# Impact of COVID-19 on Hospitality Students on Online or Offline Teaching – Learning

**Dr. Jaideep Hire**

Associate Professor, MGV SPH College of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Nashik, Maharashtra

jaideephire@gmail.com

**Introduction:**

To preserve a competitive edge, an educational system must adapt to the needs of the digital age. The most recent technological developments have improved the standard of modern education. The field of education is almost completely being revolutionized by new advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), globalization of education, and an ever-expanding competitive environment.

India reported the first case of Covid-19 (2019-nCoV) on 30th Jan 2020 in the state of Kerala, which forced the authorities to strengthen the surveillance at the point of entry to India and the figure of infected started increasing.

The COVID-19 epidemic, which put the academic calendars in jeopardy, forced the closure of educational institutions all around the world. To maintain academic activity, the majority of educational institutions in India were likewise closed and moved to online learning platforms. While schools and colleges were closed indefinitely, both academic institutions and students were experimenting with ways to finish their required coursework within the academic calendar's allotted time frame. These restrictions undoubtedly caused some discomfort, but they also led to new instances of innovative teaching practises involving digital interventions.

With the help of the Indian government's digital initiatives and in especially during the COVID-19 lockout, there has been a significant movement toward online learning. India is the second-most populated country in the world, but instructors and students from different backgrounds sometimes encounter difficulties because there are few basic amenities like power and connectivity available there. The higher education system in India is currently going through a transformation. a stage where positive modifications have occurred and more cognitive and behaviour improvements are needed. In order to ensure economic success and preserve democracy in the nation, higher education develops the necessary circumstances for enhancing quality of life and resolving issues. Higher education has undergone a paradigm change from "national education" to "global education," "lifetime learning for everyone" to "one-time education for few," and "from instructor centric learning to learner centric education."

Any country's higher education system now needs a review. In the emergency of COVID-19, the subject of how higher education for academic institutions and students must adapt to online teaching aids still exists. The difficulty of sensitive learning and new opportunities provided by technology are the root of the change. For autonomous/deemed and private institutions, the transition has been simple; nevertheless, it has been difficult for public institutions. Several institutions in India have temporarily suspended on-site classes as a result of the COVID-19 situation.

On 14th March 2020, Higher and Technical Education Department of Maharashtra State declared the closure Institutes and Universities till 31st March 2020 and remain updated for further notifications and work from home for teaching faculty was advised. The first lock down started and teaching fraternity was instructed to use online medium to complete the remaining syllabus and keep students engaged.

The lockdown was extended regularly in four stages of 15 days each. One of the possible solutions to curb this disease was social distancing. The first lockdown was lifted in a various stages allowing certain business to start there function slowly without spreading the virus. The threat continued and hence the educational institutions were not allowed to open for its academic activities. Thus the government encouraged education through digital mode. Many institutes of higher learning have embraced e-learning to give courses entirely online or to supplement more traditional courses (Blended learning). This enables ongoing learning at anytime, anywhere, for learners of various age groups and abilities. The number of patients were reducing and it was taken into consideration that the virus was under control and educational institutes were ordered to commence the offline classes from February- 2021, but the second wave hit the country and Maharashtra in the month of April - 2021 with a new variant, which was very deadly and again the institutions were asked to close the offline teaching within a month of opening. This was the beginning of the deadliest second wave of Covid – 19. The educational units were ordered to remain closed till further instructions and online teaching - learning was continued. The cases were reduced later in the later months but educational units remained closed. Unfortunately the third wave started in the month of December but subsequently the patients drastically reduced and universities and college were permitted to open offline education from the month of Feb-March- 2022. Since then the offline teaching – learning has commenced and students have reported to the colleges.

It is important to study the perception of students and faculty because both have been online for almost two years, and it is essential since attitudes regarding online learning in general are a major factor in motivation loss and persistent perceptions.

**Online Education:**
The online education concept is not new, western countries were using this concept effectively in their school and universities. The Indian education system is based on very little practical and more on theoretical base as compared to the western countries it is research and practical based.  The basic requirement for online learning or teaching is that students and teacher should have a stable Internet connection, a laptop/computer, Android mobile, etc. Online education is form of education where in the student and teacher uses their own source of communication may be Android phone or laptop and get connected to each other through internet connection. The teacher can get connected to any number of students at a given time and conducts his/her class. In India, also online teaching was used but was not very popular in school and universities, but was restricted to distance education learning. The online or distance learning education in India did not gain the momentum for regular studies and used by working professional to upgrade their qualification or by students who could not afford the higher fees of colleges. The second reason is that the online/distance education degrees are not recognized by many educational bodies and also by some of the top brands to recruit such students who have completed their education through online mode.

Now the time has changed, due to lock down the mode of teaching the students has changed from classroom teaching to online teaching, may be for certain period but this will be gradually taken seriously by everyone. UGC in the guidelines published in April 2020 has also recommended that every institution needs to set up a virtual classroom and a video conferencing system, and all of the instructors need to be taught on how to utilize the equipment. Additionally, it recommends that faculty employ ICT and online teaching tools to finish 25% of the curriculum online and the remaining 75% in the actual classroom in order to address these difficulties in the future.

According to a report titled Online Education in India: 2021, which was published by KPMG India and Google, the market for online education in India is predicted to increase by an astounding eight times in just three years, from USD 247 million in 2016 to USD 1.96 billion in 2021. The increase in paid online education users from 1.57 million in 2016 to 9.5 million in 2021 is expected to lead to such substantial growth in the market for online education.

**Various Online Platforms:**

There are various online platforms which are available to be used for online or virtual teaching, which are providing facilities for conducting online lectures or submission of assignments or assisting in keeping the academic records online, some of the popular online apps are mentioned here:

- **Google Classroom:** Google offers this service without charge to educational institutions, charitable organizations, and individuals with personal Google accounts. Everyone can quickly connect with anyone. It facilitates time savings, aids in maintaining paperless records, and makes it simple to set up classes, give homework, communicate, and maintain organization.
- **Zoom:** It is a software that offers video communications, chat, webinars, and cloud-based video and audio conferencing. Zoom offers a number of different options to its customers; the Basic plan is the only one that is completely free and offers unlimited meetings with a 40-minute time limit on each one.
- **Cisco WebEx:** This American business creates and markets web conferencing and video conferencing software. Meetings with 100 attendees, HD video, screen sharing, and a private room are all included in the free WebEx Meetings plan. Meetings may last up to 24 hours.
- **GoToWebinar (GoTo):** GoToWebinar has changed its logo as well as its name, it is now known as GoTo. The free GoToWebinar with a trial of free to cost for 7 days, it enables you to participate in webinars in addition to seeing and hearing them. You can participate in surveys, ask questions, and more. Take part in polls, put up your hand, and address the event speaker.
- **Google Meet:** It is a premium video calling provided by Google and is now free for everyone. You can hold meetings, virtual training classes, remote interviews, etc. Recently Google meet has been added to everyone having Gmail account.
- **Microsoft Teams:** This service is provided by Microsoft where team collaboration is done in Microsoft 365 that integrates the people, content, and tools your team needs to be more engaged. Free services are provided by teams with features which can be used for webinars.

**Objectives:**
1. To study various online platforms/apps available.
2. To study the perception of the students on online or offline education

**Limitations:**
- The study was limited to 174 students.
- The study was limited only to hospitality/hotel management institutes.

**Research Methodology:**

**1. Research Design:**
Descriptive research was carried out by the researcher to know the various online app/platforms available for online teaching and learning. Consequently, it helped the researcher to achieve the objectives set out by researcher.

**2. Selection of area:**
Students were contacted to fulfill the objectives about their perception on online or offline teaching & learning.

**3. Selection of sample:**
The researcher adopted the survey, in which samples will be collected and selected by random sampling method.

**4. Population and Sample size:**
Google form questionnaire was prepared and circulated to all students through whatsapp groups. The sample size was limited to 174 for students.

**6. Data Collection:**
The information was collected by the researcher by both primary and secondary data.

a) **Primary Data:-**
Primary data was collected by administering the questionnaire for hotel management students. The questionnaire was made in Google form and circulated through whatsapp.

b) **Secondary Data:-**
Secondary data was collected from various websites, published journals, private publications, reports, etc.

### 7. Analysis of data:
The answers to the closed-ended, structured questions were scored in percentages. For the purpose of analysis, a straightforward statement of facts in terms of frequencies and percentages is used, along with the help pie/bar charts representation.

### Scope of Study:
The researcher has focused on the COVID-19's effects on the educational system and there is vast scope for research on hybrid mode of education in future. The study may be carried further with detailed research.

### Data Analysis
**1. Demographic separation of students as per their Course.**



**Coursewise Responses**

- BHMCT
- DHMCT

23%
59%
11%
7%
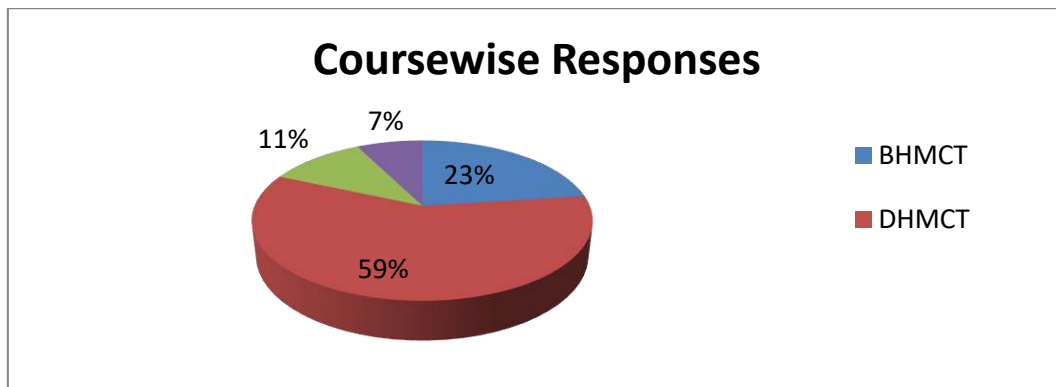
**Graph – 1**

The Google form questionnaire was prepared and circulated through the Whatsapp group of students of various hospitality courses. A total of 174 questionnaires were received out of which, 59 percent students of Diploma HMCT, 23 percent students of Bachelors of HMCT, 11 percent students of BSc. Hospitality Studies and 7 percent students of hospitality short courses filled and submitted the questionnaire.

**2. Were you aware of any E-Learning mode/platforms before the Covid pandemic?**



**Awareness of E-Platforms**

- Yes
- No

25%
75%
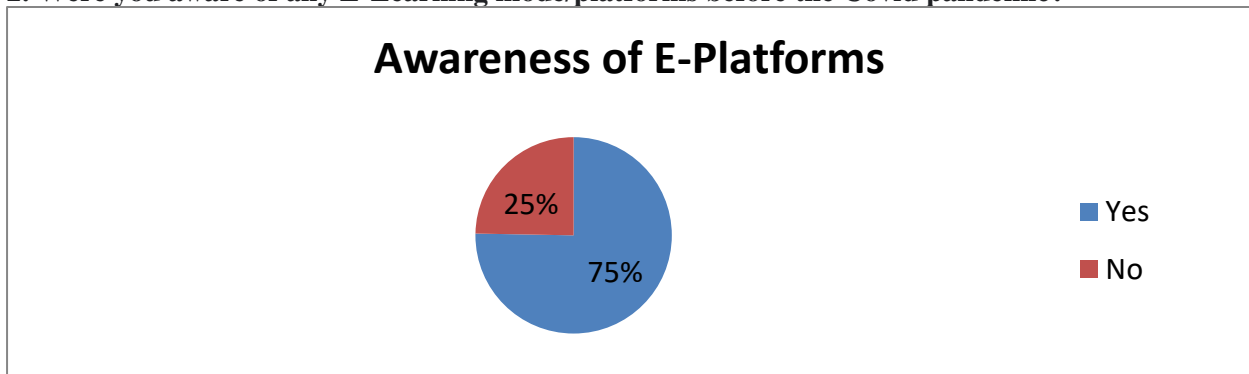
**Graph – 2**

The respondent students in the Graph-12 were aware about the E-Learning mode/platforms available, 75 percent i.e. (131 students) were aware of online platforms and they would be able to study from home, while 25 percent (43 students) were not aware of the E-Learning mode/platforms through which they would be continuing their studies .

**3. Which online Teaching Platform was used by the faculties?**

**Online Teaching Platform**
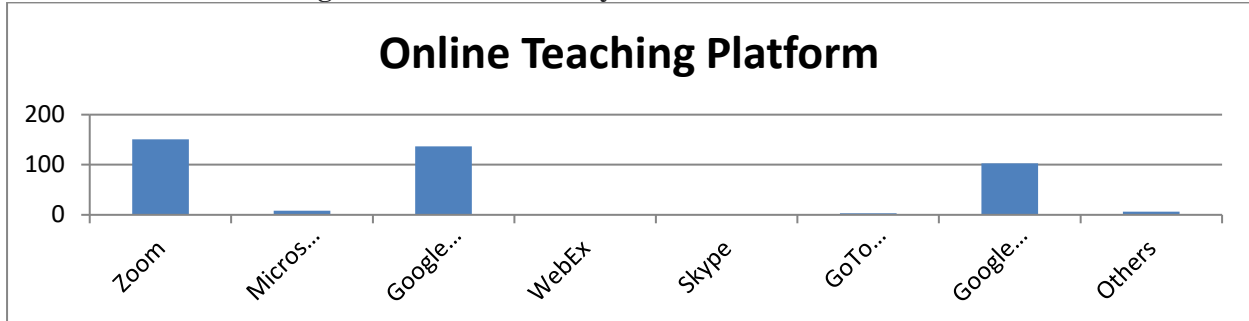


**Graph – 3**

Here, the above graph states the use of online platforms commonly used by the faculties for conducting the online lectures, from the graph it is clear that Zoom was the mostly used online platform with 37 percent as per the students, followed by Google Meet with 34 percent using it, 25 percent were using Google classroom, while GoToWebinar and other software/app was being used by only 01 percent, Microsoft Teams was used by 3 percent faculties and none of the faculty used WebEx and Skype, rest various other online platforms which were available and which are not that much popular were not considered for the questionnaire.
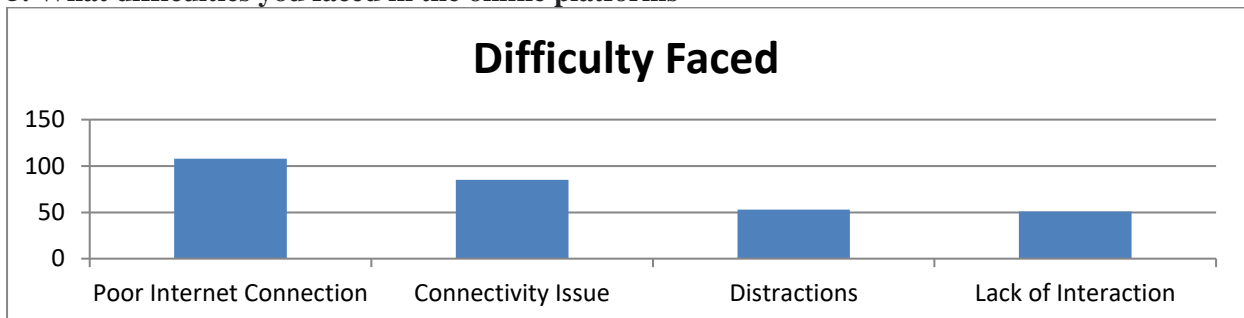
**4. Online Learning modes/platforms are easy to use.**

**Easiness**
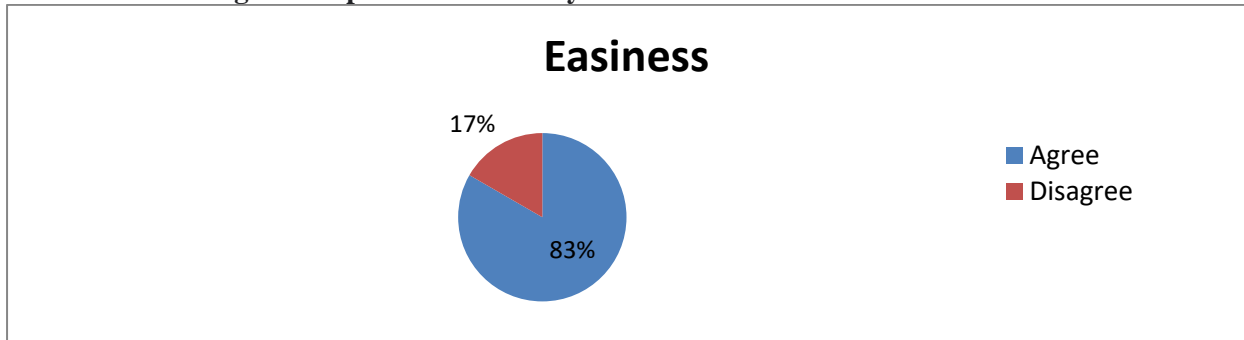


**Graph – 4**

The students were questioned regarding the usability of several online learning platforms. Students who responded to the survey in 83 percent of cases agreed that it was simple to use, while 17 percent disagreed.

**5. What difficulties you faced in the online platforms**

**Difficulty Faced**



**Graph – 5**

Students were asked to be honest about the aspects of the online learning environments they were using. According to its research, 36% of students had trouble learning online due to a poor internet connection. According to the results, just 29% of students find online learning to be very distracting

due to factors like noise and other distractions. This is followed by 18% of students who find it difficult to secure a strong internet connection and speed for online classes, especially in rural locations. For students who were using their mobile phones for online learning, calls during breaks were very disruptive. 17 percent of students reported being distracted, then not interacting with others.

**6. Was it comfortable to attend the online learning using these online platforms?**
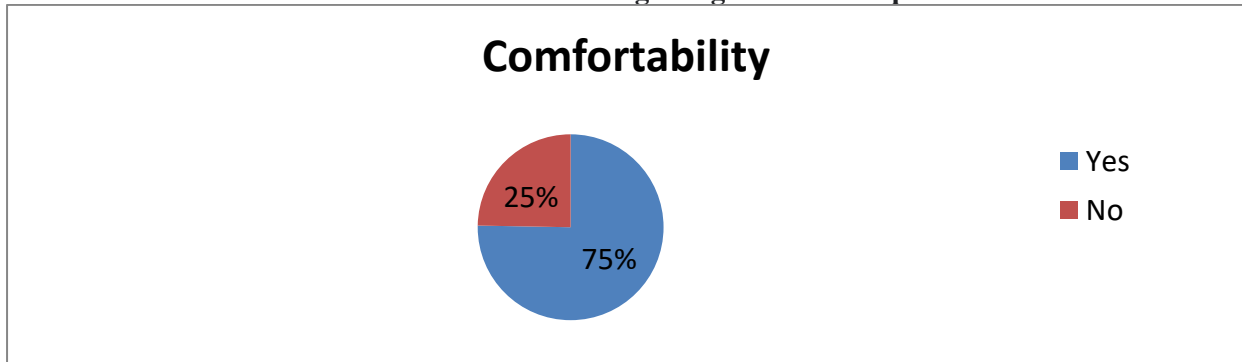


**Graph – 6**

According to research on student familiarity with online learning, 75% of students felt at ease using these platforms to participate in online classes. Students mentioned having a good time and feeling comfortable. While 25% of students were not comfortable using these online platforms for online learning, their comfort would result in productive learning.
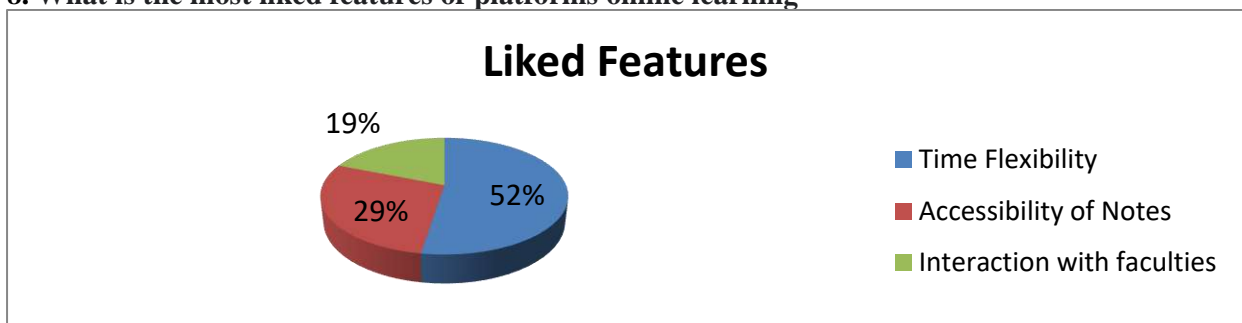
**7. Were you happy with the online learning classes rather than offline classes?**
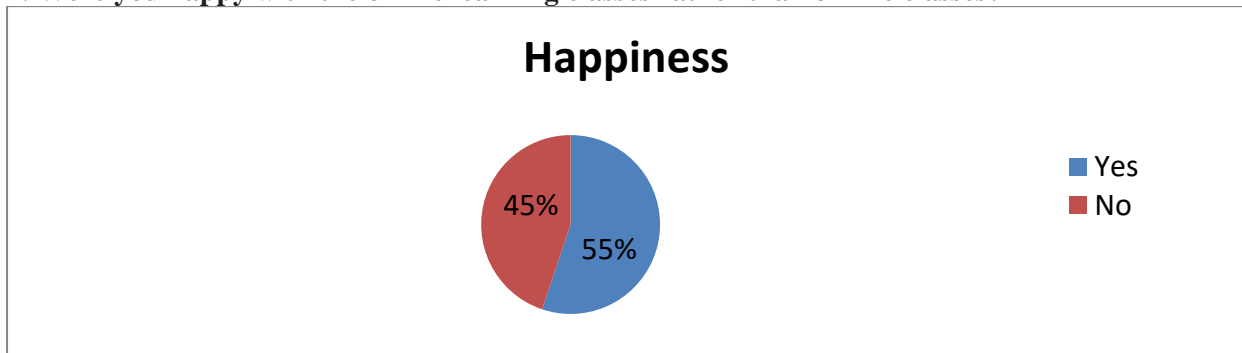


**Graph – 7**

It was found that students are happy with online learning and the same was endorsed by 55 percent students, while 45 percent students were not happy with the online learning classes rather than offline

**8. What is the most liked features of platforms online learning**



**Graph – 8**

52 percent of students found that online learning platforms were very flexible in terms of time and location, according to an analysis of the most popular characteristics. Because of its adaptability, online

learning is quite difficult. While 29 percent students also like the accessibility of available notes while 19 percent also said that interaction with faculties improved, and it was easier to interact directly with the faculties online.

**9. Do you feel that you were attentive during the online classes rather than offline classes?**
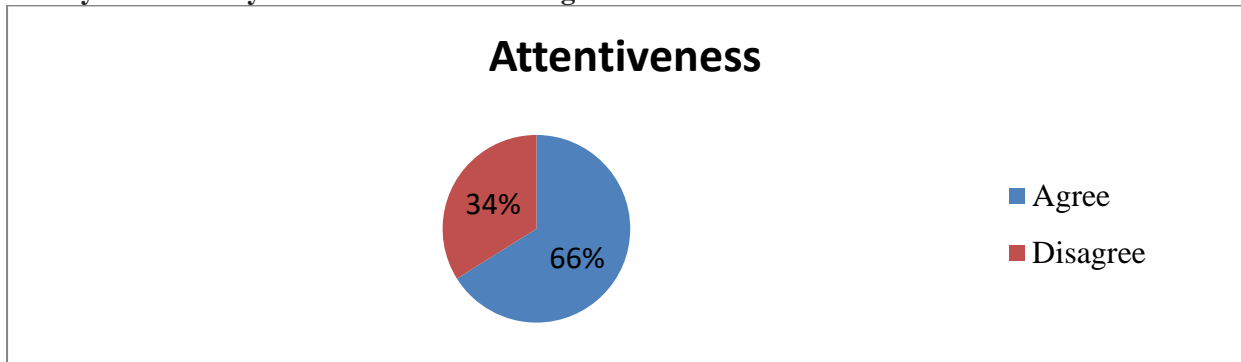


**Graph – 9**

The major concern of any faculty is about the attentiveness of students in classroom whether it is online or offline class, in concern with this, question was asked to students about their attentiveness in online class rather than offline classes. The students were attentive in online class was agreed by 66 percent students while 34 percent students disagreed to the statement.

**10. Did you regularly attended the online class than the offline classes?**
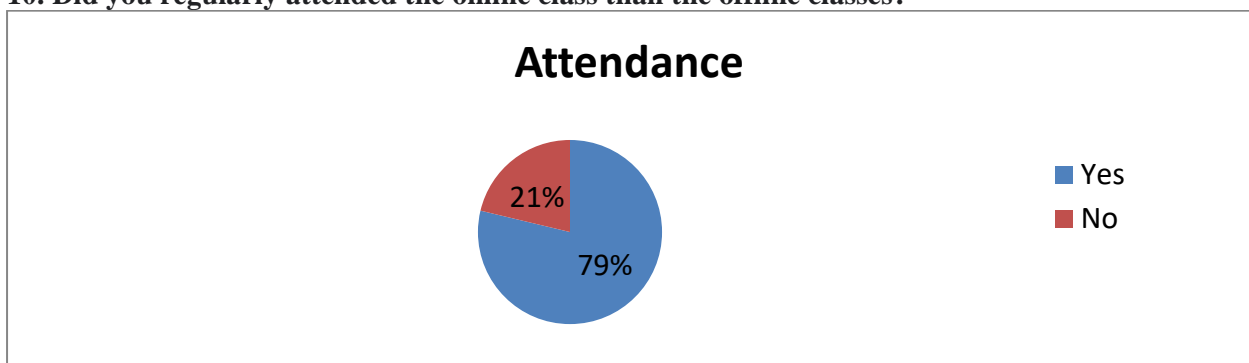


**Graph – 10**

Another major concern of any faculty or college is about the attendance of students in classroom whether it is online or offline class, in concern with this, question was asked to students did they regularly attended the online class rather than offline classes. The students responded that they attended the online class regularly was agreed by 79 percent students while 21 percent students said that did not attended the online classes regularly.

**11. Post Covid offline teaching has commenced, how would you prefer to learn?**
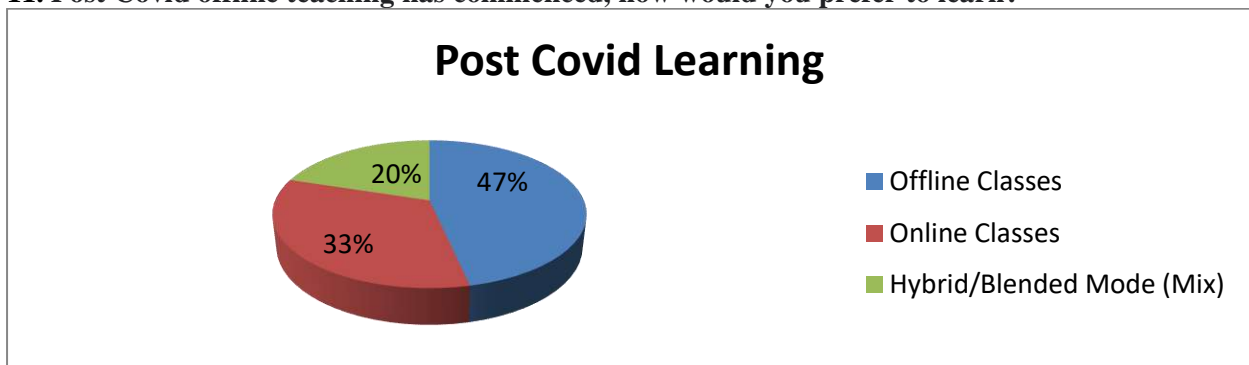


**Graph – 11**

The use of online learning platforms will remain with us and will be a part of our curricula, hence students were asked about post Covid learning, 47 percent students responded with offline classroom teaching and 33 percent wanted that online teaching –learning should be continued, while 20 percent responded that hybrid mode should be adopted for teaching – learning.

**Summary and Conclusion:**

From the above data researcher would like to conclude that:

1. A large number of respondent were aware of e-learning Teaching-Learning Platforms before pandemic.

2. During the pandemic, use of online modes/platforms became more popular where Google Meet and Zoom being highly used platform.

3. A large number of respondent feel that the online modes/platforms were easy to use and brought remarkable change in learning. Facilities provided in software's were used to conduct online lectures regularly.

4. It also shows that maximum respondents were comfortable with the online platforms to attend online classes.

5. The respondents also faced difficulties like poor internet connection, loss in connection, etc, it remained the best choice because of time flexibility, accessibility of notes, etc.

7. Though many respondents did not agreed on some questions, but it seems that online platforms are quiet helpful for students.

8. Though offline lectures are preferred by students, most of them also suggested for hybrid/ blended teaching post covid-19.

9. In spite of all the positive responses the respondent feels that they would still prefer offline mode of learning. It is clear that online platforms will remain with us and would be used continuously.

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