RDBCI | Revista Digital de Biblioteconomia e Ciência da Informação
Digital Journal of Library and Information Science

ISSN 1678-765X doi 10.20396/rdbci.v19i00.8666775/27323

ARTICLE

Study on the resumption of in-person activities in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic based on the perception of those responsible for libraries

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ABSTRACT
Introduction: Since 2020 the world has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with consequences such as the temporary paralysis of in-person services to the public by libraries. Although Brazil is one of the countries most affected by the pandemic, there have been attempts to return to face-to-face activities in many educational institutions, generating apprehension and doubts among students and employees. In this context, the libraries of these institutions need references on how to analyze their situation and thus establish a safe return strategy. Objective: Thus, the research aimed to outline and implement a route of analysis of the conditions for the return of libraries belonging to teaching institutions to face-to-face activities, using the collection and analysis of the opinion of those in charge as to the compliance (or not) of the sanitary criteria indicated by the biosafety protocol of the Regional Council of Library Science of the State of São Paulo 8th Region (CRB-8). Method: The research is classified as exploratory, with a quantitative approach and case study design, being an educational institution the case unit. Results: Among other results, it was found that 15% of the participants believe that their campus will guarantee the supply of individual protection equipment for servers and users, and 41% believe that there is enough space to guarantee distance between their users. Conclusion: It is concluded that the work contributes to the effort of confronting the pandemic by collaborating in the production of an instrument that can be replicated to other institutions, besides inspiring listening actions to those involved in the impediments of confinement.

KEYWORDS
Library services. Public libraries. Librarian's social responsibility. Promotion of library use. Social inclusion.

Estudo sobre a retomada das atividades presenciais em meio à pandemia da Covid-19 baseado na percepção dos responsáveis pelas bibliotecas

RESUMO
Introdução: Desde 2020 o mundo vem sendo afetado pela pandemia de Covid-19, com consequências tais como a paralisação temporária do atendimento presencial ao público por parte das bibliotecas. Apesar de o Brasil ser um dos países mais atingidos pela pandemia tem-se observado tratativas para a retomada das atividades presenciais em muitas instituições de ensino, gerando apreensão e dúvidas nos alunos e servidores. Nesse contexto, as

bibliotecas dessas instituições precisam de referências sobre como analisar sua própria situação e, assim, estabelecer uma estratégia de retorno seguro. Objetivo: Assim, a pesquisa objetivou traçar e implementar uma rota de análise das condições de retorno de bibliotecas pertencentes a instituições de ensino às atividades presenciais, por meio da coleta e análise da opinião de seus responsáveis quanto ao cumprimento (ou não) dos critérios sanitários indicados pelo protocolo de biossegurança do Conselho Regional de Biblioteconomia do Estado de São Paulo 8ª Região (CRB-8). Método: A pesquisa classifica-se como exploratória, com abordagem quantitativa e delineamento de estudo de caso, sendo uma instituição de ensino a unidade caso. Resultados: Entre outros resultados constatou-se que 15% dos participantes acreditam que o seu campus garantirá a oferta de equipamentos de proteção individual para servidores e usuários e 41% creem que há espaço suficiente para garantir o distanciamento entre seus usuários. Conclusão: Conclui-se que o trabalho contribui com o esforço de enfrentamento à pandemia ao colaborar na produção de um instrumento que pode ser replicado a outras instituições, além de inspirar ações de escuta aos implicados nos impedimentos do confinamento.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
Pandemia. COVID-19. Biblioteca. Protocolo de biossegurança. Medidas sanitárias.

JITA: AC. Relationship of LIS with other fields.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the future, the year 2020 will be remembered as the year of Covid-19, a disease that caused the hospitalization and death of thousands of people around the world, Brazil being one of the most affected countries. On one hand, several countries have carried out full or partial closure of their private and public establishments to reduce the flow of people and, consequently, reduce the rate of contamination. Airlines, schools, colleges, museums, shopping malls, restaurants, among other places not considered to be essential, remained without services for months, leading them to lay off employees, reduce salaries, or even declare bankruptcy.

To respond to this new context, institutions of all kinds needed to restructure their services, investing mainly in new technologies of communication and information. Large and small businesses began to advertise their products on social networks, promote their services in videos, and make e-commerce applications available. Schools have adopted online classes and their employees have begun to carry out their jobs through a computer screen.

Libraries, as well as other cultural and educational institutions, have also been affected. If for years many of them have been using online catalogs, databases, social networks, among other resources, it is a fact that a significant part of their services is based on physical items and face-to-face actions. The loan of printed books, for example, is still one of the core activities of a library and its physical space, used as a place for socializing and for courses/events. Libraries, therefore, were hit hard by the pandemic as they were unable to perform in-person activities.

Publications around the world have sought to record the challenges and transformations that libraries had to implement during this unprecedented period. Libraries in Italy (TAMMARO, 2020), Ireland (CARBERY et al., 2020), Greece (KOULOURIS; VRAIMAKI; KOLONIARI, 2020), Lesotho (MBAMBO-THATA, 2020), the United States (WANG; LUND, 2020), Romania (ERICH, 2020), and Sweden (TEMIZ; SALELKAR, 2020), among others, described the challenges of remote working, online services, and lending computers to students, among other situations. The libraries portrayed in the publications were university (MEHTA; WANG, 2020), school (AHLFELD, 2020), or public (KOULOURIS; VRAIMAKI; KOLONIARI, 2020) libraries.

Despite the importance of face-to-face services, libraries and their communities share the idea that, while the pandemic lasts, the full return of activities should only occur if the safety of users and staff is guaranteed. This requires that librarians have at their disposal references on how to analyze their health situation and thus establish a safe return strategy. Thus, the research aimed to outline and implement a route of analysis of the conditions for the return of activities in libraries belonging to educational institutions, through the collection and analysis of the opinion of those responsible for the library as to the fulfillment (or not) of the sanitary criteria indicated by national and international agencies.

2 THEORETICAL REFERENCES

In Brazil, many libraries offer, besides physical books, free-access computers, study space and online resources such as books and periodicals that can be accessed on-site or remotely. Consequently, the pandemic of the new coronavirus affected libraries immensely, since preventive measures were advised against crowds. Their physical spaces and the lending of materials offered a risk of contagion (KERN, 2020), which led to the suspension of the face-to-face activities of this sector.

In this context, library workers, as well as those in other sectors of educational and cultural institutions, had to rethink and reorganize their work. Not only the libraries in Brazil,

but libraries all over the world started to discuss how to offer quality services without the availability of their collection and physical space. The transition to a digital culture was already underway before the pandemic, but with discrepancies between rich and poor regions. For example, the University of Toronto libraries, in Canada, were already aiming to offer hybrid services that could be accessed both in-person and online (WALSH; RANA, 2020). Thus, Covid-19 only accelerated and expanded this policy. Already in developing countries, governments (and libraries) realized that initiatives were needed to mitigate the difficulties of access for the most vulnerable groups. In Africa, the library at the National University of Lesotho was able, after an agreement between the government and the country's mobile phone/internet operators, to offer free access to its learning platforms without the need for students to purchase supplementary data (MBAMBO-THATA, 2020).

Social and economic differences can be seen within the same country, as Tammaro (2020) showed in the first period of circulation restriction in Italy between February and May 2020. Northern libraries proved to have more technological and staff structure to respond to the crisis than southern libraries, historically less resourced. Closed libraries invested in online events, such as reading sessions, courses and games, but connection failures and the lack of ability of professionals to interact in the new media revealed that they were not prepared to circumvent the distance imposed by the pandemic. On the other hand, they were able to publicize and increase the use of the catalog and online sources. Thus, Tammaro (2020) believes that even after reopening, libraries will need to reinvent themselves, because not all services will resume immediately and the pandemic exposed how some institutions still lag in communicating with their public.

In Ireland, according to Carbery et al. (2020), one concern was to ensure that professionals had the right equipment and connection for remote work. From home, librarians were to publicize the availability and guide the use of the digital collection, keep the library's website and social media up to date, promote online events, and disseminate reliable information about Covid-19. Some libraries have gone further and used their 3D printers to produce equipment, such as face shields, and created special systems for lending printed materials, such as home delivery. In any case, no institution has reached a comfortable situation in the face of such abrupt changes. Despite presenting a positive response from the University of Toronto libraries, Walsh and Rana (2020) shared the same anxieties of librarians around the world: what will library service look like after the pandemic? Will the demand for printed books decrease? Will social spaces continue as before? What are the demands of the community after a year of remote study and work?

Wang and Lund (2020) stressed the anxiety of users who, facing an unprecedented event, were bombarded with information about the risks of contamination, treatment methods, safety equipment, etc., many of them of dubious or even false origin. From this perspective, they reinforced the importance of the library in combating fake news and communicating with its public, publicizing its services and decisions during this period. However, the doubts and the search for answers are not limited to users but may reach the librarians themselves, who are often not prepared for fully remote work and who fear the future of their institutions after the face-to-face return.

EI librarians faced numerous challenges during the quarantine period, such as students who had difficulty using online resources due to lack of digital literacy; students with basic internet plans that were insufficient for navigation on the adopted platforms; users, whether teachers or students, who asked to access the printed collection even when the campuses were closed, among other situations that exposed the limitations of the interruption of face-to-face service. With the expected return of in-person activities in 2021, these professionals began to question what criteria would be adopted to offer library services, since, without a universal

vaccination, the risks would remain.

Most of the papers published so far analyze the challenges and achievements of libraries during the pandemic period, but little is known about how libraries will function after the pandemic period is over. On its website, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) cites experiences with both remote working and the reopening of libraries. It can be seen that each country or even each library has adopted its own protocol, establishing differences in its institutional response that range from minimum opening to criteria for holding large face-to-face events. Still, some trends are identified, such as limiting the number of users inside the library, restricting the use of certain spaces and services, establishing a distance between users, and encouraging the use of online resources. A common feature is the adoption of safety equipment such as masks, the measurement of body temperature, and the use of hand sanitizers. IFLA also makes suggestions for employee safety, such as reducing the number of people working at the same time in the same place, as well as reducing the sharing of computers and office supplies. In all cases, IFLA emphasizes the importance of the library's communication with society, which should be informed about the new service conditions (INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS, 2020).

In May 2020, the Regional Council of Librarianship of the State of São Paulo - 8th Region (CRB-8) published a communiqué with measures considered essential for the safety and health of library staff and users during the pandemic. Unlike general documents, the communiqué from CRB-8 has recommendations rarely seen in international protocols, such as "keep fingernails short", "keep long hair constantly tied up", "recommend that employees with beards remove them to better fix the mask", "wear closed shoes during working hours", "keep the temperature at 22° C", among others. The communiqué also guides the division of labor itself, asking to "organize different shifts for library workers" and that "cleaning and sanitizing the environment should be daily, always before the Library opens. If possible, twice a day. Thus, regardless of the effectiveness of such measures, they are difficult to implement, which can cause stress among the professionals. Many libraries/institutions already work with a small number of employees, preventing, for example, cleaning and sanitizing twice a day. It is also questionable the power of a librarian/administrator to determine the size of nails, hair, and beards of his subordinates. The CRB-8 itself recognizes this difficulty and states that "we are aware of the difficulties of compliance with the recommendations by the libraries and also of the need to comply with the guidelines of each institution. Therefore, even though it may be useful for the reopening of the libraries, the recommendation may also produce new conflicts, insecurity and not be effective (Regional Council of Library Science of São Paulo State, 2020).

The Brazilian Commission of University Libraries (CBBU), subordinated to the Brazilian Federation of Librarians Associations, Information Scientists and Institutions (FEBAB), on the other hand, published, on March 14, 2020, its recommendations for the reopening of university libraries only suggesting some actions and, in some cases, pointing more than one conduct option in face of a given situation. For example, when discussing the delivery of borrowed bibliographic materials, it states that this can occur in the following ways: a) by appointment, b) while the library is open, or c) by alternative services (delivery by mail, courier, drive-through, document scanning, etc.). Although less assertive than the CRB-8 recommendations, some statements also point to challenges for libraries, such as the statement that "the return of materials is the main means of contamination. Considering that the return of materials tends to be continuous and in large numbers, staff would be in a context of constant and imminent risk, even if they adopted the recommended measures, such as using return boxes and leaving items in quarantine (BRAZILIAN COMMISSION OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, 2020).

As we have seen, several organizations/institutions have published their protocols with significant differences, potentially causing, when compared, more questions than answers about which measures to take, which are feasible, and how to ensure that they are followed. Amidst this lack of official guidance, without the guarantee of a date for the face-to-face return and without a protocol adopted by the institution, even if there were several national and international protocols already published and some criteria were already being widely used (use of masks, 70% alcohol gel, and social distancing), the library professionals were faced with numerous uncertainties since some criteria depended on the institution where they worked.

In this perspective, this article does not aim to present the actions taken by the libraries during the Covid-19 pandemic but to discuss the wishes and concerns of the coordinators or responsible for the libraries of a public IE concerning the face-to-face feedback during the pandemic and before the mass vaccination of the country's population was complete. Like other libraries, those of the IE analyzed here, carried out remote activities during the year 2020, such as dissemination of digital collections, training by videoconference, publications against fake news, among others, but we understand it is important to highlight the stress and doubts of the coordinators in this moment of uncertainty, which should be shared by professionals from other institutions in Brazil and abroad.

3 METHOD

The research is classified as exploratory as to its objectives, applied as to its purposes (GIL, 2010) and uses a quantitative approach. Furthermore, it is defined as a case study considering its design (GIL, 2010), being the libraries of a public IE of the State of São Paulo the case-unit selected for the research. Such choice is due to the geographical scope of the institution, which has several campuses distributed in virtually all regions of the State of São Paulo and a library in each of them, which represents a sufficient number to submit the approach to different points of view.

For data collection, there was the application of a closed structured questionnaire sent by e-mail and social networks to the respondents. The questionnaire was prepared based on the biosafety protocol published by CRB-8 (which was based on technical scientific texts) and underwent a pre-test, having been sent to four librarians of the selected IE who had been library coordinators of the institution but no longer held the position at the time of the research. After the feedback from three of the participants, with the analyses and modifications, the questionnaire was then sent by e-mail and social networks to the library coordinators of the selected IE (or their responsible persons, in the absence of the coordinator). Considering that these professionals are the decision-makers in the sector, they became the target respondents of the survey.

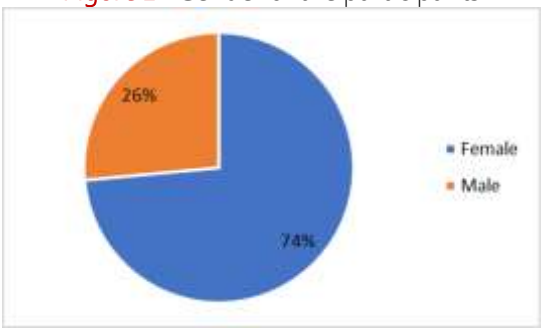
The questionnaire with the answers was received between December 7 and 17, 2020, since there was a high rate of return in the first two days, demonstrating great adherence of the professionals in participating in the research. The original population was composed of 35 respondents. From this total (35 eligible respondents), 34 valid responses were obtained (only one campus did not respond), which corresponded to a 97% return rate. The librarians who participated in the pre-test did not cooperate in this phase. After tabulating and interpreting the data extracted from the questionnaires, we created graphs and charts containing the most significant results, using MS Excel. You will find its presentation and analysis in the following.

4 RESULTS

The survey was composed of 34 respondents, of which 32 work as librarians (94%) and 2 as library assistants (6%). Of this total, 30 are the current coordinators of the library in which they work (which corresponds to 88% of the total), and the remaining 4 are responsible for the library, but without the function of coordinator. This occurs because the effective coordinator is replaced during his or her vacation period.

The next figures (Figure 1 to Figure 6) present some of the characteristics of the coordinators or those responsible for the IE libraries raised by the study.

Figure 1 - Gender of the participants

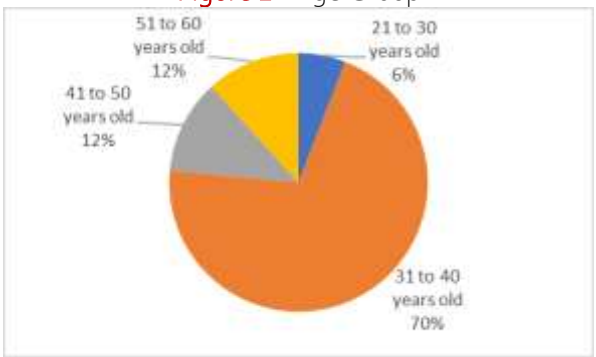


Source: research data

It can be seen in Figure 1 that approximately 2/3 of the survey participants are female (74%) and approximately 1/3 were male participants (26%).

Figure 2 presents the age range of those responsible for the IE libraries.

Figure 2 - Age Group

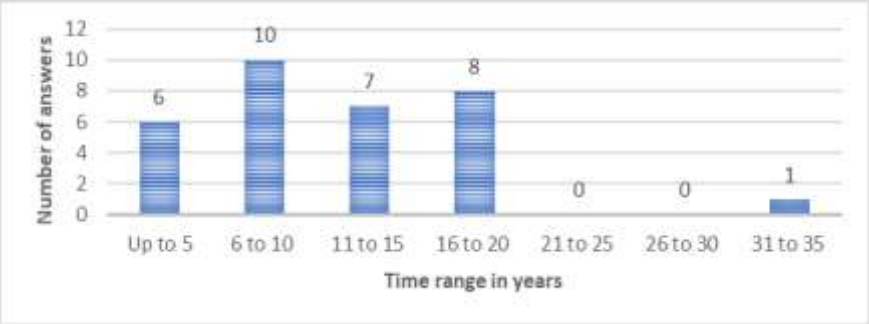


Source: research data

It can be seen from the figure that most of the participants are between the ages of 31 and 40 (70%), and that only 6% are below this main age group.

Figure 3 shows the total time each participant has worked as a librarian. It is noteworthy that the two servers that work as library assistants were not considered in the construction of the figure.

Figure 3 - Total time working as a librarian

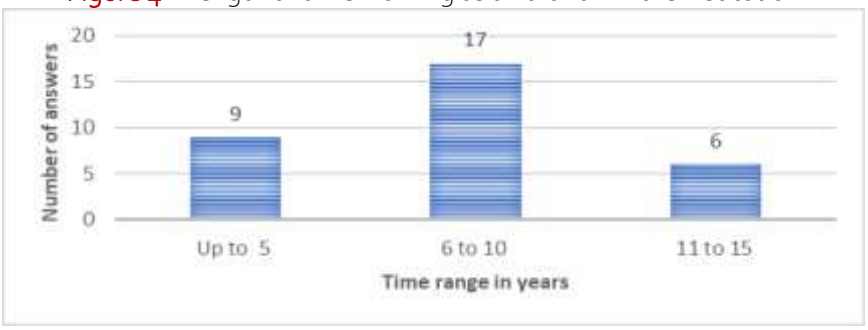


Source: research data

Through the figure (Figure 3) it is noted that 19% of librarians have up to 5 years of professional activity, while 31% have 6 to 10 years, 22% 11 to 15 years, 25% 16 to 20 years, and only 3% have 30 to 35 years of activity as a librarian.

Below, Figure 4 shows how long the coordinators and responsible persons have worked as librarians in the institution.

Figure 4 - Length of time working as a librarian in the institution

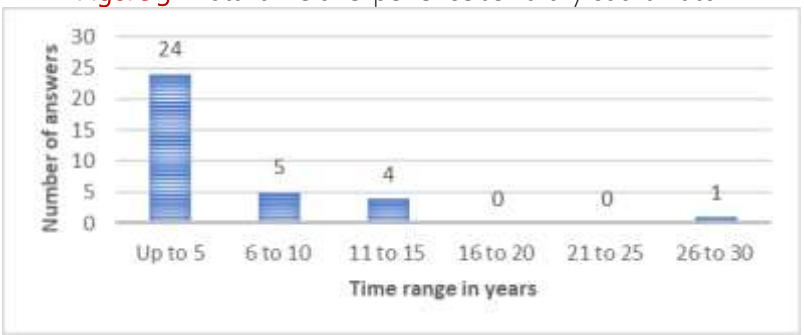


Source: research data

Figure 4 shows that 53% of the librarians have been working in the institution for 6 to 10 years, 28% for a maximum of 5 years, and 19% for 11 to 15 years. As in Figure 3, it should be noted that the two servers who work as library assistants were not considered in the construction of Figure 4.

The figure 5 shows the total time each respondent has worked as a coordinator or responsible for any library in which they have worked.

Figure 5 - Total time of experience as library coordinator

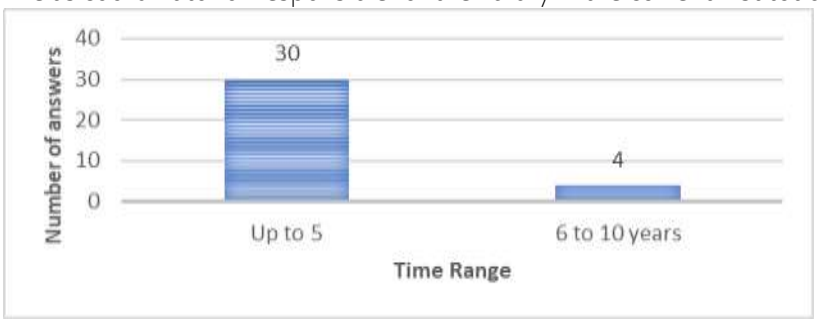


Source: research data

It is possible to observe in the figure above that most of the participants (71%) have worked for up to 5 years as responsible for the library, while 15% have worked for a dangerous period between 6 and 10 years, 12% between 11 and 15 years, and 3% for a period between 26 and 30 years.

Figure 6 presents the length of experience of each respondent as coordinator or responsible for a library, considering only the current institution.

Figure 6 - Time as coordinator or responsible for the library in the current institution



Source: research data

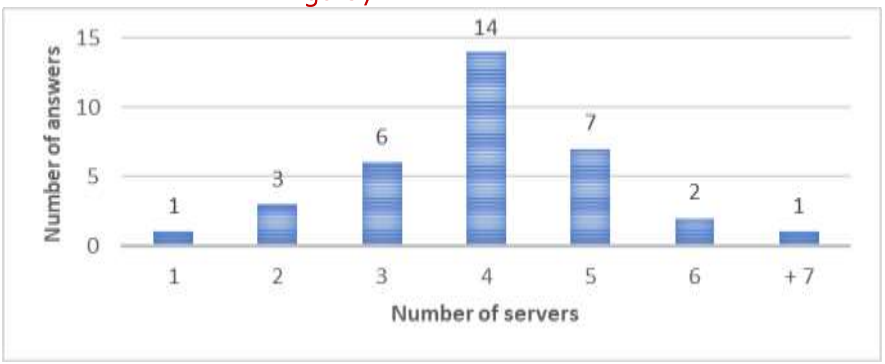
It can be observed that 88% of the respondents said that they have worked (or work) for up to 5 years as coordinators or responsible for the institution's libraries, while 12% have worked (work) between 6 and 10 years.

From the previous figures (from Figure 1 to 6), we can infer that the IE libraries, analyzed in the study, are mostly managed by women between 31 and 40 years old, who have between 6 and 20 years of professional experience (78% of the librarians) and, although there is a part of these leaders who have worked in the institution for a maximum of 5 years, most of them have worked for a period between 6 and 15 years (72%), which shows that the leadership system of these libraries has librarians with a long time of activity in the institution.

The next figures, Figures 7, 8 and 9, present some characteristics of the IE libraries, considering the number of servers, potential users and number of items in the collection.

Figure 7 (Number of servers) indicates the number of servers in the libraries

Figure 7: Number of servers

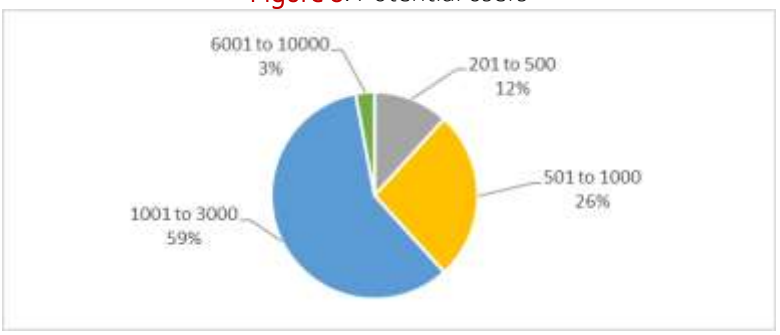


Source: research data

According to the graph above, 12% of the libraries have between 1 and 2 employees, while 79% have between 3 and 5 employees, and 9% have 6 or more employees.

The next figure shows the number of potential users (students and employees) for each library in the institution, separated by ranges that vary from 201 to 500 to 6001 to 10000.

Figure 8: Potential users



Source: research data

According to figure 8: 2% of the respondents indicated a quantity between 201 and 500 potential users, 26% indicated that they have 501 to 1000 potential users, 59% between 1001 and 3000, and 3% between 6001 and 10000 potential users. This variable shows the disparities between the libraries of smaller campuses that offer fewer courses and, therefore, have fewer students and employees enrolled, in relation to the libraries of larger campuses that have more courses and, therefore, a higher number of students and employees.

Figure 9 (Collection) shows the number of items in the IE library collections, divided into groups of 3000 items.

Figure 9 – Collection

Source: research data

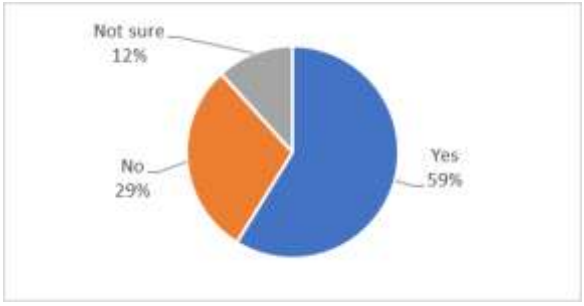
The figure above shows that 9% of the libraries have up to 3000 items, 26% have between 3001 and 6000 items, 24% between 60001 and 9000 items, 24% between 9001 and 12000 items, 15% between 120001 and 15000 items, and 3% above 15000 items (maximum of 35 thousand items).

Analyzing Figures 7, 8 and 9 together, it can be seen that there is variety in the number of servers, potential users and collection on each campus of the institution. As there is no IE legislation about the number of servers per sector, opening hours, or acquisition of material for the library, each campus determines this according to criteria established by their leaders.

Figures 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 present information about the care needed for the protection of servers and users of the IE libraries that were listed in the biosecurity protocol published by CRB-8 (REGIONAL COUNCIL OF LIBRARY ORGANIZATION OF THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO, 2020).

Figure 10 shows the answers from the people in charge of the libraries about the existence of windows and doors to ensure natural ventilation in the sector.

Figure 10 - Windows and doors to ensure natural ventilation



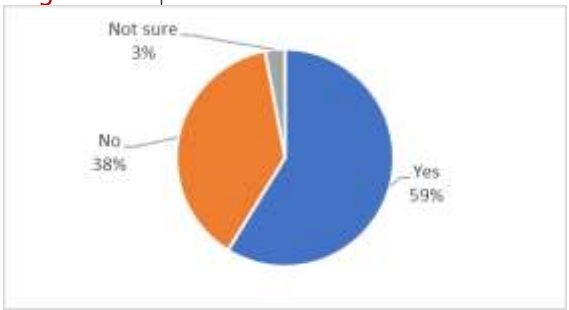
Source: research data

It can be seen that 59% of the respondents believe that the library where they work has doors and windows to ensure natural ventilation, 29% believe they do not and 12% are not sure. The importance of such item is because, according to the World Health Organization and confirmed by Correia et al. (2020), there may be transmission by aerosols (which allow the virus to be transported over longer distances) in closed environments through the airflow of the air-conditioning, ventilation and heating system (CORREIA et al., 2020). In this sense, to prevent themselves, libraries in some countries (e.g. United States, Czech Republic, Portugal, Poland) have included in their guidelines the use of natural ventilation to replace the use of air-conditioning units (INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS, 2020).

IE libraries do not have a standard architecture: some have their own buildings, but others operate in adapted rooms (like many libraries in the country), which could explain (totally or partially) the 29% of respondents who believe that there are insufficient doors and windows to ensure natural air circulation in their libraries. In addition, it is possible that part of the respondents did not consider a change in the physical structure of the environment to ensure that there is natural ventilation of the environment, such as removing protective screens or increasing the number of windows (when this is structurally possible).

Figure 11 (space for the distance between library workers) addresses the perception of library managers about the possibility of a distance of at least 1.5 meters between the workers of the sector during their on-site activities (REGIONAL COUNCIL OF LIBRARY AUDITORS OF THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO, 2020)

Figure 11 - Space for distance between servers



Source: research data

As shown in figure 11, 59% of the respondents believe that they have enough space for there to be enough distance between the servers of the sector, 38% believe that there is not enough space, and only 3% are not sure about the matter.

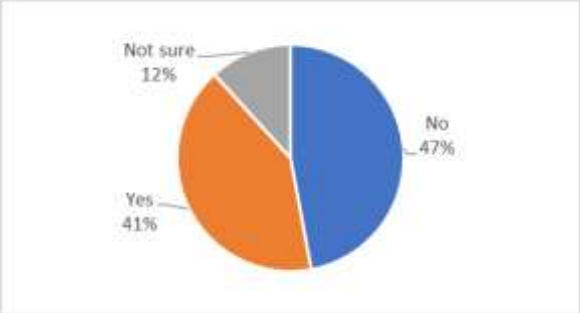
According to IFLA (2020), the distance between one person and another cannot be less than 1 meter and cites as an example the libraries in the United States that were closed

because it was not possible to keep the distance between employees and users. The CBBU recommends that the workstations be redistributed so that there is the recommended distance between servers and stresses that the priority of the institutions should be the safety of all library workers (BRAZILIAN COMMISSION OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, 2020). According to the recommendation of CRB-8 (2020), there must be a minimum distance of 2 meters between the work desks of the sector's servers.

As previously mentioned, some libraries operate in adapted spaces, with reduced space, which may justify the negative responses regarding the social distance between the sector's employees. In addition, some respondents may have disregarded the possibility of changing the layout of the library, redistributing, or removing furniture so that there is a minimum distance between the servers.

Figure 12 (Space for the distance between library users) shows whether the respondents believe that the library has enough space to ensure at least 1.5m distance between users, in any service that they want to use in the sector (study tables, customer service, computers, etc.)

Figure 12 - Space for distance between users



Source: research data

In this question, 41% of them believe that the library has enough space for the distance between users, while 47% believe that it does not, and 12% could not give an opinion.

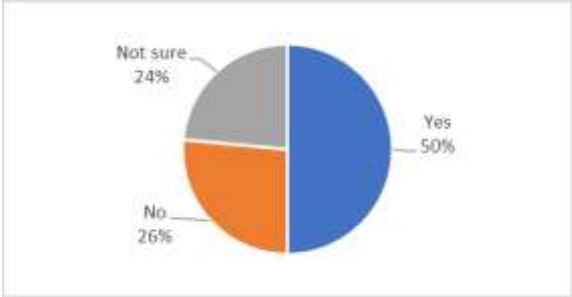
Distance between users is also an important criterion found in the protocols for the resumption of face-to-face library activities. According to IFLA (2020), libraries seek to follow the distance recommendations used for commercial establishments, which in Brazil is at least 1 meter (BRAZIL, 2020) but may vary from one country to another (from 2.5 meters in Ireland, Portugal, and Slovenia to 1 meter in Mexico) (INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS, 2020). To meet such health recommendations for distance, the Guangzhou Library, for example, decreased the number of seats and maintained a minimum distance of 1.5 meters between each (CHINA GLOBAL TELEVISION NETWORK, 2020). Changing the library layout by decreasing furniture along with distance signage on the floor are CBBU (2020) recommendations for libraries to be able to meet the sanitary measures of distance between users.

As with other criteria already mentioned, the differences found in the physical structures of IE libraries may be one of the factors that interfere with the possibility of a minimum distance between users in the sector. It is also possible that part of the respondents did not consider the change in the layout of the library, with the removal of furniture and reduction of seats, which would justify the 41% of respondents who answered that their library does not have enough space for the 1.5m distance between users of the sector. It is also possible that a part of them could keep the distance of 1 meter between its users since this is the distance used in many commercial establishments in the country (BRASIL, 2020).

Considering the possibility that it is not possible for a part of the libraries to meet the criterion of the distance between the professionals of the sector, even if it were possible to take turns, a part of the libraries could not do it, since they do not have the number of servers to keep the sector open in cases of illness of professionals in the sector (Figure 7).

Figure 13 presents the answers from the people in charge of the libraries about whether the institution has the means to guarantee the items for hand hygiene (alcohol gel, water and soap).

Figure 13 - Means to ensure adequate access to the means for hand hygiene



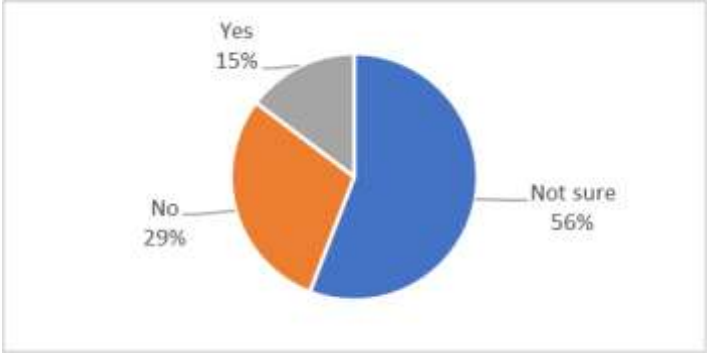
Source: research data

About this item, it was observed that 50% of the participants believe that the institution can guarantee access to such items, 26% believe it is not, and 24% do not know. According to the respondents who stated that their campus is not able to guarantee access to hand hygiene items, the doubt is about the acquisition of alcohol gel in a sufficient quantity or about the clarity of information about the purchase.

There is a consensus in the scientific literature on health about the need for constant handwashing with soap and water or the use of 70% alcohol gel as ways to prevent contamination by the virus (BRASIL, 2020). In this sense, the statement of the CRB-8 (2020) guides the availability of 70% alcohol and neutral liquid soap (for bathrooms) in the library facilities, the CBBU guides that library users have access to alcohol gel so they can use the library space, which is following the guidelines of the Ministry of Health, which indicates that, for a safe resumption of classroom activities, there should be an adequate structure for hand washing, including sinks with soap and water and availability of 70% alcohol gel (BRASIL, 2020).

Figure 14 (Access to PPE by library staff and users) shows the participants' opinion about the institution's guarantee of supply of PPE - Personal Protective Equipment (masks, gloves, face shield, etc.) to staff and users.

Figure 14: Access to PPE by library staff and users



Source: research data

In this item, 56% of the participants were not sure if the institution will guarantee access, 29% believe it will not, and 15% believe that the institution will be able to offer PPE to servers and users. For the respondents who do not believe in access to PPE's, their justifications are that the purchase of PPE's had not yet been made, or was made in insufficient quantity, or there was no disclosure of any information on the subject until the time of the survey.

Masks are mandatory equipment in many public places, including libraries (BRASIL, 2020). The CRB-8 (2020) recommends that the use of masks (cloth or disposable) is mandatory for library workers and users, and that, in addition, for greater protection and safety of workers, other PPE should be used, such as goggles, nitrile gloves, and body protection aprons. According to CBBU (2020) guidelines, libraries should provide, in addition to alcohol gel, disposable masks and gloves to library users, and everyone should use the PPE indicated by health organizations. According to IFLA (2020), there are libraries including a protective screen (acrylic plate, for example) to decrease the contact between servers and users.

Although some IE campuses have made masks, face shield, and alcohol gel for donation to health professionals, there is currently no forecast of return or any information from the rectory about the acquisition of these items. The acquisitions are mostly made by the campuses themselves, which explains why some campuses already have alcohol gel and PPE and others do not (Figures 13 and 14).

By consolidating the data from the answers given by the people in charge of the libraries about some sanitary criteria presented in Figures 10 to 14, we prepared table 1 (Library x Sanitary criteria that would be met in the perception of the people in charge of the libraries).

Chart 1: Library x health criteria that would be met in the perception of those in charge of the libraries

Campus	Natural ventilation	Servers Distance	Users' Distance	Items for hand hygiene	IPE's	
Cp1						
Cp2						
Cp3						
Cp4						
Cp5						
Cp6						
Cp7						
Cp8						
Cp9						
Cp10						
Cp11						
Cp12						
Cp13						
Cp14						
Cp15						
Cp16						
Cp17						
Cp18						
Cp19						
Cp20						
Cp21						
Cp22						
Cp23						
Cp24						
Cp25						
Cp26						
Cp27						
Cp28						
Cp29						
Cp30						
Cp31						
Cp32						
Cp33						
Cp34						Total
Total of "yes"	20 (59%)	20 (59%)	14 (41%)	17 (50%)	5 (15%)	76 (45%)
Total of "no"	10 (29%)	13 (38%)	16 (47%)	9 (26%)	10 (29%)	58 (34%)
Total of "not sure"	4 (12%)	1 (3%)	4 (12%)	8 (24%)	19 (56%)	36 (21%)

Source: research data

The table shows that if on-site activities were to resume in early 2021, according to the perception of those responsible for the IE libraries, none of the campuses would meet all the sanitary criteria listed in the biosafety protocols published by institutions such as the CRB-

8 and the Ministry of Education (CRB-8, 2020; BRASIL, 2021) regarding the institution's libraries.

Through the table, it is also observed that although the green color (i.e., the coordinator/responsible person believes that his/her library would be able to meet the health requirement) is the most abundant (45%), the percentage of 21% of the yellow color (the coordinator/responsible person is not sure of meeting the health requirement) and 34% of the red color (the requirement would not be met, in the opinion of the coordinator/responsible person for the library) are quite high. It is possible to see that the criterion related to PPE's is the biggest problem that the libraries of the institution will have to face since there is a great predominance of yellow and red colors. The criteria related to natural ventilation and distance between servers are the ones that received the highest amount of positive evaluations since they have a higher concentration of green.

These results show that the institution will need to act on all campuses to meet the sanitary criteria in its libraries. The data in the table indicate concerning natural ventilation, the distance between servers and hand hygiene items, problems occur on a smaller number of campuses than those related to the distance between users and the availability of PPE.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the coming years, new research is likely to emerge on the impact of Covid-19 on library operations. Some of this will be conducted retrospectively, with a distance that will be important to answer many questions, but that will also limit the record of the feelings and doubts that library professionals experienced during the pandemic. Therefore, this research aimed to highlight the perception of a set of librarians about the return of the face-to-face activities of the libraries they coordinated during the pandemic and before the full vaccination of the population.

Through the survey, it was possible to verify that the most worrying item for the coordinators/responsible for the IE libraries, analyzed in the study, is the provision of PPE's since most of them are not sure (56%) or do not believe (29%) that they will be able to offer them to users and servers, given the fact that they have not been acquired until the time of the survey. We emphasize the importance of planning the acquisition of PPEs since, with the return to on-site activities of all the institutions that are currently working remotely, there may be a lack or increase in prices of these materials, which may lead to problems similar to those that occurred in the country regarding the acquisition of syringes and other supplies related to the Covid-19 pandemic by the federal government.

Another important finding is that considering only the opinion of the library coordinators/leaders, although there were criteria that received the most positive responses, none of the IE libraries would meet all the basic health criteria simultaneously. Thus, to be successful in its return, the institution should perform an analysis of the needs and risks of the libraries, considering the specificities of each one of them, since there are differences between the physical structures, layouts, number of servers, users and collections in each one of them, and hardly a single analysis will solve the problems of all libraries.

In short, it is inferred that for a safe return that also inspires security in servers and users, there has to be an advance planning in partnership with the institution. The librarians of IE have organized themselves and created a take-back protocol, and have already demanded from the rectory the means for the sanitary criteria to be met. Another possible action would be the creation of a discussion group among those responsible for the libraries since the problem

in one unit can occur in the others and the collaborative work could point to more effective ways to solve it.

Despite the limitations of the research (it was applied in only one public educational institution and only one Brazilian state), the questions that inspired the results presented - especially from Figure 10 onwards - actually represent a "route", applicable to any library belonging to an educational institution (with possible adaptations according to its specificities), for the analysis of the conditions of return to on-site activities from the perspective of the head librarian. Based on the biosecurity protocol published by the CRB-8, this route adds value to the extent that it transforms the protocols into questions, facilitating their application in a real context.

Moreover, this work, even though it was based on a set of libraries, and even developed answers based on this characteristic (see Table 1), also applies to institutions that have a single library. Thus, librarians responsible for IE libraries may find in this work a reference on how to analyze their situation, document it, and discuss it with their staff and the institution itself to lead all stakeholders towards a safe and smooth return.

In this sense, the present research serves both as a warning (based on the experience of IE librarians) about the condition of uncertainty in which a large part of the coordinators and heads of libraries across the country finds themselves, but also as a call - and inspiration - to the implementation of diagnostic measures by libraries and educational institutions in order to plan solutions that will ensure the safe return of face-to-face activities in libraries.

The study also offers contributions and perspectives for future analyses, including in other contexts. Since the fears and perceptions of library professionals about a possible face-to-face return were discussed, a second stage of the project can inquire whether or not these expectations were confirmed after the return, and what the consequences of each measure were on library operations.

Another possible investigation is whether the concerns expressed in this article were considered in the biosecurity protocols adopted by the institution in the period of return to face-to-face activities. Since this is an IE, the present study can serve as a reference and comparison for other research on the relationship between pandemic control measures and the functioning of libraries in other IEs around the country. Finally, an opportunity that face-to-face feedback offers is to observe the students' opinions on the subject and to be able to confront them with that of the servers. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the cultural and educational sector in a significant way between 2020 and 2021, with consequences that will last for years, which will cause new debates and questions.

CRediT

RECOGNITIONS: The authors would like to thank the members of the Research Group of the UFPE's Digital Curatorship Nucleus for the discussions provided to improve this work.

FINANCING: Not applicable.

INTEREST CONFLICTS: The authors certify that they have no commercial or associative interest that represents a conflict of interest in relation to the manuscript.

ETHICAL APPROVAL: Not applicable.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL: Not applicable.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation. Methodology, Project management, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Software, Writing - original draft, Writing - proofreading & editing: GALDINOI, R.; SOUZA, W.E.R. de; Financing acquisition – not applicable.

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turnitin
Article submitted in the similarity system
Submitted: 25/08/2021 – Accepted: 16/09/2021 – Published: 20/09/2021