

E-Learning the new Mantra of Education - A journey of challenges, satisfaction & opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The current study examines the impact of E-Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic on Hotel Management graduates and faculties and highlights the challenges, opportunities, and levels of satisfaction. The study has also attempted to highlight the new teaching pedagogy and the changes that were adopted by the faculties to deliver E-Content and online teaching and learning experiences to the students. A qualitative research approach was used for the current study by taking two Hotel Management institutes and hospitality skill training centres as a case study located in Maharashtra, India. The findings of the research are highly useful and present in-depth and real challenges related to E-Learning during and post-COVID-19. Arguably, this is a unique kind of study, as there has been no previous research done specifically aiming at the faculties and the graduates of the Hotel Management institution. The findings will help the faculties, hospitality trainers, and students to benefit from the E-Learning platforms. The findings will also help the faculties to plan and design the new teaching pedagogy to deliver effective classroom learning experiences to the students.

Keywords – *E-Learning; COVID-19; Technology; Use of technology*

INTRODUCTION

E-learning is one of the finest examples of how the development of technology can facilitate the learning and teaching experience. Aboagye, *et al.* (2020) argued that any form of formal learning exercise or formal training activities conducted with the help of electronic sources can be termed an E-Learning mode. Teaching and learning through this mode can be conducted either inside or outside of the class; here the learning and teaching medium is important as compared to the venue.

All across the world, many educational institutes use E-Learning to improve the quality and the overall learning experience for the students. Hotel management is also one of the finest skill-based courses which is known for providing world-class hospitality graduates who are best suited for both national and international job profiles (Kamrul., *et.al.*, 2022). Hotel management courses have encountered many changes over the period of time especially during critical COVID-19 many new changes took place which changed the complete face of traditional teaching and learning methods (Giray, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the management and authorities of these hotel management colleges had three major responsibilities, that is, to prevent the virus from spreading to the students, faculty and staff, the economic sustainability and running of the college, and last but not least, to ensure no academic year gap occurs for the students (Balakrishnan *et al.* 2013). In other words, it also created pressure on the academic fraternity to design and deliver everything through online mode. COVID-19 and its spread during the initial phase forced many national and international firms and institutes to close down (Barrot, Llenares & Rosario, 2021). In order to reduce the spread and to control the spreading virus, the institutes were forced to take this major step of sudden transformation of their shift from offline to online mode. This sudden transformation was a big move and surprising as well in many forms for faculty, students, and even for the administrative staff and the management of these institutes (Cevik & Bakioglu, 2021). However,

the graduate students and the faculty of hotel management faced many real-time challenges during their shift from offline to online mode. The current research has a clear focus to assess the impact of E-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic on hotel management graduates and faculty and to highlight the challenges, opportunities, and their level of satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-Learning as a trend in Education in Hotel Management Schools across India

In recent times especially post the COVID-19 pandemic E-Learning is amongst the most obvious choices and the tool that has made the teaching and learning process much easier and comprehensive. Rossi (2009) has argued that E-Learning must be considered as a major concept that offers a varied range of activities such as learning methods, innovative teaching methods, new online assessment tools, online feedback mechanisms, and also to offer online simulation exercises. Furthermore (Maltz *et.al.*, 2005 & O'Neill *et al.*, 2005) highlighted that E-Learning is applied in many different perspectives which include basically four aspects, that is, distributed learning, online–distance learning, hybrid, and mobile learning.

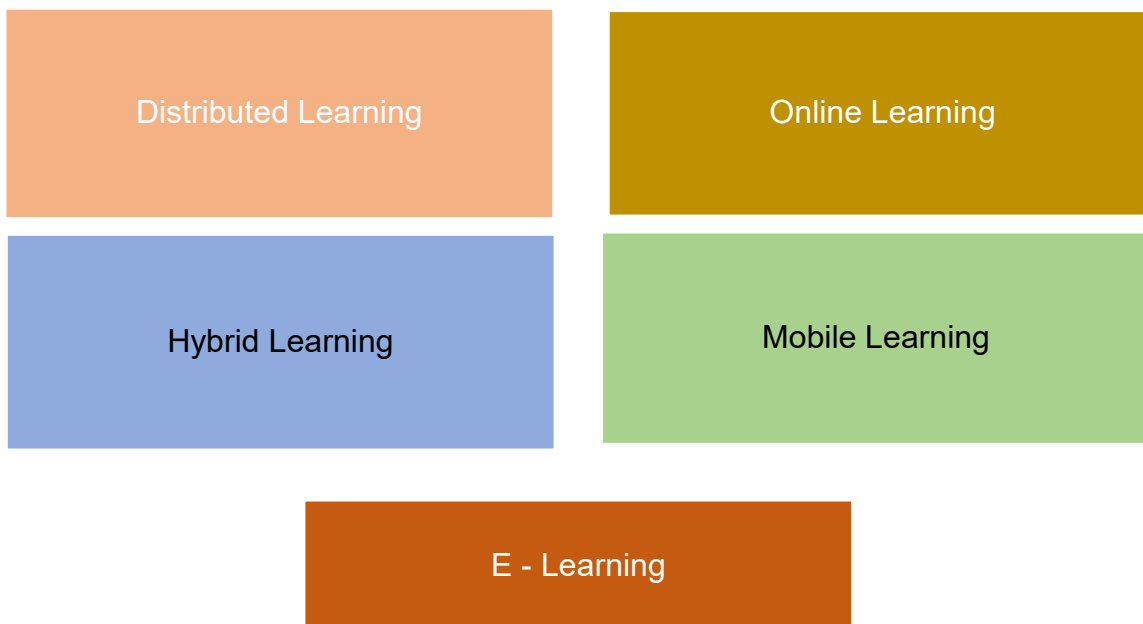


Figure 1: Author's Elaboration – E-Learning Perspectives

O'Neil, *et.al* (2011) argued that students who take E-Learning seem to be more optimistic as compared to the ones who take offline classes. The study also highlighted that initially students find it difficult to relate and remain motivated but with the passage of time and with constant guidance their level of involvement and degree of learning increases by a higher margin.

Kohnke & Moorhouse (2021) argued in detail about adopting the HyFlex method in higher education and in this study observed the teaching students in a physical classroom alongside synchronised online through videoconferencing software. The authors emphasised the utilisation of various features of the videoconferencing software and the other digital tools which were highly

significant for the effectiveness of HyFlex; at the same time it was found to be highly flexible and a bit challenging as well.

Aristeidou & Cross (2021) highlighted the changes in distance learning students and in their study habits which included classroom learning, assessments and active participation. They analysed the factors which have negative impacts as well. They found that very little or no work previously was done in the context of distance learning universities and their learning support towards the students. Furthermore, some of the negative impacts on the students' study habits were associated with handling study pressure, no scope for interaction with other students and few activities, socioeconomic background, study level, limited interaction with tutors, age, personal health, employment issues, childcare and caring responsibilities, which were also the major factors related to particular study habits. However, it is interesting to note how the universities with new and even the existing distance learning practices can address these major factors and design a process to handle or offer better support in the case of COVID-19 or similar disruptions.

The introduction of an E-learning system into Hotel Management courses has been a long and complex method because the nature of the course and the practical aspects associated with it make it even more complicated and challenging (Hobbes, 2011). The studies by Kohnke & Moorhouse (2021) and Aristeidou & Cross (2021) have strong relevance in the Indian context, where technology like HyFlex can be a great medium to support online classes. At the same time, Hotel Management institutes must also design and develop distance learning short-term courses to support students in the case of disruptions such as COVID-19. Some of the major challenges which were faced by the Hotel Management schools in India are related to the new infrastructure development, new technical gradation, introducing and implementing automated training process, use of IT-driven support for education and training, and many other technical challenges (Maheshwari, 2021).

Hotel management courses are highly skilled based and demand the constant training of the core department employees, that is, '*Front office, Housekeeping, F& Beverage and Front Office*' which also demands some on-the-job and hands-on training experience for the employees (Aung & Khaing, 2015). Hence the learning experience in hotel management institutes must be a blended learning experience with a strong combination of online theory and offline practical, which can further be facilitated by online or live demonstration sessions.

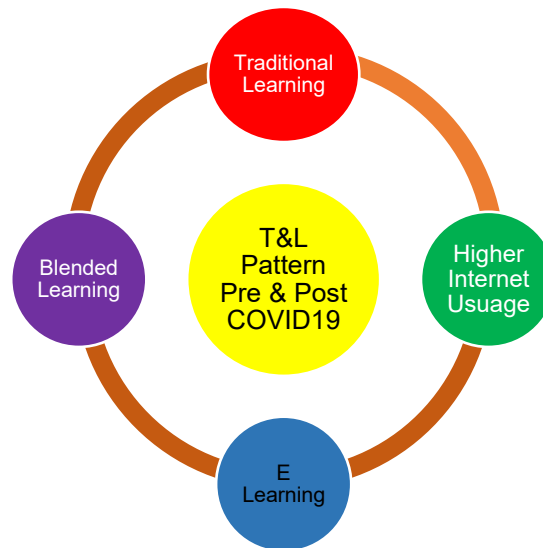


Figure 2: Author's Elaboration – T&L Pattern Pre & Post the COVID-19 Pandemic

Technology and Online Teaching & Learning Experience for Hotel Management Graduates

During the early 1960s for the first time in human history, the online education system got its identity at the University of Illinois where a classroom system base was linked with the computer terminal (Roblyer & Doering, 2010). PLATO was also a major invention that was known as the first internet-based community designed for online education by Daniel Apler and Don Bitzer in the USA. Further in 1969 in the UK a program called CICERO was launched which marked the beginning of the Open University which introduced many modules for distance teaching and online class delivery (Hobbes, 2011; & Maratos, 2012).

Table 1: Early Phases of Technology Innovations

1960 -1980 Incremental Phase	Invention of Super Computers and the Internet for R&D in the USA
1990 – 2010 Semi – Radical Phase	Major technological advancements for the higher data storage capacity, tracking system, faster medium of communication, and entering into the digital technological era.
2010 – Present Disruptive Phase	Digital imprints for telecommunication and technological advancements.

(Source: Bower & Christensen (1995); Rosenbloom & Spencer (1996))

Table 2: Technology Changes 2010 to Present

Incremental Phase	Innovation for upgrading the existing technologies
Semi – Radical Phase	Use of innovative technologies for a higher degree of usage (like mobile phones have every single feature)
Disruptive Phase	Disruptive innovation in the case of many sectors

(Source: Schatzberg, 2006)

Online teaching in India started in 1994 when ISRO provided a teleconferencing facility at the IGNOU New Delhi. Although this was a one-way video and two-way audio system it gave much-needed support to the students (Maheshwari, 2021). In the year 2000 Gyandarshan Platform was launched which gave a strong identity to the official education channel. Further in 2005, ISRO, MHRD, and IGNOU came forward to launch EDUSAT, a satellite designed by the late Hon'ble APJ Abdul Kalam, which was considered a major revolution for today's online education system (Dham, 2020).

As the COVID-19 pandemic affected almost all the educational institutes, earlier studies noted that hotel management also faced major heat, and this will continue to impact the long-term sustainability of the hotel management college. Authors such as Dham (2020), and Baig (2011) have argued that the nature of the hotel management course which demands more practical and less theoretical work, was the biggest problem for all the hotel management colleges during the pandemic. The Institute of Hotel Management – Aurangabad and ITC – Manipal were the pioneers

in finding the solution to this problem; they started with live demonstrations, and the recordings of the same were shared with the students, which helped them to practice the recipes back at home. Furthermore, a few authors also argued about some of the major issues and the real-time challenges such as the financial problems, affordability, and the poor network facilities in the rural and semi-urban areas which further made the students struggle a lot during testing times (Hobbes, 2011).

Many initiatives were taken by the Indian government under PM e-VIDYA, an initiative related to digital/online and on-air education for multi-mode access, which facilitated online education and further enabled the hotel management students to have continuity in their education. Major initiatives like Swayam, MOOCs, DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) and NROER (National Repository of Open Education) came as a blessing in disguise (Giray, 2021 & Dham, 2020). In order to facilitate the learning process, many hotel management institutes across the country use different online teaching platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classrooms, WebEx by Cisco Go to Meetings, and many more.

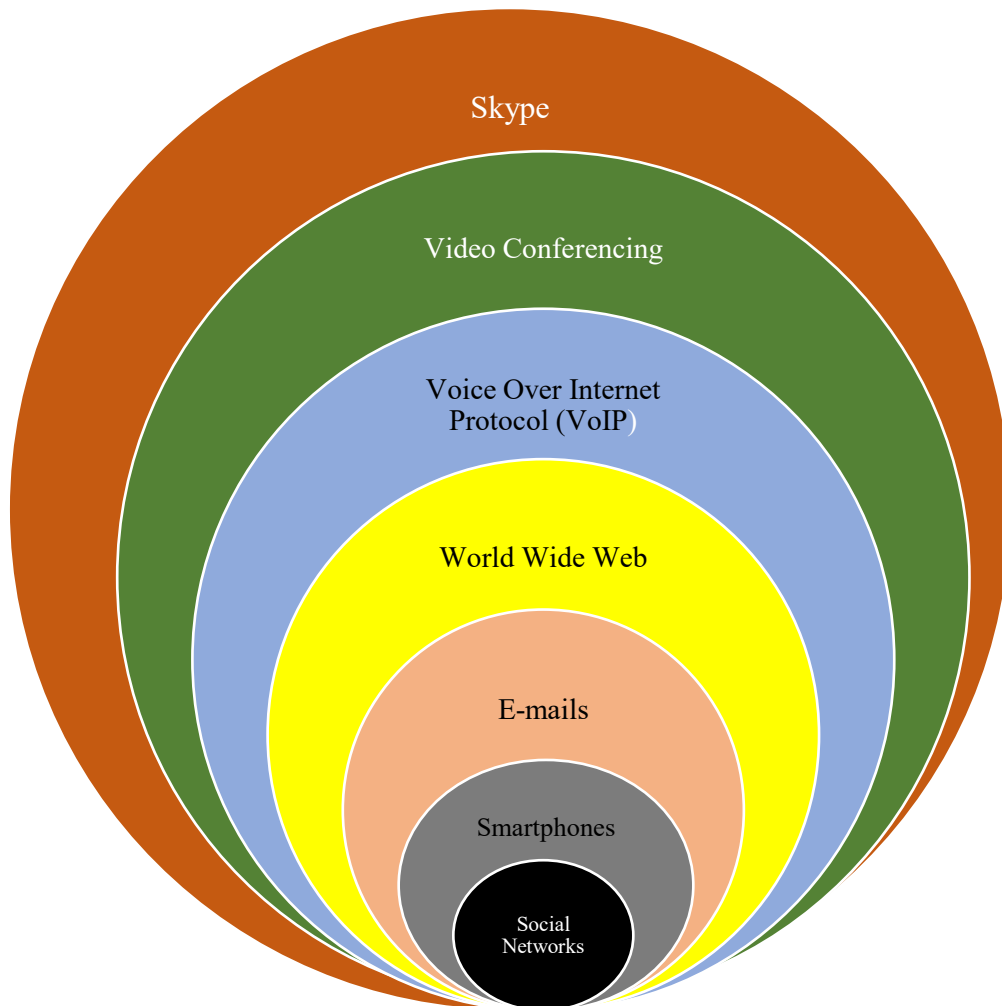


Figure 3: Internet Communication Tools for Business, Training & Online Education
Source: Fenell, (2013)

TCM Model and Online Learning

The concept of training before the online support was mostly dependent upon the usage of mail and telegraph. In the early 1980s, many companies in the US started using online training as a medium to train company executives and government employees (Roblyer & Doering, 2010). Soon many corporate giants like TATAs, Reliance, Birlas, etc. started using PPTs, visual charts, and even data and figures in pictorial form to facilitate their training. This further led to the birth of E-Learning with online education and training courses which soon became part of schools and colleges as well (Aranda, 2006). The current study has many implications for the TCM model (Technology Change Model 1950-2010) discussed by Aranda (2006), Cook, et.al. (2021), Cook & Sonnenberg (2013). Further, Fedaghi (2009) highlighted the TCM model, where he stated the need for a formal model to extract requirements from policies and regulations using the TCM model. The model is a perfect example of an overview with the objective of establishing the frame of reference for technological changes and online learning from the 1950s to 2010. The TCM model comprises seven different steps for advancing online learning, that is, design for online learning, production of online linked systems, digital online network distribution, online network operation, online system expansion, online system utilisation, and improved mobile computing hardware and software (Hameed, Badii & Cullen., 2008). The TCM model is highly applicable for hotel management courses as well, as the courses have also gone through many changes and advances over the period of time. The model also becomes highly applicable especially post-COVID for the hotel management programmes including the bachelor's degree, master's degree, and even the short and craft courses (Cevik & Bakioglu, 2021 & Istenic, 2021).

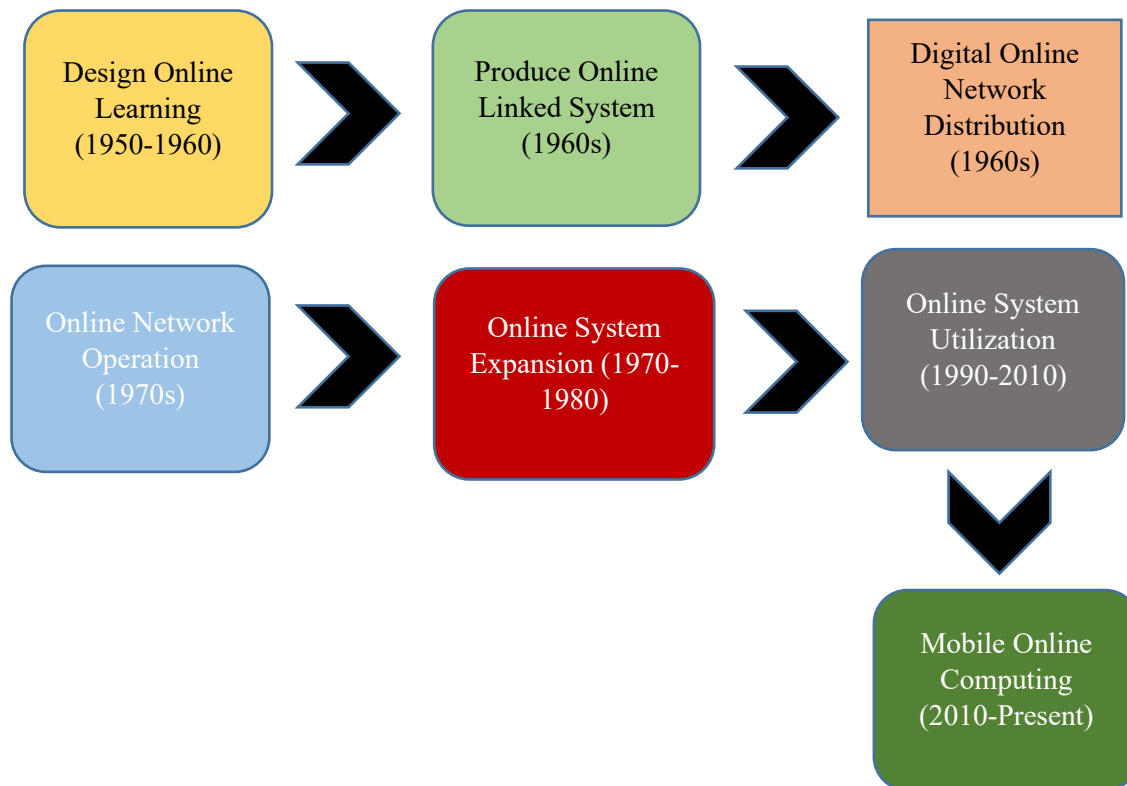


Figure 4: Author's Elaboration of the TCM Model

Newer Dimensions of E-Learning and the role of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) in E - Learning

As we have discussed earlier, the classroom teaching and learning methods are changing, and this trend has also forced the traditional method which focused on the teacher centric mode to change to the student centric education mode (Aung & Khaing, 2015). No doubt in the context of this study, arising from the need of the hour is the switch over to E-Learning and accept the recent changes and be also efficient with the technological aspects and technicalities involved in using these technologies (Dham, 2020). Some of the major E-Learning concepts are Flipped Classroom (FC), Open Educational Resource (OERs), and blended learning & MOOCs and the teachers from Hotel Management should move to these online E-Learning platforms, and at the same time the students also must be motivated to utilise the E-Learning platform resources (Maheshwari, 2021). E-learning also uses the various features of ICT (Information & Communication Technologies) as it enables teachers and students to get major access to the information source (Buhalis, 2020). ICT generally includes wireless networks, satellite communication, mobile learning apps, Internet services, digital televisions, and Google Class. We can consider the E-Learning system as a digital learning mechanism and the beauty of digital learning is that this method enables us to learn anyway, anytime, and any number of times by using the new gadgets (Barrot, Llenares & Rosario, 2021). E-Learning has also enabled students to access the digital library and digital content, course materials, and research reports can be accessed through online platforms (Law, 2020). There are different learning sources that are commonly now being used by hotel management colleges which include Open Educational Resources (OERs), Flipped Classrooms, Blended Learning, MOOCs, E-Readers, Mobile Learning and Micro-Learning, Augmented Reality, Social Media, and Language Processing and all these learning platforms have proved to be a major support system for the students and the teachers (Kamrul, *et.al*, 2022; Giray, 2021).

The education sector worldwide now also depends highly on AR & VR to create an immersive and engaging learning experience. VR is a simulated three-dimensional computer-generated environment that emulates the real world or acts as an imaginary world. VR in India is mostly used for three major purposes, that is, education, entertainment and even as a research tool (Chouhan, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, many educational institutes teaching hotel management courses realised the benefits and the significance of AR and VR for creating unique learning experiences for their students (Bansal, Mahto & Sharma., 2020)). Since visiting the hotel during lockdown was not possible, and in order to offer a similar learning experience, many top hotel management institutes, based on their affordability, adopted AR and VR for their institutes. In VR, since the virtual environment can be monitored and supervised, especially for organisational behaviour and human behaviour research, it is believed that VR is highly significant in conducting cutting-edge research (Kumar, 2019).

According to Buhalis (2021), AR should be defined as a variation of VR. It has been found that VR is so powerful that the user gets completely involved inside a computer-generated environment, but at the same time, the user might not relate to the physical environment. Whereas AR can be considered as a combination of both virtual and physical environments and usually enables the overlaying of the virtual elements onto the physical environment; as a result, it supplements reality rather than replacing it (Cook, *et.al*. 2021). In order to have optimum utilisation of AR and VR in the E-learning segment, it is highly essential to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of one over the other to have a clear understanding of the impact and effectiveness (Merge Cube, 2023). AR and VR offer a wider scope of collaborative learning where both the hotel management students and the faculty engage and interact within the virtual world. In hotel management courses, especially in the Indian students' context, it has been observed that these technologies have helped in improving critical thinking, crisis management, conflict resolution, and effective decision-making skills among the students. AR and VR have enabled hospitality students to experience the virtual environment that facilitates hospitality/ tourism experiential learning from exploring the hospitality

services, guest facilities, products and service quality, tourism destinations, among others (Ra'cz, 2019). AR and VR present remarkable benefits, but they also come with major challenges such as high financial costs, infrastructure especially for the technology, content creation and ensuring the safety measures associated with the usage of AR and VR (Tilovberdiyevich, 2023).

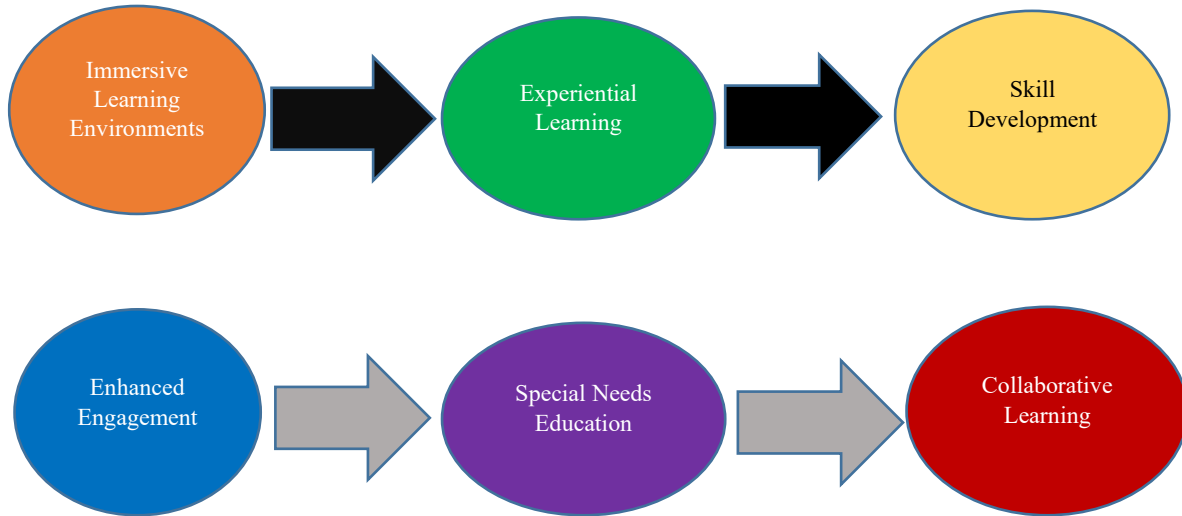


Figure 5: Author's Elaboration of VR in Education

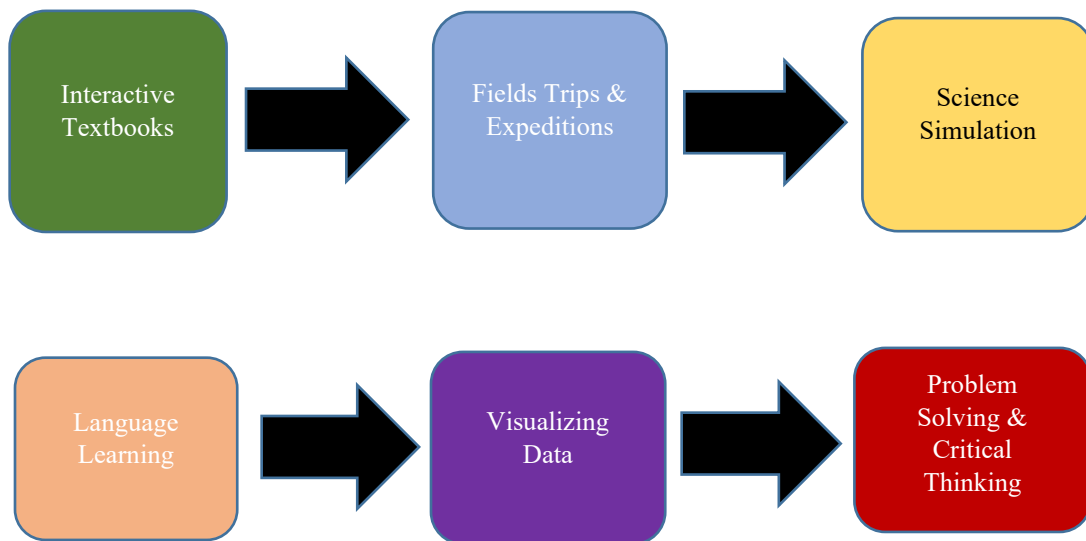


Figure 6: Author's Elaboration of AR in Education

Research Methodology

Based on the research questions and purpose of the study, the study has been designed in order to acquire information from the faculty, staff, and students from the hotel management colleges and hospitality skill development centers located in Maharashtra. The current research focused on the Aurangabad district and two hotel management and one skill development institutes were selected for the study. The nature of the study is such that we had to collect the data in two phases, and we termed it Phase 1 & and Phase 2 of our study. In Phase 1 we focused only on the hotel management institutes located in Aurangabad and we approached the Institute of Hotel Management – Aurangabad, and MGM Institute of Hotel Management. In Phase 1 we conducted detailed interviews, including telephonic interviews, and discussions with the faculty, staff, and students even through online/Zoom platform/MT. Phase 1 had around 11 students, 15 faculty, and staff who showed their strong desire to participate in the study but a few of them requested not to reveal their identity. In phase 2 of our study around 13 students and 16 faculty and staff agreed to share their experience from Pratham Skill Development Institute, Aurangabad. The current study is exploratory in nature and follows the qualitative approach of primary research methodology (Malhotra, 2008; Dworkin, 2012).

For the current research, the theory of “data saturation” based on grounded theory is applied which is considered the most reliable method for the primary data source (Bowen, 2008; Marshall, 2013). Data were analysed with a prime view of retaining the participants’ responses (faculty, staff, students, HODs, and the other administration staff of the hotel management colleges and Pratham Skill Centre). In the detailed process of developing the themes, sub-themes, and major themes, the researcher immersed in the qualitative data thereby identifying emergent categories and the different patterns. During the process the linkages between patterns and the different categories were applied to develop the sub-themes; and further, the s tried to group the sub-themes together which held together in a meaningful but distinct way. Later those themes merged in a coherent yet unique manner were further grouped as a major theme (Cresswell, 2002). Later the convergence in the respondents’ viewpoints, learning experience, and the overall online deliveries were often linked to the prime role, responsibility, and the level of active participation of faculty and students. Based on the research objectives the recorded and interpreted the data. The researcher followed all the ethical considerations while collecting the data and all the respondents (students, staff and faculty) were assured that the confidentiality and privacy of their personal details would be maintained (Creswell, 2007; Schwandt *et al.*, 2007).

Objectives of the Research

- To study in detail about E-Learning and its impact on the overall learning experience of the students during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To highlight new innovative technologies and their significance in facilitating E-Learning for the students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Question

How have E-Learning and new innovative technologies during COVID -19 impacted the overall learning experience of the students?

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It was observed during the study that COVID-19 had severely impacted the hotel management and skill development institutes; as a result, many institutes could not take the heat and either the

course or the department had to be closed in and around Aurangabad district, India. According to the World Health Organization, around 77% students and 83% alone in the hotel management course were impacted during the COVID-19 outbreak. The current study found that E-learning during the pandemic impacted both the students and the faculty; it even led to a psychological and intellectual gap and an extreme state of stress and uncertainty. Students living in rural areas were badly impacted; poor network connectivity, lack of resources, mental health conditions, access to academic and reading material, and even uncertain assessment schedules made the students go through extreme academic pressure. The present study highlights the new technological availability and its usability at the college level and the range of challenges faced by the faculty and the students. The study also makes a contribution to the existing literature on education, learning abilities and even to the training and development practices by investigating the implications of technologies and new innovations in the field of teaching.

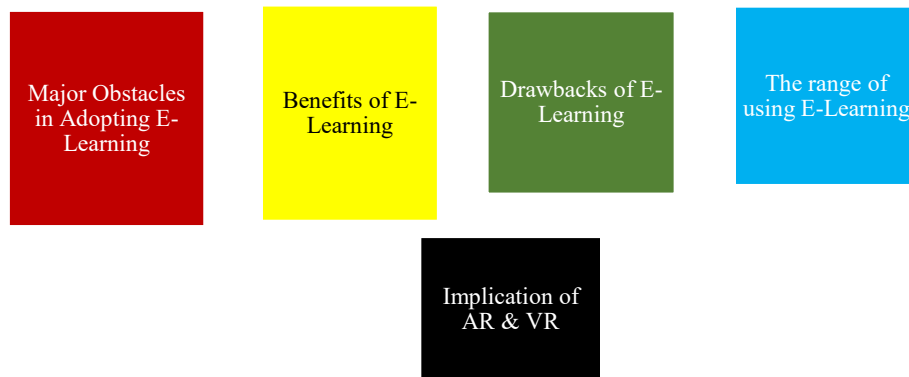


Figure 7: Implications of E-Learning

The present research emphasizes the need for advanced and economical technology options for all the hotel management and skill development institutes, and at the same time, the students must be exposed to the academic content, online classroom experience and live kitchen practical demonstrations. Some of the major aspects of the study and prime observations regarding E – Learning are discussed below.

Impact of E-Learning Technologies on Student' Motivation

The analysis of the collected data highlighted that E–Learning is preferred as more effective compared to the old method of teaching. Many students during the FGD highlighted that the learning content provided through E–Learning by the teachers was much more appealing compared to the traditional method. The faculty of the Institute of Hotel Management & MGM highlighted that the biggest benefit of adopting E–Learning is that it provides the college and the student's greater flexibility in terms of place, time and level of involvement. The faculty also highlighted that they have observed a higher degree of motivation in the students when comparing pre and post-COVID situations. The same clearly highlights the higher degree of motivation towards E–Learning compared to traditional learning.

One of the senior professors from IHM mentioned that:

“We observed a different and higher degree of motivation among the students, especially among the intermediate and final year level students towards the new learning method. A sense of excitement to try and experience something new had already set in among the

students. The students also appreciated the flexibility of class timings, separate doubts sessions and discussion classes which eventually helped them in better learning and understanding of the subject. Strong support from new technologies and innovations like AR & VR also played a major role for the overall quality learning experience for the students”.

An Insight into Student Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Here the researcher tried to understand the students’ learning goals and the faculty’s teaching strategies which evolved post-COVID based on the five major categories shown in Figure 8 below.

Many students from the Institute of Hotel Management & MGM, especially the final year students, shared their experience that E–Learning is very useful and highly flexible; it has transformed many of their batchmates. Few students also agreed that E–Learning is quite tough and challenging initially but soon after some time and with constant practice, improvements can be achieved. Students from the Pratham Skill Centre pointed out their challenges, with poor Internet services being their biggest obstacle, and lack of exposure and good guidance was a major roadblock. Further, they also highlighted that E–Learning puts more pressure on the students rather than on the faculty, and sometimes the level of interaction and involvement is also very low. Many students and faculty highlighted in detail about the significance of AR and VR for hospitality studies. They argued how new innovative technologies like AR and VR can make a huge impact on the overall learning experience of the students. Practical exposure and hands on training was highly essential. Further, faculty from Pratham also added that, these exposures and hands on training will build a different level of confidence and awareness among the students. Many students also highlighted that E – Learning is more student centric and not tutor centric. All the new methods of teaching and learning which began during the COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a new and powerful trend which was observed as a new shifting trend from tutor centered to student centered learning. The figure below highlights the shift from the tutor–centred to the student–centred approach, with the major changes which came up during the pandemic.

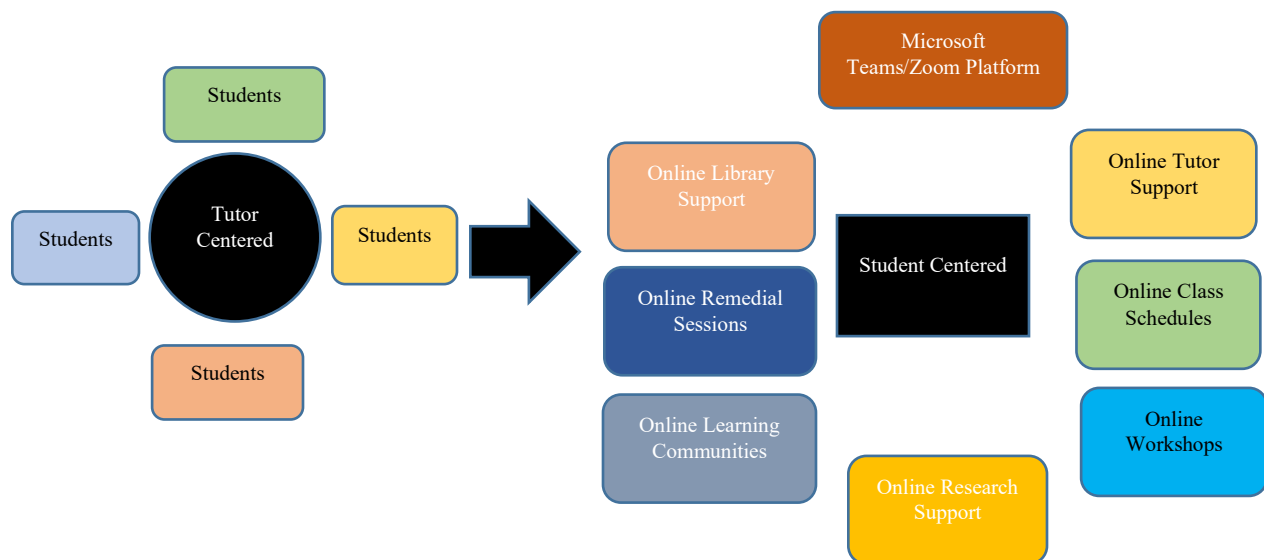


Figure 8: Shift from Tutor Centered to Student Centered Approach

An Insight into the Teaching and Change in Pedagogy during the COVID-19 Pandemic

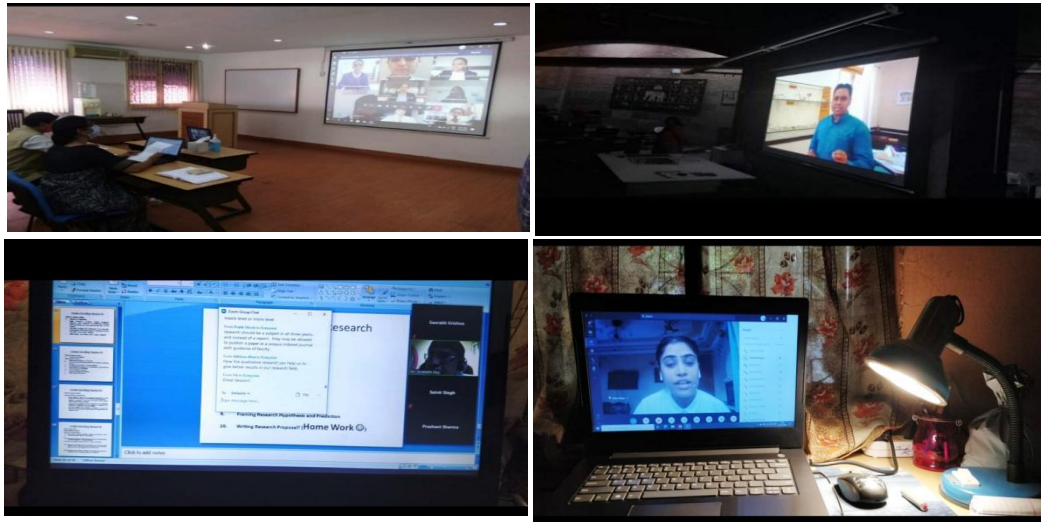


Figure 9: Classes and Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic (*Images reproduced with permission from participants*)

During the FGD and even during the individual interviews, many of the faculty highlighted that E-Learning is highly beneficial, and it targets the technological skills of the students. E-learning enhances the technical skills of the students and facilitates them in learning new things from new platforms. The responses also suggested that many online management games and activities also play a major role in the overall learning and teaching process.

Some of the classes conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic are shown in the images in Figure 9 above.

During their interviews many of the faculty also highlighted the significance of E-Learning over the range of communications, and how well it has facilitated the flow of communications either through emails, or intra-communication networks, among others. Faculty from both the Institute of Hotel Management/MGM and from Pratham agreed on the fact that E-Learning is very expensive and all the hotel management colleges cannot afford this much cost for facilitating E-Learning. They acknowledged that e-Learning sometimes demand additional budget and costing, as the cost of installation, training cost, operational costs and even maintenance are extremely expensive. One of the faculty from MGM mentioned that:

“No doubt new learning method has made a huge impact on the overall knowledge and understanding of the students. Students initially faced few challenges in terms of understanding the technological features, getting accustomed to the new learning method, and overall response to the new E – Learning method. We found that online management games had a huge impact on creating the interest and active participation by the students. Management games created a sense of competition and a desire to participate and solve the management level situations and cases related to their modules.”

Modritscher (2006) noted that any e-Learning process involves major learning theories such as behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism. During the study, it was observed that each learning theory influences the learning process, the characteristics of the learners, and the different aspects

of self-assessment. However, it was also found that each pedagogical step requires use of a relevant E-Learning strategy that suits the characteristics and the electronic environment or facilities of the students, where they are based. It eventually helps in planning, using the appropriate medium to teach, and delivering the right content to the students who are involved in hybrid learning. Hence based on the major analysis it can be argued that E-Learning has transformed teaching and learning. The students on one side and faculty on the other side have been equally affected and it has been a great challenge for them to adjust and perform in this fast-changing technological world.

The Future of E-Learning

E-Learning must be considered as a multichannel learning environment which is also a complex adaptive system when it comes to the overall delivery of the academic content (Machado & Demiray, 2012). Based on the discussion with the respondents it was observed that a major shift was taking place in the hospitality education system. Earlier, it was the teacher-centred approach which is now moving towards a learner-centred approach, and using the relevant learning resources for achieving the learning objectives. It was also observed that at the Institute of Hotel Management & MGM, there is a major shift taking place from instructor-controlled classroom learning to an instructor-controlled E-Learning approach. However, a mix of both depending upon the appropriateness of the situation and the utilization of different learning resources plays a significant role for both the instructor and the learner, but at the same time integrating E-Learning with face-to-face learning to create blended learning will be difficult in many situations. It is believed that in a few years from now all the learning will be multichannel learning and E-Learning will continue to evolve with the introduction of new delivery methods via podcasts, YouTube channels, Wikis, and educational blogs. There is also a trend where a major transition from training to learning is happening and that goes beyond E-Learning, mainly through talent management, knowledge management, competency management, performance management, succession planning, online recruitment process, Web 2.0, Chat GPT and the integration of AI, for the next phase of E-Learning. One of the staff members at the IT Cell, Pratham mentioned that:

"It is understood that E – Learning and all the new technologies especially in the education sector are highly expensive. There are many hotel management colleges in India which fall under budget category, affording these technologies simply will be out of their reach. We need a strong support from the government and the policy makers to provide us the access to these technologies. Even the institutes working at the rural areas need strong support and intervention from the government and private players."

Furthermore, evaluating the quality of E-Learning should also be considered as an important aspect. Many respondents both at the Institute of Hotel Management & MGM highlighted the quality of E-Learning and the significance of the continuous evaluation of the E-Learning platforms and the overall delivery mechanism. It was highlighted that to have quality E-Learning programs there must be a governing and accrediting body having high-quality standards, principles, frameworks, and their self-assessment tools for achieving excellence in the learning process. Apart from this, E-Learning should also make a positive impact on the local society and the community located in and around the educational institute. Pratham NGO could be a major game changer as it works at the grass root level, and the rural youths, local community and the rural women could get major benefits from structured E-Learning programs. The online training programs should be designed to offer basic training related to cooking, bakery, hygiene, sustainability, farming, healthcare, hospitality education, and a few training programs related to entrepreneurial ventures.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of the study was to investigate the impact of E-Learning on students and the faculty especially during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. The study primarily focused on the relationship between three key major aspects. First, the E-Learning system and its technological needs and specifications and the benefits and contribution of E – learning. Secondly it focussed on the student's motivation and the acceptance of the new learning and teaching medium by both the students and the faculty; and lastly, the future aspects and the cost parity which plays a major role in the acceptance of the E-Learning method. The qualitative results clearly highlight that students have a higher degree of acceptance and are highly positive when it comes to E-Learning, and in their online assessments as compared to the traditional examination pattern. It was found that both tutors and the students there was positive agreement regarding their perceptions of online and the E-Learning system. Tutors and the students highlighted that E-Learning is highly effective at imparting the required skills and training, and will play a major role to fulfil the technology criteria. However, there is a need for a blended approach across the country where the combination of both traditional and contemporary methods of teaching and learning can be justified.

The study also assessed the technological stands of the IHM & MGM students and the overall support and technical support provided to them from the institutes. It was observed that lack of technological support and access to the online resources affected the stress level of the students especially the intermediate and honours level students. However, the top authorities and senior leadership team from both the institutes worked towards providing the best technological support as well as revitalizing the curriculum for E-Learning. E-Learning also influences the nature of the teacher and the student's interaction and the exchange of knowledge, and demands a higher degree of motivation and self-discipline from the students which eventually opens up new opportunities for the student's innovative expressions, new ideas, and overall personality development.

The management should also focus on motivating the faculty and the students. The management must provide high-end Internet facilities to both the faculty and the students, a digital library with 24*7 access, and all the modern-day equipment and tools which are highly needed for facilitating E-Learning on the hybrid platform. The success of E-Learning and teaching depends mainly upon the implementation process, the structured mechanism, and the definite goals that need to be achieved. Some of the other aspects such as technical and financial support, training and development, improved working conditions, strong technological background, online teaching skills and delivery mechanisms are highly significant for the implementation of E-Learning in hotel management colleges. Hotel management colleges and skill development institutes need more focus and a structured approach when it comes to E-Learning and teaching. The teaching must focus on enhancing the skill sets of the students because the industry demands a particular set of skills and abilities. Hence E-Learning and teaching must be given top priority especially when it comes to hotel management and skill development institutes.

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