Massive Open Online Courses- e platform for Learners-benefit & challenges

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Abstract- The main aim of this research article is to explore the knowledge about MOOCs to learners. With the rapid advancements in technology, the higher institution has undergone significant transformations, adapting to the digital age and redefining its roles in supporting teaching, learning, and research. This paper examines the various ways of communicating, accessing, and delivering services on e-platforms. It explores the benefits and challenges of MOOCs and their impact on users, teachers, and the overall learning environment. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of MOOCs in educational institutions and offer practical recommendations for educational administrators.

Keywords- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Online Education, E-Learning, and Online Learning.

INTRODUCTION:
In the recent few years higher education focuses on quality inculcation and employability enhancement. Due to the emergence of the internet and information communication technologies, online literacy came possible and popular worldwide. Attendants and druggies are using online services and platforms for online learning for colorful purposes. The government initiatives like the national knowledge commission, Digital India, and so on, have encouraged people to move towards a digital way of communicating, accessing, and delivering services on e-platforms. In this way, the university grants commission along with the human resource development ministry launched the MOOC program in India for higher secondary, bachelor, and master's degrees. This will cover a wide range of subjects that may or may not be taught in regular campus studies.MOOCS are among the most prominent emerging trends as the innovative practice of teaching and learning globally.MOOCs arose under the precedents of open education, open educational resources (OER), OPEN EDUCATIONAL CONTENT, and open online course (e-Learning) A MOOC is an online course that can be accessed by anyone who has an internet connection. MOOCs depicts open access, global, free, video-based instructional content, audios, problem sets and forum realized through an online platform to a large of participants to be educated. MOOCs are flexible in time in place. Massive Open Online Courses are the new paradigm shift in the global scenario .with the help of MOOCs it has become easier to expand knowledge and information

What is Massive Open Online Course?
A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is an online course that is designed to be open and accessible to a large number of participants over the Internet. MOOCs are typically offered by universities, educational institutions, or online learning platforms. They provide a wide range of courses on various subjects, including but not limited to science, technology, engineering, mathematics, humanities, social sciences, business, and more. MOOCs are characterized by their scalability, as they can accommodate thousands or even hundreds of thousands of students simultaneously. They are typically free to enroll in, although some platforms may offer optional paid features or certifications. MOOCs usually consist of pre-recorded video lectures, interactive quizzes, assignments, and discussion forums where students can interact with each other and sometimes with instructors. One of the key advantages of MOOCs is their flexibility. Participants can access course materials and complete assignments at their own pace, fitting the learning process into their schedules. Additionally, MOOCs often attract learners from diverse backgrounds, allowing for valuable interactions and discussions among students from different parts of the world. MOOCs have democratized access to education by eliminating many barriers that traditionally limited learning opportunities. They have made high-quality educational resources available to anyone with an internet connection, regardless of their geographical location or financial circumstances. This accessibility has been particularly beneficial for individuals who are unable to attend physical classes due to various reasons, such as work commitments, family obligations, or limited access to educational institutions.

The benefits of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are as follows:
Flexibility and Accessibility of Learning Opportunities: MOOCs provide flexibility in terms of time and location, allowing professionals to engage in self-paced learning that fits their schedule. Professionals can access a wide range of courses from renowned institutions and experts worldwide, breaking the barriers of geographic limitations. This flexibility and accessibility enable professionals to acquire new skills and knowledge without having to leave their current work or location.
Life-long learning: MOOCs reinstate the concept of lifelong learning. Learning is not meant to ascertain a number of the year alone, an undergraduate degree need not be restricted to 3-4 years and a post–graduate degree to 1-2 years. No time bond here. learning can continue beyond all these limitations that traditional education has set over some time and MOOCs undoubtedly are a boon for this.

Global Networking and Collaboration Possibilities: MOOCs provide a platform for professionals to connect and collaborate with peers, experts, and professionals from around the world. Through discussion forums, virtual communities, and collaborative projects, professionals can engage in meaningful interactions, exchange ideas, and gain diverse perspectives. This global networking fosters a sense of community and enhances professional connections, enabling professionals to expand their professional networks beyond their local or institutional boundaries.

Self-Learning Environment: As learning becomes lifelong personalization becomes imperative.MOOCs provide classes on demand and the self–paced nature of most courses creates and comfortable personalized learning environment. Most MOOCs program are designed with teaching assistants who help in going deeper into the topic. Conversation and discussion forums create and added perspective to learning through MOOCs.

 Social Learning Environment:- MOOC courses create that fine blend of personal and social learning. As much as the learner can create a personalized learning environment by choosing his pace of study, MOOCs also create a conducive social environment. Learners from across the globe collaborate in discussion forums to learn from each other. This global perspective of understanding a concept is made possible through this course. This discussion forum also gives scope for cohorts of learners to join together and learn thereby creating a highly social learning environment.

Online Campus Learning:- Introducing more of while on campus, either in the online mode or blended mode to enrich the learning experience of students. This also inculcates a sense of lifelong learning in the learner.

Interdisciplinary approach:- Harnessing MOOCs for providing the much-needed interdisciplinary approach to the program offered. Course cutting across disciplines could be integrated into the traditional program matrix by incorporating MOOC courses.

Complementing traditional courses:- The blended models of MOOCs could be used to compliments traditional classroom teaching. Inputs from top-ranking institutions and top-rated professors should be a welcome inclusion into the traditional framework.

Challenges of MOOCs.

While Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offer significant advantages for learners, they also come with certain challenges and limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed. Understanding these challenges is crucial for both professionals and institutions seeking to effectively leverage MOOCs for skill enhancement. The following section highlights some of the key challenges associated with MOOCs:

Quality & credibility issue: Maintaining the quality of MOOC courses is another big challenge, for creating and delivering quality content efficiently and quality resources persons and teachers are required. In India many teachers and resource persons are not familiar with using technology for developing courses, another issue is technical staff for editing and formatting content and videos to produce quality courses on the MOOCs platform. Institutions and professionals must carefully evaluate and select reputable MOOC providers and courses to ensure the acquisition of reliable and relevant skills.

Technological Infrastructure and Access: MOOCs heavily rely on technology and internet connectivity for delivery. India is a developing country and in a rural area, there is very less availability of computers and internet connections. This creates difficulties for learners from rural learners to continue their participation in MOOCs especially in remote areas.

Motivation and Engagement: Completing MOOCs requires self-discipline and motivation as learners engage in self-paced learning without the structure and accountability of traditional classroom settings. Some learners may struggle with staying motivated and committed to completing the course due to competing priorities, lack of interaction with instructors and peers, and absence of immediate consequences for non-completion.

Recognition and Accreditation: MOOCs often lack formal recognition and accreditation from traditional educational institutions. While many MOOC platforms offer certificates upon completion, the recognition of these certificates may vary among employers and professional associations. The absence of standardized accreditation frameworks and the perception of MOOCs as less prestigious than traditional degree programs can limit the acceptance and value of MOOC-based learning in the job market and professional advancement.

Low awareness among learners:- Though MOOCs are not new in India, we can trace the journey of MOOCs since 2003 when NPTEL has taken the initiative to offer various online courses. But still, the awareness among learners is very low regarding MOOCs and their benefits.

Lack of resources in Institution:- To offer and implement MOOCS some resources are necessary, without resources and technology no one can access and implement the MOOCs. In India in many institutions there is a lack of resources institutions do not have computers, internet connections, and computer labs also. Due to this, they are unable to use MOOC courses and take benefits from MOOCs .so first of all institutions should fulfill their needs for technology and resources and upgrade their technological infrastructure, then they will be able to take the benefits from MOOCs.

Less Enrolment in the course:- In India some courses the enrolment of learners is very less because learners are not aware of the courses. So there is a need for digital marketing and advertisement to attract the learners and to reach the learners. Another thing is the learned outcomes of the courses should be clearly stated so that learners can have an idea that after completing the course what they are going to achieve.

Upgrading the technological infrastructure:- There is a need to upgrade the existing technological infrastructure in institutions and universities. In India the present condition of institutions/universities is not fulfilling the requirements of resources to carry MOOCs and if they have the resources like computers etc. Then the problem is the internet connection. speed of the internet is another concern. so first we have to fulfill all the requirements in terms of resources, internet connection, and speed of the internet, only then we can take advantage of MOOCs.

Increasing awareness about MOOCs.:- The awareness about MOOCs among learners and teachers is very low so we should organize some awareness programs all over India to make the people aware of MOOCs programs we can use social media and

digital marketing for the advertisement if people will be aware of MOOCs program, then they will get enrolled according to their needs and we can achieve the objectives of massiveness.

CONCLUSION:

In the present era, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) made a paradigm shift in online learning in every discipline . in which they can explore possibilities to use Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) technology in the most effective way to prove their profession among the academic community by assisting the professionals of other disciplines who are engaging in the development of Massive Open Online Course on different subjects.

In the present scenario, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are being used globally at a large scale. MOOCs in India are in primitive stages. UGC has released guidelines for blending MOOCs with face-to-face education systems. All over India, universities should be asked to organize workshops for developing MOOCs. Faculty may be familiar with MOOCs. but still, awareness of MOOCs is very less. Required ICT skills are to be developed among faculty members for this short terms training program can be organized, it will be better if someone's MOOCs course can be developed for sensitizing and training faculty members on the SWYAM platform first. it may serve a dual purpose .to make them aware of the initiative as well as can give them a real feel about practices and procedures of MOOC development, the implications and practice of MOOCs in education and training must be seriously addressed, and their need for well-equipped institutional infrastructure to implement and to use the MOOC at large scale.

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