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MOOC (MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE): DOES IT ENHANCE HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT'S COMPETENCY – AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

***Annotation.** Competency represents the skill set of an individual in delivering an effective outcome. The required skill set with respect to specific roles and responsibility of an organization. In the competitive era of business world organizations are facing a very hectic competition to source the competent candidate in the job market. Organizations are rigorous and of course the learning patterns are also changing. An individual who could serve the real need of the organization is most expected and welcome. (Ganesh, A., & Mogappagowda , 2017) explore that 39% employers struggles to find talent minds to best suit with the work profile and 90% of jobs are skill-based. On this background this research attempts to measure the student perception of MOOC course in enhancing their competency through the technology platform. The modern education brings in lot of changes and digital landscape for the learners to enrich their knowledge. As the world is more and more data driven and data centric in nature, it is highly required to up skill ourselves to be competitive and sustain in the business industry Eco space.*

***Keywords:** MOOC Course, Competency, Technology, Higher education, Skills.*

INTRODUCTION

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are the essential platform in today's higher education learning landscape which lessen the barrier in terms of cost, time, resources and so many. (Hone & said, 2016) MOOCs open up the social and geographical boundaries and paves way for a world class learning around the globe. Millennial and Gen X are rapid learners, the way in which education industry transform towards a digital platform support MOOCs a lot, as well the pandemic may be one significant reason to spotlight the MOOCs to the diverse learners. In the digital era online education is at the top roof due to its flexibility. By the year 2025, the online learning will experience a 200% surge and also around 60% of the internet user are engaged in online platform (Class central, 2020). There is an extensive acceleration in the learning patterns of students in order to meet out the skill gap. Considering MOOC as one of the customised learning in education encourages students for a self – paced learning style. Industry 4.0, put pressure on the term called “Up skilling or reskilling”, MOOC will be a better source for the learners to up skill themselves in their core area of concern around the globe.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MOOC provides quality education. MOOC attract the academic researcher in recent times and as a source of individual learning (Siemens, & Hatala, 2015). One of the emerging trends in technology enhanced learning is the use of MOOC platform (Montoya & Aguilar, 2012). The literature shows that MOOC are rapidly changing over time and 75 per cent of the paper on MOOC describes that MOOC has advantageous for its open components (Laverde et al., 2015). The number of learners using MOOC, and the number of MOOCs and the courses offered are seems to be increasing (Gamage et al., 2015). Researchers observed that MOOC has higher gain that the students taking a course in offline (Colvin et al., 2014) and also observed that the rate of drop out is

also very high(Jordan., 2014), few researchers doubt that whether students are actively participating in it is a question for discussion(Daniel., 2012).

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) rose to importance of talent building and of increasing access to education for learners from all backgrounds (Moore & Tait, 2002). MOOC raise the literacy of learners those who are excluded from higher education (Lambert, 2020) and often mature age and working, those who don't have the opportunity to access it. Concerns are also raised with regard to the inequality among the MOOC courses and providers (Emanuel, 2013; Jordan 2014). The integrated learning technologies act as a source for educational institutions to meet the demand and enhance the learning process.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A structured survey questionnaire measures the responses from 107 participants among higher education PG students in particularly MBA. This research is exploratory in nature and follows voluntary sampling, as because the survey is done through Google form and students those who are interested volunteered to take up the survey. Nature of data collection is both primary and secondary. Using IBM SPS 20.0, the collected data are analysed and the results are discussed in the following sections.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SPSS 20.0 test the hypothesis for the study population. The results are discusses here under. The characteristics of the sample comprises of 60 per cent of male and 40 per cent of female, out of 107 respondents. More than 50 per cent of the respondents are interested in finance specialization and relevant to this the number of course completed are also related to finance, 28 per cent marketing and 14 per cent human resources, very less in health care and production specializations. The participants know about the MOOC courses through college are 90% and rest through online platforms and friends. Regarding their work experience 87% of the students have no experience, 7% less than a year, 4% less than 2 year and 2% more than 2 year of experience. It is observed that nearly 92% of the respondents are interested in preferring short term courses for the stated reasons such as “To get intense knowledge” and “To complete the course fast”.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha and Correlation of the study variables

S.No	Variable	Alpha	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	RTC_M	0.925	3.7096	.89147	_	.604**	-.047	.489**	.219*
2	PB_M	0.927	4.0311	.73074			-.281**	.611**	.491**
3	DTC_M	0.864	2.4725	.66125				-.152	-.313**
4	CG_M	0.98	3.9690	.80321					.394**
5	SL_M	0.967	3.8772	.78202					_
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).									

The descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha and correlation of the study variables are shown in the table above. The mean and standard deviation of the study variables lie an average range between 2.4 to 3.9, shows the average response of the participants in the survey follows a centred mean which is acceptable. The cronbach,s alpha value lies between 0.86 to 0.96, shows an acceptable range which is all above 0.60. The correlation among the study variables shows a fair correlation as expected, it proves that, students who find difficulty in taking up online MOOC courses, their competency gained is less which carries a value of -.152 (Negative significance).

Independent Sample t-test

Table 2: t test for mean comparison

	n	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance (two-tailed)
Competency Gained					
Gender					

Male	63	3.97	0.76	0.018	0.622
Female	44	3.96	0.86	0.017	
Course Preference					
Short Term	98	3.94	0.83	1.15	0.544
Long Term	9	4.27	0.79	1.28	
Potential Benefits					
Gender					
Male	63	4.01	0.68	0.251	0.892
Female	44	3.92	0.96	0.243	
Course Preference					
Short Term	98	4.01	0.74	1.83	0.469
Long Term	9	4.3	0.48	1.28	

The results of t-test for mean comparison are presented in the table 2. As shown in the table for all the above variable entered the significance value is greater than 0.05, hence accepting null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the two means, the male and female in comparison with the competency gained and potential benefits of the respondents, as well as regarding their course preference with the measured constructs.

CONCLUSION, FUTURE IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Education is for all. MOOCs is consider as a democratic form of education, where in no barriers for the learners except few in terms of cost, terms and resources etc., Students at higher educational institutions have the opportunity to learn course from elite universities.

When life meets digital, formal education is a living and self – education is a fortune, wherein MOOC acts as a source of self-education. Learners in MOOC platform who learn out of their self – interest wins, and who learn for the counts fail. Hence, existence of digital opportunity is a gift; making use of it depends on the learner’s perspective. Though MOOC act as a source of learning, the effective utilisation depends on the nature of the learner. From the literature review it is observed that there is no predetermined scale to measure the quality of MOOC course, and also the number of dropout from the course is more. Hence future research can focus on quantitative study in measuring the quality oriented learning from MOOC and also identifying the reason for discontinuation from MOOC platform. The study follows few limitations regarding the sampling size chosen. Respondent’s bias associated with the study is one more criteria and hence the results cannot be generalised to all the students of higher education.

Hence the researcher concludes that MOOC courses are the requirement of the day, as because it provides a platform for the learners to enhance their competency. Up skilling is the need of the hour, and to profile ourselves these online technology enhanced learning will support a lot. MOOC enhance the competency of students at higher education level and make them employable.

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