

Reconsider the Role of MOOCs in Open and Distance Learning for Further Institutional Justification

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Abstract

MOOCs have been sensationalized as the vehicle to forever change and even save higher education. Today we can say that online distance learning in the era Post-MOOC world. The question appear is that wether we push or pull MOOCs. Outcome learning to be the most important of implementing MOOCs. But some institution likely ignore the impact of MOOCs for the benefit of students. Some research has found that high level of dropout is the big problem which give a clue for the ODL policy maker to reconsider MOOCs. Adjustments are needed in order to strengthen the function of MOOCs platform.

Keywords: MOOCs, ODL, Post MOOC

INTRODUCTION

The development of internet and communication technology has encouraged the emergence of concepts and characteristics of learning environment on the principle of "*connectivity and behaviorism*". A *Massive Open Online Course* (MOOCs) appeared as new paradigm of modern education with no time and place limitation as well as offering new opportunities for people to interact and access the learning experience. The open in MOOCs means: the course is open to anyone, the course is offered free charge, participations takes place in the open space of the internet, and share openly with other participant (Carver and Harrison, 2013). Others expert (Fernandez et al, 2015; Amo and Maria, 2013) calls MOOCs as democratization of higher education. MOOCs would lead to radical change shape future model of higher education and maintain university sustainability (Cooper, 2013).

The benefit of MOOCs is that it can create a community for students, lecturers and people. Learning in MOOCs tends to allow freedom in expressing idea, concept, notion, that it allows information sharing in the community created. Cheong (2014) states that "the boundary between conventional and open universities will be blurred, and they will meet in the area of flexible education". MOOCs are able to provide unlimited opportunities for people to participate and open access through website. Anyone in anywhere can follow MOOCs as long as they can access the internet. MOOCs bring more affordable and accessible education.

In the last few years, MOOCs have gained tremendous attention from many educational institutions. The number of higher education that offers MOOCs shows a rapid development. As in the United States, there was an increase in the number of institutions which offer MOOCs as courses within one year (2012-2013) that was up to 5 % from 2.6 % (Allen and Seaman, 2013). There are many other colleges that also offer MOOCs, and today there are around 155 courses offered by 33 universities, both private and state universities (Allen and Seaman, 2013). A study by Wong et al (2014) showed that there are two main motivation factors of why institutions offer MOOCs: self-marketing to be able to build brand image and educational for experimenting

pedagogical models by providing learning experience to participants. In Indonesia, Universitas Terbuka (UT) was one of many institutions that officially launched MOOCs in early 2014. The launch of MOOCs was an innovative step of UT in utilizing technology advancement in providing education for people in general, serving students in all areas all over Indonesia. MOOCs of UT also called as online open course is offered to all Indonesian people to gain a comprehensive experience in online-based learning.

Public response to MOOCs offered by various institutions is high enough, including in University of Stanford reached 160,000 participants (Osvaldo in Maria and Amo, 2013). UT which launched MOOCs on March 20, 2014 was managed to attract 3,027 participants. Participants positive response was due to a unique "e-learning experience" obtained whereas they do not necessarily have to register in acquiring learning experience in college and only need access through internet. Other uniqueness was the creation of community among the participants so communication can be more widely, not only by the lecturer (instructor) but also other participants. A research result of McLeod et al (2015) to the participants of MOOCs of University of Edinburg shows that there were three important reasons to follow MOOCs, namely learning new things, trying online education and getting certificate. James (2015) stated that MOOCs have been massive with some courses initially enrolling more 10.000 students. The high responds of people towards MOOCs is a positive indication, yet what becomes the challenge in the future is how to maintain the sustainability.

Since has been introduced 2008, today we can say that online distance learning in the era Post-MOOCs world. It appear that the number of MOOCs is still increasing but the market will be gradually saturated. Some institutions started questioning learning effectiveness that the student may gain. Effectiveness of MOOCs is often doubted for the completion rate. The high level of dropout is a challenge to ensure that MOOCs have sustainable in the future. Several study results (Bartolome and Steffens, 2015) found the high level of drop out in Spain, there was only 4% of MOOCs participants who completed their courses. This situation also occurred to the MOOCs participants of UT, where there was a decrease of the number of participants in 2014 in semester 1 to semester 2 up to 86% (412 partipants). Jordan (2014) reported that less than 7% MOOCs participants completed and students who actually planned to complete course (58%) only 22% earned certificate. Wilson and Gruzd (2014) acknowledged that MOOCs have high withdraw/dropout rates, the highest completion rates achieved was 19,2% and the majority of MOOCs completion rate of less than 10%.

The high level of dropout of MOOCs indicate that educational process only up to a level of exposure to content (broadband internet) can not reach the stage of learning content and verifying that the content has been learned (James, 2015). Furthermore, the success of MOOCs depend largely on learners motivation and diciplines. Student factors for withdrawal in MOOCs such as lack of time, lack of learner motivation, feeling of isolation-lack of interactivity, insufficient background and skills and hidden cost. Motivation is identified as an important contributor to student engangement in a MOOCs such as : 1) the desire to achieve an academic credential at a reduced cost, personal enrichment and self satisfaction. Another side, in terms of institution determents of MOOCs are technology requirement, lack of instructor's support whom can't provide sufficient support to their MOOCs students and personal cost like length of time in preparing learning material, supporting technical officers and administrative staf and issue of plagiarism. MOOCs can cost universities to invest million in developing single course. Mostly MOOCs are free charge, how to get return on investment?.

MAJOR ISSUES OF POST MOOCS-WORLD

Uncertainty in enhancing learning effectiveness likely due to quality assurance of MOOCs not optimally applied (Wong et al, 2012). According to Kocdar and Hakan (2013) the quality assurance is still big problems like :1) the backing of an academic institution in offering MOOCs, 2) the course development process, 3) instruction/teaching and learning, 4) Learnersupport (readiness module, video materials), 4) assessment. Although the quality of MOOCs remains a challenge for the institution, but most institutions see provision of MOOCs have strategic value such as (Wong et al, 2012):

- 1) selfmarketing to enhance brand image as pioneer in the global development of online learning, the institution can market itself as an international one with great foresight.
- 2) To strengthen the institution relationships with potential partners and stakeholder which can creating inter-institutional collaboration
- 3) As strategic investment – financial
- 4) Educational, MOOCs provide better learning experience to their students and improve students learning performance
- 5) Research, to explore new pedagogical models and applying learning analytics.

To determine whether to be involved or not is a really based on institution consideration. some institution threat of not offering MOOCs in term of being excluded from market and widening gap between leading universities and other institution. The most important consideration is that how MOOCs has to be effective tool for achieving educational outcome

FUTURE DIRECTION ADJUSTMENT OF MOOCS

Based on the above analysis the following some recommendation that can be used to increase the effectiveness of MOOCs in the future:

1. The need of quality assurance of MOOCs. A sound quality framework should be integrated into course offering
2. MOOCs should address development of skills needed by the industry and requirement of lifelong learners
3. Possible revenue streams should be identified to sustain MOOCs offering. Cost associated with MOOC offering like: technical team, teacher/markers fees for assesesmet, certification should be considered
4. The development of MOOC begins to focus on market segmentation for serving more focused groups of users.
5. Creating user friendly platform and collaborate with other institution.

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