Prospects for Success of MOOC in Higher Education in India

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Abstract

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC's) are witnessing a huge demand among the students, with majority of Indian students enrolling into foreign universities. When elite colleges are offering courses free of cost to students, it is definitely an offer hard to resist. AsCoursera, a major player in the MOOC sector gets second highest enrollments from India. This is the right time to develop a strategy for launching MOOC's in India. This paper proposes a framework for the success of MOOC's in India to revolutionize the current education sector. If accurately implemented, the massive and economic nature of MOOC's can provide a solution to the problems of the youth. Along with changing the dynamics of education providing methods currently followed in India. Author provides an insight to the enthusiasm behind the MOOC woven into blanket of MOOC for Indian youth providing them jobs from the industry. Thus fulfilling the goal of attaining the higher education of the youth can be well answered. It can be a highly fruitful arrangement for the learner, university and industry, which can contribute in transforming the face of the youth of our nation. The objective of the paper will be to focus on providing framework for the learner, trainer, university and industry beneficial for everyone.

Keywords: MOOC, Collaborative learning, Flip classroom.

1. Introduction

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) are the latest buzz word .The unique feature of MOOC is providing education to public, at minimum level of cost at world scale and to deliver an attestation of completion to those who fulfill their study. This makes

it attractive especially for the developing countries. The major players like Cousera, Udacity and Edx witness high number of enrollments from India. A course is designed for few weeks and imparted on web. Assignments are given to be solved using the collaborative learning. The students take up exam at the end and are given certificate.A MOOC on software architecture and cloud computing was conceptualized and offered for six weeks during January and February by Professor Prabhakar of Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IITK) and Dr Balwinder Sodhi of IIT Ropar (IITR). The course material was offered at three levels: one, it was open for anyone to browse; two, learners would need to register to attempt the assignments; and three, the learners would need to pay a registration fee of INR 900 to get a certificate. That makes this MOOC partially 'open'. The reason for this was to discourage non-serious participants. The course started with just under a 1000 registrants, 470 of whom opted to pay the certification fee. Subsequently, 370 received certificates, a 37% success rate. This smaller MOOC demonstrated a much higher success rate than the bigger MOOCs which typically show completion rates of under 10%.

2. Objectives
Mooc's can be used as a tool to empower youth of our nation.
- To blend the goal of attaining higher education
- To incorporate the goal of facilitators
- To include the role of university
- To provide maximum benefit for the student.
- To empower our nation.

3. Model
Let us begin with the goal of attaining education. A student enrolls into a course for learning to gain knowledge which enables him to practically implement it. We need a swimmer who knows how to swim not only the technique of swimming. This is the reason for the unemployment of the youth of our nation. MOOC foundation starts from type of course .The course must be chosen keeping in mind the industry requirements. For a refinery project to be completed in a north India region, expert engineers had to be recruited from Japan. Many projects fail to see the final light of the day due to the inexpertise. MOOC's designed providing a practical knowledge incorporating the lectures from professors as well as industry experts will solve our problem. In a country like India where accreditation plays a major role in the education sector. The universities need to step forward to take the MOOC under their umbrella. For the basic courses, Professors can design the courses for short duration credits can be assigned to the course. For advanced courses, a long duration courses can be designed by professors and industry experts. The university accreditation and job surety will lure the students to enroll into course. The massive nature of MOOC ensures the benefit can be availed not by the limited nature of students. But the benefit is extended to the

thousands of together at the same time. More number of students, more benefits of collaborative learning. Collaborative learning is based on the view that knowledge is a social construct. Collaborative learning .The learner or student is the primary focus of instruction. Interaction and "doing" are of primary importance. Working in groups is an important mode of learning. Structured approaches to developing solutions to real-world problems should be incorporated into learning. Shuchi Grover, Paul Franz, Emily Schneider, Roy Pea have proposed a framework for MOOC for design and evaluation where interactive learning is the focus.
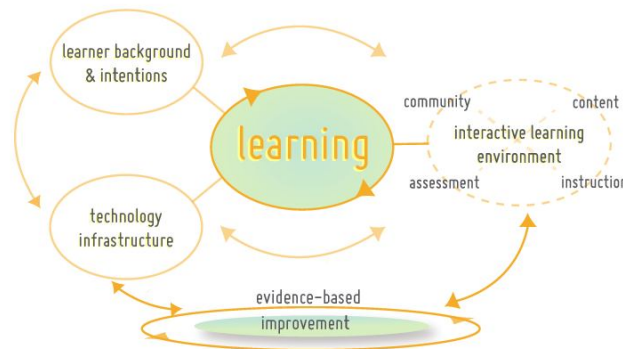

Figure 1: Distributed Intelligence Framework for the Design and Evaluation of MOOCs Shuchi Grover, Paul Franz, Emily Schneider, Roy Pea.

University approved MOOC whether short term basic or long term advanced course can be taken by student. Universities can tie up with the industries. Thus meeting the requirements of both sides. University designed MOOC can bridge the gap by providing the missing practical approach in the existing education sector.
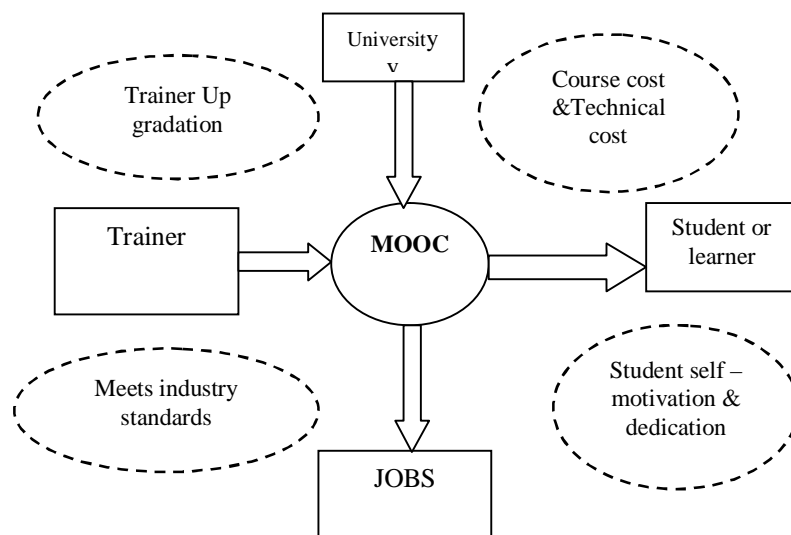

Figure 2: Framework for MOOC in India.

Author proposes the above framework for MOOC in India which initiates the university approved MOOC designed for the students to impart them industry perspective knowledge fulfilling their need of jobs.

4. Challenges

A linear model can be opted for the implementation suggested by the author.
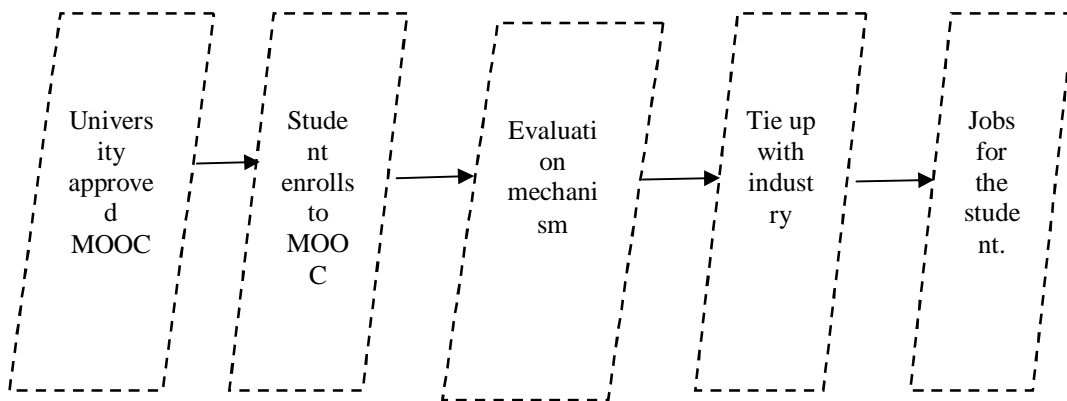

Figure 3: A linear Implementation Model.

The factors which pose as challenges required to be taken into consideration along with implementation.

- University approved MOOC
  If universities need to be run, The Technical infrastructure needs to be upgraded in the universities. But when Ivy League colleges are providing MOOC's to students free of cost. Indian universities need to gear themselves up to meet the global standards.
- Students enrolling to MOOC
  Awareness of MOOC's needs to be spread appropriately using the social media sites, blogs along with traditional methods.
- Evaluation Mechanism
  MOOC's are student- focused. Apart from the peer study, student needs to be evaluated according to his knowledge obtained on the subject. A strong assessment mechanism needs to be built up to justify the course objectives.
- Finances
  With the increase in the cost due to technical cost plus cost of including industry experts along with expert professors. The universities will be definitely burdened with the extra costs. Universities can either charge the prospective employer meeting their exact requirements or a small amount of fees can be charged from the large number of students can solve the problem.

- Trainers
  IIM colleges plan to start providing the students study material required two months prior the commencement of the course. Students are expected to come prepared for the lectures. During the lectures, the focus will be on improving the decision making skills of the student and enhancing their practical knowledge. The concept of flip classrooms. "We expect to see more partnerships between MOOC providers and Indian universities wherein MOOC courses are integrated with existing Indian courses in a "flipped classroom" framework, for both on-campus as well as distance learning programmes," said Raj Chakrabarti, professor of systems engineering in Carnegie Mellon University. Trainers can enjoy the benefit of sharing information with vast number of students but it also poses a challenge to them for upgradation of their skills. It is a good option for a retired professor, who can share his experience with the upcoming generation .It enforces a constant pressure on the trainers to meet industry standards.
- Student perspective
  The student centric nature of MOOC gives the learner an upper hand. But self learning cannot be done without self-motivation and dedication of the students. Coursera witnesses a major fall in the number of students those who enroll and those who complete the course. The model proposed by author provides solution .If MOOC courses are approved by the university, the rate of students dropping out of the courses will be reduced.

5. CONCLUSION

MOOC can provide the Indian students an edge required to compete in the global market. Chakrabarti says that Indian students can leverage on MOOC to stay competitive. "Given the limited capacity of seats at top US and Indian universities, these features enhance the competitive edge of Indian students in the global job market and improves their chances of admission to top US and European colleges and graduate schools," he added.

This is not an end but just beginning of the discussion for the prospects of MOOC in India.

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