

Challenges faced by online Educators in Hospitality Education during Covid-19

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Abstract. COVID-19 pandemic has hit the country very severely. Each & every sector is trying to cope with the pandemic in its ways. Lockdown has seemed to be one of the effective measures to help against the spread of COVID-19. All the schools and colleges, including hospitality institutes, were disturbed because of the lockdown across the country. As a result, academic institutions have explored alternatives and have switched to the online mode, its e-contents, and its effective delivery. This study aims to analyze the significant challenges online skill-dominant hospitality education faces during covid-19 (April 2020 to June 2021) from the educators' perspective. This research intends to offer positive and constructive suggestions based on the findings. The respondent's sample size is 100 from the select hospitality institutes of India for the evaluation. A well-set of questionnaires has been used to acquire primary data. The secondary data has been gathered through literature reviews from similar research areas. The study also explores the respondents' views on how those are likely to evolve in the future. This will also help analyse how educators and institutions respond to particular challenges being faced in online education. The study will further contribute to online hospitality education to become more aware of the challenges and various ways to minimize them to a certain level, leading to the commitment of the required skill and knowledge effectively.

Keywords: Challenges, E-contents, Skill-dominant, Hospitality education, COVID-19

1 Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic has affected the entire country. Every field has been disturbed, and the hospitality industry is no different. The active part of the industry and the whole teaching system have also been adversely affected by the pandemic. (Kwok, 2021) 2020 has been a challenging year and a complete downfall to the hospitality industry with the collapse in economy and employment. The year 2021 and the coming years bring

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hope to the industry and will be a complete survival and recovery time for the hospitality and tourism sector. After the pandemic, all the schools and colleges were shut, and it is difficult for all the educational institutes to continue the classes with the traditional classroom method. As a result, almost all the teaching institutions and organisations have been shifting their teaching methods to suitable alternatives for the continuation of education. The online teaching method seems to be an effective measure for education and is being widely accepted by the students of various courses. But for a skill-dominant course curriculum like hospitality, which is mainly based on practical knowledge, the e-learning method doesn't seem adequate. It is a matter of concern for the budding hoteliers and the future of the hospitality sector.

Skill delivery through online platforms is challenging, and the facilitators face various issues. The availability of proper e-contents and study materials, facilitation of required resources by the institutes, technical knowledge to conduct the e-teaching, knowledge of equipment, and good net connectivity is must. They are failing any of these leads to inefficiency in the education process. The factors about e-learning are students' attitudes and acceptance of the new shift in the education system. This study focuses on measuring the effectiveness of online conduct, and the challenges hospitality education's online educators face.

2 Objectives

- To study the present e-contents for theory classes conducted at IHMs
- To analyze the present e-contents for practical lessons at IHMs
- To find out the tools used by the educators in the online teaching of Food Production Practical.
- To find out the tools used by the educators in the online teaching of Food and Beverage Practical.

3 Review of Literature

Sl. No	Title of the Study	Resource Journal	Publisher	Year of Publication	Study Gap/Findings
1	Challenges faced by Hospitality Instructors due to Covid-19 Pandemic: An exploratory study on IHMs by Shreya Prasad and Deeksha Khatri	Indian Journal of Hospitality Management, IHMA, VOL 3, Issue, ISSN: 2582-4082	Institute of Hotel Management, Ahmedabad	2021	This paper focuses mainly on the central IHMs of India, and there is no significant discussion about the skill subjects and the practical aspects of hospitality education.
2	Effect of Covid-19 Pan-	International Journal of All Research	IJARESM Publications	2021	This study focuses on the mental health, job stability,

Indian Journal of Hospitality Management, IHMA, VOL 4, Issue 1

	demic on Hospitality Educators of Private Institutions in India and its Challenges in Future, with Special Reference to Delhi NCR by Harveer Singh and Vishal Bishnoi	Education & Scientific Methods, VOL 1, Issue 1, ISSN: 2455-6211			and affected economic conditions of hospitality educators during the pandemic. This study is carried out in the private hospitality institutes of Delhi-NCR.
3	Online Learning: A Panacea in the Time of COVID-19 Crisis by Shivangi Dhawan	Journal of Educational Technology System, VOL 50, Issue 1	SAGE Publications	2020	The study explores the growth of online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic situation and suggests effective measures for its success but ignores the teaching constraints for a dominant skill course like hospitality.
4	Adapting to a blend of online and offline hospitality education by Dr. Vinay Rana	Express Food & Hospitality	Global Fairs & Media Pvt. Ltd.	2020	The article elucidates the possible strategies that hospitality institutes can use to face the academic challenges in the covid crisis. It also provides insights into the required changes in the syllabi contents.
5	Challenges and Strategies of Online Training for Hospitality Trainers by Mukul Dimri	Mukt Shabd Journal, ISSN: 2347-3150	Mukta Shabd	2020	The paper suggests the success of future hospitality education through a well-balanced and blended model, including online and offline classes.
6	A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and	SAGE Journals, ISSN: 2347-6311	SAGE Publications	2021	The study provides a comprehensive report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on online teaching and

	Learning by Sumitra Pokhrel and Roshan Chhetri				learning and indicates the way forward. However, it does not talk about hospitality education in particular.
7	Impacts of COVID-19 on tourism education: analysis and perspectives by Pinaz Tiwari, Nimit Chowdhary, and Hugues Seraphin	Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism, ISSN: 1531-3220	Taylor & Francis	2020	This study focuses on the perspective of hospitality educators concerning upcoming challenges in the hospitality discipline.

4 Hypothesis

- The core hospitality skills inputs cannot be delivered effectively to the students via online modes.
- The educators who possess the technology adequately will deliver online hospitality education relatively better.

5 Research Methodology

The study has been conducted using primary and secondary sources of data. As a primary data source, a set of well-structured questionnaires was distributed to 100 hospitality educators, and responses were received from 56 of them. The responses were further analysed to conclude. Different literature reviews about similar research areas were considered and analysed as secondary data sources. The data analysis has been done with the help of pie charts and linear bar graphs. The study was carried out on the leading institutes located across India, including Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Pune, Noida, Indore, Delhi, Mumbai, Guwahati, and Haryana.

6 Findings

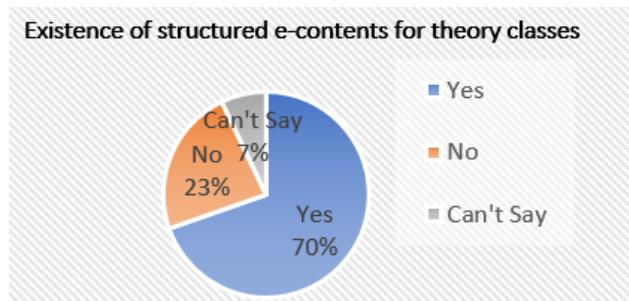


Fig. 1. Existence of structured e-contents for theory classes

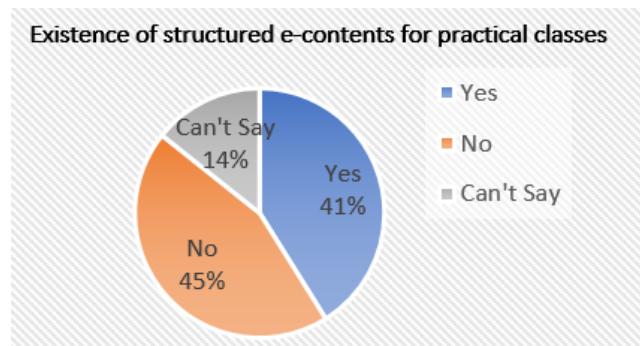


Fig. 2. Existence of structured e-contents for practical classes

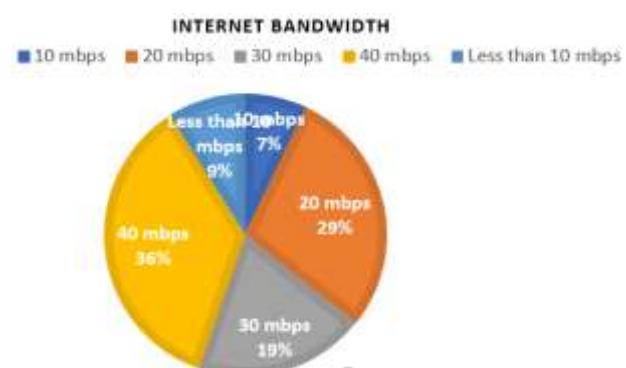


Fig. 3. Internet Bandwidth

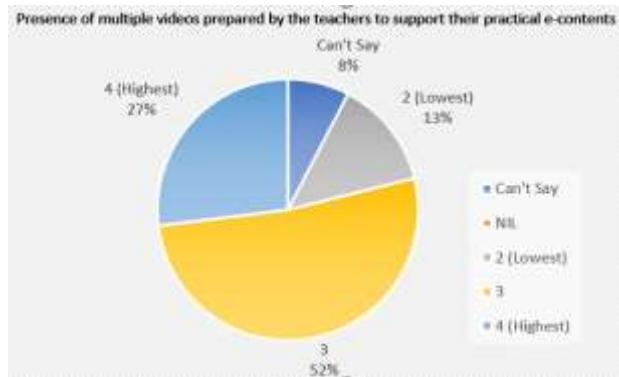


Fig. 4. Presence of multiple videos prepared by the teachers to support their practical e-contents

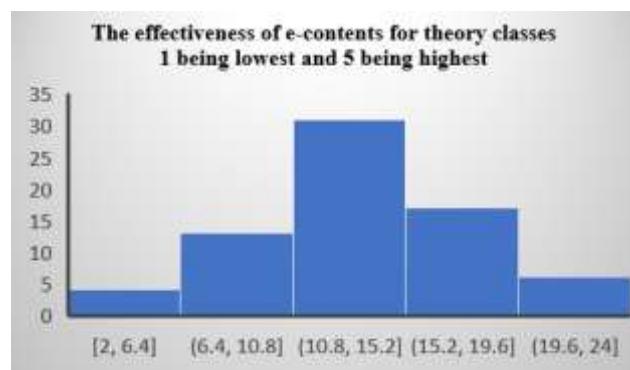


Fig. 5. The effectiveness of e-contents for theory classes, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest

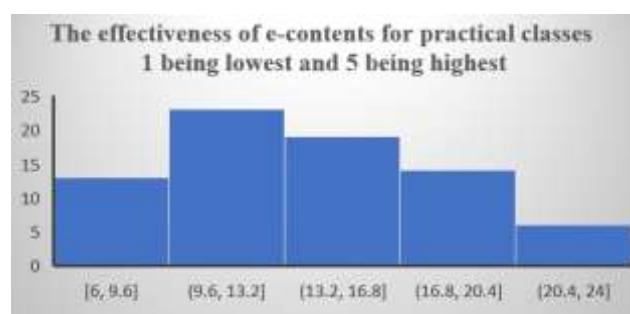


Fig. 6. The effectiveness of e-contents for practical classes, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest

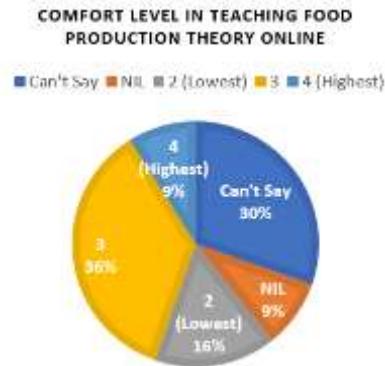


Fig. 7. Comfort level in teaching Food Production Theory online

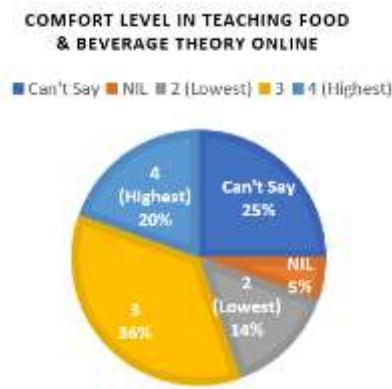


Fig. 8. Comfort level in teaching Food & Beverage Theory online

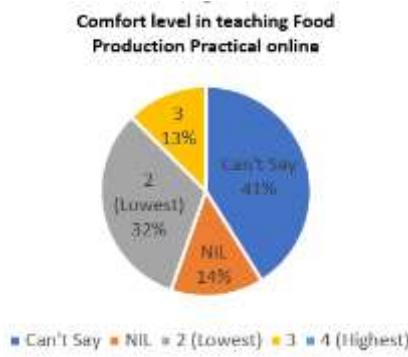


Fig. 9. Comfort level in teaching Food Production Practical online

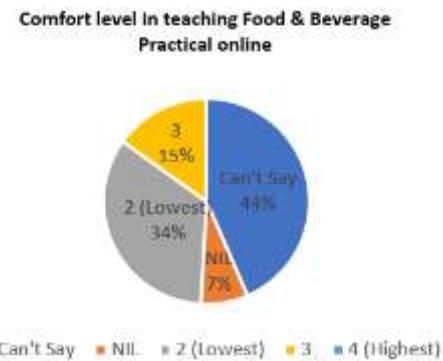


Fig. 10. Comfort level in teaching Food & Beverage Practical online

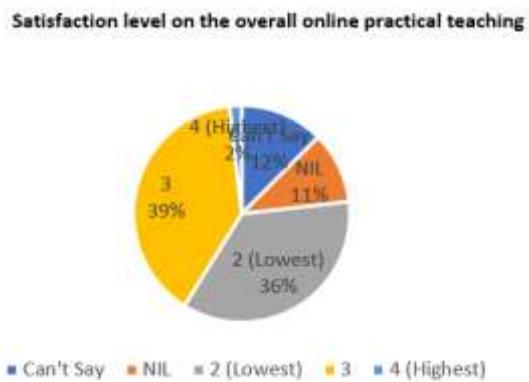


Fig. 11. Satisfaction level on the overall online practical teaching

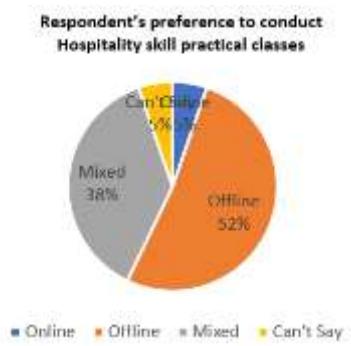


Fig. 12. Respondent's preference to conduct Hospitality skill practical classes

7 Analysis and Discussion

- 69.6% of the respondents have agreed that there exist uniformly structured e-contents for theory classes. 23.2% of the respondents do not agree, and 7.1% are clueless about the given statement.
- Considering the existence of uniformly structured e-contents for practical classes, only 41.1% of the respondents have agreed, and 44.6% of the respondents have disagreed, while 14.3% are clueless about the same.
- A varied range of internet bandwidth usage from 40mbps to less than 10mbps has been observed among educators, affecting the quality of content delivered online.
- The effectiveness of e-contents for theory classes have been observed to be higher than that of the efficacy of e-contents for practical lessons, with 30.4% being the highest and 3.6% being the lowest in the case of theory classes and 12.5% being the highest, and 8.9% being the lowest for practical courses.

Talking about the comfort level of teaching theory of the food departments, i.e., Food Production and Food & Beverage, the following pattern (in %) have been observed:

Table 1. The comfort level of teaching theory of the Food Production and Food & Beverage

	Can't Say	NIL	2 (Lowest)	3	4 (Highest)
Food Production	30.4	8.9	16.1	35.7	8.9
Food & Beverage	25	-	14.3	35.7	19.6

While asking about the comfort level of teaching practicals of the food departments, i.e., Food Production and Food & Beverage, the following pattern (in %) have been observed:

Table 2. The comfort level of teaching practicals of the Food Production and Food & Beverage

	Can't Say	NIL	2 (Lowest)	3	4 (Highest)
Food Production	41.1	14.3	32.1	12.5	-
Food & Beverage	41.1	7.1	32.1	14.3	5.4

On comparing the responses for online theory and practical classes, it is found that the respondents are more comfortable taking the theory classes online than the practical classes for the skill dominant subjects.

Considering the satisfaction level on the overall online practical teaching, only 39.3% of the selected population is reasonably satisfied, whereas 35.75 of the population has a very low satisfaction level, and the rest of the population is not satisfied with the overall online practical teaching.

25% of the respondents have been found to have the presence of multiple videos prepared by them to support their practical e-contents. 48.2% of the respondents support the given statement on an average rating scale, whereas 12.5% suggest that they do not have proper videos prepared by them to help the practical e-contents.

A majority of 51.8% of the respondents prefer to conduct hospitality skills practical classes, offline. 37.5% of the respondents prefer the mixed model, including online and offline modes, whereas the rest of the respondents cannot decide on their preferences.

8 Suggestions and Implications

The study is conducted to analyse the challenges faced by the online educators of the skill-dominant hospitality education from the best institutes of India, and according to the responses received, the results suggest that proper internet connectivity and uniform structured study materials are the major focused areas by the educators. Most respondents prefer the course conducted through offline mode with appropriate social distancing norms or through a well-balanced and mixed model including both online and offline classes. The findings also suggest the institutes make necessary changes in the syllabi contents of the curriculum to facilitate effective content delivery and proper evaluation of the same.

Considering the findings and the suggestions, the study may be essential to measure the efficiency of hospitality practical skill delivery using e-contents. It also discusses the challenges hospitality educators face in online teaching mode and can help overcome the challenges and barriers of the same. The paper may also contribute to further studies related to the same research area.

9 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of responses received and review of the secondary data, the following conclusions are evident that various study materials and e-content utilised to deliver the skill play a significant role. The involvement of self-made videos and demos is substantial. The existence of structured e-content for theory classes is sufficient, but it lacks practical lessons, affecting the effectiveness of practical base knowledge over theoretical knowledge. For the skill dominant and practical subjects like Food Production and Food & Beverage, it is challenging for the educators to carry and demonstrate the skills to the students. Thus, online teaching in a skill-dominant hospitality education is not a choice but a necessity of the crisis-like situation. The quality of the education delivered depends on various factors such as proper infrastructure, sufficient internet bandwidth, and adequate technical knowledge to operate the equipment used and conduct online classes efficiently. Lack of interest among students and their negative behavioural attributes in the online classes also hinders the teaching process. All of these challenges and barriers conclude that a majority of the educators are not well satisfied with e-teaching. Therefore, a large population of the selected sample prefers to conduct offline or mixed hospitality skill practical classes.

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