

MOOCS – Technology Reaching People Beyond Economic And Social Barriers

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In this generation of Youtube and social media, **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)**, tailored to fit the bill are the trending phenomenon in higher education. It is by now clear that because of the continuously growing demands of technology by students; several universities have embraced technology for education. A lot of students today want to see an increased use of **learning management system (LMS)**, prefer more open educational resources and yearn for more online videos and game based learning. Bearing in mind the hunger for technology, educational providers are reacting to the demands of the students and beginning to adopt more and more tech support in the classroom.

According to predictions by Deloitte, 2014 Student registrations in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) will be up by more than 10 million courses, a **100% increase over 2012**. As maximum students in India do not get the opportunity to complete their tertiary education, it is expected that by **2014 0.2% of all completed tertiary education completed will be MOOCs**. By 2020, however, over 10% of all courses taken in tertiary and enterprise continuing education may be MOOCs. The growth and development of online education has now compelled the educational institutions to increase investments in this area, uphold online education as it becomes accredited and increase adoption by corporate training groups.

Educational giants will experiment with this form of content but MOOCs will not impact education in a very significant way in the near future. Enterprise training and continuing education looks likely to be the fastest adopter of MOOCs, with significant growth in 2014 and 2015.

Talking about the popularity of MOOCs in India, **India is the second biggest market for MOOCs in the world, after US.** It is however expected that India in the coming years will supersede US. Our country has the second largest population in the world after China and is the third in terms of university enrollment worldwide. Respectively, the US and China are first and second for university enrollment at the moment but this may soon change.

MOOCs have opened the gateways for a lot of Indians in terms of being part of an educational revolution. It gives a great opportunity to avail high quality learning with the help of internet connectivity. Two foremost reasons as to why MOOCs is a good idea in India is millions of Indians live in poverty and are unable to afford or gain access to a higher education and secondly there are more applicants than seats in the Indian Universities.

While the technology is being exploited for tertiary education widely at present, **the question now is how to take it to the next level and its potential scope in the K-12 sector?** The administrators and educators of K12 are now beginning to experiment with the Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs considering their rage in the world of higher education. With the aim of academic experimentation and democratisation, many colleges and universities are offering these courses free to anyone with the internet facility. The courses in it are attracting thousands of participants. The K12 operators are currently exploring the use of open content, learning analytics, competency based education and personalised instruction which indicate the role that MOOCs can and will play for learners. These trends are expected to grow and become more prominent as the cost of technology continues to go down and access to both the devices and connectivity continues to increase. MOOCs present schools with a great way to supplement and enhance their current curriculum.

MOOCs for K12 clearly have a lot of advantages. Schools could use the technology to bridge the teacher shortage, particularly in maths and science. A high school struggling to find a teacher competent to lead 20 students in advanced placement calculus can tap into the expertise of a top-flight university professor. In addition, schools with just a handful of students ready for calculus could plug them into a MOOC as well.

MOOCs are a growing phenomenon in India because for the longest of time, the country has been a source of information technology and has explored only a fraction of its potential IT specialists due to lack of access to higher education.

With digital technology, MOOCs could possibly help to bridge this gap between industry and students, not only at the tertiary level but also across the K12 sector.

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