

# Vaccination Status, Brand, and Learning Preferences of Hospitality and Tourism Management Students: Basis for Face-to-Face and Flexible Learning Policy Implementation

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**Abstract:** While COVID-19 has startled the world in many ways, it is said to have had a significant impact on education, which was probably best equipped for a quick shift to a digital environment. This study aims to determine the status of vaccination among hospitality and tourism management students including their preferences when it comes to learning and discussions. A survey instrument was made available via Google Forms with a total of 801 respondents. The results revealed that majority of the respondents were already fully vaccinated with Moderna as their brand of vaccine. Also, the results show that the majority of the respondents will still pursue their enrollment for the coming semester. However, only forty-nine percent of the respondents were willing to attend face-to-face classes. The paper recommends further encouragement for the students to be willing to have their vaccination shot and that the institution must create a sound flexible learning modality guidelines that considers all of its stakeholders.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, vaccination status, hospitality, tourism, Moderns, flexible learning

## Introduction

Since the COVID-19 outbreak was confirmed in Wuhan in December of 2019, (Yang et al., 2020), the World Health Organization has declared the virus a pandemic (Jebril, 2020). Most countries around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and minimize infections for nearly two pandemic months. This closure has impacted over 1.2 billion students globally, including over 28 million in the Philippines (UNESCO, 2020). In reaction to these circumstances, educational leaders made the decision to embrace the new normal in education (Tria, 2020).

Whilst COVID-19 has surprised the globe in many ways, the education sector, which is said to have been heavily influenced, was perhaps the most prepared for a swift transition to a digital world (Anderton et al., 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, a surge of online learning occurred practically all over the world, causing the world of education to shift around (Goldschmidt & Msn, 2020). This unusual change in education has piqued the curiosity of policymakers, teachers, scholars, and the public at large in learning how education systems responded to the pandemic and how students' learning experiences have evolved (Bertling et al. 2020). As a result, academic continuity must be maintained despite disturbances under regular conditions (Bartusevičienė, 2021). Online learning is the only option for continuing teaching and learning activities in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic (Batubara, 2021).

The Commission on Higher Education granted academic independence to HEIs in the higher education sector, requiring them to offer distance learning, e-learning, and other alternative modes of delivery to students (CHED, 2020). Several colleges have chosen to implement their own regulations concerning instruction and the start of classes beginning in August 2020. It will be the new normal in education, and improving educational planning and health is a priority in order to provide a high-quality, inclusive, and accessible education to all students. Batubara (2021) mentioned on his study that online learning is a challenge in the field of education since the government is unprepared to fulfill the key components for the policy's success. As a result, this paper was created in order to provide a clear lens of the new normal in education as basis for flexible learning policy implementation.

## Methodology

The online survey served as the main method of data collection in this study, which employed a descriptive-survey research design. The goal of descriptive research is to evaluate or study a specific sample of a population and characterize it using various techniques. A total of 801 people, or 89 percent of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management's total population, participated in the study at Gordon College in Olongapo City. Through Google Forms, a structured survey questionnaire was made available. The researcher employed descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, and mean rating, to examine the information obtained from the respondents.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the collated results from the data gathering, a large proportion of respondents were female (66%, n = 529), and the rest were male (34%, n = 272). For the civil status, single respondents were 99.9% (n=800) and only 1 respondent was married (0.1%).

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of respondents based on their year level. From the 801 respondents, there were 31.8 percent coming from the third year students (n = 255) and 30.6 percent from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (n = 175). Majority of the students in the CHTM department were from this year level since the college opened three blocks for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of both programs.

**Table 1.** *Frequency distribution and percentage of respondents when grouped according to their year level.*

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	126	15.7
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	245	30.6
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	255	31.8
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	175	21.8
Total	801	100.0

Metro Manila and other regions had been placed under "enhanced community quarantine" on March 16, 2020 (Atienza, 2021). Under ECQ, school and university classes were canceled, large scale gatherings were prohibited, government offices were operated by a skeleton staff, companies and businesses were shuttered except for those supplying essential products and services, mass public transport was restricted, and citizens were instructed to follow social distancing measures and stay at home (Hapal, 2021). Due to the imposed community quarantine in the country, the Gordon College of Olongapo City started adapting flexible learning for its students to continually provide quality education. The institution provided options for the students which could be based on their current resources. Among the 801 respondents of the CHTM, 14.6 percent or 117 respondents were using pure offline modality and 85.4 percent of 684 respondents were using mixed modality – online and offline mode.

It is imperative for the institution to identify the vaccination status of the students as consideration for policy making for implementation of face-to-face and flexible learning. On the table 2, it can be concluded that 94.51% of the respondents (n = 757) were already vaccinated [fully vaccinated (1 dose) 5.1 %, n = 41; fully vaccinated (2 doses) 12.1%, n = 97; fully vaccinated (fully vaccinated 1 dose/2doses, 77.3%, n = 619) while 5.1 percent were able to have the 1<sup>st</sup> dose of the vaccine (n = 41). There were minimal respondents who were not yet vaccinated but willing to do so, with 0.9 percent (n = 7). However, it can be seen on the table that there are still few students (1.1%, n=9) who have no intention to be vaccinated. Based on the data of World Health Organization (n.d.), as of 25 August 2022, a total of 162,067,505 vaccine doses have been administered already in the Philippines.

**Table 2.** *Frequency distribution and percentage of respondents when grouped according to their vaccination*

Vaccination Status	Frequency	Percentage
Undecided	17	2.1
Fully Vaccinated (1 dose)	41	5.1
Fully Vaccinated (2 doses)	97	12.1
Fully Vaccinated [Fully Vaccinated (1 dose) doses]	619	77.3
No, but willing to get vaccinated	7	.9
No, no intention to get vaccinated	9	1.1
Partially Vaccinated	4	.5
Scheduled for Vaccination	7	.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The table 3 specifies which brand of vaccine was injected to the students. Moderna and Pfizer topped the list with 33.6 percent (n = 269) and 29.1 percent (n = 233), respectively. This supports the comparative study of Katella (2022)

among the different COVID19 vaccines, in which majority of institutions and stakeholders prefer Moderna and Pfizer as their vaccine brand.

Based on the findings, 96.1 percent of the respondents (n = 770) has no comorbidity or in a normal condition and only 3.9 percent of the respondents (n= 31) has a comorbidity. The comorbidities place the COVID-19 patient in a vicious infectious circle and are significantly linked with morbidity and mortality. Individuals with comorbid conditions must take precautions and be managed carefully (Ejaz et al., 2020).

**Table 3.** Frequency distribution and percentage of respondents when grouped according to their vaccine brand

Vaccine Brand	Frequency	Percentage
No vaccine	40	5.0
AstraZeneca	1	0.1
Bharat Biotech	43	5.4
J&J	39	4.9
Moderna	269	33.6
Pfizer	233	29.1
Sinopharm	18	2.2
Sinovac	157	19.6
Sputnik V	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>100.0</b>

To anticipate the number of enrollees for the coming semester, the table 4 shows the number of respondents who will and will not be enrolling to the institution. Among the 801 respondents, majority are still willing to enroll for the next semester with 78.7 percent (n = 630). However, there are minimal number of respondents who will not enroll for the next semester either they will stop next annual year (0.7%, n=6) or will transfer to another school (0.2%, n=2). On the study of Aucejo et al. (2020) about the impact of COVID-19 on student experiences and expectations, 11 percent of 1500 respondents have withdrawn from their classes and the study indicated that the pandemic could have a long-term impact on current students' educational achievement.

**Table 4.** Frequency distribution and percentage of respondents when grouped according to their willingness to enroll for the next semester

Enrolling for Next Semester	Frequency	Percentage
No, graduating	163	20.3
No, will stop next A.Y.	6	.7
No, will transfer to another school	2	.2
Yes	630	78.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The table 5 presents the willingness of the CHTM students to attend face-to-face classes. It can be gleaned on the table that 49.6 percent or 397 respondents have answered "Yes" to the question if they are willing to attend face-to-face classes, since they have already fully vaccinated and are willing to follow them all. 13.6 percent or 109 respondents are not willing to attend face-to-face classes due the fact that they are not vaccinated and were afraid of their safety. There are also 52 respondents (6.5%) who are not confident to attend face-to-face classes even if they are fully vaccinated. Results also show that there are 3 respondents (0.4%) who prefers online mode of learning and they have already adapted to this kind of learning modality. 27 respondents (3.4%) are still undecided.

**Table 5.** Frequency distribution and percentage of respondents when grouped according to their willingness to attend F-2-F classes

Willingness to Attend F2F	Frequency	Percentage
NA (graduating/will not enroll/will transfer)	171	21.3
Yes, because I'm fully vaccinated and will follow them all	397	49.6

Undecided	27	3.4
No, I am not confident and I will not be safe even if I am fully vaccinated	52	6.5
No, I prefer the online mode of learning and I am adapted to it	3	.4
Yes, because I intend to get fully vaccinated and will follow them all	42	5.2
No, I am not vaccinated so I will not be safe	109	13.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The resumption of schools for face-to-face encounters must be carefully organized to safeguard the safety of children, teachers, and school employees in a phased manner, especially following physical distance (Viner et al., 2020; Sheikh et al., 2020). During this pandemic, the planning and implementation of school health policies must be supplemented by accurate data provided by numerous institutions (Sarmiento et al., 2020).

The adaptation of new way of learning by the students were evident as shown on the results of the study due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The school, as the policy-making body, must constitute to its promise to deliver quality education in a safe environment. Thus, the findings of this study serves basis in creating a sound policy for flexible learning for all the students.

### Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, a large proportion of respondents were female, single, and a third-year College of Hospitality and Tourism Management students. For the vaccination status, most of the students are fully vaccinated already, with Moderna being the top brand received by the students. Regarding willingness to enroll, majority are still willing to enroll for the next semester (2022-2023). Student-respondents also agreed to attend face-to-face classes for the coming semester based on the fact that they are fully-vaccinated and will follow through the booster shots if ever available.

### Recommendation

Based on the results, discussion, and conclusion of the study, the researcher now recommends the following:

1. Encourage the unvaccinated students to receive their vaccination by partnering with health agencies and inform them about the safeness and benefits of receiving the vaccine.
2. Create a sound policy for flexible learning to prepare the students, parents, teachers, employees and other stakeholders considering the IATF guidelines for safety, sanitation, and health concerns.
3. Improve the facilities of the institution to ensure that safe work environment will be given to all stakeholders.
4. Review and benchmark the other institutions who are implementing face-to-face modality to recognize the problems that they have encountered and implement their best practices.

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