

Significance of School Libraries in Online Teaching-Learning Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic in select National Schools of Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka

T. Ramanan¹ and M. N. Ravikumar²

Abstract

There is a tendency in reported documents pertaining to school education in Sri Lanka to have literally omitted school libraries and information resources. Teachers and students struggled to gain access to appropriate information resources. After performing a pilot survey to validate the reliability of the questionnaire, a sample of 209 subjects was randomly selected from 459 teachers in select National Schools in Batticaloa Education Zone. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered across WhatsApp groups of those teachers and response rate was 77.5%. Data were analysed using One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank, Chi-Square, and thematic analysis since a mixed method was employed. In this survey, teachers have expressed that school libraries were essential in providing resources to support teaching-learning activities although they have not received sufficient support from school libraries. Study further found that the role of school librarians in educating teachers and students with respect to copyright was underrated. Therefore, as the study results revealed, there was a considerable gap between the need and

¹ Senior Assistant Librarian, Faculty of Technology, University of Colombo

Email: ramanan@lib.cmb.ac.lk



<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1344-843X>

² Senior Assistant Librarian, Eastern University, Sri Lanka

Email: ravikumarmn@esn.ac.lk



<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2243-880X>



Received: 24 April 2023, Accepted revised version: 02 July 2023

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

the availability of resources, which needs to be bridged through school libraries.

Keywords: Electronic Information Resources, Online Teaching, School Libraries, School Librarians, Batticaloa District

Background

Electronic resources relevant to teaching-learning activities are essential during the crisis times since physical mobility and participation are restricted. In this regard, this study intended to explore the significance of electronic resources provided by school libraries and how teachers perceive the importance of such resources for their teaching activities. According to the census report, Batticaloa District has 05 education zones, 14 education divisions, and 362 government schools that include 13 national schools. These national schools comprise considerable percentages of students (17.2%) and teachers (16.2%) of the total of the District. National schools fall under the category of 1AB, which means schools having Science stream for Advanced Level. Teachers those are engaged in office work, library, ICT lab, counselling, sports and special education are disproportionately miniscule when compared with other categories of teachers ([Ministry of Education, 2021, pp. 2, 3, 6, 16](#)). This shows that the importance given to library services in Sri Lankan schools is quite low and it may affect the process of receiving support from school libraries for teaching-learning activities.

Nevertheless, COVID-19 pandemic was unexpected and had pushed teachers and students to embrace digital platforms and ICT technologies to excel in their tasks ([Hayashi et al., 2022](#)). Incidentally, recent economic and political chaos too intensified the need for the indiscriminate accessibility of online resources in Sri Lanka. For example, [Perera \(2022\)](#) writes that the students of poor income background struggle more to afford online tuition fees and the Internet connectivity. She continues that many of their smartphones did not support the modern learning platforms. These gaps can only be bridged by expanding the free accessibility of electronic resources across both teacher

and student communities. School librarians can provide training and introduce alternative options for students, with respect to learning online.

In a proposal, the Ministry of Education (Sri Lanka) has identified eight problems in Sri Lankan schools, and had proposed possible solutions. One of those solutions was to use information technology in teaching-learning ([Ministry of Education, 2022, p. 4](#)), which may include information resources. However, the proposal literally did not mention anything about developing School Library Learning Resource Centres (SLLRC) or empowering school librarians although it talks about the discretion of schools at which they expend their budgetary allocations. It is paramount to strengthen SLLRC with indiscriminate access to resources, especially electronic resources if the teaching-learning activities are to be successful in online environment. Consequently, at present, librarians are required to gather electronic information, develop and disseminate digital resources since the digital divide has been almost disappeared due to the Internet ([Okike, 2020](#)) and other palm-held devices.

It is obvious that the online delivery was not possible without sufficient information communication technologies and electronic information resources. In this regard, the authors intended to conduct a survey among teachers at the select national schools in the Batticaloa Education Zone to find out the significance of electronic resources, its perception and trend, and challenges of online teaching-learning activities. The work also focuses on potentiality of strengthening the teacher-library collaboration in online delivery of education. It is anticipated that the findings could help develop policies related to strengthening school library resources as well.

Objectives

Purpose of the study was to explore the significance of electronic resources and school librarians in the online learning environment in a select education zone in Batticaloa District. The following are the specific objectives of the study:

- To find out the subjects mostly taught in online environment;
- To identify the resources and devices used in online teaching;
- To learn the challenges of online teaching; and
- To examine the role of school libraries and librarians in online teaching.

Research Method

There are five education zones in Batticaloa District, namely Batticaloa, Batticaloa Central, Batticaloa West, Kalkuda Zone and Paddiruppu Zone. A pilot survey was carried out across WhatsApp groups of Grade-6 to Grade-12 teachers from the select National Schools to validate and check the reliability of the questionnaire. Pilot survey responses revealed that resources were abundantly used in 1AB category schools (Table 1). [Salamah and Ganggi \(2022\)](#) adopted similar study design where the respondents were reached via WhatsApp.

Table 1

Types of Schools and their Resources

Resources used	Type of School			
	1AB	1C	Type2	Type3
Internet Resources	39	2	0	5
Webpage content	56	2	0	0
Videos	85	10	5	0
Presentation slides	105	10	5	5
Images	98	5	10	0

Chi-square test performed on the data showed that there was significant difference between these categorical variables ($\chi^2 = 37.355$, $df = 12$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$), which means the type of schools have strong relationship with types of resources they use. In this regard, National Schools that are 1AB category were selected for the survey as they use more resources than other types of schools.

Of five education zones of Batticaloa District, Batticaloa Zone was selected, which encompasses four National schools ([Ministry of Education, 2021, p.18](#)) falling under the 1AB category. Besides, this zone is demographically representing almost all types of communities in the District. Total population of permanent teachers in the select schools was 459 ([Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 94](#)). The study population of the survey was teachers who deliver to classes from Grade 6 to Grade 13 in select schools. Since this particular fraction of the population was unknown yet assumed to be less than the actual population the total population that was 459 was considered when calculating the sample size. According [Krejcie & Morgan \(1970\)](#), the sample size required was 209. Although the total population covers all teachers and the random sampling technique was applied to draw the sample, the sample size of unknown population that covers only the teachers of Grade-6 to Grade-13 did not present any significant sampling bias.

Semi-structured questionnaires constructed on Google Form were administered across the sample from those four (04) National-level schools. Response rate had reached 77.5% after sending three reminders since respondents were struggling due to the frequent power outage and Internet disconnection during the survey period (October 2021 to May 2022). A mixed method was applied to analyze the data. Quantitative analysis was executed using Single-Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank and Chi Square Tests. Thematic

analysis was applied for qualitative approach towards the collected data from open-ended questions.

Dominant Subjects, Resources and Devices

Subjects and streams

It was found that there was a significant difference between different subjects taught in Ordinary Level (O/L). Single-Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank was applied to find out which subjects are mostly taught online in the O/L category. Table 2 shows the significant difference between subjects taught for the Ordinary Level (O/L) students in the online classes. A five-point Likert Scale (1- very low to 5- very high) was used to draw the responses for mostly taught-subjects. One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was applied by taking 3 as the hypothesized median to see which side the responses moved when there were significant differences ($p < 0.05$). Mathematics has a higher significant difference than the hypothesized median which means response is inclined towards 'high' and 'very high.'

Therefore, more focus has been shed on teaching/learning mathematics. However, Science as the subject did not have a significant difference although the mean value falls on the right side. Subjects such as Tamil, English, Religion, Geography, and Commerce have significant differences below the hypothesized median ($p < 0.05$), which means the responses inclined towards 'low' and 'very low.' This could be due to less importance given to these subjects. Despite the mean values tended towards 'high' scale, the Science and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) did not have significant difference at $p < 0.05$. It is speculated that science and ICT attract more practical sessions than purely being taught online. This

could be attributed to their higher mean value (at 3 as the hypothesized median) and no significance ($p>0.05$). Meanwhile, in the Advanced Level (A/L), of the four streams, namely maths, science, commerce and arts, have significant difference among those streams (Table 2).

Table 2

Leading subjects being taught online in O/Level

Subject	Very Low (1)	Low (2)	Undecided (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Mean	P-Value ($P<0.05$)
Science	9.9%	13.6%	39.5%	27.8%	9.3%	3.13	0.195
Math	1.2%	22.2%	42.6%	24.7%	9.3%	3.19	0.009
Tamil	9.3%	18.5%	53.7%	18.5%	0.0%	2.81	0.004
English	6.8%	27.8%	50.0%	12.3%	3.1%	2.77	0.001
Religion	22.2%	9.3%	62.3%	6.2%	0.0%	2.52	0.000
Geography	13.0%	15.4%	62.3%	9.3%	0.0%	2.68	0.000
Commerce	6.2%	24.7%	66.0%	3.1%	0.0%	2.66	0.000
ICT	0.0%	24.7%	47.5%	24.7%	3.1%	3.06	0.308
HPE	16.0%	9.3%	62.3%	9.3%	3.1%	2.74	0.000
Aesthetics	13.0%	15.4%	68.5%	3.1%	0.0%	2.62	0.000

Responses for mostly-taught subject streams for Advanced Level were elucidated on a 5-point Likert Scale, starting from 1- very low to 5 – very high. One-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to analyse the data, by taking the 3 (i.e. undecided) as hypothesized median. According to the analysis, Management and Arts streams have medians significantly lower than the hypothesized median ($p<0.05$), which mean they inclined more towards the ‘lower’ end. On the other hand, Mathematics and Science streams have less

significant values and the data had clustered around the hypothesized median (3), which is ‘undecided.’

Table 3

Mostly Taught-Subjects for A/Level in Online Classes

Streams	Very Low (1)	Low (2)	Undecided (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Mean value	P- Value
Mathematics	0.0%	19.1%	56.8%	21.0%	3.1%	3.08	0.152
Science	9.3%	17.3%	45.7%	15.4%	12.3%	3.04	0.555
Arts	12.3%	15.4%	69.1%	3.1%	0.0%	2.63	0.000
Management	6.2%	18.5%	69.1%	6.2%	0.0%	2.75	0.000

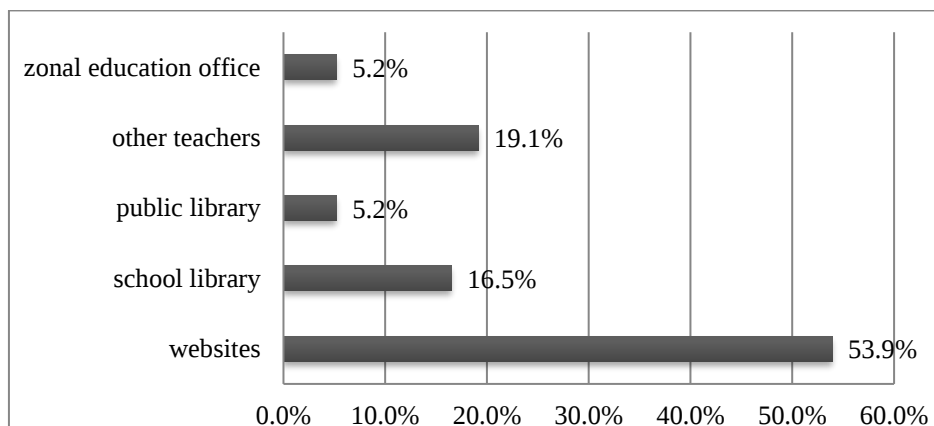
Resources

When teaching-learning activities switched from conventional classrooms to online platforms, electronic and digital resources became essential in education ([Sharifabadi, 2006](#)). With the recent pandemic and economic crisis in Sri Lanka the need to bring in more electronic and digital resources was sensed very crucial.

The survey results showed that almost 54% of the respondents relied on websites for their information needs while a considerable number of respondents depended on other teachers for getting information. Options such as ‘School library’ (16.5%) and ‘public library’ (5.2%) also contributed to providing resources for teaching. Similarly, teachers do obtain resources from the Zonal Education office (Figure 1). However, there is a need to emphasize on the role of libraries in disseminating resources required for online teaching-learning activities.

Figure 1

Sources of Information for Online Teaching



[Uwandu \(2021\)](#) says that school librarians can involve in online teaching-learning by providing additional resources and freely available online material to enhance the online delivery. School libraries can train teachers and students to use social media, effectively and ethically. Besides, school libraries are the best place to assist students of economically marginalized who are unable to have access to the Internet and other devices.

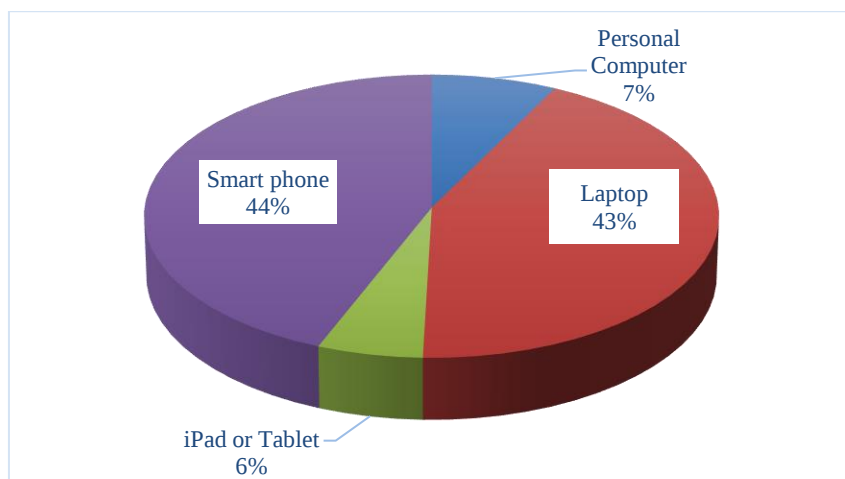
Devices for teaching

Devices used could be influenced by the type of subjects taught online as different disciplines require different resources and teaching aids. A study was carried out by [Babarinde, Agbo & Fagbemi \(2022\)](#) to discover the electronic resources used by select schools in Nigeria during COVID-19 pandemic. They found that almost all of the students were dependent on their smart phone when learning, while television channels and PowerPoint slides

were used as teaching aids. Figure 2 depicts the types of devices used in online teaching-learning in the surveyed education zone in Batticaloa District.

Figure 2

Devices Used for Learning



In this study, majority of respondents said that they use smartphones (44%) and laptops (43%) for teaching purposes. A small fraction of respondents used personal computers (7%) and iPads or Tablets (6%). Affordability could be attributed to owning more smartphones than other devices. At the same time, the devices are preferred due to their compatibility with the education tools and Apps such as Zoom and WhatsApp. However, the thematic analysis revealed that there was a stern lack of devices needed for learning as one of the respondents stated as follows: “*Students lack devices like smart phone, laptops Therefore, it is difficult to teach economically marginalized (students).*” [T056].

It is obvious that majority of the teachers used WhatsApp groups to interact with their students (47.3%) followed by Zoom which is the second popular apps for online delivery (39.3%). Nevertheless, other platforms like Google Meet, mass media, Google classroom, Moodle and email were also used to a small extent (Figure 3). These online platforms were used to perform different teaching tasks. Respondents mentioned that Zoom app was not subscribed by schools; hence, most of them depended on the free version of it that has limited facilities.

Figure 3

Online Teaching Platforms

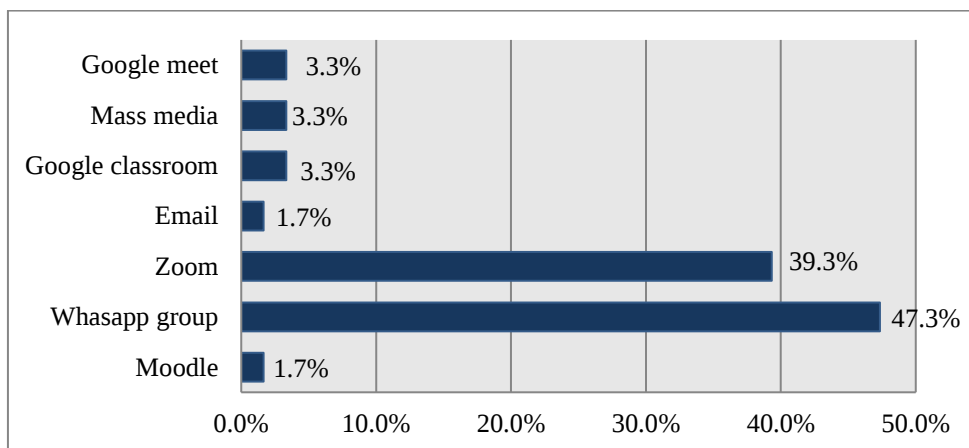


Table 4

Tasks of Teachers in the Online Environment

Teacher-tasks in online teaching	Percent
Preparing lesson plans for virtual platforms	23.1
Preparing teaching aids/presentations for online classrooms	27.7
Guiding staff on delivering lectures/supervisory role	16.9
Providing technical assistance to students in online learning	1.5
All of the above tasks	30.8

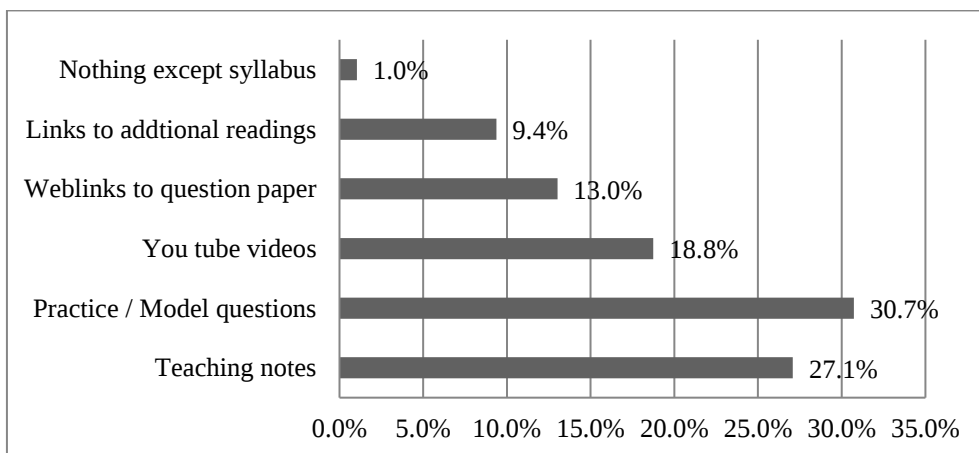
As Table 4 shows 30% of the respondents performed almost all the required tasks to fulfil their online teaching. This was followed by the next tasks, namely, ‘preparing teaching aids for online classroom’ (27.7%) and ‘lesson planning’ (23%). Some teachers were involved in ‘supervisory role’ (17%). However, ‘providing assistance to students’ was surprisingly lower (1.5%). Therefore, school librarians possibly had responsibility to support the students in the technical aspects of using resources and devices.

Online Teaching and Importance of School Libraries

Survey results demonstrated that resources were obtained through freely available resources and websites or prepared by the teachers themselves. In this regard, the resources consulted are determined mostly by the activities of teachers or their responsibilities (Bansode & Nargide, 2014). Therefore, more library-classroom collaboration is required in online education.

Figure 4

Resources Shared Online by Teachers

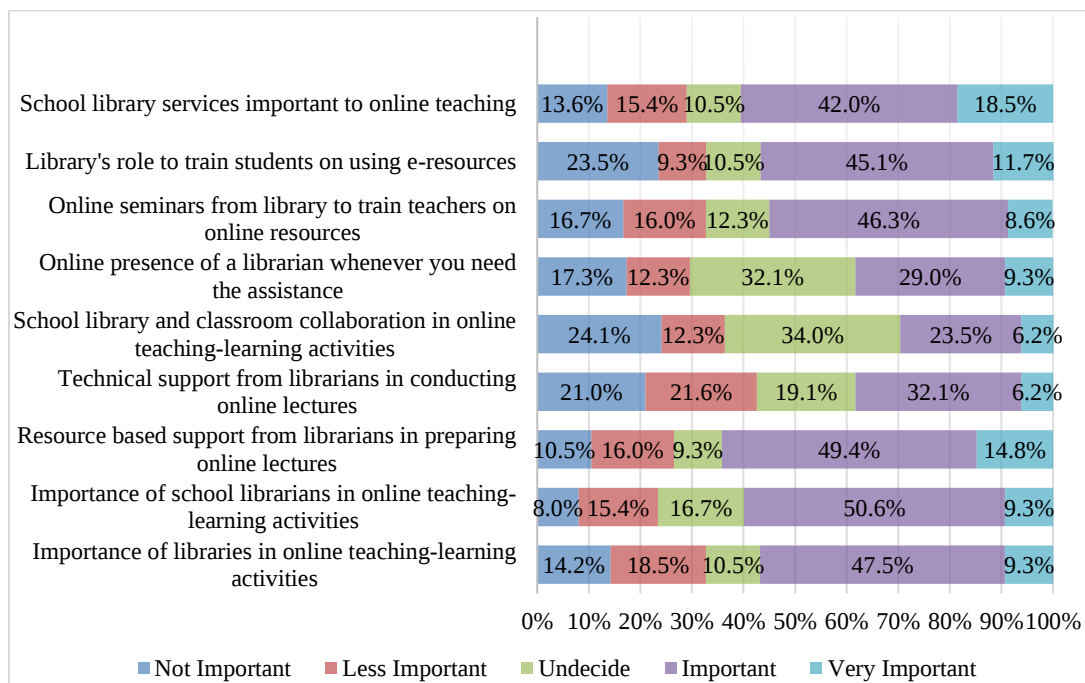


According to Figure 4, online classes were predominantly conducted for practicing model question papers (30.7%). Meanwhile, respondents shared their teaching notes (27%), YouTube videos (18.8%), links to question papers (13%), and links to additional resources (9.4%). This shows that there is a serious lack of textbook-related material and other digital resources. These resources should be identified, collected, and distributed by school libraries for saving time of teachers.

Respondents were asked to express their opinion on a 5-point Likert scale to identify the importance of school libraries and role of school librarians in online teaching-learning activities. It is evinced *prima facie* that respondents recognize the importance of school libraries and their resources in teaching-learning activities (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Significance of School Libraries in Online Teaching-Learning Activities



However, teachers seemed not to spare certain tasks for school librarians as depicted in Table 5 below. One-sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to analyse the Likert scale responses, by taking the 3 (i.e. undecided) as hypothesized median and the results tabulated in Table 5. The results indicated that the statements from 2, 3 and 9 have median which is significantly higher than the hypothesized median 3 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the responses are more inclined to 'important' level for these statements, which mean respondents positively recognized the importance of school librarians and library resources in online teaching.

Table 5

Importance of School Libraries

No	Statements	Mean	P-Value
1	Importance of libraries in online teaching-learning activities	3.19	0.112
2	Importance of school librarians in online teaching-learning activities	3.38	0.000
3	Resource-based support from librarians in preparing online lectures	3.42	0.000
4	Technical support from librarians in conducting online lectures	2.81	0.024
5	School library-classroom collaboration in online teaching-learning	2.75	0.003
6	Online presence of a librarian whenever you need the assistance	3.01	0.712
7	Online seminars through library to train teachers on online resources	3.14	0.328
8	Library's role to train students on using e-resources	3.12	0.714
9	School library services important to online teaching	3.36	0.002

For the statement 4 and 5 have median which is significantly below the hypothesized mean ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the responses are more inclined towards the ‘not important’ level. It is therefore inferred that most of the respondents did not recognize the technical support of school librarians and library-classroom collaboration. Other responses such as 1 and 6 to 8 are more or less closer to 3, i.e. ‘undecided.’ This infers that more awareness programs are to be conducted to kindle the significance of school library resources among teachers and students.

Additionally, in the thematic analysis, respondents expressed their demands for more facilities in classrooms to enable online teaching-learning. One of the respondents opined that “*Multi-media room with unrestricted access and resources*” [T018], which indicates the importance of a well-established SLLRC in schools. Furthermore, respondents insisted upon suitable information resources through school libraries (“School libraries should provide current and appropriate resources” [T009] and “Need more electronic information resources such as e-books from the school library” [T128]).

Awareness of Legal Aspects of Using E-Resources

When resources are obtained from the Internet-based sources it is necessary to have an awareness of copyright compliance. This has been one of the crucial areas where librarians have tremendous responsibility in teaching arena to help avoid plagiarism, spreading fake information and violating copyright (Secker, Morrison & Nilsson, 2019). Table 6 shows the ranking of awareness statements of respondents.

It was found that teachers mostly depended on fair use of resources or material made available under Creative Commons (CC-BY licence). Considerable number of respondents were aware of giving due acknowledgement to resources they conferred on. Third ranked statement says that the teachers surveyed have obtained permission to use images and statistics when used. Some teachers have restricted copying their own teaching material. As a safe practice, a few respondents avoided using copyrighted resources. Copyright concerns did not matter certain teachers. In this regard, librarians can help teachers composing learning materials with credibility and free of legal consequences. Meanwhile, school librarians have important roles

to play in training students and teachers on academic integrity and plagiarism in utilizing learning material from web resources.

Table 6

Awareness of Copyright Norms

Statements	Responses	
	Percent	Rank
Using resources of Creative Commons (CC-BY)/Fair use	31.60%	1
Giving due acknowledgment to the source (appropriate citation)	26.40%	2
Obtaining permission to use images & statistics	16.00%	3
Restricting students & others from copying my own teaching resources	11.80%	4
Avoiding the use of copyright materials	10.80%	5
I do not have to observe any copyright procedure in my online delivery	3.50%	6

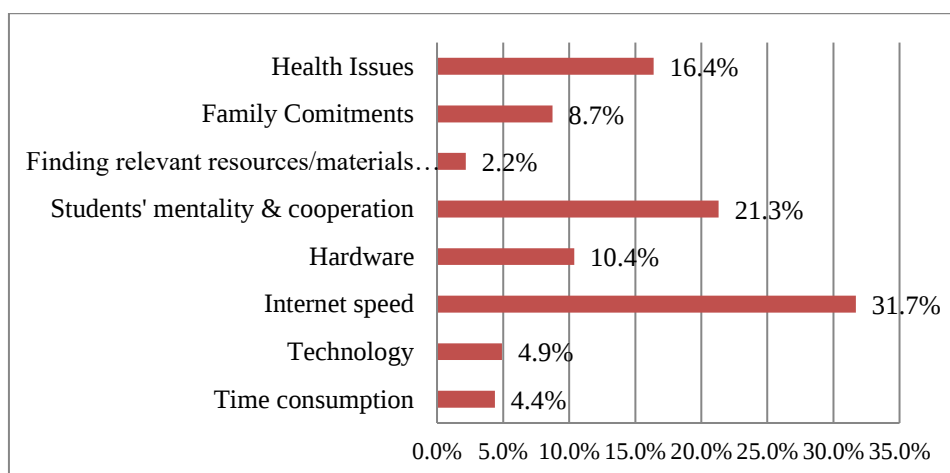
Mitigating Challenges in Online Teaching-Learning Activities

Survey results revealed that teachers encountered a number of challenges in providing online education in the select education zone of Batticaloa District. One of the major obstacles to online delivery was the poor Internet speed (32%), followed by the next hurdle which was uncooperative mentality of students (21%). Health issues were also having negative impact on online teaching (16.4%) as COVID-19 and other strains were on the rise during the survey period ([Health Promotion Bureau, 2020](#)). A few respondents stated as follow: “*Relevant resources and training for students (are needed)*” and “*Library book (resource) details should be made available.*” [T045] and [T130], respectively.

It has been stated by the respondents that students displayed uncooperative attitude towards online learning. [Allaymoun and Shorman \(2022\)](#) point out in their research that getting feedback from students through WhatsApp is a great challenge. This challenge could be managed through individual feedback system and re-explanation. At this juncture, school librarians can intervene to help teachers and students to create feedback mechanisms and to have alternative learning resources, respectively.

Figure 6

Challenges Facing Online Teaching-Learning Activities



Despite the popularity of new educational tools like WhatsApp, YouTube and Zoom the school teachers struggled to deliver what is actually required by their students as the resources are limited due to reasons like time constraints, unavailability or inaccessibility, technical incompetency, and financial barriers. Many of them prepared their own teaching materials. Respondents stated that many students struggled to own a laptop or personal computer (*“lack of laptop and personal computers”* [T112]).

Hayashi et al., (2022) point out some ICT related challenges such as weak Internet connection and unavailability of proper digital devices when students learn online. These challenges are harsh for rural students whose family incomes are quite low. Perera (2022) too records the struggle of students with online tuition fees in Sri Lanka. Thus, the role of libraries in sustaining teaching-learning activities cannot be underrated.

Respondents stated that online teaching was difficult with students of uncooperative mentality. In this regard, they suggested training parents to support students at home (*“Convert the parent mind set reading online learning and accessories”* [T064]; *“Students need constant motivation and supportive accessories”* [T053]). This could be addressed by improvised school library services such as personal counselling and visits by school librarians.

Next, students struggle to learn online has been further challenged by poor Internet connectivity. Thus, a respondent said that *“All students should have free Internet facility”* [T015]. In addition statement like *“Computer laboratory facilities should be available for both teachers and students”* [T066] reveals the importance of strengthening SLLRC and school computer laboratories. In this study teachers were concerned about establishing classrooms with Smart TVs and other technological advancements (*“Classrooms and labs should be built with Smart TVs and the Internet”* [T157] and *“ICT aided classrooms”* [T134].

Respondents shared their views on rectifying the challenges as follows: *“Awareness programs for parents, teachers and students”* [T089]; *“In-service trainings for online teaching-learning”* [T082] and *“technical support and training for teachers those who struggle in online teaching”* [T017]. Therefore, training is essential for strengthening online teaching-learning

activities in schools, where school librarians have promising roles to play. When education was switched from traditional to digital mode the time, distance, demographics do not matter (Sharifabadi, 2006), hence, school libraries need to break their physical and time boundaries to cater to the stakeholders, especially resource-deprived students.

Conclusions

Resilient Sri Lankan society has adapted to rapid changes in the education system although the presence of electronic resources and devices was not new yet their application was not noticeable. Pandemics like COVID-19 like pandemics and abrupt economic crises are the type of uncertainties Sri Lankan schools have not faced before, at least in the past few decades. Educators, school administrators and teachers struggled to face the challenges with available resources and strategies. It was noted that the government documents and proposals made by policymakers have missed out the emphasis on the school library development. Nevertheless, advantages of electronic resources in online teaching-learning kept the pace of teaching-learning activities at promising levels. The survey elucidated data to meet the objectives and authors have found that there was a dearth of electronic resources necessary for online teaching, especially credible material. Moreover, there were certain challenges that hindered the educational activities in the study area. Those challenges were mainly, among others, ICT issues, lack of electronic resources, and lack of digital literacy although respondents heavily relied on the Internet resources. Meanwhile, respondents stated that they valued the intervention of school librarians in certain tasks in online teaching activities. Therefore, it is recommended to promote library-classroom collaboration in schools to mitigate the issues at hand. Additionally, the significant role of school libraries in the provision of needed resources is

positively perceived by teachers accounted for this study. Hence, awareness programs coupled with training for teachers and students are highly recommended. Additionally, school librarians are required to develop awareness of copyright and combating plagiarism when composing teaching material. Therefore, school librarians should proactively demonstrate their value by creating liaisons with online classroom activities.

Limitations and Further Research

One limitation in the study was that the researchers focused only a select education zone and a particular type of schools in Batticaloa District, therefore, further research could be carried out in other districts to corroborate or generalize the findings. Similarly, survey can be extended to analyze the feedback from students with respect to school libraries and their resources in the online environment.

References

- Allaymoun, M. H. & Shorman, S. M. (2022). Individual Self-assessment Using Feedback System to Improve e-Learning in Case of Corona 19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 12 (8), 802 – 808. <http://www.ijiet.org/vol12/1687-IJiet-4410.pdf>
- Babarinde, E. T., Agbo, D. A., & Fagbemi, V. O. (2022). Use of Electronic Resources in Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools in Enugu State during COVID-19 Era: How Effective? *Library Philosophy and Practice*. 7006. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7006>
- Bansode, S. Y. & Nargide, B. B. (2014). Information Seeking Behavior of B-School Faculty Members in Digital Environment: A Case Study. *International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology*, 4 (2), 130 – 134. <https://www.indianjournals.com/ijor.aspx?target=ijor:ijidt&volume=4&issue=2&article=006>
- Hayashi, R., Kaushalya, T., Hewagamage, K.P., Garcio, M., & Amaratunge, S. (2022). *Sri Lanka: Progress and Remaining Challenges in Online Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic*. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/798001/adb-brief-213-sri-lanka-online-higher-education-covid-19.pdf>
- Health Promotion Bureau. (2020). COVID-19 situation report. <https://hpb.health.gov.lk/covid19-dashboard/>
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), 607–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308>
- Ministry of Education. (August 2022). *Proposals for General Education Reforms 2022 – 2032: a preliminary note*.

https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/sri_lanka_document-reforms_2022.pdf

Ministry of Education (2020). Annual School Census of Sri Lanka – Final Report 2020.

<http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Education/StaticalInformation/SchoolCensus/2020>

Ministry of Education (December 2021). *Annual School Census of Sri Lanka: Summary Report 2021*. https://moe.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/School_Census-2021_Summary-Tables-Final-Report1.pdf

Okike, B. I. (2020). Information dissemination in an era of a pandemic (COVID-19): librarians' role, *Library Hi Tech News*, 37 (9), 1 - 4. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LHTN-04-2020-0040>

Perera, U. (May 2022). *Private Tutoring Amidst Sri Lanka's Economic Crisis: Issues Faced by Students*. <https://island.lk/private-tutoring-amidst-sri-lankas-economic-crisis-issues-faced-by-students/>

Salamah, U. L. & Ganggi, R. I. P. (2022). How Students Seek Information When Studying at Home? A Case Study in Pekalongan High Schools. Khizanah Al-Hikmah. *Journal Ilmu Perpustakaan, Informasi, Dan Kearsipan*, 10(1), 61-68. <https://doi.org/10.24252/kah.v10i1a6>

Secker, J., Morrison, C. M. & Nilsson, I. L. (2019). Copyright Literacy and the Role of Librarians as Educators and Advocates. *Journal of Copyright in Education & Librarianship*, 3(2), 1 – 19. <https://doi: 10.17161/jcel.v3i2.6927>

Sharifabadi, S. R. (2006). How digital libraries can support e-learning? *The Electronic Library*, 24 (3), 389 – 401. <https://doi: 10.1108/02640470610671231>

Uwandu, Linda I. (2021). Covid-19 and the Challenge of Information Delivery by School Librarians, *Journal of applied Information Science and Technology*, 14 (1), 164 – 170. <https://jaistonline.org/14vol1/18.pdf>

Acknowledgement

Authors would like to register their due acknowledgement to the teachers of National Schools located in Batticaloa Education Zone for supporting the data collection. And, they would like to thank Mr. S. Santharooban, Senior Assistant Librarian, attached to the Faculty of Health-Care Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka for helping with statistical analysis of this study.