

Chapter 2

Exploring a New Learning Environment Through Massive Open Online Course: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

As the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) concept is adding a new dimension to online learning and presenting a deeper impact in different disciplines including the library and information science area, library and information science professionals are producing scholarly literature on MOOC-related issues. Through this chapter, the authors gave the overview of the genesis of MOOCs in a new learning environment. This article gives the outlook of MOOCs, which are one of the latest trends in education. This chapter also explores various literature reviews on the conceptual framework and discusses the online courses in general and specifically for LIS domain.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has always been relied on certain tools and modes these were pencils, books, and chalk and boards, to deliver content. As the technology involves and impacts the environment gets change for a learners and facilitators. The concept of traditional classroom teaching environment has enhanced to virtual online learning environments which are in synchronous and asynchronous modes. The tool of education list has grown to include Information and Communications Technology such as smart classroom which have computers connected to internet and more recently, online platforms such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) (Cheung, 2013). These tools used in learning and teaching processes are in a continuous state of flux. However recent improvements in technology and increasing bandwidth capabilities have led to the growing popularity of synchronous e-learning Chen (2006). Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been integrated into teaching and learning to support a variety of pedagogies during the last three decades of the 20th century. From open access to open educational resources, and more recently, open online courses, there is growing momentum among institutions to participate in this “open” movement.

E-learning is a process of online teaching and learning through network technologies which is powerful growing need of education in lifelong learning phase (Zhang, 2004). Learning initiatives mainly relied on asynchronous means for teaching and learning. Learning environments potentially provides higher learner autonomy and more interactions among learners than traditional classrooms. Mayer (2012) argued that learning outcomes are affected by learning materials instructional methods, and learner characteristics.

Casey (2008) observed, distance education has a long history, with correspondence courses making use of reasonable cost universal postal services for the delivery of study material to learners and for submission/return of assignments by/to students. Dede (2008) highlight that the underlying pedagogy in many current learning management systems (LMSs) closely resembles computer-assisted instruction (CAI). Their obvious disadvantage is that they are usually based on a paradigm of learning that encourages “reaching the correct answer” rather than on the generation of new questions. A range of both topics and platforms have since emerged and the term was described as “the educational buzzword of 2012” by Daniel (2012) reflecting widespread interest in the concept.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been integrated into teaching and learning to support a variety of pedagogies during the last three decades of the 20th century. As we know traditional online courses charge tuition, carry credit and limit enrollment to a few dozen to ensure interaction with instructors. On the other hand, MOOCs is usually free, credit less and well massive. While

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