A Study on the Awareness of On-Demand E-Learning Methods for Customized Management Skills Enhancement amongst Indian Companies

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ABSTRACT: *The world today is a complex one with issues and concerns emerging that were absent even a generation ago.In present days, our societies are slowly becoming knowledge-centric and pushing people to learn more things in order for their Day-To-Day survival. In line with the societies' trend, now, majority of the organizations are completely becoming knowledge driven and hence, the success of any organization is highly dependent on how it trains, motivatesand creates an environment which is conducive for learning, for their workforce in all levels, irrespective of their position in the corporate ladder. Today, all the four Major entities of business – The Organization, The Product, The Customer and The Market all are increasingly dynamic in all aspects. This aspect is creating a huge Knowledge / Technological Skills gap at any given point of time which cannot be filled by conventional or formal education. Besides, the (window) time to learn or implement new things in organizations is sinking, going to new lows and is increasingly getting close to Zero which infinitely complexes the problem to greater extent. To address this, today's knowledge solutions must be crisp, quick and should be available readily at a handy distance. This forms the Genesis and preamble for on-demand e-learning for customized skills enhancement. This paper deals with the various concepts of learning, e-learning, on-demand e-learning, their advantages, and disadvantages. This paper studies the state of awareness and popularity of various e-learning methods amongst the workforce in Indian companies.*

KEY WORDS: *On-Demand E-Learning; E-Learning; Customized Management Education; Management Skills Enhancement; Need for On-Demand Learning; Importance Of On-Demand Learning;*

I.   INTRODUCTION

The world today is a complex one with issues and concerns emerging that were absent even a generation ago. One of the significant changes that have taken place is the role of education and the realization that it is indispensable for meeting the challenges and complexities of contemporary life and society. Education has become indispensable not only for its own sake -- for making people literate and knowledgeable, but also as a means of empowering them and for the development of society. Without education, the technological revolution that continues unabated would not have been possible in our lives. In every field – agriculture, housing, health services, manufacturing and transportation, and of course education, we find that technology has transformed these fields and our lives beyond imagination. Computers and their varied and ever changing applications are becoming part of the educational scene today. Computers and internet have brought in an astonishing change in the lives of most people across the world. Communications, messages, visuals, photographs can be exchanged instantaneously from one part of the world to any other. According to Asha Gupta (2008), "We have moved from the industrial age to the networked age. We have moved from the agricultural and industrial revolutions to the information revolution". One of the important technological innovations is E-Learning which may be described as the application of broadband internet and computers to assist teaching and learning. E-Learning has emerged today as a new trend in education sector which is an effective tool in learning process.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

E-LEARNING:

A learner or student who is making use of information technology (IT) through internet is said to be learning electronically or in other words the computers and internet are contributing to student learning. This, in common parlance, is termed e-learning. Perhaps the first computer delivered lecture using email, was made by WD Graziadei in 1993. Dr. Bernard J. Luskin, a distinguished American psychotherapist, is often called an e- learning pioneer, since he has popularized on line learning both as an educator and an entrepreneur in online learning and new media. E-learning has not only become widespread in USA, Canada and Europe, it is becoming popular in India at the higher education level. In Asia, also e-learning is evolving rapidly in several directions as the economies of Japan, China, South Korea and Singapore etc. expand. E-Learning is referred as the delivery of a learning, training or education program by electronic means. E-learning involves the use of a computer or electronic device (e.g. a mobile phone) in some way to provide training, educational or learning material. (Derek Stockley 2003) E-learning can involve a greater variety of equipment than online training or education, for as the name implies, "online" involves using the Internet or an Intranet. CD-ROM and DVD can be used to provide learning materials. Distance education provided the base for e-learning's development. E-learning can be "on demand". It overcomes timing, attendance and travel difficulties. An e-journey is one type of e-learning or online training. Blended learning is e-learning combined with other training methods. Elliott Masie refers e-learning as "The use of technology to design, deliver, select, administer, support and extend learning" and Percepsys defines that e-learning is nothing but "Using a technological means (Internet/Intranet/Extranet) to access and manage learning that supports and enhances the knowledge of an individual"

ON-DEMAND E-LEARNING (*Augmented Learning*):

On-Demand E-Learning, also called as Augmented learning, is an on-demand learning technique where the environment adapts to the learner. By providing remediation on-demand, learners can gain greater understanding of a topic and stimulate discovery and learning.

Technologies incorporating touchscreens, voices and interaction have demonstrated the educational potential that scholars, teachers and students are embracing. Instead of focusing on memorization, the learner experiences an adaptive learning experience based upon the current context. The augmented content can be dynamically tailored to the learner's natural environment by displaying text, images, video or even playing audio (music or speech). This additional information is commonly shown in a pop-up window for computer-based environments.

SALIENT FEATURES OF E-LEARNING:

In view of the special needs, abilities and backgrounds of learners, e- learning is becoming more and more popular. Some of the main features of e-learning are:
- Connectivity or networking
- Flexibility
- Interactivity and collaboration
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

TYPES OF E-LEARNING:

Basically there are two types of e-learning – Asynchronous and Synchronous.

ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING –
   1. Self-Paced Courses
Self-paced courses can be delivered in many ways including:
- Internet
- Intranet or Local Area Networks
- CD-ROM or DVD
- Self-paced courses usually have these features:
- Multimedia: A mix of text, graphics, animation, audio and video to enhance the learning process
- Interactivity: An instructional strategy that helps a learner practice what they have learned
- Bookmarking: Lets the learner stop the course at any time and restart it from the same point
- Tracking: Report the learner's performance within a course to a Learning Management System (LMS)
   2. Discussion Groups
SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING –
[1] Virtual Classroom
[2] Audio and Video Conferencing
[3] Chat
[4] Shared Whiteboard
[5] Application Sharing
[6] Instant Messaging
[7] Learning Management Systems (LMS)

[8]   Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS)
[9]   Knowledge Management System (KMS)

ADVANTAGES OF E-LEARNING:
- Is more cost effective.
- Saves time without sacrificing quality.
- Minimizes travel cost.
- Better Suited for Geographically Diverse Employees.
- Provides More Consistent Course Delivery.
- Offer More Individualized Instruction.

DISADVANTAGES OF ELEARNING:
- Technology dependent
- Material Incompatibility
- Unsuitable for Certain Types of Training
- Unsuitable for Certain Types of Learners
- Reliant of the Quality of the
- Expensive
- Reliant on Human Support
- Social/economic disadvantage
- No Match for Face-to-Face Teaching
- Too Reliant on IT Skills
- Learners with visual or physical impairments may be disadvantaged.
- Inflexible
- Pedagogically Unsound

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A pure scientific methodology & a structured Questionnaire were used and anonline Survey was conducted in order, to study the state of awareness of various on-demand e-learning methods for the enhancement of Management skills amongst workforce working in Indian companies. An online survey was conducted taking 100 Respondentswho were randomly selected from 10 Cities namely Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Pune and Ahmedabad. These are the top 10 cities, contributing to the organized Workforce scenario in India, and hence, is the criterion for selecting these 10 cities. These respondents form a very diverse group differing in their region, state, Government sector, Private Sector, etc. factors. The reliability (Cronbach's Alpha – 0.741) of the instrument is found be in the accepted region ($α> 0.70$) for social sciences and is said to be having Good Reliability. The collected Data then was visualized, analysed and reported in a brief report after a proper & careful process of Data Cleaning.
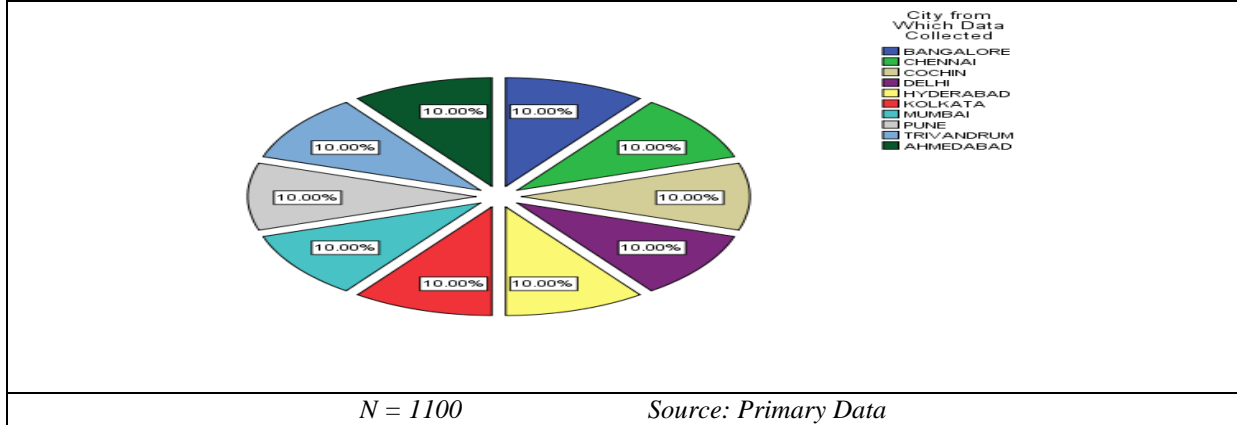
I.   **Data Visualization & Analysis**

DEMOGRAPHICS:

| CHART – 1: Respondents By Region: |
|---|
| |
| *N = 1100*   *Source: Primary Data* |
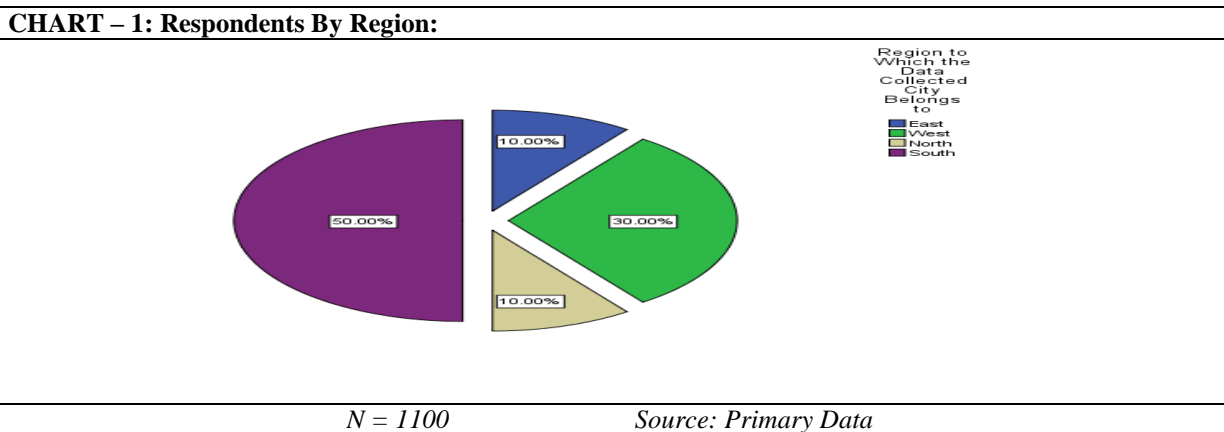
50% of the respondents are from Southern region of India, 30% are from Western region and 10% each from Eastern and Northern regions.

CHART – 2: Respondents By City:

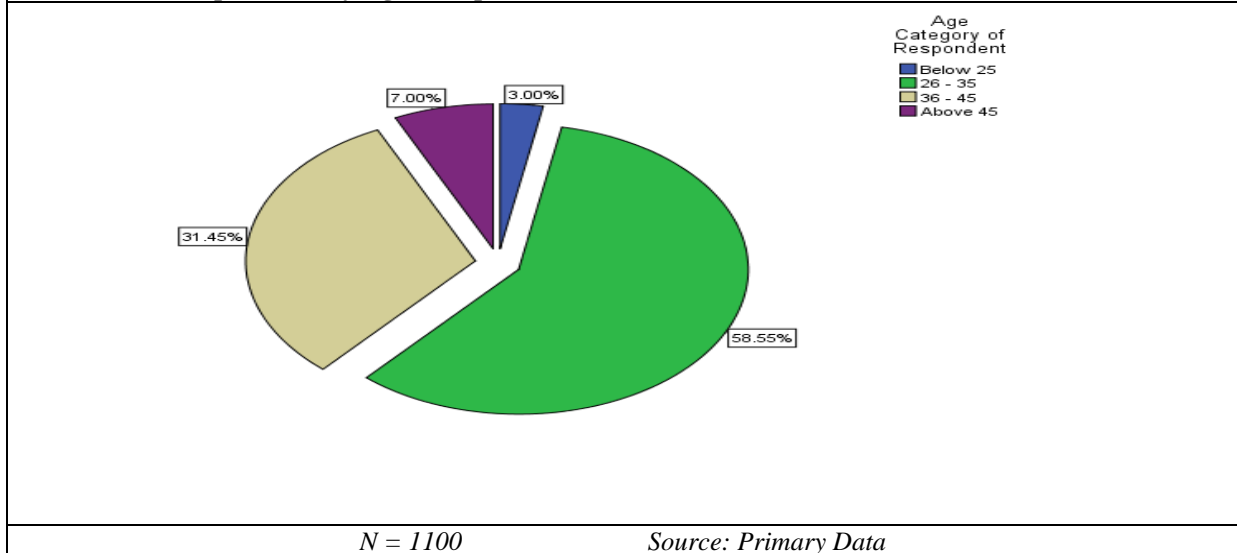| City from Which Data Collected |
|---|
| ■ BANGALORE |
| ■ CHENNAI |
| ■ COCHIN |
| ■ DELHI |
| ■ HYDERABAD |
| ■ KOLKATA |
| ■ MUMBAI |
| ■ PUNE |
| ■ TRIVANDRUM |
| ■ AHMEDABAD |

N = 1100	*Source: Primary Data*

Sample is equally distributed among all the 10 cities. Each City Viz. Bangalore (Bengaluru), Chennai, Cochin, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram), Ahmedabad contributed to 10% of the respondents.

CHART – 3: Respondents By Gender:

Gender of the Respondent
■ MALE
■ FEMALE

47.27%   52.73%

N = 1100	*Source: Primary Data*
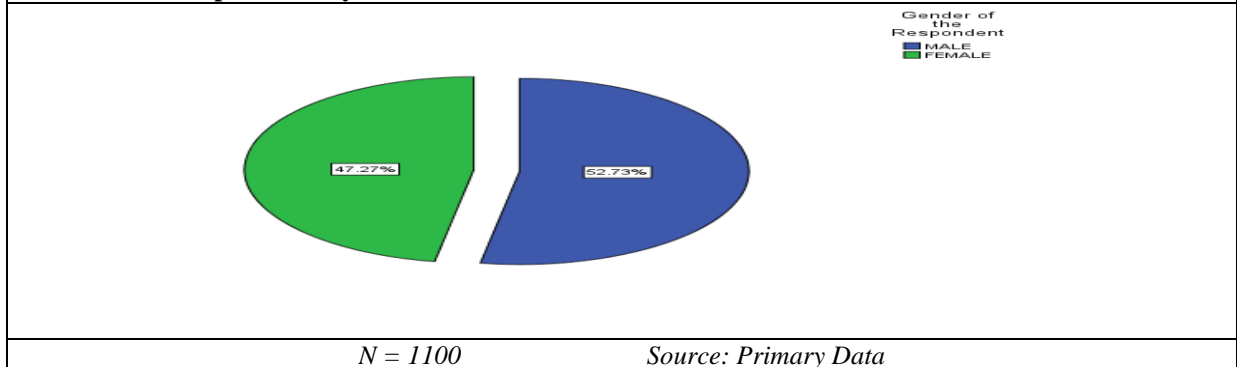
Amongst the respondents, 52.73% are Male and 47.27% are female.

CHART – 4: Respondents By Age Group:

Age Category of Respondent
■ Below 25
■ 26 - 35
■ 36 - 45
■ Above 45

7.00%   3.00%
31.45%
58.55%

| N = 1100	*Source: Primary Data*

Of the Respondents, 58.55% are of '26 – 35' age group; 31.45% belonging to '36 – 45' age group; 7% belonging to 'Above 45' age group and 3% are belonging to the 'Below 25' age group.

CHART – 5: Respondents By Educational Qualifications:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
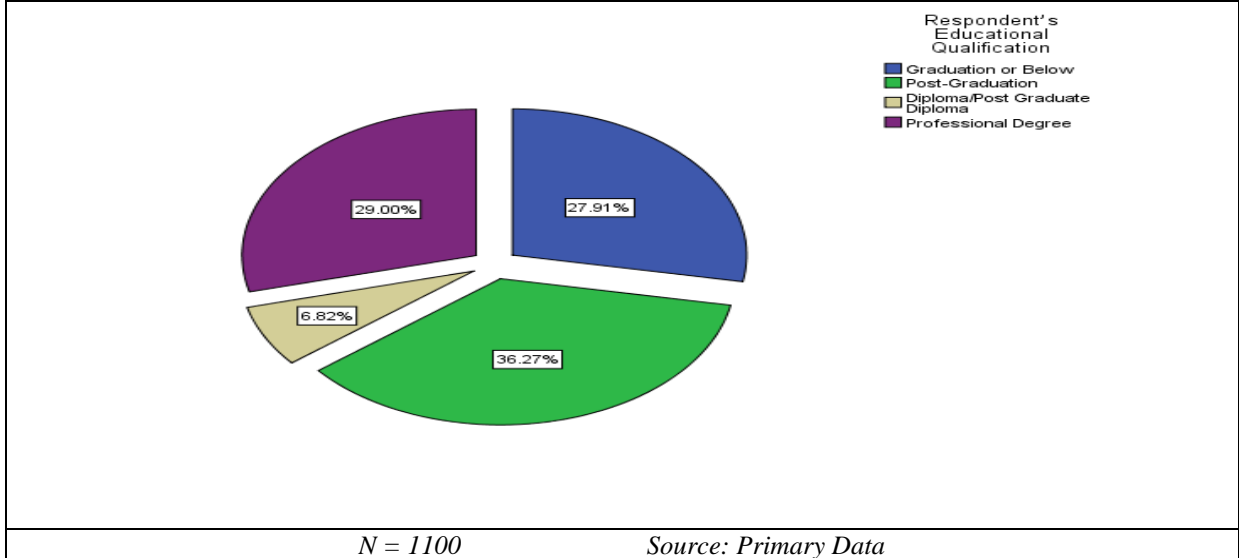
Of the respondents, 36.27% are having 'Post-Graduate Degree'; 29% are having 'Professional Degree' like MBA, CA etc.; 27.91% are having either 'Graduation Degree or Below'; and 6.82% are having 'Diploma / Post Graduate Diploma' like PGDM, etc.

CHART – 6: Respondents By Marital Status:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
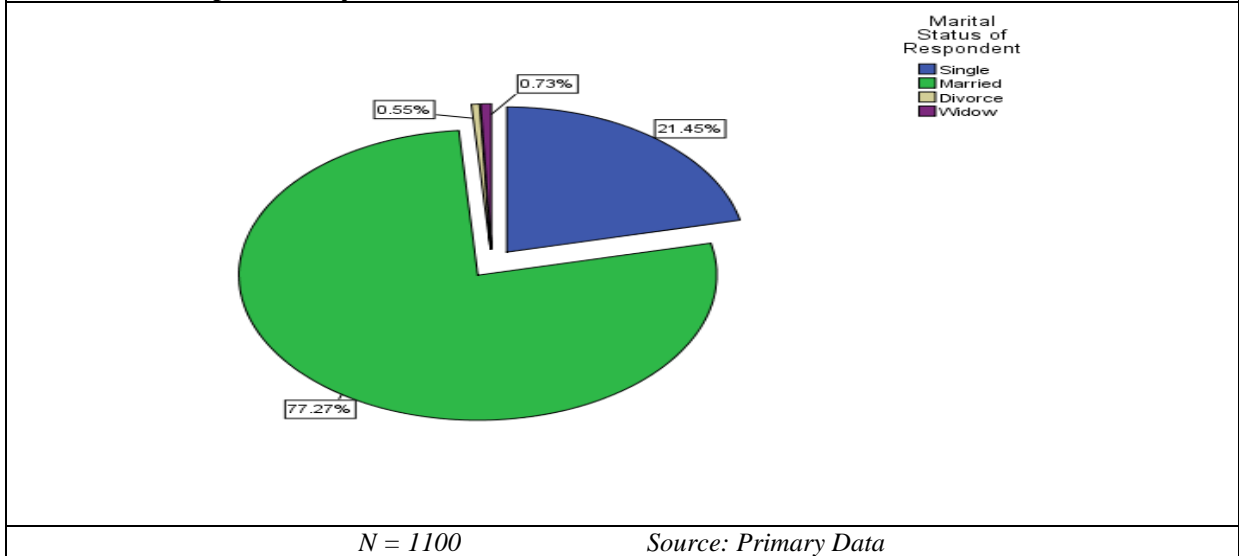
Of the respondents, 77.27% are 'Married'; 21.45% are 'Unmarried / Bachelors'; 0.73% are 'Widowed'; and 0.55% are 'Divorcees'.

**CHART – 7: Respondents By their Occupation:**

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
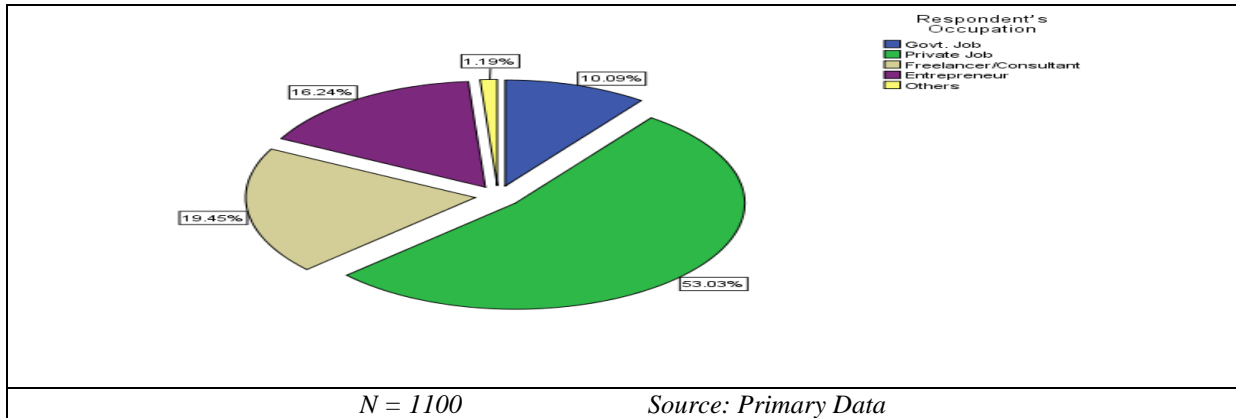
Of the respondent, 53.03% have occupied in 'Private Job'; 19.45% are 'Freelancer / Consultants'; 16.24% are 'Entrepreneurs'; 10.09% have occupied 'Government Jobs'; and only 1.19% are occupied in 'Other' professions which are not in the given list.

CHART – 8: Respondents By their Monthly Income:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
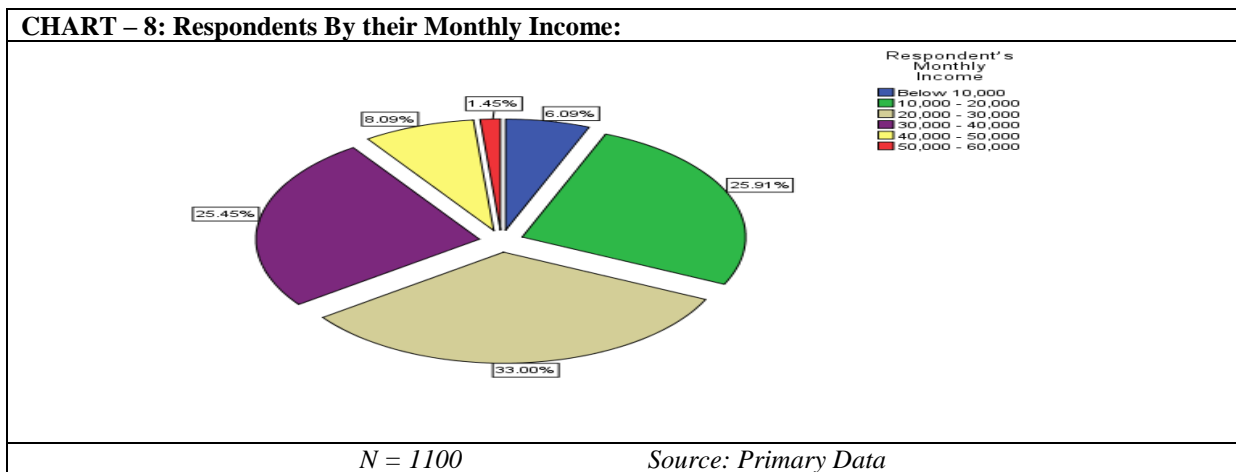
Of the respondents, 33% are having a monthly income in the income range of '20,000 – 30,000'; 25.91% are having a monthly income in the income range of '10,000 – 20,000'; 25.45% are having a monthly income in the income range of '30,000 – 40,000'; 6.09% are having a monthly income in the income range of '40,000 – 50,000'; another 6.09% are having a monthly income in the income range of 'Below 10,000'; and only 1.45% are having a monthly income in the income range of '50,000 – 60,000'.

CHART – 9: Respondents By their Level of Working:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
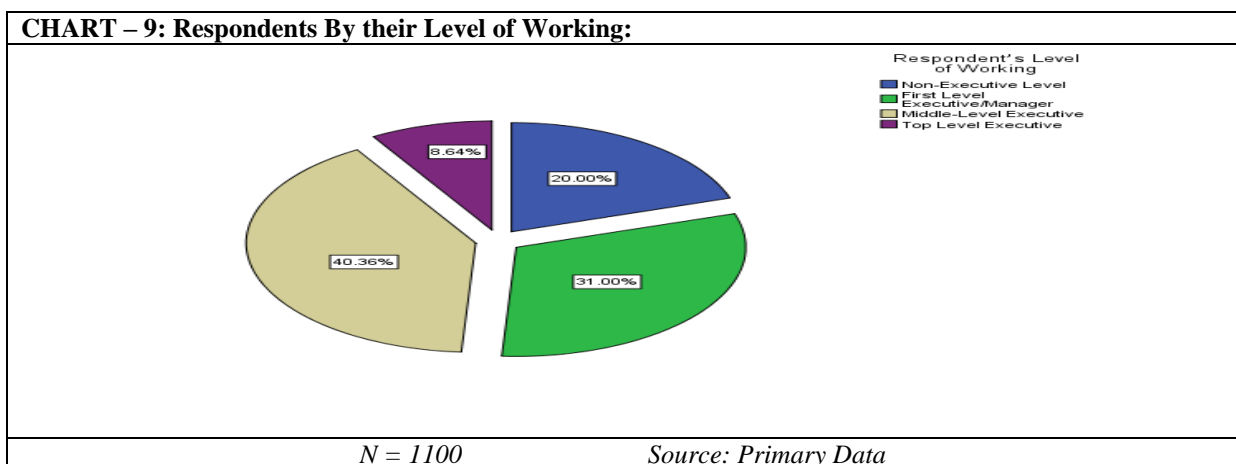
Of the respondents, 40.36% are working as 'Middle Level Executives'; 31% are working as 'First Level Executives /Managers'; 20% are working in 'Non-Executive level'; and 8.64% are working as 'Top Level Executives'.

CHART – 10: Respondents By their Primary Role of Job:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data

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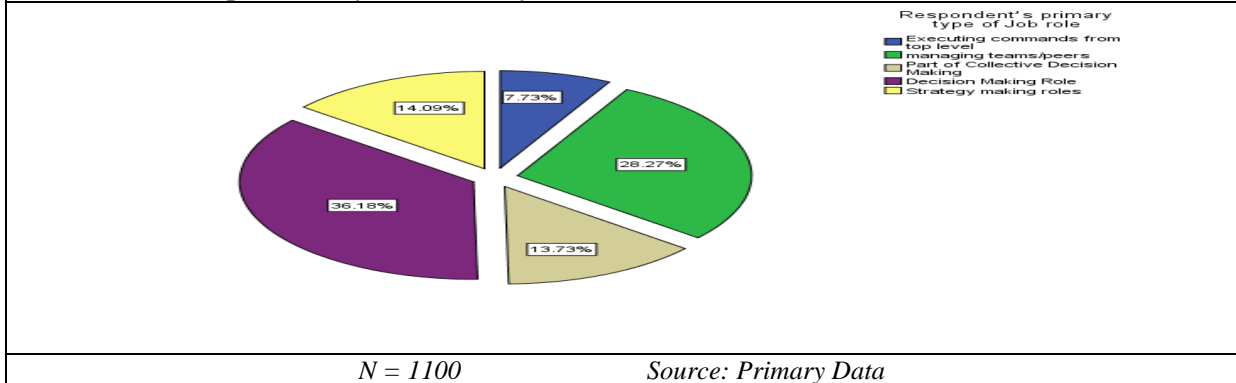
Of the respondents, 36.18% are having 'Decision Making' as their primary role of Job; 28.27% are having 'Managing Teams / Peers' as their Primary role of job; 14.09% are having 'Strategy Making' as their primary role of job; 13.73% are 'Part of collective Decision making' as their primary role of job; and 7.73% are having their primary role of job as 'Executing commands from Top Level management'.

CHART – 11: Respondents By their Type of Organization:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data

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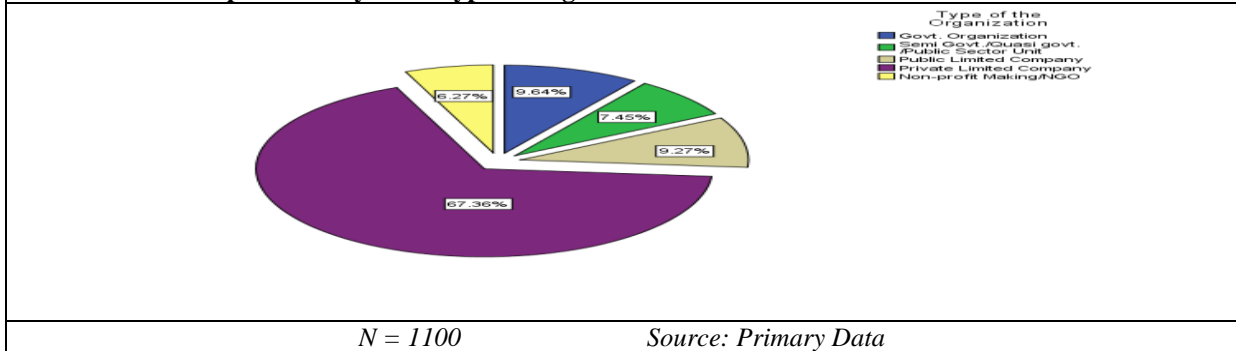
Of the respondents, 67.36% are working in 'Private Limited Companies'; 9.64% are working in 'Government Organizations'; 9.27% are working in 'Public Limited Companies'; 7.45% are working in 'Semi Government / Quasi Government / Public Sector Units'; 6.27% are working in 'Non-Profit organizations / NGOs'.

CHART – 12: Respondents By their Type of Industry:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data

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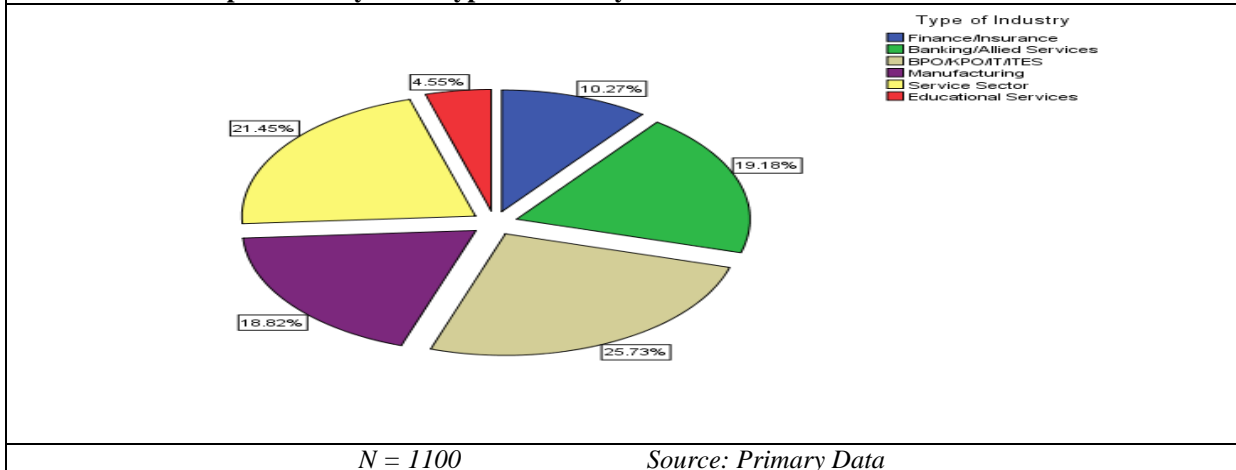
Of the respondents, 25.73% are from 'BPO / KPO / ITES/ sector; 21.45% are from 'Service Sector'; 19.18% are from 'Banking / Allied Sectors'; 18.82% are from 'Manufacturing' sector; 10.27% are from 'Finance / Insurance' sector; and 4.55% are from 'Educational Services' sector.

CHART – 13: Respondents By the Employee size of their Organization:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
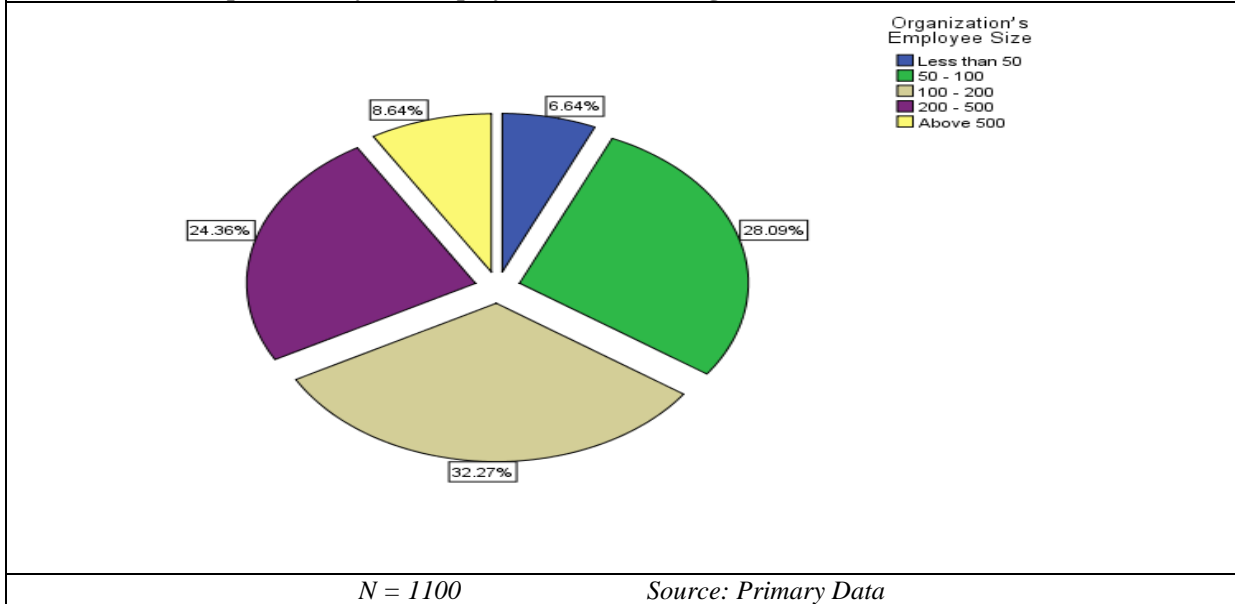
Of the respondents, 32.27% are working in an organization having an employee size of '100 – 200'; 28.09% are working in an organization having an employee size of '50 – 100'; 24.36% are working in an organization having an employee size of '200 – 500'; 8.64% are working in an organization having an employee size of 'Above 500'; and 6.64% are working in an organization having an employee size of 'Less than 50'.

CHART – 14: Respondents By the Turnover of their Organization:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
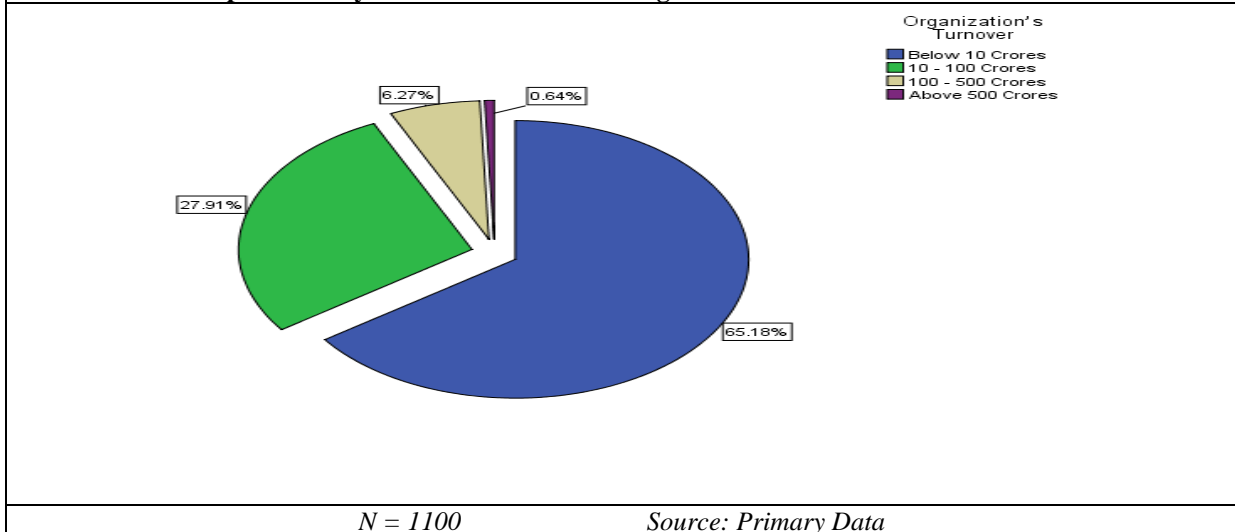
Of the respondents, 65.18% are working in organizations whose turnover is 'Below 10 Crores'; 27.91% are working in organizations whose turnover is between '10 – 100 crores'; 6.27% are working in organizations whose turnover is between '100 – 500 crores'; and only0.64%are working in organizations whose turnover is 'Above 500 Crores'.

AWARENESS ABOUT VARIOUS E-LEARNING METHODS:

**CHART – 15: Awareness About Audio Lessons:**

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
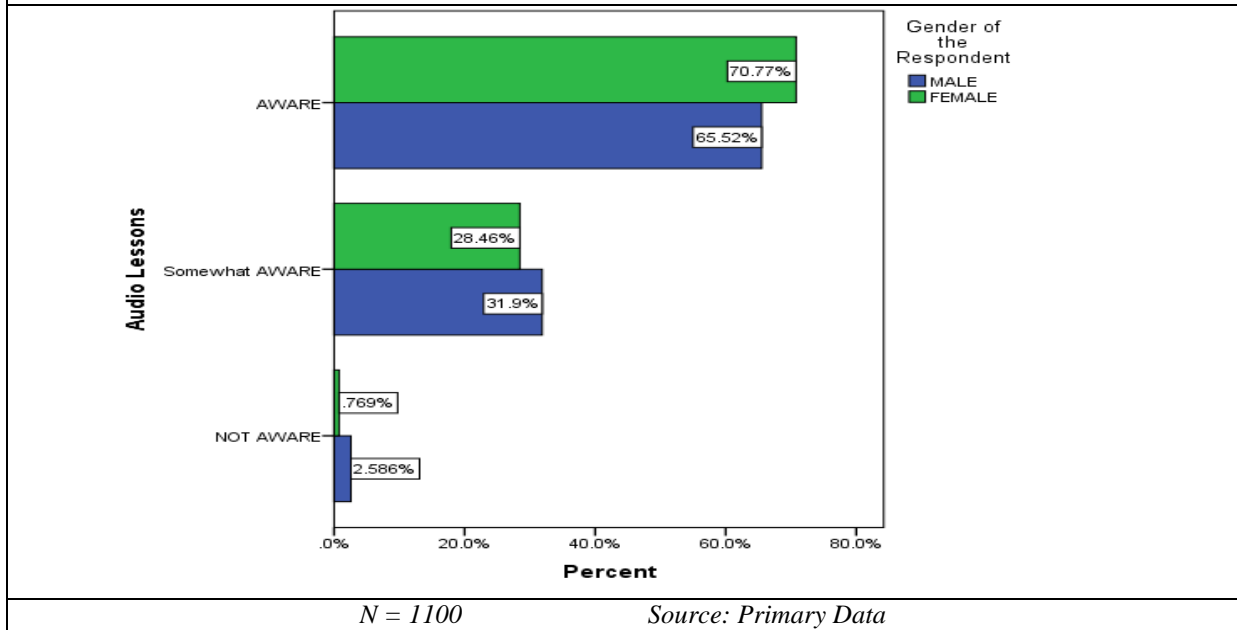
Of the respondents, 70.77% Females & 65.22% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Audio Lessons'; 28.46% Females & 31.9% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Audio Lessons'; and 0.769% Females & 2.586% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Audio Lessons'.

CHART – 16: Awareness About Video Lessons:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
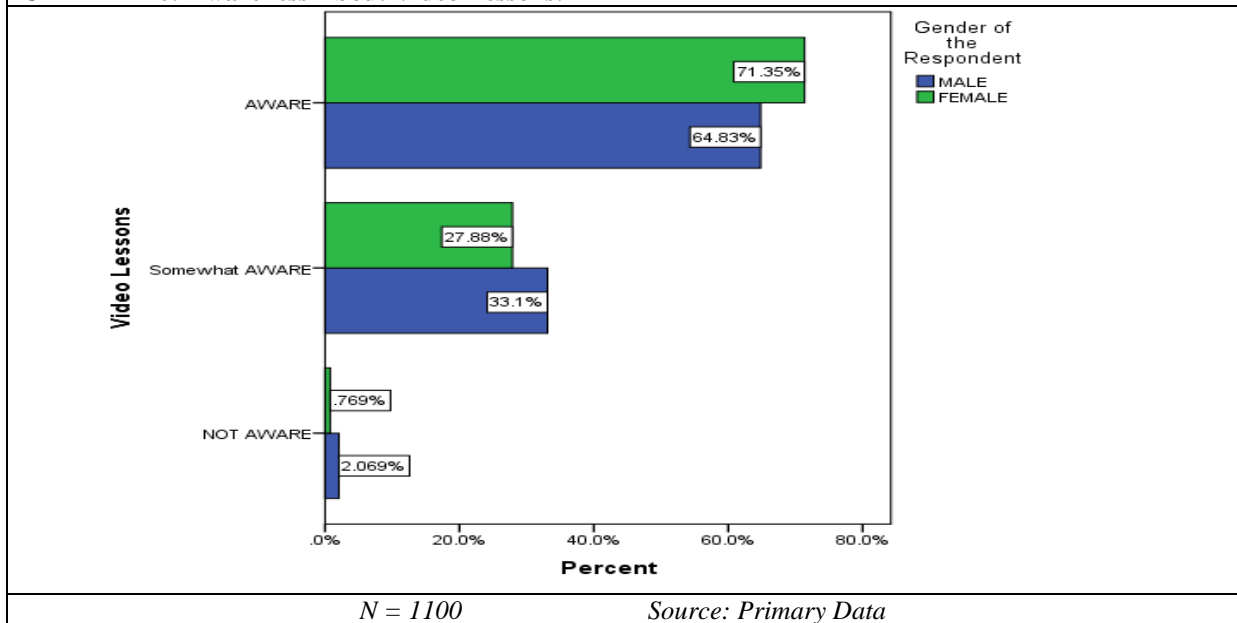
Of the respondents, 71.35% Females & 64.83% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Video Lessons'; 27.88% Females & 33.1% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Video Lessons'; and 0.769% Females & 2.069% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Video Lessons'.

**CHART – 17: Awareness AboutCD/DVD ROM Based Static Learning:**

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
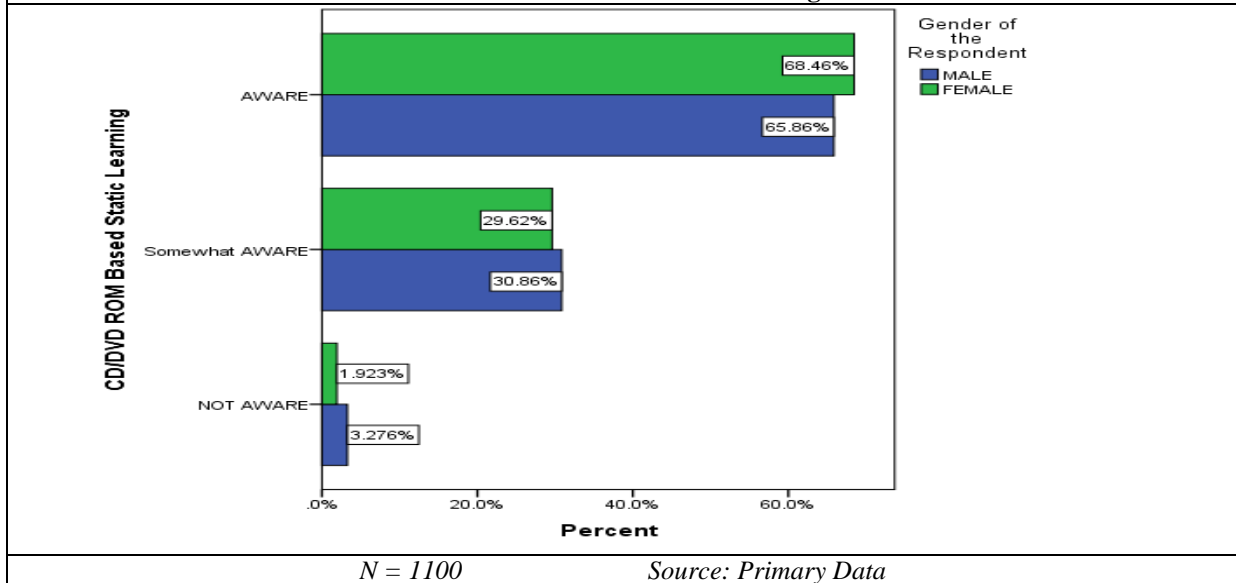
Of the respondents, 68.46% Females &65.86% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Static Learning'; 29.62% Females &30.86% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Static Learning'; and 1.923% Females &3.276% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Static Learning'.

CHART – 18: Awareness About CD/DVD ROM Based Interactive Multimedia Learning:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
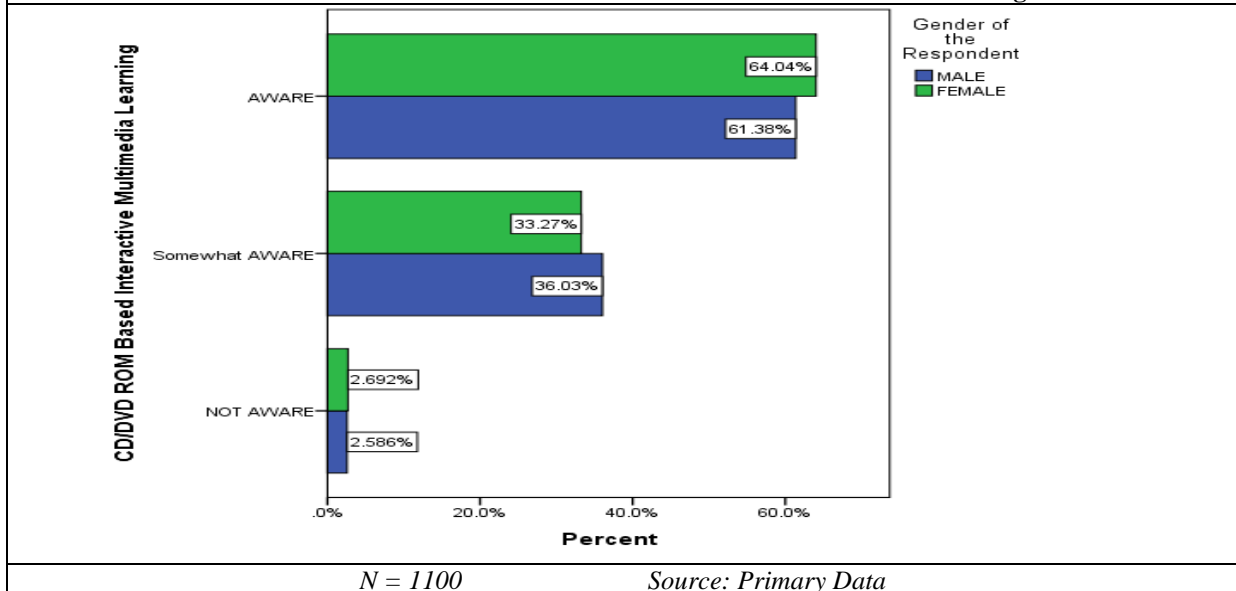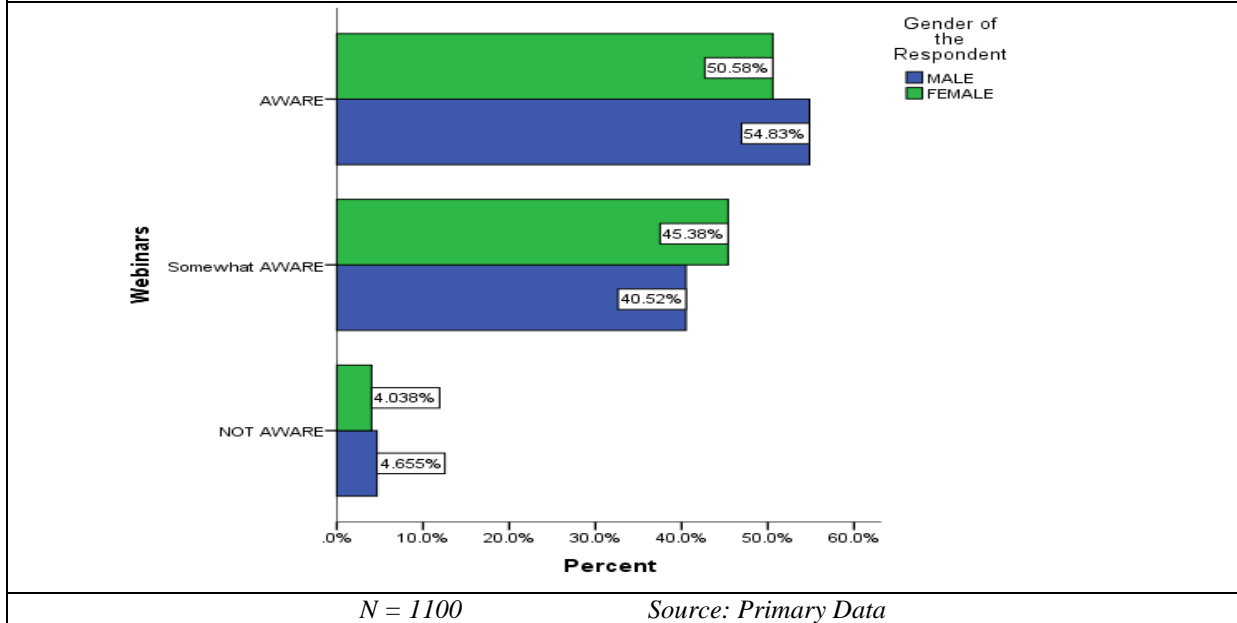
Of the respondents, 64.04% Females & 61.38% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Interactive Multimedia Learning'; 33.27% Females &36.03% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Interactive Multimedia Learning'; and 2.692% Females &2.586% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'CD/DVD based Interactive Multimedia Learning'.

**CHART – 19: Awareness About Internet / Web based Static Page Learning:**

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
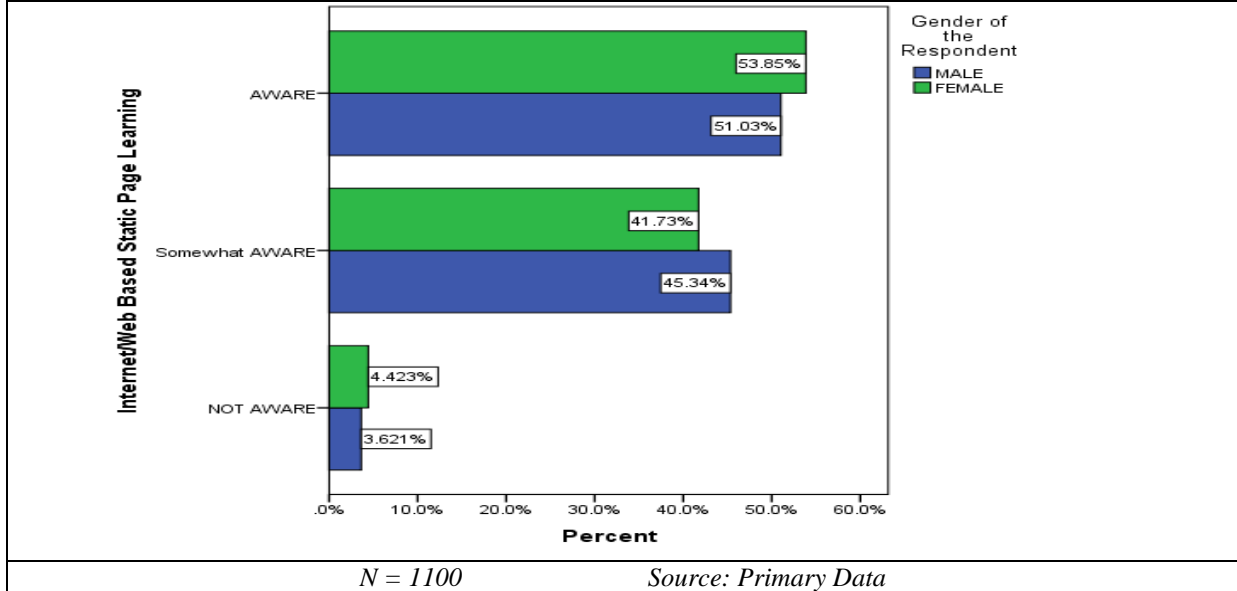
Of the respondents, 53.85% Females &51.03% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web Based Static Page Learning'; 41.73% Females &45.34% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web Based Static Page Learning'; and 4.423% Females &3.621% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web Based Static Page Learning'.

CHART – 20: Awareness About Webinars:
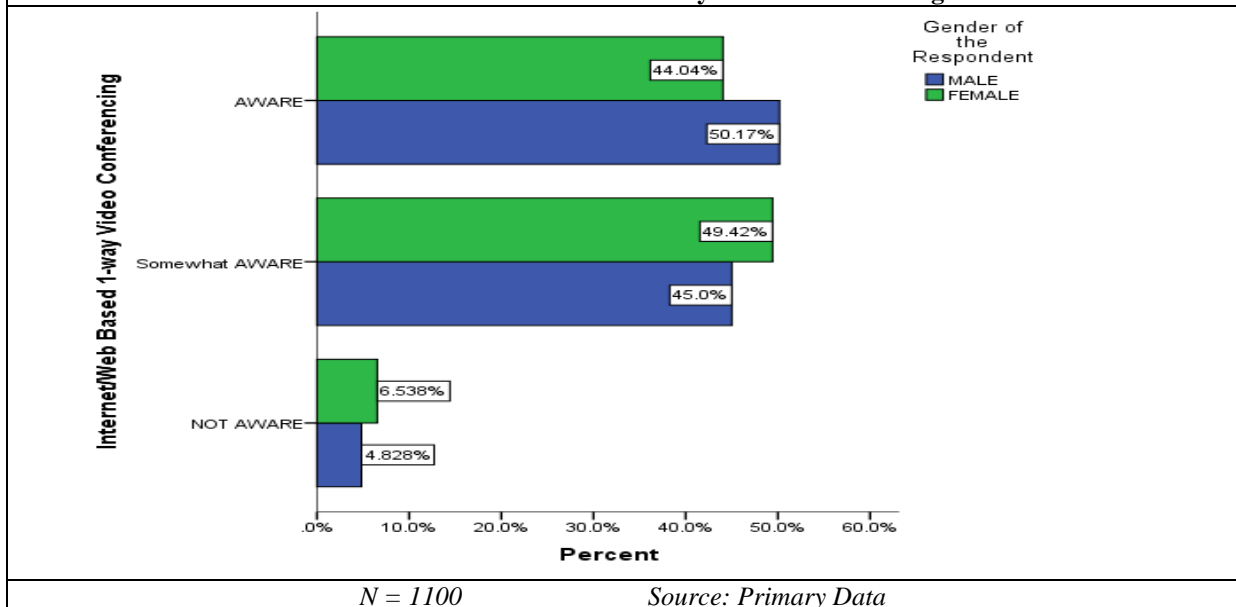

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data

Of the respondents, 50.58% Females & 54.83% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webinars'; 45.38% Females &40.52% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webinars'; and 4.038% Females &4.655% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webinars'.

CHART – 21: Awareness About Webcasts:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
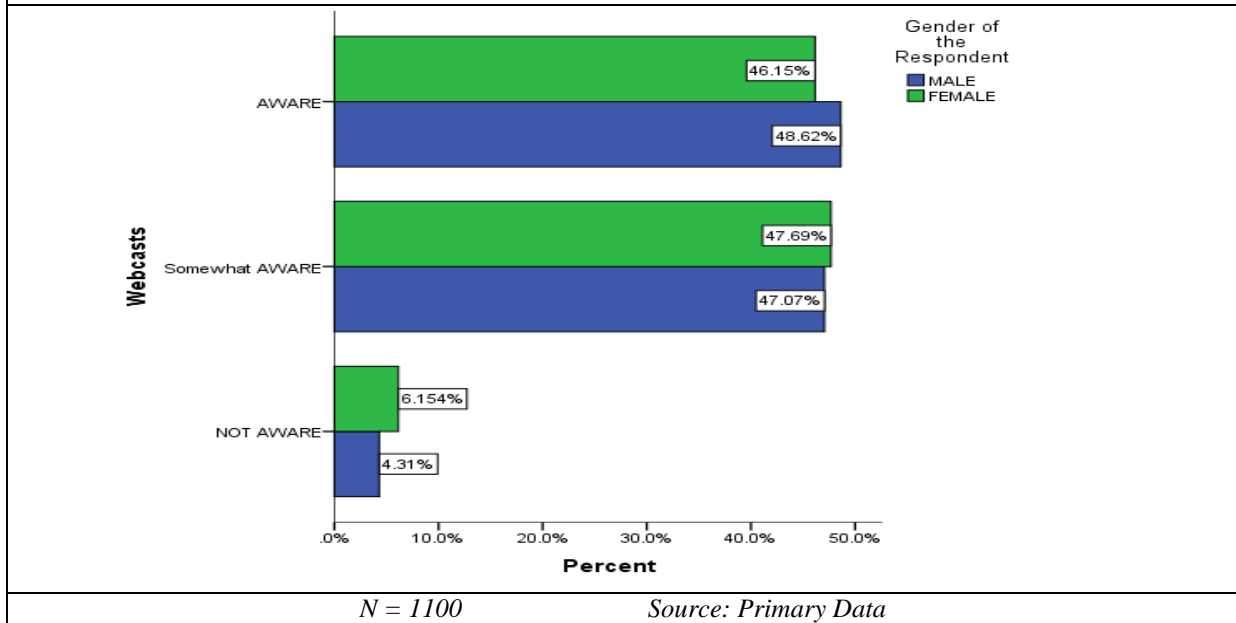
Of the respondents, 46.15% Females &48.62% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webcasts'; 47.69% Females &47.07% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webcasts'; and 6.154% Females &4.31% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Webcasts'.

CHART – 22: Awareness About Internet / Web Based 1-way Video Conferencing:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data

Of the respondents, 44.04% Females &50.17% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 1-way Video Conferencing'; 49.24% Females &45.0% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 1-way Video Conferencing'; and 6.538% Females &4.828% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 1-way Video Conferencing'.

**CHART – 23: Awareness About Internet / Web Based 2-way Video Conferencing:**

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
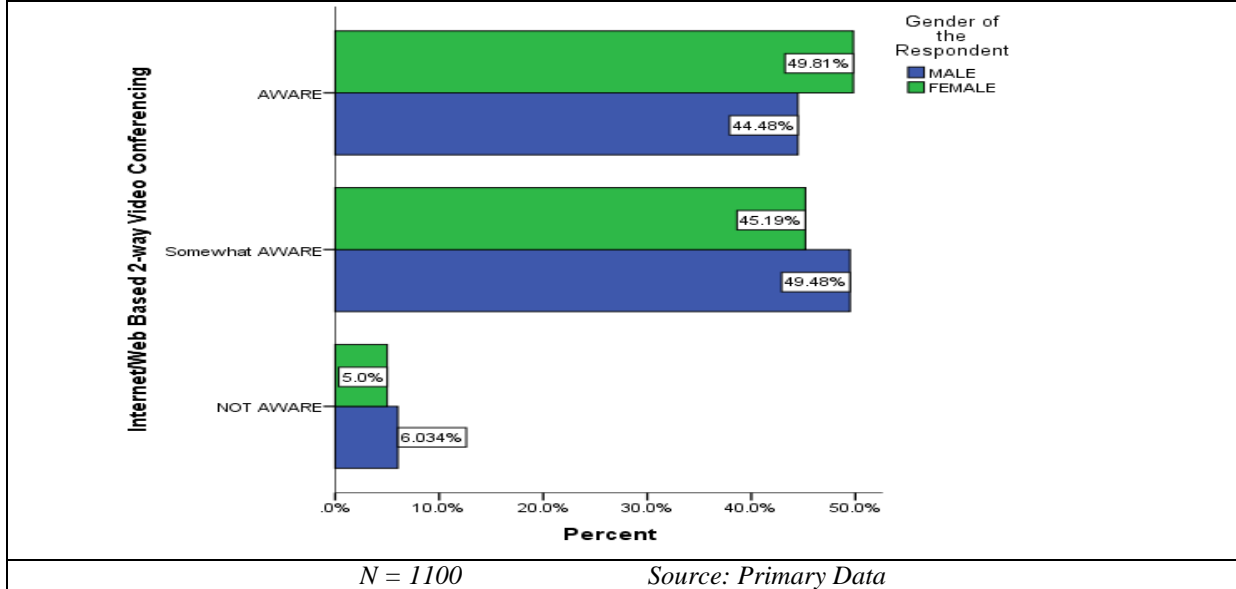
Of the respondents, 49.81% Females &44.48% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 2-way Video Conferencing'; 45.19% Females &49.48% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 2-way Video Conferencing'; and 5.0% Females &6.034% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based 2-way Video Conferencing'.

CHART – 24: Awareness About Internet / Web Based Interactive multimedia learning:

N = 1100   Source: Primary Data
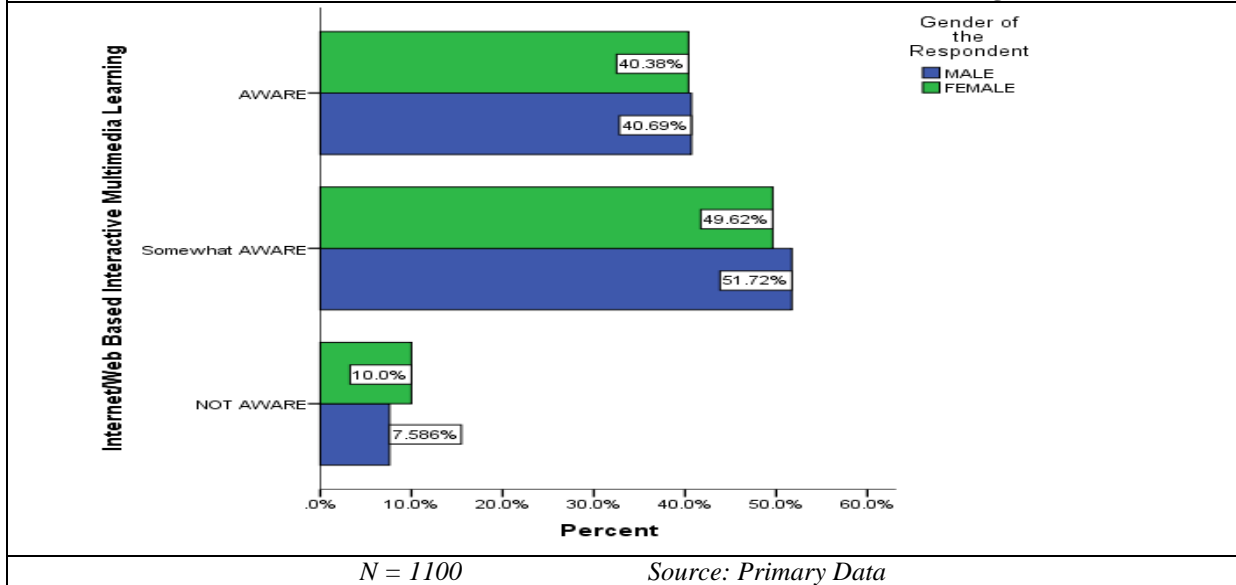
Of the respondents, 40.38% Females &40.69% Males are 'AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based Interactive Multimedia Learning'; 49.62% Females &51.72% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based Interactive Multimedia Learning'; and 10.0% Females &7.586% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about the E-Learning method 'Internet / Web based Interactive Multimedia Learning'.

CHART – 25: Awareness About Various E-learning methods:

Awareness of Various E-learning methods

■ Male ■ Female ■ Total

	Male	Female	Total
NOT AWARE	4.16	4.23	4.19
Somewhat Aware	41.10	39.83	40.47
Aware	54.74	55.94	55.34

N = 1100   *Source: Primary Data*
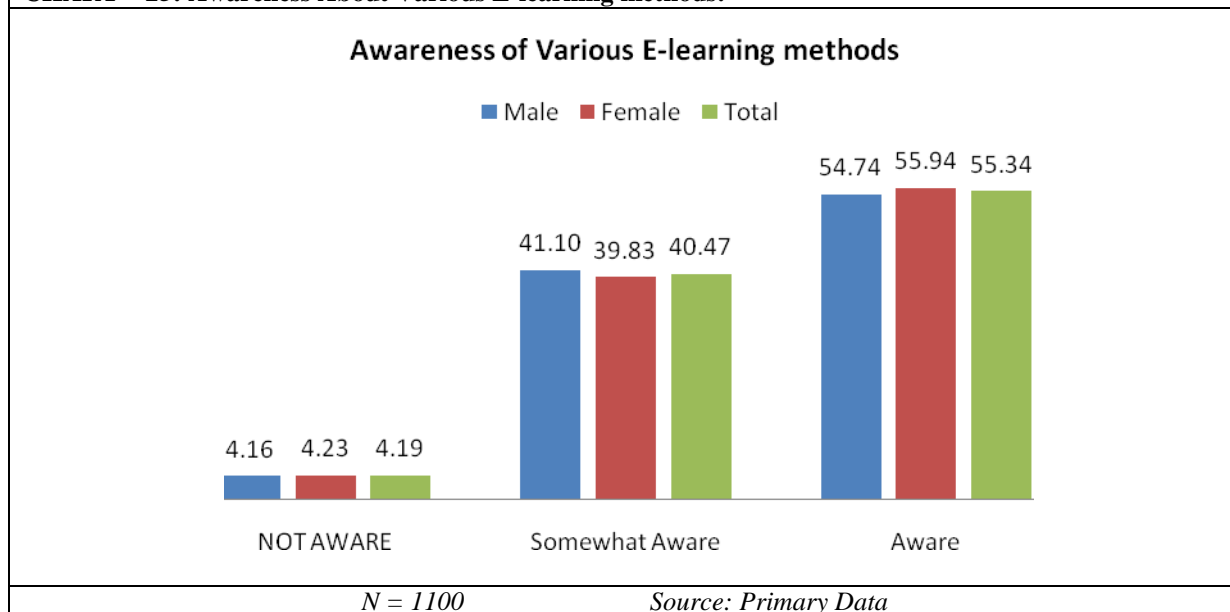
Of the respondents, 55.94% Females &54.74% Males are 'AWARE' about various E-Learning methods; 39.83% Females &41.10% Males are 'SOMEWHAT AWARE' about various E-Learning methods; and 4.23% Females &4.16% Males are 'NOT AWARE' about various E-Learning methods.

Table 1: Various E-Learning Methods vs. Gender of the Respondent

E-Learning Method	*Awareness*	*Gender of the Respondent*		
		MALE%	*FEMALE%*	*Overall%*
Audio Lessons	NOT AWARE	2.59%	0.77%	1.68
	Somewhat AWARE	31.90%	28.46%	30.18
	AWARE	65.52%	70.77%	68.14
Video Lessons	NOT AWARE	2.07%	0.77%	1.42
	Somewhat AWARE	33.10%	27.88%	30.49
	AWARE	64.83%	71.35%	68.09
CD/DVD ROM Based Static Learning	NOT AWARE	3.28%	1.92%	2.60
	Somewhat AWARE	30.86%	29.62%	30.24
	AWARE	65.86%	68.46%	67.16
CD/DVD ROM Based Interactive Multimedia Learning	NOT AWARE	2.59%	2.69%	2.64
	Somewhat AWARE	36.03%	33.27%	34.65
	AWARE	61.38%	64.04%	62.71
Internet/Web Based Static Page Learning	NOT AWARE	3.62%	4.42%	4.02

	Somewhat AWARE	45.34%	41.73%	43.54
	AWARE	51.03%	53.85%	52.44
Webinars	NOT AWARE	4.66%	4.04%	4.35
	Somewhat AWARE	40.52%	45.38%	42.95
	AWARE	54.83%	50.58%	52.70
Webcasts	NOT AWARE	4.31%	6.15%	5.23
	Somewhat AWARE	47.07%	47.69%	47.38
	AWARE	48.62%	46.15%	47.39
Internet/Web Based 1-way Video Conferencing	NOT AWARE	4.83%	6.54%	5.68
	Somewhat AWARE	45.00%	49.42%	47.21
	AWARE	50.17%	44.04%	47.11
Internet/Web Based 2-way Video Conferencing	NOT AWARE	6.03%	5.00%	5.52
	Somewhat AWARE	49.48%	45.19%	47.34
	AWARE	44.48%	49.81%	47.15
Internet/Web Based Interactive Multimedia Learning	NOT AWARE	7.59%	10.00%	8.79
	Somewhat AWARE	51.72%	49.62%	50.67
	AWARE	40.69%	40.38%	40.54
TOTAL Awareness	*NOT AWARE*	*4.16%*	*4.23%*	*4.19%*
	Somewhat AWARE	*41.10%*	*39.83%*	*40.47%*
	AWARE	*54.74%*	*55.94%*	*55.34%*

Source: Primary Data   *Sample N = 1100*

The above table (*Table -1*) lists about the awareness of various E-learning methods(in per cent terms) spread across the sample by Gender of the respondents. The overall per cent shows the total awareness of a particular e-learning system viz. its representative awareness in the sample.

IV.   CONCLUSION
The Total awareness of various e-learning methods amongst the Males is 54.74% and amongst Females is 55.94%.The Total awareness of various E-learning methods across the sample irrespective of Gender is 55.34%. This shows that the Total awareness regarding the various e-learning methods amongst the sample is just close to the half way mark only and the other half of the Sample are unaware of the various e-learning methods available for the enhancement of on-demand management skills. This result goes along with the general assumption about the awareness / usage of various e-learning methods amongst the workforce working in organized sector.These results give us a scope for promoting and popularizing various e-learning methods across the society for on-demand skills enhancement.

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