

MOOCs

Short Concept: -

MOOC stands for **Massive Open Online Course**. It is a free or low-cost online course that allows a large number of learners worldwide to study through the internet using video lectures, reading materials, quizzes, and assignments.

The first MOOC was introduced in 2008 by “George Siemens” and “Stephen Downs” through their course Connectives and Connective Knowledge. The term MOOC was coined by Dave Cormier. In 2011, Stanford professors Sebastian “Thrun” and “Peter Norvig” offered an online Artificial Intelligence course that attracted over 160,000 students. This created a major interest in MOOCs. In 2012, platforms such as Coursera and edX were launched, making MOOCs a global form of online education.

Thus, MOOCs provide flexible, accessible, and affordable learning opportunities to people around the world.

The concept of MOOCs is based on four main elements:-

Massive: MOOCs can accommodate a very large number of learners from different parts of the world.

Open: They provide easy access to learning, generally without strict admission requirements or geographical restrictions.

Online: All teaching-learning activities are conducted through the internet using digital platforms.

Course: They follow a structured course design with learning objectives, study materials, activities, assessments and a defined duration.

Objectives of MOOCs:-

1. **Democratization of Education:** To make quality education accessible to learners irrespective of their location, social background or financial condition.
2. **Promote Lifelong Learning:** To encourage individuals to continue learning and developing new knowledge and skills throughout their lives.
3. **Provide Flexible Learning:** To allow learners to study according to their own time, pace and convenience.
4. **Reduce the Cost of Education:** To provide affordable alternatives to traditional courses and reduce the financial barriers to higher education.

5. **Develop Professional Skills:** To help learners acquire new skills and knowledge required for employment, career growth and professional development.
6. **Global Learning Opportunities:** To connect learners with teachers, experts and other learners from different parts of the world.
7. **Improve Access to Quality Education:** To provide learning resources and expert instruction from reputed universities and institutions to a wider population.

Features of MOOCs:-

1. **Online Learning:** Courses are delivered completely through online platforms, allowing learners to study from any location with internet access.
2. **Large-Scale Participation:** A large number of learners can enrol in the same course simultaneously.
3. **Video Lectures:** Courses generally include recorded or live video lectures delivered by teachers and subject experts.
4. **Interactive Learning:** Discussion forums, online activities and peer interaction provide opportunities for communication and collaborative learning.
5. **Digital Study Materials:** Learners receive e-books, reading materials, presentations, notes and other digital resources.
6. **Online Assessment:** Quizzes, multiple-choice questions, assignments and peer assessments are used to evaluate learners' progress.
7. **Immediate Feedback:** Automated assessments can provide quick feedback, helping learners identify and correct their mistakes.
8. **Flexible Learning:** Learners can often access course materials according to their own time and learning pace.
9. **Certification:** Many MOOCs provide certificates after successful completion of the course, sometimes through a paid or verified option.
10. **Global Accessibility:** MOOCs enable learners from different countries and backgrounds to access educational opportunities beyond geographical boundaries.
11. **Popular Platforms:** MOOCs are offered through platforms such as Coursera, edX and India's SWAYAM.