Perception of Teacher Educators about MOOCs Programmes

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Abstracts: Information and communications technology in education plays a very important role in the present time. The steps taken for achieving the dream of digital India by governmental and non governmental institutions in India, are appreciable and worth evaluating. The availability of quality content in structured form is ensured by various online courses commonly called as MOOCs. The initiative taken by the government of India with regard to online courses are reflected on SWAYAM portal. his paper focuses on the various teacher education programmes by the Ministry of Education, government of India related to MOOCs. The paper provides a sneak peek into the motive of creating and running MOOCs through SWAYAM platform. This paper also focuses on perception of teacher educators about MOOCs programmes like E-contents, E-tutorial, Discussion forum and Assessment

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Conceptual background:

Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC) broadly aims at providing open learning opportunities to diversified groups of learners at different stages of education. It aims at catering to educational needs of students already studying inside the framework of formal education, as well as, pursuing education for lifelong learning. Of late, different institutionalized efforts have been made to promote MOOC facilities at higher education stage in India. The Indian initiative for MOOC at higher education provides opportunities to the students to get enrolled in different kinds of higher education courses. MOOCs are an extensive online course which provides free and open access to everyone. It is a latest approach that the use of power of internet for available courses to unlimited participants. MOOCs are quite different from traditional online courses (Gyles, 2013). Chakravarty and Kaur (2016) says that it has rightly abbriviated as MOOC as M can represent for Massive in number as there is no limit to student intake. Similarly, O represents Online i.e. completely through internet and where due to self pacing attendance is not required. Another O represents Open for all placed anywhere with minimum or no mandatory qualifications, free of coat or at minimum possible cost and finally C may be reffered as courses i.e. based on well formulated syllabus, structured, time frame, affordable. Further, MOOCs courses contain pre-recorded video lectures, discussion forums to review course materials and computer graded tests. Huge number of students can obtain usually free learning opportunities and high quality education through MOOCs form the world's best

universities. These universities recommend their courses through major providers of MOOCs viz. Coursera, edX, Udacity and Udemy.

MOOC Platforms in India

Indian government started an Indian MOOC platform it is called 'SW AYAM'. It is started on 9th July 2017 through web based and mobile based platform. Its programs are based on three principals of Education Policy viz., Access, Equity and Quality. In this more than fifteen hundred MOOCs Courses were scheduled on SWAYAM. Out of this eight hundred courses have already been delivered. About 3.4 million participants enrolled in these courses.Presently, SWAYAM provide the courses for school, undergraduate, and post graduate. The responsibility of offering courses is given to six institutes such as NCERT and NIOS for school education, IGNOU and CEC for under-graduate education, UGC for post-graduation education, NPTEL for engineering, and IIMB for management studies. SWAYAM is enhancing the best use of the resources, and Ministry of Education (Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through SWAYAM) Revised regulation, 1st, June, 2017.

Four Quadrant Approach:

Government of India launched "SWAYAM" Platform with its apex body of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with four quadrant approache. These are:

Quadrant-1: E-Contents like video demonstrations PDF/e-books/illustration, simulations, documents and interactive wherever required. Web Resources containing related links, case studies, and open content on internet.

Quadrant 2: e-Tutorials have Audio and Video Contents in a planned form, Simulations Animation, Virtual Labs.

Quadrant 3: Discussion forum for raising of doubts and clarifying them on a near real time basis by the Course Coordinator or his team.

Quadrant 4:Assessment which shall contain MCQ, Problems Quizzes, Assignments and Solutions, Discussion forum topics and setting up the FAQ, Clarifications on general misconceptions.

MOOCs for Teacher Education

On 5th September, 2018 the MHRD launched Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT), now, about 1.5 million higher education staffs are using the MOOCs platform SWAYAM for professional development through online. The courses are meant for all the teachers and faculties in order to enhance their career prospects. Initially it was allotted on choice basis to the 75 Specific University and centres already functioning under the PMMMNMTT schemes and selected UGC-HRDCs.

Its latest focus are to prepare online training material, new and emerging trends, pedagogical and methodologies improvements for transacting revised curriculum. The ARPIT covered wide range of discipline in Teacher Education, Humanities, Language Teaching, and Indian Research & Heritage Studies etc. Through ARPIT all the faculties can register and complete these refresher courses in their subject which will assist them in career development. They can have online interactions through discussion forums, share ideas develop skills and implement in classrooms.

The course is a 40-hour module with 20 hours of video content and 20 hours of non-video content. All the teachers who have successfully completed the online

refresher course will be certified which will not only add to their learning but also enhance their motivation and involvement in teaching learning process.

Need for the study in India, MOOCs are relatively new emerging trends of online learning. There are few initiatives taken by the government of India offer to online courses for teachers, like "SWAYAM" portal offers various courses related to teacher education. It is a general perception that for getting benefitted from MOOCs, teachers should be well prepared and need to be competent enough to handle the courses. As SWAYAM has become reality and all higher education institutions will accept, acknowledge and use it in big way. UGC has notified guidelines on the inclusion of online learning with face to face learning, so it becomes important to explore the perception of the teacher Educators of such online courses.

On reviewing the literature, it is found that most of the studies have been done so far on awareness of the students and teachers towards the MOOCs but none on the perception of the enrolled teachers on MOOCs in the Indian context. The present study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the perception of teacher Educators enrolled in MOOCs. This study sought to explore positive experiences as well as the various advantages and challenges faced by teacher Educators. Topic is perception of teacher educators about MOOCs programmes. The Objectives of the study constituted 'to study the perception of the teacher educators about Massive Online Open Course (MOOCs) programmes' and 'to study the advantages and challenges of using MOOCs as perceived by the teacher educators'.

Research Design:

The method of present study is descriptive in nature. It was conducted on teacher Educators enrolled in the ARPIT (Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching in higher education) and other Courses on SWAYAM Portal. The sample consisted of 60 teacher educators. Teacher educators were selected through purposive sampling technique, the researcher developed a Questionnaire and administered through Google forms were emailed to the enrolled teacher Educators in MOOCs who were extending their services in various government- owned university and colleges. The data were analyzed qualitatively. The study was delimited to the teacher educators enrolled in "ARPIT" and other Courses on SWAYAM Portal in 'Teacher Education'.

Findings of the result:

The focus of the present study is perception of teacher educators about MOOCs programmes who were enrolled in ARPIT and other courses in Teacher Education. Their perception regarding each quadrants were viz a viz e-content, language of e-content, e-tutorial, discussion forum and assessment and evaluation were taken.

E-Course content:

The result shows, the perception with course content from four aspects: Innovative and creative, Rich and plentiful, relevant to the courses and up-to-date. The respondents were asked to choose as many options as they find suitable about the course content. 61.7% respondents think that the course content is up-to-date, 58.30% think that the course content is rich and plentiful, 55% of the respondents think that the content is relevant to the course and 41.70% think that the course content is innovative and creative. All teacher educators considered that e-course content provided to

them is relevant, Up to date but less Innovative and creative to the courses. So we can say MOOCs programmes are relevant according to student's needs

Language of e-content

The result revel about the language of the e-content provided to the learners of the MOOCs out of which 40% respondents responded that the language of the e-content is understandable, 33.30% of the respondents responded that the language of the e-content provided to them are easy. 15% responded that the language of the e-content provided to them are very easy, 8.30% responded that the language of the e-content is difficult and the rest 3.30% responded that the language is very difficult.so most of the teacher educators said that language of the e-content is understandable and easy.

E-Tutorial

F-Study shows perceptions of the teacher educators about the e-tutorials from four aspects: Instructor use different approaches to promote learning, One-to-one interaction, Instructor perform pre-rehearsed lectures and learner centred. Participants had to answer in Yes/No for all the four aspects. 51.17% of them responded that in e-tutorials, instructor performs pre-rehearsed lectures rest said 'No' to it. (70%) responded that e-tutorials are learner-centred; (66.67%) responded that instructor uses different approaches to promote learning in e-tutorials and 58.30% responded that there is one-on-one interaction in e-tutorials. Majority of teacher educators responded that e-tutorials learner-centred and uses different approaches to promote learning but few lectures performs pre-rehearsed lectures.Most of the respondent said that one to one interaction is very

less.

Language of e-tutorial

The language of e-tutorial in MOOCs programmes is understandable the result shows40% of the teacher educators responded that the language of the was 'e-tutorial Easy', while 36.70% responded that it was 'Understandable' for them, 8.30% responded that it was 'Very Easy' and other 8.30% responded that it was 'Very Difficult' for them and the rest 6.70% re-tutorial responded that it was 'Difficult' for them. Majority of teacher educator's responded language of are easy and understandable so any teacher can understand and attend others MOOCs programs for the professional development.

Perception about Discussion Forum

The questionnaire investigates the perception with discussion forums from four aspects: Helpful, provide platform to ask questions, Provide heated discussions and well organized. The respondents were asked to choose as many options as they perceived about the discussion forum. 61.7% responded that the discussion forum is helpful, 48.30% responded that the discussion forum provided heated discussions, 43.30% of the respondents think that the discussion forum provide platform to ask questions and 41.70% responded that discussion forum is well organized. Most of the teacher educators responded that the discussion forum is helpful and provides them a platform to ask a question.

Perception about Assessment and Evaluation

Shows result the perception of teacher educators about Assessment and Evaluation of the MOOCs form four aspects: Uses multiple methods to assess student's performance, Assessment and Evaluation tools are

effective, Quality of peer assessment is high, and Quality of final evaluation is high. The respondents said about the Assessment and Evaluation, 80% responded that the Assessment and Evaluation tools in MOOCs are effective, 70% responded that the Quality of Final Evaluation is high, 60% of the respondents responded that the Assessment and Evaluation uses multiple methods to assess student's performance and 53.34% responded that the quality of peer assessment in MOOCs are high. Most of the teacher educators responded that the Assessment and Evaluation tools in MOOCs are very effective.

Advantages of MOOCs:

Most of the participants (76%) considered 'Self-paced' as one of the advantages of MOOCs whereas (81%) of them responded 'Technical Knowledge' as the advantage of MOOCs. 78% responded that MOOCs helps in 'Reviewing content' (75%) teacher educators said that Updated content are also available, sometime new information not published on time in the books or limited fact provided only superficial. (70%) teacher educator responded MOOCs is free of cost, so anybody can study anywhere, anytime, teacher educator can enhance knowledge and professional development through MOOCs programs. All most of the teacher educators (93%) responded that the advantage of MOOCs is that there is 'no age barrier' Therefore ,students and working person can enrolled in any course for the professional development and (88%) participant considered 'Brings people together from all over the world' no barrier of distance. (90%) all most considered 'Easy entry to the course' as one of the advantages of MOOCs. All over the world students can enrolled without visa only few document have to also

provided because very easy entry in any course. Whereas (81%) teacher educators responded flexible of MOOCs programs it's the advantage of MOOCs, because no age barrier, no need for leave and supports all students and affordability of higher education. (80%) result shows that construction and expanding knowledge through MOOCs programs.

Challenges of MOOCs:

Teacher educator (70%) considered that 'Time Issues' as one of the challenges of MOOCs programmes because lots of assignment submitted on time but institution not provide free time for the completing online course ,so Course Assignments is difficult to finish. As most of teacher educators are working, therefore so reasons indicate that time management and allocating free time stand as the biggest reason for the dropout. Considering high dropout and low retention rates. Whereas (63.34%) of them responded that 'Language Barrier' as the big challenge of MOOCs, because all the E-content provided only English language so weak students not understand in English and E-tutorial also so it can be the biggest reason for the dropout. Few responded (36.67%) that one of the challenges of MOOCs is 'Difficult Course Content due to language and digital literacy but most of the participants responded that course content are very easy in respect of language and digital literacy. Teacher educators (68%) responded that 'withdrawn from the course' after being enrolled due to the free enrolment in programs, fee only given for examination so that students not serious about MOOCs course as the biggest challenges of MOOCs. The result shows (30%) responded that 'No face-to-face interaction' as the challenge of MOOCs but (70%) participants interacted

with each other not only institution level but also world level students through different media like- chat and Orel discussion.

Major Findings of the Study

Majority of Teacher educators perceive about course content from three aspects: Rich, relevant to the courses and up-to-date information. However, few of them teacher educators perceive the course content is less innovative and creative.

One third teacher educators responded about the language of the e-content provided to the learners of the MOOCs understandable, very easy to them, and rest of them responded that the language is very difficult.

Study revel that the instructor uses different approaches to promote learning in e-tutorials like Learner-Centred, instructor performs pre-reheard lectures and also Teacher educators perceive that there is less one-to-one interaction in e-tutorial.

Result shows the language of e-tutorials in MOOCs. Most of the teacher educator responded that language of e-tutorials are Easy, Understandable

Majority of teacher educators perceived about Discussion forum on MOOCs is helpful, provide platform to ask questions, however, the discussion forums provide low heated discussions. Thus, in order to build a healthy and effective learning community.

The result show that the use of discussion forums from four aspects: discussion forum is helpful and provides them a platform to ask a question related to the Academic debate and course content, advice about assignments, Social support.

Result shows the perception of teacher educators about Assessment and Evaluation. Responded that the

Assessment and Evaluation tools in MOOCs are effective and the Quality of Final Evaluation is high, and the assessment and evaluation uses multiple methods to assess student's performance.

Most popular advantages of MOOCs perceived by teacher educators these are 'free of cost' 'Easy entry to the course' 'Technical Knowledge, up-to-date information ,majority of them joins in MOOCs for learning due to the No age barrier and free of cost.

Most popular challenges are of MOOCs Perceived by teacher educators Time Issues, Language Barrier, difficult to finish Assignment, Digital Literacy, less innovative and creative, No face-to-face interaction, contacting the Instructor. Withdrawn from the course are big challenges of MOOCs.

Conclusion:

(MOOC) is a new and innovative learning approach in India. MOOCs have involved large numbers of people all over the world. The present study reveals that the perception of teacher educators about four dimensions i.e.e-content, e-tutorial, and discussion forum and assessment and evaluation system. Study revealed that e-contents are up-to-date and rich, MOOCs course content is sufficient and also qualities of e-content is good for the participant but the course content is less innovative and creative for the participant. Language of e-content is easy and understandable which provided to learners of MOOCs. The instructors uses different approaches in e-tutorial to promote learning which are Learner-centred but some time instructors performs pre-reheard lectures. However, there is less one-on-one interaction in e-tutorial MOOCs. But language of e-tutorial are Easy and Understandable in MOOCs. So, that videos lectures is helpful to all

participant those who are studying from other language instead of English. Discussion forum on MOOCs is helpful, and provide platform to ask questions in order to build a healthy and effective learning, most of the discussions related taking advice of assignments, academic debate of course content and asking questions. Only few discussion related social support on the Discussion forums. Assessment and Evaluation tools of MOOCs are very effective and it uses multiple methods to assess student's performance for final evaluation but the quality of peer assessment is low. Most popular advantages of MOOCs are free of cost, easy entry to the course, technical knowledge, flexible, no age barrier, and some less important advantages are construction and expanding knowledge, brings people together, self-paced, updated content and reviewing content by the teacher educators.

Challenges of MOOCs majority of the teacher educators perceive Time Issues, Language Barrier, withdrawn from the course, difficult to finish Assignment, Digital Literacy and No face-to-face interaction contacting .As most of teacher educators are working, that reasons indicate the biggest reason for the dropout. Considering high dropout and low retention rates, the conclusion of this study teacher educator's perception about MOOCs programmes is positive but some challenges face by participants during attending programs which are discussed above.

Educational Implications:

The result show e-contents are up-to-date and rich. So university should encourage the all students and teachers for continuing study and professional development through MOOCs because e- lectures are Easy, e-contents are understandable and up-to-date.

Another implication of this study is the potential of MOOCs for teacher educators as a instrument to assist them get the, competences, knowledge, and skills needed to involve productively within diverse field like economic, political, social and cultural realms of society. It will allow them to recognize the issues and challenges associated with the MOOCs and to increase its educational values

This study shows result lot of advantages of MOOCs in education so policy makers and government also raise awareness about potential of online learning through MOOCS. It has effective new innovative leaning pathways towards field of education and expanding life time opportunities for learning. Through taking courses on a MOOC platform, students and also working adults. All Learners can strengthen their knowledge and pursue interest in their specialization.

The result revel advantage of MOOCs in India like free of cost' no age barrier, construction and expanding knowledge in all areas. Those people do not have any time and energy to carry on their studies. MOOCs also give better opportunities for more learning they can promote their experiences of lifetime learning and increase their career opportunities.

This study shows that difficult to finish Assignment, Digital Literacy, No face-to-face interaction, contacting the Instructor and also withdrawn from the course is big problems so improve the course completion rates of participants, through motivation and retention of participants. More option should be given to complete the course on MOOCs platform.

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