Introduction

MOOC stands for a Massive Open Online Course. They are similar to university courses, but do not tend to offer academic credit. A number of web-based platforms (initiatives) supported by top universities, colleges and organizations offer MOOCs in a wide range of subjects.

History

A massive open online course (MOOC) is a free Web-based distance learning program that is designed for the participation of large numbers of geographically dispersed students. The word MOOC was coined in 2008 by Dave Cormier, from the University of Prince Edward Island for a course offered by the University of Manitoba, "Connectivism and Connective Knowledge." 1

Approach

A MOOC is a gathering of participants, of people willing to jointly exchange knowledge and experiences for each of them to build upon. A MOOC is by itself a non-defined pedagogical format to organize learning/teaching/training on a specific topic in a more informal collaborative way.

Features

MOOCs are a group of online classes that share several key features. The most obvious is that all content is delivered online, either through video, slideshows, discussion boards, or any combination thereof. Courses are usually developed by well-known figures in the field from large research institutions, but in reality anyone can create a MOOC. Participants pay no enrolment fees and there are no restrictions on who may register, although there may be suggested prerequisite knowledge 2. The inherent openness and user-friendliness of the format means that incredible educational resources are available to anyone with the time to devote to learning. MOOCs offer real opportunity to people without access to traditional education.

Participation in organic discussions

The instructor actively participates in the discussion forums but students are leading the conversations by posing questions, commenting on the materials, and helping one another. The instructor mostly reacts to the students’ posts and comments that emerge organically as the students work their way through the course.

Leading planned discussions

the instructor guides the discussion forum activity by posing questions, assigning discussion exercises, and sometimes steering organically emerging conversations toward course learning objectives.
Mediated participation

Instructors do not participate in regular direct interaction on the discussion forums. Instead, TAs or other staff monitor and participate in the forums on a daily basis and gather interesting questions and comments for the instructor. At regular intervals, the instructor then responds in a collective message with their own thoughts and reactions³.

Various products of MOCC

Virtual classroom
Course management system
Video streaming
Content library
Online tests
Chat
Podcast
Blog

Advantages

MOCC are low cost routes to accessing quality courses and it can be combined with other study or work. They are accessed from any computer at any location including your home or wherever connectivity available. One can organize it in any language by using various online tools that are relevant to your target region or that are already being used by the participants. Learning is possible beyond time zones and physical boundaries. It can be organized as quickly as you can inform the participants. Contextualized content can be shared by all. One can connect across disciplines and corporate/institutional walls. Improve lifelong learning skills can be possible. Absorption⁴. Patient education can be done through this medium through videos

Disadvantages

Online courses do not help us to interpret non-verbal cues. MOOCS do not feed into a degree or other qualification but are self-contained. Few students complete the courses. Content from a MOOC offered by a university outside your home country may not match cultural and other conditions with which you are familiar. It feels chaotic as participants create their own content. It demands digital literacy and time and effort from the participants.

Courses list

MOOC List is an aggregator (directory) of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) from different providers (http://www.mooc-list.com/). In this page we can view the Upcoming courses (for the next 30 days), view the Last submitted or updated courses and also browse by Course Categories, Course Length, Estimated Effort and Tags⁵. Other such sites are also providing these details such as. http://mooc.ca/, https://www.class-central.com/, http://www.openculture.com/free_certificate_courses etc.

MOOC RESOURCES

The list of some important providers is given below.

Coursera
Udacity
edX
Kahn Academy
Udemy
Canvas Network
iversity
OpenLearning
FutureLearn
MOOEC

Novoed

WizIQ

The National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) etc.

Conclusion

MOOCs have the potential to bring education to millions who otherwise would not have access. The combination of short video lectures, frequent comprehension testing, and active participation in an online community can be an effective learning tool for some students, but the registration-to-completion ratio is likely to remain low. Personal interest is plays a vital role in completing the course. Some mechanism like providing credit points for CME can be done. But monitoring of learning or evaluation of MOOC is quite difficult.

References


