

AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOC) AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main purpose of the paper is to explore the relationship between awareness and utilization of Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) among college students. Sample of the study comprises of 300 college students (150 males and 150 females) were randomly selected. Normative survey method was employed for data collection. The investigator developed and used an awareness and usefulness of MOOC Programme questionnaire in order to find out the college students' awareness and usefulness about the MOOC Programme. Three research questions were framed to guide this study. Results revealed that there is significant relationship between Awareness and Usefulness of MOOC among college students. Also, it is found that there is no significant difference between male and female college students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC. Findings revealed that Private college students feel that MOOC programmes are more useful than Government and Government Aided college students. In awareness of MOOC, there is no significant difference found among the college students with respect to type of management.

Keywords: MOOC, Awareness, Usefulness, Government, Government Aided, Private



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1. Introduction

A MOOC is a **Massive Open Online Course** facilitated wholly online and designed to support an unlimited number of enrolments. The meaning of MOOC is as follows.

Massive - because they attract a large number of participants often in the thousands

Open - because it takes place in an area that is open for anyone to read, reflect and comment upon; it is free and the content and work done in the course is shared between all people taking the course.

Online - because the course takes place online.

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Course - because it has facilitators and course materials, a start and an end date, and participants. It's an event around a topic that people care about.

The term MOOCs was originally coined by Dave Cormier of the University of Prince Edward Island in 2008 for a large online class taught by George Siemens of Athabasca University and Stephen Downes of Canada's National Research Council Canada.

2. Need for the Study

Latest development in the learning sciences and technologies provide opportunities to create well-designed, learner-centered, engaging, interactive, affordable, efficient, easily accessible, flexible, and meaningful, distributed and facilitated online-learning environment. Every teacher at present prepares themselves to work in such an environment. A teacher is no longer viewed as the transmitter of knowledge or dimensions of wisdom, but as a diagnostician, guide, assistant, whenever appropriate exchanger, stimulator, promoter and an interactive participant in the education process. Teachers have to develop competence in teaching in the digital world order and redefine their role in technology based learning.

“Online learning is the process of education i.e., learning, teaching obtaining knowledge and skill through internet”. The internet is method of communication, interaction, entertainment, health, trade and commerce, students can visit websites not only to download desired information but also to ask questions till out examination forms solving questions papers and learning information from the teacher through online education, student can learn, acquire knowledge, information and skill of particular work or job without attending any class but sitting in the house or wherever internet is available.

The present study attempts to examine the awareness and usefulness of MOOC Programmes among the college students in Chennai.

3. Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study is stated as “**Awareness and Utilization of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) among College Students.**”

4. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study.

1. Is there any significant relationship between awareness and usefulness of MOOC among college students?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female college students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC?

3. Are there any significant difference among the students studying in Government, Government Aided and Private colleges in awareness and usefulness of MOOC?

5. Methodology

Normative survey method is used for the study. The subjects for the study were 300 students drawn from Government and Government Aided Colleges in Chennai District. Random sampling method was used for data collection.

6. Instrumentation

The investigator developed an awareness and usefulness of MOOC Programme questionnaire in order to find out the college students’ awareness and usefulness about the MOOC programme. Awareness scale consists of 42 items and the Usefulness Scale consists of 49 items. Totally, there were 91 statements in the questionnaire and was developed on a Likert Scale of five response category ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The score ranges from 1 to 5 (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree).

The reliability of the MOOC awareness and usefulness scale is calculated using Cronbach’s Alpha method and the coefficient of reliability is 0.939 and 0.717 respectively which shows that the scale is highly reliable.

7. Data Analysis

Data collected from the subjects were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis to draw up inferences from it. ‘t’ test, ANOVA and Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient were used for data analyses.

8. Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between awareness and usefulness of MOOC among college students?

Table 1 showing the relationship between awareness and usefulness of MOOC among college students

Variable	Awareness of MOOC	Usefulness of MOOC
Awareness of MOOC	1	0.636**
Usefulness of MOOC	-	1

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

The calculated 'r' value in the above table shows that there is significant and positive relationship between students' awareness and usefulness of MOOC among college students.

Research Question 2: Is there any significant difference between male and female college students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC?

Table 2 showing the mean difference between male and female college students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC

Variables	Gender	Gender				t value	Level of Significance
		Male (N=150)		Female (N=150)			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Awareness of MOOC		142.57	22.68	144.76	24.36	0.804	NS
Usefulness of MOOC		169.12	20.99	172.74	20.93	1.496	NS

Note: NS- Not Significant

It is inferred from the above table value that there is no significant difference between male and female college students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC. Hence, it is evident that the level of awareness and usefulness of MOOC among male and female college students are similar.

Research Question 3: Are there any significant difference among the students studying in Government, Government Aided and Private Colleges in awareness and usefulness of MOOC?

Table 3 showing the mean difference among Government, Government Aided and Private College students in awareness and usefulness of MOOC

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
Usefulness of MOOC	Between Groups	4651.731	2	2325.866	5.453	S**
	Within Groups	126682.935	297	426.542		
	Total	131334.667	299			
	Between Groups	2222.605	2	1111.302	2.022	NS

Awareness of MOOC	Within Groups	163258.062	297	549.690
	Total	165480.667	299	

Note: ** Denotes significant at 0.01 level

NS – Not Significant

It is inferred from the calculated 'F' value that there is significant difference among the students studying in Government, Government Aided and Private Colleges in usefulness of MOOC at 0.01 level. But there is no significant difference among the college students in awareness of MOOC with respect to type of management.

Variable	Type of Management	Mean Difference	Level of Significance	
Usefulness of MOOC	Government	Government Aided	10.34 S*	
	Government Aided	Government	Private	14.28 S*
		Government Aided	Private	3.94 NS
	Private	Government	Government Aided	-10.34 S*
		Government	Government Aided	-14.28 S*
		Government Aided	Government Aided	-3.94 NS

*Significant at 0.05 level.

From the above table value, it is observed that there exists significant difference between Government and Government Aided as well as Government and Private college students in usefulness of MOOC at 0.05 level. But there is no significant difference between Government Aided and Private college students in usefulness of MOOC programmes.

From the mean difference, it is evident that Private college students tend to feel that MOOC programmes are more useful when compared to Government and Government Aided college students for their career development. This may be due to the fact that private colleges provide more computer labs and internet facilities so that the students develop their technological arena in education.

9. Educational Implications

The study has indicated about appropriate steps to be taken for learners' motivation and learners' high participation in learning situations. There must be well co-ordinated efforts between course ware design and development, delivery system, instructional activities, learner

support services and evaluation strategies. The MOOC initiatives by UGC at national level must be interlinked with every stage of higher education with a view to provision of alternative and multiple opportunities for open learning to the students. Special emphasis be given on students orientation and teachers orientation at higher education institutions about implementation of MOOC programmes as an integral component of higher education.

MOOCs integrate social networking, accessible online resources, and are facilitated by leading practitioners in the field of study. Most people enrolled in MOOCs are not college students seeking a degree, but rather students looking for personal enrichment and lifelong learning opportunities. The importance of MOOCs is that they provide the experience of open-ended online courses which have enabled participants from different countries to join international universities and benefit from the unique programs and courses.

10. Conclusion

As MOOC programmes offered by the Central Government is adding a credit to all the faculties working in government and private universities for their career advancement, it is advisable to join any course and benefit for the development of an individual but also for the upliftment of the Nation.

Now, our Nation is marching towards development, it is imperative that as a younger generation, we have to create awareness and usefulness of MOOC programmes which will be beneficiary for the career. Since the people those who are living in rural areas are not aware of these courses and it is our duty to reach the unreached and impart the knowledge of MOOC courses for the society.

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