"Massive Open Online Courses" (MOOC)

Navjit Kaur (Assist. Professor)

Department of Commerce, Dasmesh Girls College, Mukerian, Punjab, India

Abstract

This Paper discusses the importance of "Massive Open Online Courses" (MOOC) in present era. MOOC is recently introduced in our education system. Over the last decade, many educational institutions have begun offering courses via the web in a variety of formats. Recently, new breed of online class has emerged that is "Massive Open Online Course". The original concept for a MOOC came from academic research in early 1960s with the idea that people could be linked by a series of computers to discuss, listen and learn about a particular topic. With the continuous development in IT, it becomes easier for everyone to have access to a broad and diverse range of education and learning system. MOOC provide free online courses that enable people with an interest in a selected topic to study and learn through interaction with others also interested in same topic. There are no fees or entry requirements and no formal academic credit is available. The purpose of this paper is to describe the basic elements of MOOC and explore what MOOCs might mean for libraries. Along with this the paper contain importance of MOOC in our education system and define how this new method of study brings revolution in our existing education system This paper is intended to 1) define the MOOC 2) critically discuss the importance of MOOC 2) how it's working 3) which kind of benefits it is providing to students 4) how it differ from traditional education system 5) some of its inherent disadvantages.6)The paper also proposes strategies for the institutional adoption and implementation of MOOC 7) offer suggestions for the improvement of this new way of educational system. This paper also draws on diffusion of innovations theory to help understand and predict MOOC outcomes for students. There is lack of research studies and critical papers examining its current situation around the world, so this paper also examines it from various dimensions: pedagogical and technological implementations around the world and its research focus. Therefore, a literature review on MOOCs characteristics, timelines of its development and a bend of practical issues with the well known MOOCs providers are presented

INTRODUCTION

MOOCs are Massive Open Online Courses and they are rapidly changing the game for higher education. Even it is also changing the executive education and employee development. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are a new type of online class that allow anyone, anywhere, to participate via video lectures, computer graded tests, and discussion forums. MOOCs offer free online courses covering a growing range of topics delivered by qualified lecturers from some of the most well-known universities in the world.

It usually provides free study. Qualified lecturers provide the short video lectures combined with computer-graded tests and online forums where participants can discuss the material or get help from each other. MOOC generally came with the idea that people should be link with each other with the help of series of computers. It is very useful method of study to explore the hidden knowledge and capabilities of people who cannot get education from higher education institution due to lack of time or money.

The term MOOC will be clearer from the following explanation:-

Massive - because they attract a large number of participants, often in the thousands

Open - because it takes place in an area that is open for anyone to read, reflect and comment upon; it is free and the content and work done in the course is shared between all people taking the course.

Online - because the course takes place online.

Course - because it has facilitators and course materials, a start and an end date, and participants. It's an event around a topic that people care about.

Background

The term MOOCs was originally coined by Dave Cormier of the University of Prince Edward Island in 2008 for a large online class taught by George Seimens of Athabasca University and Stephen Downes of Canada's National Research Council Canada. The main motive of introduction of MOOC was to provide the connectivity and connectivism knowledge around the world with the help of IT. MOOCs are the internet equivalent of distance education and there could be 100 or 100,000 participants in a single course. The main motive of MOOC was to provide education to more and more people. Because if we talk about traditional method of study it has big limitation that it can provide education or knowledge only to limited number of people. But this drawback covered by MOOC open learning system.

MOOCs provide free online courses that enable people with an interest in a selected topic to study and learn through interaction with others also interested in the same topic. Other participants could be from the same organisation, city or region, learning together with people from other organisations, cities, regions and countries from around the world. MOOCs create the opportunity for vast numbers of people across the world to access learning through quality courses.

Importance of MOOC

Following are few points which may clear the importance of MOOC in the lives of people who want to expand their knowledge with the help of internet:-

1) **Easily accessible:-** MOOC that is massive open online courses are easily accessible to the people. Because in these days internet is main part of our life. Everyone have different sources of Internet. So any one can take participate in online courses.

2) **Learn alongside a diverse group of professionals and students.:-** From a survey it has been discovered that not only those people are part of MOOC which can't pursue their higher study in any educational institution but other one like employee or other people who seek knowledge also took admission in MOOC. So that they can expand

International Journal of Research

Available at https://edupediapublicat ions.org/ journals

e-ISSN: 2348-6848
p-ISSN: 2348-795X
Volume 05 Issue 12
April 2018

their existing knowledge. So in this way in MOOC people can learn alongside a diverse group of professionals and students.

3) **Study large no. of subjects without any restriction:-**Under MOOC education system people can study anything according to their interest without any kind of restriction. Like if you want to study computer science but you have also interest in poetry you can study the poetry also that can be possible only in MOOC.

4) **Be a part of something global:-** with the help of internet a person who is part of MOOC can become a part of global education. In Traditional education system. Where there is only few professionals are available for providing the knowledge on the other hand in MOOC large no. different kind of expert are available for providing the expert opinion on any single topic which may be very vast as compare to traditional education system.

5) **More information provider:-** MOOC Can be used as a tool in a blended learning program, where students can access more information than what is provided in the class.

How does a MOOC work

Today it becomes possible to take higher study with high quality courses with the help of internet connection. And in some cases it is even free. Here are lots of courses offered by MOOC weather related to improve the business skill, learning any kind of language, soft skills or various other courses.

Now the question arise how it does work?

For answering this question, Here is following procedure which generally follows in every MOOC course:-

1) **Select the course you are interested and register on the course page:-** If any person wants to take online education on any particular subject then he/she needs to go to that course page and register his self /herself to that page.

2) **When a person can join the MOOC:-** At any time a person can join the MOOC. Even during the course also.

3) **What a person needs to join the MOOC:-** A person can join the MOOC with the help of any device like- desktop , laptop, tablets etc.

4 **Charges for joining the MOOC:-** MOOC is generally free. No any kind of charges are there for joining the MOOC, but only internet charges.

5) **Need to met any kind of criteria to join the MOOC:-** Here is very simple criteria to join the MOOC is just check whether the course met your own personal requirements. This can be check from the course content which may be available on the course pages.

6) **Certificate for attending the course:-** Person can get a **Statement of Participation** for these online courses — this is a personalised, printed certificate to show that person have taken part and completed the necessary parts of the course. For this the person must mark

International Journal of Research

Available at https://edupediapublicat ions.org/ journals

e-ISSN: 2348-6848
p-ISSN: 2348-795X
Volume 05 Issue 12
April 2018

more than 50% of all course steps as complete and attempt all test questions to be eligible to buy a statement of participation.

7) Providing lectures with the help of short videos:- In MOOC generally experts provide the short time videos. From a person can learn anything, anytime and anywhere.

Various Benefits of MOOC

Lots of benefits are providing by MOOC. Some of these are as flows:-

1) MOOCs are free of cost:- Most of the courses which provided by MOOCs are free from any kind of charges. This is very big benefit.

2) MOOC brings people together:- MOOC brings people together all over the world and encourage engagement between various personal at large scale and also encourage them to interact with wider public.

3) Freedom in learning:- Under MOOC learning happens in a more informal setting, at a place of your convenience and often around your own schedule.

4) Person can choose the language:- MOOC provide another benefit to the personal who join it that they can choose any language according to their convenience. It doesn't matter if a person can speak English, Hindi, and Chinese etc.

5) Make the study more attractive and meaningful:- MOOC make the study more attractive and meaningful as compare to the traditional study methods. Because under the MOOC a person can get full freedom in study ,which is not possible in any other method of study.

5) Distributed learning: - Participants help each other interpret the material, seek out different or related sources, and use social networking to share their interpretations. Through this distributed learning, participants gain a better understanding of the material and can get immediate feedback if questions arise.

6) No distance constraint:- It basically eliminate the distance constraint because with the help of MOOC you can take free courses offered by different universities like Germany, USA, China etc. by just browse the offering of the topics in which you have interest.

7) Offering interesting business opportunities. Several new MOOC companies launched in 2012: edX by Harvard and MIT; Coursera, a Standford company; and Udacity, which focuses on science and tech.

8) Helps to deliver quality education:- MOOCs become very helpful to deliver quality education . Because in this system of education lots of professional are available for providing knowledge, irrespective of their geographical location.

9) Live discussion:- Apart from study material, students get participate in live discussion which help them to get their doubts cleared and also interact with professors from top universities and colleges.

How MOOC differ from Traditional education system

Basically MOOC education system is very different from traditional education system it may more clearly from the following points which differentiate MOOC from traditional education system:-

Basis	Traditional education system	Massive open online courses
Meaning	Under this education system, students get education in the classrooms by the few professors.	Under this system here is not any kind of barrier to get education, students get education online from no. of professionals.
Scheduling	Campus based courses requires that the student should attend classes a certain no. of days in a week or at specific time. No freedom allotted to students for choosing their own schedule for study.	Every online class run differently but in most cases, it is much easier to schedule your class around the rest of your day when go to school virtually.
Interaction	Students interact with each other and with professors in this system. For discussion or sorting off their problems.	Students also do interact with others but it depends on the habit of the student.
Discipline and self motivation	When it comes to discipline and motivation, traditional education does have an advantage in the eyes of many. The structured schedule of attending regular classes inculcates the disciple in students.	The increased flexibility of online learning comes with a bit of a trade-off—you'll need to be highly self motivated. All college classes require students to keep up on required reading and assignment, but some students may struggle to stay motivated when learning from comfort of their home.
Tuition fee	Very high amount of fee usually charged by higher educational institutions.	Very nominal amount charged MOOC.
Resources	Generally school or college library or notes provided by professors as a study material.	Various professionals and other learners provide data. Also experts share their views.

Various Problems facing in MOOC

1) It is difficult to keep track of students' assignments and involvement:- Because Of Large No. of Students its Quite Difficult to keep track of their assignments.

2) Learners with disabilities and a poor Internet connection can't use MOOCs.:- MOOC totally depend on connectivity of internet, so poor internet connection is a barrier in the way of success of MOOC. Moreover person should have ability to learn by himself/herself.

3) Language can be a barrier while offering MOOCs.:- person who wants to join the MOOC should have at least knowledge of English.

4) MOOCs can't be used as a credit-earning.:- it can't be used as credit earning because most of the MOOCs are free.

5) Self confidence and motivation is less because of absence of proper feedback.:- Students motivated in traditional education system by their guides by providing them feedback time to time, Which is not possible in MOOC education system.

6) Forget about fancy papers. :- Objective type questions are successful in MOOC not theory based questions. And if student is related to arts stream then it will create hindrance.

Suggestions to improve the MOOC Education system

Despite high enrolment numbers, according to estimates approximately 90% students who sign up for MOOC fail to complete their courses. Here are some suggestions for improving the MOOC system:-

1) By providing Feedback:- Most of the students de-motivated because they didn't receive any kind of appreciation from its instructor for good performance. So here is suggestion that instructor should send some motivational messages and also congratulate them for work completed.

2) Post more interesting videos:- People get bored when they just learn written lessons. So instructors should mitigate this problem by posting more audio and video segments instead of only providing written lessons.

3) Face to face interaction:- Regardless of delivery method, social interaction is key to effective learning which is not available in MOOC. So here suggestion that here should be face to face interaction between students by using blended learning which is an education program that combines online digital media with traditional classroom methods.

4) Offer of credit:- The offer of credit after completing the course successfully can boost-up the morale of people.

5) Allow students to learn from each other's work:- It can create a bounding between students if they will allow learning from each other's work as in traditional education system.

Conclusion

MOOCs bring the new revolution in education system. It makes possible to bring education to million people who otherwise would not have access. The combination of short videos, open discussion, comprehensive testing and active participation in an online community can be an effective learning tool in the hands of people. Under MOOC learning happens in a more informal setting, at a place of your convenience and often around your own schedule. Despite all these advantages enrolment in MOOC is low. May be due to lack of knowledge about this effective education system, it is not so popular.

REFERENCES

1. McAuley, A., B. Stewart, G. Siemens, and D. Cormier. 2010. "The MOOC Model for Digital Practice." https://oerknowledgecloud.org/sites/oerknowledgecloud.org/ files/MOOC_Final_0.pdf.

2. Ripley, A. "College Is Dead. Long Live College!" Time 180, no. 18 (October 29, 2012): 32–41.

3. Goodell, J. "Massive Open Online Courses." MLA News 53, no. 9 (October 2013): 19. https://www.mlanet.org/members/pdf/news/2013/mlanews_2013_oct.pdf.

4. Kellogg, S. "Online Learning: How to Make a MOOC." Nature 499, no. 7458 (July 18, 2013): 369–371.

5. Lewin, Tamar. "Colleges Adapt Online Courses to Ease Burden." The New York Times, April 29, 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/30/education/collegesadapt-online-courses-to-ease-burden.html.

6. Liyanagunawardena, T.R., A.A. Adams, and S.A. Williams. "MOOCs: A Systematic Study of the Published Literature 2008–2012." The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning 14, no. 3 (June 3, 2013): 202–227.

7. Oremus, W. "University Suspends Online Classes After More Than Half the Students Fail." Slate (blog), July 19, 2013. http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_ tense/2013/07/19/san_jose_state_suspends_udacity_online_classes_after_students_ fail_final.html.

8. Bates, A. W., Teaching in a digital age, (http://opentextbc.ca/teachinginadigitalage/part/chapter-7-moocs/accessed Jan 2015)