-book-sanitizer/) Some book shower machines are also in the market to sterilize not only the outer part of books but inner parts and cover of books also. It uses ultraviolet rays and natural aroma to make the showering pleasant.

Besides this, regular hand sanitizers need to be placed at the entrance, reception desk, stacks, reading rooms and at the circulation desk. Washroom should be cleaned several times. The floors, desks, chair call for cleaning frequently. Big sized libraries might hire the professional services in this respect.

RFID enabled self check-in and check out center could serve as a greater comfort to avoid direct human contact. Book drop stations at the important places in the campus would be helpful in continuation traditional library services after post covid-19 situation. This can be effective in terms of efficiency, convenience and adherence to technology. However, implementation of such technology must be envisaged in the environment of ongoing pandemic. Librarians should also be cautious to confirm whether the disinfectant liquid i.e. Lysol or blech or any other disinfectant material can demolish virus. Ultraviolet light may also be proving as risk factor as it can damage the library material.

Even though above mentioned technology offers optimistic view to wrestle against covid-19, yet it would be on its economic feasibility to reap the benefits of such upcoming technology. Nevertheless, libraries are not expected to be at back while resorting to technology in the current scenario.

We must wait for more sincere and authenticated research to take any decision over this. However, academic libraries must not hesitate to make use of common cleaning practices. The security of the users must be prioritized before all.