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Investigating Massive Open Online Courses through the Eyes of Moroccan Master Students:

the case of Sultan Moulay Slimane University

Mohamed Handour

Sultan Moulay Slimane University, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Beni Mellal.
Email: handourmohamed73@gmail.com

Abstract

The advent of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has generated discussions around their potential to disseminate knowledge and make lifelong learning accessible for all. This academic study provides a critical overview of the emergence and development of MOOCs and their role in transforming the formal educational landscape. In the age of advanced technology, open learning continues to gain popular currency among scholars, researchers, and practitioners who are confident of its capacity to bridge geographical, socioeconomic and institutional divides. The paper also enquires into the transformative potential of open-access learning and how it has impacted 'traditional'

educational paradigms. To initiate a dialogue between theory and practice and foster reliability, a survey is conducted to gauge a group of Master's students' familiarity and experience with MOOCs and juxtapose their reactions with the growing popularity of online learning in recently produced literature. Set in a mixed-methods framework, the research is both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the surveyed data. One key finding highlights the universal dimension of MOOCs, which makes knowledge within reach of a diverse spectrum of learners beyond the confines of physical, cultural and socio-economic spaces. One more research outcome elaborates on the idea that while MOOCs promote open learning opportunities that are free of access charges and other barriers, catering for the principles of Open Educational Resources (OER), they have to grapple with several challenges as they strive to fulfil their goals. The most prominent of these interfering hurdles consist of low completion rates, and assessment integrity and credibility. More importantly, the participants' responses reveal that MOOCs can supplement, but never supplant the conventionally-oriented education.

Keywords: Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Accessibility; Connectivity, Lifelong learning.

1. Introduction

In the last few years, there has been a seismic shift in the traditional paradigms of education, driven by the cutting-edge advancement of

technology enhanced learning (TEL). The latter promotes a proffered philanthropic contribution to an unprecedented dissemination of knowledge. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are becoming a focus of interest among educators and practitioners who are concerned with a variety of issues related to open learning opportunities such as the democratization of knowledge, autonomous and lifelong learning, and the possible tension between traditional and new educational paradigms. MOOCs were launched in the year 2008 and since then their number has been on the increase. By 2012, they had already reached their apotheosis, with MOOCs becoming the educational buzzword of the year. Their growing popularity has sparked off a debate about their potential to enhance the quality of learning and respond to the needs of learners outside the confines of formal educational settings and geographical locations.

This study is conducted based on a group of Master's students' responses to a questionnaire on Massive Open Online Courses and their hands-on experiences with them. It is partly grounded in the premise that MOOCs, as a disruptive innovation in higher education, have the potential to transform, but not replace, traditional courses. The hypothesis put forward actually hinges on the increasing popularity of open learning among researchers, educators and even policymakers. Three questions are raised to test this hypothesis: (1) What are MOOCs? And what are some of their salient tenets? (2) While MOOCs claim to promote the democratization of knowledge by providing open learning opportunities in a highly networked

environment, do they face any challenges that preclude the achievement of this objective? (3) Can they supplant or even supersede the traditionally oriented classroom? These queries are addressed through a quantitative and qualitative interpretation of the surveyed data. The descriptive and thematic analyses are set against the backdrop of some existing theoretical paradigms. While quantitative data analysis is aimed at assessing the students' familiarity with MOOCs, the qualitative approach is adopted to navigate their engagement with eLearning, the differing challenges that interfere with MOOCs, and the relationship between distance and in-person learning.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

In the first two volumes of his trilogy, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture,* Manuel Castells examines the emergence of the network society due to the advent of information and communication technologies, namely the rise of the Internet. The emerging networked forms of organization have increasingly grown in intensity and velocity since the publication of his multi-volume book series between 1996 and 2003. In the second volume titled *The Power of Identity*, he provides a meticulous account of the transformative potential of digital technologies, exploring their pervasive influence on various aspects of contemporary society such as politics, economy, identity and social relations. In a recently delivered video lecture,

Castells lends more credence to the concept of the network society that has so long informed his academic research; he cogently points out that he has never been a futurologist predicting what will happen in the future, but he could detect the embryos of the imminent transformation at the turn of the last century. He argues that "what characterizes our societies is the general digitization of information and communication", reiterating that "99.5 percent of information is digitized and accessible over networks" (Castells, 2023, 00:06:30). It would be fair then to pay tribute to this researcher whose groundbreaking work has paved the way for similar academic endeavours in the contemporary digital landscape.

2.2 The rise of open networked learning environments

The echoes of Castells' study continue to resonate in several academic papers and books, providing a framework for the shifting paradigms in education now that every domain of what used to be human activity is being perpetually altered. One of the transformative effects of the digitization process manifests itself in the advent of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that offer new learning opportunities, making knowledge accessible to all. The rise of technology-enhanced learning makes it possible for university students worldwide to manage their learning autonomously and outside the formal walls of established educational institutions. In this regard, many researchers, educators and practitioners are becoming aware of the importance of theorizing the intersection between higher education and digital

technologies in an era characterized by the unprecedented speed of connections, the volume of the amount of data that learners can receive and transmit and the extraordinary latency that they can enjoy as it becomes possible for them to deal with any learning experience in real-time.

One of the leading academics who strives to set online learning in a theoretical framework is George Siemens, whose study is an attempt to link the emerging concepts in the contemporary learning environment to existing teaching methodologies. The need to address the challenges of our educational and learning practices in a technologically globalized world of networked forms of organization necessitates revisiting "traditional" theoretical paradigms and devising a new conceptual grid that is capable of capturing the essence of this turbulent digital transformation. Such theories as behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism that have so long inspired teachers and educators, providing a foundation for their instructional activities are being contested in a digital epoch where remote learning is no longer a farfetched possibility. According to Siemens (2005), technology has impacted our existence at all levels, interfering with the way we live, communicate and learn.

In close connection with MOOCs, informal e-learning has gathered momentum in a technologically oriented environment where "know-how and know-what is being supplemented with Know-where (The understanding of where to find the knowledge needed)" (Siemens, 2005, p.2). In the same vein, Downes (2008) highlights the importance

of dealing with online courses beyond the scope of traditional learning theories, underlining the potential of connectivism to help learners leverage a self-directed cyclical sort of learning. More important, Downes notes that many online courses promote a proffered philanthropic contribution to knowledge dissemination since a large number of students can sign up for free. Though this statement lends legitimacy to the democratization of knowledge thanks to the advent of the networked communities of practice, Castells (2023) would call into question this claim since, for him, not everything the Internet offers is gratis because we pay with our data for any spuriously free service.

Being designated as a novel learning theory whose emergence coincides with the unprecedented advancement of the network society, connectivism has recently assumed the status of a buzzword among researchers and educators concerned with theoretically framing open educational and learning practices. Intrinsic to connectivism is the idea of self-directed learning in an open online landscape where information is not merely learned, but collaboratively created, tested and shared with others. As a result, the relationship between the learner and teacher has altered significantly. The instructor who used to be viewed as the dispenser of knowledge can play the role of a facilitator *par excellence* in a digital technology-saturated environment. The intensity, speed and latency of online learning have entrenched the role of teachers as helpers, especially in higher educational institutions. The proliferation of formal and informal

Open Online Resources (OERs) has decentered the onus of the university teacher as the only purveyor of information, which can be presently accessed at the click of the button (Batson, Paharia, and Kumar Vijay 2008). Following the same line of thought, Ponti (2014) navigates self-directed learning in a digitized educational landscape, reflecting on a host of premises; the most important of which underlines the imperative of rethinking the metaphor of the classroom model at a time when the cutting-edge rise of OERs is destabilizing the experts' authority.

Though part of this study corroborates some evidence – drawing on the academic findings of leading scholars of Castells' caliber – to show that technology-mediated learning can shake, but is unlikely to supersede, the physical classroom, the impact of new technologies on teaching- learning environment is well-founded. In this regard, Steve Kolowich (2013) argues that information and communication technologies have the potential to transform the educational space, marveling at how possible and practical it is to teach thousands of students at once. Though the process of interacting with this staggering number of learners in real time is laborious, it is also enjoyable. The largest survey ever to be conducted in this regard targets 184 professors who have taught a MOOC and 103 of them responded to the questionnaire; "nearly half of the professors felt their online courses were as rigorous academically as the versions they taught in the classroom" (Kolowich, 2013, p. 1). This statement attests to the growing popularity of Massive Open Online Courses in a digital

era where the future directions of higher education ought to be taken seriously.

Dealing with MOOCs efficiently is nevertheless challenging, especially in the absence of an adequate teaching methodology with a well-defined set of objectives and procedures. One of the intractable problems lies in how it would be possible to manage a whole gamut of learning activities and outcomes in a space where thousands of students seek knowledge through virtual interaction with machines. Sadigh, Seshia and Gupta (2012) jointly conducted a workshop in this regard. They note that one of the challenges that a MOOC practitioner should consider seriously resides in the effective management of homework assignments and exams. These activities that are not difficult to handle in the ordinary classroom create serious issues as regards grading, preventing cheating, and providing "customized feedback and new practice problems to students" (p.1). While Massively Open Online Courses are positioned to cater for the needs of a vast global student population and promote autonomous and lifelong learning, their effective implementation involves significant challenges that facilitators must address comprehensively.

Like any other emerging trend, MOOCs have attracted the attention of academics and educators who strive to establish a theoretical foundation for these courses to come to grips with the intricacies of their implementation. Theorizing them is therefore regarded as a prerequisite for managing this unprecedented free and flexible access to information within a comprehensive pedagogical and

methodological framework that is conducive to successful learning outcomes. Tracing the historical evolution of MOOCs, which emerged in 2008, Baturay (2014) explores their various facets as the initial step towards considering the pedagogical approach to address the challenges associated with their implementation. Although commonly characterized as 'open', 'participatory' and 'distributed', each course continually evolves, necessitating a rigorous approach to provide some anchorage to an otherwise fluid learning environment.

Several academic endeavors focused on MOOCs cogently point out that this innovative model requires new learning approaches. As lifelong learners can now make use of diverse strategies to create and manage their learning networks, MOOCs can provide pedagogical guidance and impart systematic rigor to their activities. Fini (2009) sheds light on Connectivism and Connective Knowledge (CCK08), an open online course facilitated by George Siemens and Stephen Downes in the fall of 2008. The course's tendency to make knowledge accessible to all is manifested in offering free open learning to thousands of people worldwide that cannot learn formally through the University of Manitoba. While the informal dimension of this distance learning project is auspicious as it allows for more flexibility and autonomy, it is not devoid of shortcomings according to Fini (2009). Because these informal learners are not eligible for a degree, a reward that formally enrolled students receive upon course completion, many of them drop out, especially when other extrinsic factors such as a lack of ICT proficiency come into play.

In a highly-interconnected world, 'learning-to-learn competencies' acquire significance under the aegis of new information technologies (Cigognini et al., 2009), whose transformative effects on the contemporary educational landscape necessitate skillful online interaction for the sake of achieving optimal learning outcomes (Martin, 2006). This implies that digital and information literacy, along with purposeful social networking, are becoming integral components of the broader learning-teaching process (Pettenati et al., 2009). In response to a constantly changing sociotechnical learning context, those motivated by leveraging open educational resources are expected not only to be ICT literate, but also to be acquainted with the intricacies and nuances of emerging theories that frame their interconnected learning experiences. Connectivism is a relatively new learning theory that has recently gained prominence in this regard. However, many educational theorists and practitioners argue that connectivism alone is not sufficiently capable of capturing the essence of learning in a dynamic networked information context.

For its proponents, connectivism can offer a suitable theoretical framework for a MOOC, but its critics argue that it lacks rigor. "Since the scope of the change exceeds personal and interpersonal learning activities to include larger scale organizational and societal change, additional theories are needed to explain change, to plan interventions, and to develop policy" (Bell, 2011, pp. 100-101). Implicit in this statement is the idea that one single theory cannot adequately account for continually evolving learning communities of practice that

transcend the limited scope of the 'traditional' classroom. Similarly, Tschofen and Mackness (2012) argue that connectivism can respond to the needs of a digitized education that educators, practitioners, managers and policymakers begin to take seriously. However, one of the main challenges that connectivity-related elements face, according to the authors, lies in the variety of individual perspectives both revealed and concealed during interactions with these elements. Their study draws on "personality and self-determination theories to gain insight into the dimensions of individual experience in connective environments and to further explore the meaning of autonomy, connectedness, diversity, and openness" (p.124). As a learning theory, connectivism acquires salience only when it is investigated in close connection with individual learning experiences. While they recognize the importance of networked learning, the authors emphasize that the agency of the learner as a unique entity within interconnected communities is of paramount importance.

In a post-web 2.0 era, educational research is also concerned with the impending impact of new technologies on the learning environment. Kirkwood (2010) points out that education is undergoing significant changes that go beyond the boundaries of formal educational institutions. These networked forms of connectivity and openness involve a flexible and diverse approach to learning outside the province of conventional teaching methods. It has been recently suggested that network connections have the potential to decenter the centrality of conventional learning channels. In reference to these

connections, Kirkwood (2010) argues that "they became a part of each participant's Personal Learning Environment (PLE) – the people, tools and platforms we use for professional development (p.96). This openness undermines the linear nature of conventional formal education and promotes learning as a self-directed and distributed activity. In this context, Yousef et al. (2014), extols MOOCs for allowing learners worldwide not only to have free access to both formal and informal education, but also for promoting a cascade of learning materials that benefit a global audience.

The combination of resources can provide invaluable open learning opportunities, but the challenges that may prevent learners from making the most of them matter in a digital landscape. Networked learning has the potential to respond to the needs of learners beyond the confines of age, origin and even socio-economic conditions, but various other factors may interfere with the achievement of optimal learning outcomes. Since e-learning involves interacting with humans, resources or both, the approaches adopted to deal with it should consider this heterogeneity. To the triad of learner, educator and content that are central to the conventional classroom is added the element of context which is becoming intricately influential in networked forms of knowledge production, consumption and dissemination. Without an explicit delimitation of connectivism and appropriate incorporation of theories as diverse as andragogy and experiential learning, it would be challenging to capture the essence of a turbulent technology-enabled learning environment. Kop (2011)

argues that the process of acquiring and constructing knowledge has always been integral to learning, but in its contemporary networked form it becomes possible to engage with it in terms of "aggregation", "relation", "creation" and "sharing[1]."

To come to grips with the intricacies of MOOCs and navigate their nuances, academics in different parts of the globe have engaged with them since the emergence of the concept in 2008. In this regard, Liyanagunawardena et al. (2013) trace the development of MOOCs over four years providing a systematic review of the literature devoted to them, especially because they reached their apotheosis in 2012, when they became the educational buzzword of the year. Since its emergence at the University of Manitoba in Canada in 2008, a typical MOOC has substantially evolved to reach its present form where a larger scale information digitization makes its theorizing challenging. Liyanagunawardena and colleagues' study is of pivotal significance in this regard as it serves to delineate different open online courses, starting with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as one of the early institutions that introduced enhanced-learning technology. Now that MOOCs have got a foothold in higher education, it is

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[1] These terms are used by the writer in attempt to conceptualize open educational resources and the learning opportunities they offer outside the boundaries of formal educational settings. 'Aggregation' designates a variety of online resources that are accessible for learners in the form of texts to read, videos to watch, etc.; 'relation' implies the possibility of connecting what is read, watched or listened to with what they already know or experience; 'creation' entails leveraging what learners have processed and reflected on in order to create their own knowledge; 'sharing', which is the advanced stage of this nodal chain, implies knowledge cascading.

incumbent upon us as researchers and educators to mull over the way in which they influence the conventional educational system.

It is therefore becoming critical to seriously consider how to adapt the way we teach to the exigencies of Massive Open Online Courses. According to Martin (2012), the rise of the Internet is conducive to the proliferation of distance learning opportunities that take on various forms, decentering 'traditionally-oriented' education and encouraging alternative resources which foreground autonomous, self-directed and distributed learning. The writer argues that the growing popularity of learning management systems (LMSs) "such as the proprietary Blackboard or open-source Moodle software" (p.26) heralds the advent of a networked learning context that necessitates new approaches and paradigms. More than twenty years ago, Moore (2002) argues that UNESCO is aware of the transformative effects of ICTs on distance education even in fledgling and developing economies. Since then, the digitization of information has grown so fast that no single human activity remains unaffected by this seismic change. In connection with education, however, the promises and disruptions of new technologies should be equally considered.

Fournier et al. (2011) note that "as educational practice and the settings in which learning takes place have changed with the proliferation of the Internet and its available tools, careful thought about these tools and considerations of the processes and means with which data is being collected and analyzed is once again required" (p.1). Implicitly, the Internet has much to offer, but ICT proficiency is

required in order to effectively deal with open educational resources. Kop et al. (2011) underpin this perspective, trying to investigate how important creativity is for learning in networked communities of practice and how this creativity can be enhanced in a vast educational setting.

In connection with MOOCs, Open Educational Resources (OERs) have become the focus of scholarly inquiry as efforts are made to provide a theoretical foundation for an open and dynamic learning environment. Since these resources are freely accessible, making Learning Objects[2] (LO) within the learners' reach, educators are required to adopt a rigorous approach to effectively cope with the demands of e-learning. Lane and Mc Andrew (2010) argue that the transformative effects of the Open University on the relationship between educators, learners and content should be navigated in order to explore its intricacies in an ever-changing educational context. In tandem with the increasing ubiquity and pervasiveness of OERs, MOOCs earn considerable academic recognition among many scholars, researchers and practitioners who insist on dealing with them in a well-defined pedagogical context. Founding her study on the skepticism aroused by MOOCs because of the quality of learning they offer, Bali (2014) strives to set these courses in a suitable theoretical

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[2] "Learning Objects (LO)" refer to modular, reusable digital resources or content components designed to support specific learning objectives. These resources are typically digital and can include various types of content, such as text, images, videos, simulations, interactive exercises, and assessments.

framework. To accomplish this end, she conducts a pedagogical assessment of MOOCs "using Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education and Bloom's taxonomy, based on the author's personal experience as a learner in four x MOOCs" (p.44).

2. 3 Conclusion

This cursory literature review showcases that the digital revolution has brought about a dramatic change in the contemporary learning environment. The emergence of MOOCs as a concept in academia is an attempt on the part of scholars and researchers to describe a landscape in which the openness of e-learning begins to encroach on the formal educational setting where the role of the teacher, as a dispenser of knowledge, is still revered. The embryos of this transformation were detected by Manuel Castells towards the start of this Millenium in his multi-volume book series. A few years after its emergence, 'MOOCs' became one of the educational buzzwords, at a time when Open Educational Resources (OERs) offer new opportunities and serve as a precursor of future trends in higher education. However, this auspicious accessibility and openness to learning is still imbued with intractable problems and challenges in a post-Covid era where the digitization of education is looming on the horizon.

3. Method

To bridge the gap between theory and practice and pit MOOCs against the backdrop of a specific learning environment, a survey is conducted to gauge the degree to which Massive Open Line Courses promote a philanthropic contribution to the democratization of knowledge at a micro level. The questionnaire targets four groups of Master's students enrolled at the Department of English at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities in Beni Mellal, Morocco. Most of the questions are intended to elicit their reactions and attitudes to MOOCs. One of the main goals set for the survey is to see the extent to which the importance accorded to technology-enhanced education in the reviewed literature is manifested in a post-graduate context that is expected to be founded on autonomous and self-directed learning.

Though the majority of the questions are open-ended, a few closed-ended queries are included not only to add variety to the survey, but also to assess the students' familiarity with MOOCs across age and gender. The study opts for a mixed-method approach, deriving insights from some existing critical perspectives on MOOCs and therefore moving from theory to practice and back again. Thus, quantitative data are not entirely excluded from the questionnaire, which is the only instrument of this research. The target population comprises Master's students who, as neophyte researchers, are expected to rely more on online courses to enhance their academic performance and write term papers on different topics. Their exposure to informal online learning is assumed to be more organized and regular than that of undergraduate students. The questionnaire was

emailed to the students who were allowed enough time to reflect on the questions and respond to them in order to maximize objectivity. Out of 83 participants only 26 filled out the questionnaire and sent it back. The data obtained is subjected to a rigorous analysis, starting with how much familiar the learners are with MOOCs, which have garnered widespread appeal since the moment George Siemens and Stephen Downes strived to create a theoretical location for them in 2008.

4. Data analysis

4.1 Introduction

Since this study is motivated by providing a comprehensive understanding of MOOCs and their contribution to the dissemination of knowledge at a little or no cost, the data gathered by dint of a distributed questionnaire will be exposed to critical analysis by making recourse to descriptive statistics in relation to a few close-ended questions. This section is intended to navigate the learners' familiarity with MOOCs at a time when researchers, policymakers and educators are becoming aware that the shifting paradigms and future trends in higher education should be taken seriously. Another purpose is to explore whether the level of attention bestowed on these online courses by academics and decisionmakers is commensurate with the reactions of four classes of Master's students who are presumed to embrace autonomous and lifelong learning. The thematic analysis draws on the students' reactions to a set of open-ended questions as

regards their experiences with a given MOOC and its benefits in the context of higher education. More importantly, those who are familiar with it are asked to highlight some of its transformative effects on their overall growth and personal learning management (PLM). Most significant of all, the survey aims to assess whether these technology-enabled educational resources have the potential to undermine or even supersede "traditionally-oriented" education.

4.2 Quantitative result analysis

Based on the descriptive analysis of the data, it is evident that the majority of the targeted population is only relatively familiar with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), with only 16% indicating a very high level of familiarity. These percentages, particularly within the micro-higher educational context of this survey, raise questions about the widespread popularity of MOOCs as one among several trends that may challenge the 'traditional classroom'. The integration of MOOCs in a digital learning environment has gained popular currency since their emergence in 2008. Since then, scholars, researchers and educators worldwide have contributed extensively to providing a theoretical foundation for these emerging networked forms of learning. However, amidst all the enthusiasm surrounding the integration of MOOCs in higher education, only three elements of those surveyed could name a MOOC.

Not long after the advent of MOOCs, many Artificial Intelligence experts are confident that the educational landscape will undergo a

serious transformation in the future. Coursera, which was launched earlier at Stanford University, is an early instance of the unflinching fervor with which the professors and stakeholders respond to the prospect of extending the scope of education beyond the confines of the conventionally-oriented school. Andrew Ng and his fellow Stanford Professor Daphne Koller (a MacArthur award–winning Artificial Intelligence research scientist) "together launched Coursera in April 2012 and immediately began forming partnerships with colleges and universities around the world that allowed them to leverage Coursera technology to give "rock star professors" the chance to educate thousands" (Haber, 2014, p.3). Be that as it might, only very few of those surveyed are familiar with a MOOC.

This incongruence between the widespread recognition of MOOCs among researchers and their limited impact on the academic life of many surveyed individuals highlights that not all learners are ready to venture outside the 'traditional' educational classroom. Existing literature has consistently underscored the potential of MOOCs to revolutionize education, contending that their theoretical merits should naturally translate into widespread acceptance among students. Paradoxically, while policymakers and stakeholders advocate for adopting a new approach to tertiary education and pondering future trends to meet workplace requirements in a digital world, the recognized degrees and diplomas are mostly those awarded by public educational institutions. Even in the USA where the higher cost of college education makes open learning a tempting alternative,

employers have a tendency to accept credentials from only a recognized Institution of Higher Education (Public Agenda, 2013). Scholars laud MOOCs for their accessibility, flexibility, and democratization of knowledge, anticipating that these attributes would appeal to learners worldwide. However, this study demonstrates that, for even the few students who are very familiar with MOOCs such as Coursera, the formal classroom will always preserve its place in this unprecedented networked educational landscape.

The students' responses to the second question of the survey are aimed to gauge their familiarity with a MOOC. Descriptive analysis of the data suggests that, despite the theoretical prominence of open online courses, access to them is limited, with the majority of respondents only being relatively familiar with MOOCs. This finding is echoed by Hollands and Tirthali (2015) who set xMOOCs[3] in juxtaposition with cMOOCs[4] , arguing that the latter "aim to emulate some aspects of the apprenticeship model in the digital world, with students learning by doing and traversing the network of learners and

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[3] xMOOCs typically follow a more traditional, instructor-centred model. They are often structured with a predetermined curriculum, lectures, assignments, and assessments. Content is usually delivered through video lectures, quizzes, and other interactive elements.

[4] cMOOCs are more decentralized and focus on a connectivist approach. They are characterized by a more learner-driven, networked, and collaborative model. cMOOCs emphasize the creation and sharing of knowledge through social networks and collaborative learning..

resources, but many tasks cannot be adequately executed or simulated online" (p.136). Based on this perspective, it can be inferred that even in Massachusetts Institution of Technology (MIT), which is one of the leading exponents of Technology-Enhanced Learning, xMOOCs face challenges in addressing practical pedagogical issues. Our mini-scale study targeting four groups of Master's students similarly indicates limited openness to online educational resources. Learning through social networking grounded in the aggregation, relation, creation and sharing of knowledge appears unpopular among Moroccan postgraduate learners who still prefer conventionally-oriented education.

The mismatch between theoretical appeal and the survey results underscores the importance of recognizing the intricacies involved in the practical implementation of educational innovations. While the theoretical discourse often operates on a global scale, the practical manifestation of these theories is contingent upon various contextual factors, as evident in the divergent perceptions of MOOCs among Moroccan Master's students. Their limited acquaintance with internetworked learning will be further navigated, drawing on their responses to the closed-ended questions.

4. 3 Qualitative analysis

The qualitative dimension of this study is an overall analysis of a diverse cohort of Moroccan students' attitudes to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and their reflections on their hands-on open

learning experiences. While quantitative analysis has elucidated some statistical facts related to the reception of MOOCs in a micro-postgraduate learning landscape, the qualitative interpretation is an attempt to capture the gamut of sentiments and reactions that underlie the unstructured narratives of the participants. These open-ended questions provide a canvas for participants to express their thoughts freely, offering a deeper understanding of the intricacies surrounding MOOC familiarity. By employing thematic analysis, this section endeavors to unravel emergent themes, providing a holistic portrayal of the participants' perceptions and shedding light on aspects that quantitative metrics alone may overlook. The integration of qualitative findings with the existing literature will further enrich our comprehension of the complex relationship between MOOCs and the academic landscape as perceived by this specific group of participants.

A-Navigating the students' engagement with MOOCs

In this section, qualitative responses from open-ended questions are organized to impart depth and substance to the previously analyzed quantitative data. The participants' varied degrees of familiarity with specific open online courses indicate that some of them can name a MOOC and provide some of its aspects or objectives, though their e-learning remains limited, temporary or irregular.

Participants expressing 'Not Very Familiar' responses often demonstrate an awareness of prominent platforms like Coursera. Despite limited exposure, they highlight the empowering and

motivating aspects of these platforms, revealing an appreciation for the potential of online education. Those indicating 'Somewhat Familiar' levels of exposure display a broader range of recognized platforms, such as Khan Academy, Udemy, Codecademy, MasterClass, Skillshare, and FutureLearn. Their feedback underlines the platforms' diverse offerings, ranging from arts and humanities to science. Finally, respondents displaying 'Very Familiarity' showcase a deeper engagement, recognizing platforms like Coursera and Canvas Network. They appreciate features like accessibility, video lessons, and the varied content offered by these platforms. Notably, these participants often underscore the impact of these open learning opportunities on their personal and professional lives.

In summary, participants across familiarity levels appreciate the accessibility, diverse content, and motivational aspects of online learning platforms. From those less familiar to those highly engaged, a common denominator emerges — the acknowledgment of these platforms' potential to transform and enrich the learning experience. The qualitative data adds weight to the quantitative findings and provides a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perceptions of open online courses. Though only 16% of the responses exhibit high levels of familiarity, all the perspectives prepare the ground for a thorough qualitative analysis that will ultimately investigate some of the nuances and intricacies of the participants' interactions with MOOCs.

B- Respondents' hands-on experiences with MOOCs

This section is a synthesis of the participants' experiences with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The organization of data ranges from a high to a low level of familiarity. The diversity that characterizes the interaction of a small cohort of sophisticated learners with one open course or another contests the often-univocal theoretical perspective that tends to look at MOOC users worldwide as a homogeneous entity. Open educational resources that are contingent on new communication technologies do not seamlessly receive the same amount of interest from a few classes of Moroccan Master's learners. Networked interpersonal communication disrupts face-to-face interactions since we "may be physically present in one space, yet mentally and emotionally engaged elsewhere" (Baym,2010, p.3). This technological encroachment with the familiar is still unpalatable to many surveyed learners.

Several participants indicate a moderate level of familiarity with MOOCs. Notably, some admit that they have never benefited from MOOC courses, while others highlight the flexibility and course selection options as substantial advantages. One participant mentions glancing at MOOCs without direct involvement, underscoring the varied ways individuals engage with online learning. The experiences shared highlight the enriching and educational aspects of MOOCs, emphasizing self-paced learning, interaction with peers, and the availability of diverse materials. While some have never taken a MOOC, others benefit from free access during their undergraduate studies. One participant has shared a positive experience with Open

Culture online courses, citing encounters with native lecturers and significant learning gains in the English language and related fields. Lastly, the only three participants who are very familiar with MOOCs account for their experiences across various courses, such as TEFL, TEYL, English for Journalism, and Teaching Grammar Communicatively. These respondents underline the fruitful nature of their experiences, emphasizing the efficiency of the materials provided and the applicability of techniques in their teaching roles. The structured format of courses and the clear timelines for completion were noted as positive aspects.

It is important to note that out of 26 participants, only one is excluded because of the inconsistencies and contradictions in his responses. Following a scrutiny of his answers to the first questions, an incongruity is detected within the context of familiarity with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Initially, the participant asserts a complete lack of familiarity with MOOCs when confronted with a closed-ended query. Paradoxically, when asked to expound upon personal experiences with MOOCs in a subsequent open-ended inquiry, the same participant admits to actively taking part in a MOOC and leveraging his engagement with it. This incongruence, characterized by a stark contrast between professed unfamiliarity and concurrent involvement, introduces a level of inconsistency and ambiguity into the obtained data. Consequently, this participant is deemed unreliable for analytical purposes, and his responses are consequently excluded from the ensuing examination. This instance of

rigorously treated data aims to maximize the objectivity of the research endeavor by mitigating the impact of conflicting participant accounts.

In sum, the participants' experiences with MOOCs underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of online learning engagement. The findings are occasionally commensurate with the broader literature on MOOCs, showcasing both the potential benefits and challenges individuals encounter in this potentially alternative learning landscape. As a case in point, one respondent acknowledges that he has enormously benefited from an open online course, but has failed to complete it and get a completion certificate. This individual experience evokes the overriding concern in literature for the growing number of dropouts, which represents a serious threat to MOOCs. In this regard, Li (2019) argues that "one of the distinct challenges lies in the high rate of dropout compared with the high rate of enrollment, which requires the reflection from the curriculum designers and researchers to find out the reasons behind it" (p.52). Despite the increasing popularity of technology-enabled courses in official and academic discourse, low completion rates and lack of formal accreditation– which can be imputed to a wide range of complex factors – continue to interfere with this prevailing fervor.

C- Challenges and limitations of learning through MOOCs

Regardless of their familiarity with MOOCs, participants highlight several common challenges and limitations associated with learning

through Massive Open Online Courses. These hurdles are broadly categorized into areas such as interaction, internet access, information abundance, and issues related to assessment and accreditation. These limitations are actually addressed in many academic studies, some of them going so far as to coin terms such as "MOOC panic" or "MOOC mania", or even "tsunami" to describe the repercussions of MOOCs for the conventional educational landscape. "Early rhetoric about the educational value of MOOCs was quite lofty, talking about the goal of reaching the quality of individual tutoring, but it is difficult to reconcile such rhetoric with massiveness as an essential feature of MOOCs" (Vardi, 2012, p.5). Across levels of familiarity, the respondents navigate some implications of this statement, underlining the imperative of addressing several challenges in order to give impetus to efficient and rewarding accessibility.

One of the salient limitations of MOOCs and which is commonly mentioned by the participants is the absence of direct interaction with instructors and peers. Learners express the importance of personal touch and real-time discussions offered by traditional classrooms. The same shortcoming is highlighted by Butin (2012), who, though a staunch MOOCs enthusiast, is concomitantly one of their sceptics. "So long as such courses continue to be teaching-focused rather than learning-centered", he argues, "the only transformation will be that students online will fall asleep from boredom much faster than those sitting in the cramped lecture-hall seats." The potential of MOOCs to

provide a more interactive learning model than 'traditional classrooms' is critically examined.

Though the virtual world is now familiar to many across cultures and geographies, the surveyed data raises the important issue of Internet connectivity as a potential challenge, limiting the accessibility of MOOCs for some individuals. This problem, which is more pronounced in the 'Somewhat Familiar/Not Very Familiar' category, impacts online learning, particularly in areas in which accessibility is hampered by poor Internet connectivity. This hindrance is exacerbated when the individual cannot afford the Internet for socio-economic reasons or as a result of a disability. Therefore, MOOCs' auspicious goal to offer freely accessible education for all is somehow a farfetched aspiration. Several factors – though not necessarily intrinsic to these e-learning modes – can interfere with this prospect. The view that "MOOCs make education borderless, gender-blind, race-blind, class-blind and bank account-blind" (Agarwal,2013, p. 13) still needs further praxis for distance education to reach excluded categories. In the same vein, Sanchez-Gordon and Luján-Mora (2016), with whom some respondents tacitly concur, argue that computer-driven learning could also adapt its contents to cater for learners with special needs.

A substantial body of academic research praises MOOCs for their massive scale, emphasizing their potential to reach thousands of students globally and foster networked forms of learning beyond formal educational settings. Alam (2023) conducted a systematic literature review, examining 50 academic articles spanning the years

2005 to 2022. The review underscores "the potential of Connectivism to transform traditional models of teaching and learning, offering insights into the design of innovative educational practices that leverage the power of networks and connections to support learning in the digital age" (p.1). Despite these advantages, the extensive interconnectedness of MOOCs is not without drawbacks. The abundance of information they provide, while seemingly beneficial, poses challenges. Respondents in the study noted that the sheer magnitude of courses across various platforms can be overwhelming for learners. Navigating through numerous options and selecting the right course is considered a significant challenge.

Two other challenges should be taken seriously according to the surveyed participants. They opine that issues of self-discipline and motivation do not receive the same amount of attention they garner in the so-called traditional educational context. Motivation which is enhanced by the learners' in-person interaction with the instructor, may be affected by the absence of the latter. For the sake of an optimal learning experience, self-monitoring is also required to leverage a MOOC. Garrison (1997), points out that self-monitoring entails that learners assume responsibility for personal knowledge construction. If this accountability is a requisite condition in a physical classroom, it is more so in a MOOC platform where the absence of fixed schedules, according to several respondents, is acknowledged as a challenge. However, we should not let some antithetical perspectives go unnoticed. In a recently conducted study,

Zhu, et al. (2022) maintain that most MOOCs have discussion boards where the reception and cascading of information is possible. They argue that "most participants viewed the discussion boards as key in facilitating their [Self-Directed Learning] SDL", adding that "another feature that was also recurrent among the participants was the instructors' involvement in the courses" (p.162). Taking all this into account, it is not certain that MOOCs are not motivating for many learners who can willingly enroll at a given course beyond the restrictions of a formal educational system.

The respondents also highlight several other challenges that a MOOC designer should overcome to foster efficiency and accessibility. Credential recognition matters in open online courses. This limitation is underscored by a participant who is very familiar with and even enthralled by MOOCs; he notes that "not all MOOCs offer accreditation, so the effort you put in might not always translate into a formal qualification." The value and recognition of MOOC certificates in comparison to traditional degrees is a common concern for a number of participants. Besides, technical problems should be addressed to boost quality and accessibility. One more participant is articulate about this issue, pointing out that "access to MOOCs relies on having a reliable internet connection and access to appropriate technology devices, which can be a limitation for individuals in underserved or remote areas." In the same vein, assessment modes and the efficiency of accreditation processes are noted as a limitation,

which makes some respondents express reservations about the effectiveness of assessment in the MOOC format.

 In spite of all these challenges, the growing popularity of MOOCs in a technology-enhanced learning space betokens the advent of new trends and future directions in higher education. The digital divide, which was considered a threat to the democratization of knowledge a few years ago and a subject of heated debates in academic and public discourse, continues to shrink across different world regions and populations. Less wonder, then, that none of the participants explicitly refers to it as an impediment to learning through MOOCs, at least in Morocco, where the digitization of education is gaining popular currency among academics, educators, stakeholders, and policymakers. Be that as it might, the blended learning model finds resonance with almost all the respondents who make clear that new technologies will complement rather than take over from the so-called 'traditional' classroom. The combination of face-to-face and technology-mediated learning bespeaks the significance of real interactions with the teacher. Cleveland-Innes and Wilton (2018) provide a lucid example in this regard, stating that "one blended learning course could involve students attending a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting while also completing online components of the course independently, outside of the classroom, on an online learning platform" (p.2). Though our study strives to approach distance learning through MOOCs outside the tyranny of binary logic (i.e., technology-mediated learning versus the traditional

classroom, with the first term obliquely privileged over the second), it ultimately elicits – being unable to avert the delimitation of ontology itself- the participants' reactions to the relationship between "conventionally-oriented" learning and massive open online courses.

D- 'Traditional' class versus MOOCs

Even if there is a widespread tendency in the literature to anchor the intricate phenomenon of education in the simple dyad of traditional versus contemporary modalities of learning, empirical evidence showcases that both modes are resistant to the authority of this exclusivist discourse. In everyday life, new inventions ultimately displace old ones as people find their utility tempting and irresistible. However, this a priori assumption does not apply to the complex context of education. Across varying degrees of familiarity with open educational resources, all the participants argue in favor of a potential longevity of the 'conventional' class, recommending that MOOCs should co-exist with face-to-face learning for the sake of an optimal modern learning environment. Even the mere integration of MOOCs in some faculties and institutions to provide ancillary learning services is still challenging. In several private as well as state universities in America such as Stanford, Harvard, Minnesota, Michigan and Pennsylvania, medical schools see that MOOCs can enhance, but not replace, the existing learning structures.

Despite their potential to update and innovate content delivery to the convenience of global learners, MOOCs fall short of addressing all the

learning needs of prospective physicians. In response to this statement, Belfus (2015) questions: "How, for example, can schools develop fresh, evidence-based content, integrate the MOOC experience with other learning channels and still mentor students in the subtleties of medical decision making and judgment (P.1)"? Since the mere integration of MOOCs in leading American universities is challenging, the digitalization of higher education outside the ambit of the 'traditional' class is called into question. The organization and analysis of the participants' responses reveal that technology-mediated learning can supplement, but never supplant, formal educational settings. Their reactions generally align with Osman (2023), who cogently points out that online learning "continues to complement traditional methods of education, but it is hard to predict whether it will replace traditional learning altogether" (p.3). The data under scrutiny lend credence to these words.

The participants who are relatively familiar with MOOCs hold that the relationship between these online courses and 'traditional' education matters in a digital era. The general sentiment is that both modes can co-exist harmoniously to diversify and optimize learning opportunities. This idea is expressed by Li and Young (2018), who build their study upon the premise that MOOCs are neither "the panacea of quality teaching in higher education nor the genie out of the bottle. It might be a supplemental element in the traditional courses to assure quality teaching" (p.122). The tendency to adopt a balanced approach that recommends a hybrid learning form in which

new technologies can be integrated into the educational system recurs in the obtained data. Many participants emphasized the complementary nature of MOOCs, suggesting that they complete traditional classroom-based learning. Most of them use the term "complementary" to accentuate the idea that the two modalities can enhance each other. The blend of MOOCs and 'traditional' education is seen as providing a more personalized, comprehensive, and flexible learning experience.

Elements of the same category perceive MOOCS as challenging, but open learning has the potential to complement existing educational structures. According to them, issues of flexibility, accessibility and cost are likely to interfere with the gamut of online services that MOOCs can offer; however, the consensus is that MOOCs complement 'traditional' education by providing supplementary resources, allowing self-paced learning, and catering to a global audience. This perception evokes the argument that "there is a growing interest for exploring how MOOCs can enrich traditionally taught courses and act as a complementary resource in achieving teachers' and students' goals" (Barlic & Divjak, 2018, p.1). The need for a well-structured relationship between MOOCs and traditional education is acknowledged, and there is an awareness that MOOCs can enhance what is learned in the classroom without entirely replacing it. In a hyperbolic statement one respondent argues that open educational resources can contribute to the promotion of a blended learning environment, but will never displace the traditional class: "I

think that MOOCs can only play a complementary role to traditional classroom-based education, but they will never be an equal alternative." The same perspective underlines the responses of the "Very Familiar" category, which reiterate that the relationship between face-to-face and distance learning is complementary.

Across familiarity levels, there is a consistent acknowledgment of the complementary relationship between MOOCs and traditional education. The consensus is that both approaches have distinct strengths and can work together to provide a more enriched learning experience. The challenges posed by MOOCs, such as concerns about engagement and accountability, are recognized, but the prevailing view is that these challenges can be addressed through careful integration and well-structured relationships between the two modalities. The main perspectives expressed in the responses highlight the complex interplay between MOOCs and traditional education, emphasizing the need for a balanced and integrated approach to derive profit from the strengths of each.

E- Implications and recommendations:

The qualitative analysis conducted in this part of the study is aimed at investigating the attitudes of a few classes of Moroccan Master's students towards Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and their experiences with open learning. The interpretation of the data is undertaken against the backdrop of several theoretical concepts and perspectives, establishing a dialogic encounter between ideas and their

manifestation in the teaching-learning practices. This section delves into the implications, and recommendations drawn from the comprehensive exploration of the qualitative dimension of the research.

The findings underline the diversity in students' interactions with MOOCs. Therefore, any attempt to investigate online learning should consider these individual differences and the possible external factors that may engender them. Lu, et al. (2020) undertake a study in this regard, inferring that "the network structure of different courses is determined by the learners' behavior which is closely related to the background of the learners, the characteristics of the course and the teacher's guidance" (p.1). Less wonder, then, that even members of a spuriously uniform population of postgraduate learners experiment differently with MOOCs. The experiences range from limited exposure to highly engaged participation, revealing the variegated nature of MOOC adoption.

The study brings to the fore a variety of issues that should be addressed to give impetus to MOOCs and optimize their effectiveness. Regardless of how much or less the participants are familiar with open online learning, they highlight common challenges and limitations associated with it, such as problems of interaction, internet access, information overload, and concerns with assessment and accreditation. These impediments should be acknowledged and addressed to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of MOOCs. Besides, the surveyed data place a premium on the complementary nature of

eLearning, illustrating that MOOCs and formal educational practices can co-exist in perfect symbiosis. Almost all the respondents concur that MOOCs can supplement, but not replace, 'traditional' learning structures.

All things considered, it is incumbent on institutions and educators to explore strategies that are conducive to a seamless integration of MOOCs into traditional courses to offer supplementary resources, enable self-paced learning, and cater for diverse learning styles. This integration should be carefully structured to maximize the benefits of both modalities. To achieve optimal learning outcomes, and leverage educational technology, MOOCs' content designers and facilitators should navigate a host of deficiencies that interfere with open learning opportunities. Concerted efforts should be made to address the challenges identified in the study, such as the lack of direct interaction, internet connectivity issues, and concerns about assessment. Designing MOOCs with features that foster engagement, accessibility, and effective evaluation can contribute to mitigating these challenges. Needs analysis, which occupies a central place in formal teaching methodology, is apparently downplayed in technology-enabled learning. "MOOC designers do not seem to understand very well the needs and demands of MOOC learners. This leads us to conclude that it can be questioned whether designers currently understand and meet the needs and demands of MOOC learners" (Stracke, 2018, p. 14). New technologies can address these needs only in a hybrid learning environment. The study upholds a

blended model that combines face-to-face and technology-mediated learning. Institutions should consider adopting this approach to make the most of the strengths of both 'traditional' and online education, providing a personalized and comprehensive learning experience.

4. 4 Conclusion

In sum, this research provides insights into Moroccan students' perceptions of and experiences with MOOCs. The findings indicate that while MOOCs offer diverse learning opportunities and have the potential to complement traditional education, they face challenges that need careful consideration. The study recommends a balanced and integrated approach, acknowledging the unique strengths of both MOOCs and traditional education. As technology continues to reshape the educational landscape, this research contributes to the ongoing dialogue on optimizing learning environments for a digitally interconnected world. The study's implications and recommendations serve as a foundation for future research and inform the development of effective strategies for incorporating MOOCs into higher education in Morocco and beyond.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), as an outcome of modern technology, have come to prominence in both academia and industry. Their increasing popularity is relatively attributed to their potential to promote networked forms of learning where knowledge is not merely learned, but also created and shared. In recently produced literature, open learning is generally referred to in laudable terms as it is capable

of breathing a new life in the 'traditionally-taught' courses. As a revolutionary innovation in higher education, the concept of MOOCs creates a new market that offers cheaply accessible knowledge in a flexibly informal educational landscape (Yuan, 2013). While many researchers argue in favor of MOOCs, underlining their potential to reshape the contemporary learning environment, several others are skeptical about this lofty rhetoric.

This being the case and taking into consideration both perspectives, this study is built upon the premise that technology-mediated learning will supplement, but not supplant, the 'traditional' classroom. In fact, this hypothesis is not formulated in a vacuum; it is inspired by an interview in which a YouTube channel hosted and addressed several questions to Manuel Castells, a leading expert in the transformative effects of communication technologies on society, economy and culture and the writer of a trilogy of books on social networks in the information age. He points out that teachers and not machines educate, preferring "textbooks, notebooks and pencils" to computers (Castells, 2023, 2:8). His statement suggests that technology can be leveraged only as a facilitating tool to boost the quality of formal education. To test the hypothesis above and to further navigate Castells' perspective, a survey is conducted based on a questionnaire filled out by four Master's classes belonging to the English Studies Department at The School of Arts and Humanities in Beni Melal, Morocco.

Following a review of literature, it becomes evident that the influence of new technologies on higher education is addressed in academic

research. The majority of researchers highlight that computer-driven learning can broaden the scope of education and ensure a democratization of knowledge at a time when the cost of enrollment at public tertiary institutions continues to soar, especially in developed countries such as the USA. MOOCs have the potential to offer cheaper and easily-accessible alternative modalities. However, the surveyed data demonstrate that the sheer optimism surrounding the growth of open learning is not always informed by praxis in real-life and authentic situations. The participants point out that a host of challenges interfere with MOOCs and must be addressed for the sake of achieving optimal learning outcomes. Even those who have taken hands-on training under the auspices of a MOOC (just three students) acknowledge that distance learning can only complement in-person interaction with the teacher. This perspective resonates with Obama's view that "automation and disruptive technologies are not going away; it is hard to find an instance in human history where something is invented and is not used; whether that's the printing press, or gunpowder or the computer" (Obama, 2023, 24:32). Since education cannot set up a bulwark against the influence of technology in a digital era, the onus is on humans to adapt such disruptive innovations as MOOCs to the contemporary learning environment. In the same vein, it is interesting to ponder the case of Sweden which is the first country to shift entirely to a digitization of education only to subsequently eliminate computers and restore textbooks (Castells, 2023, 2:21).
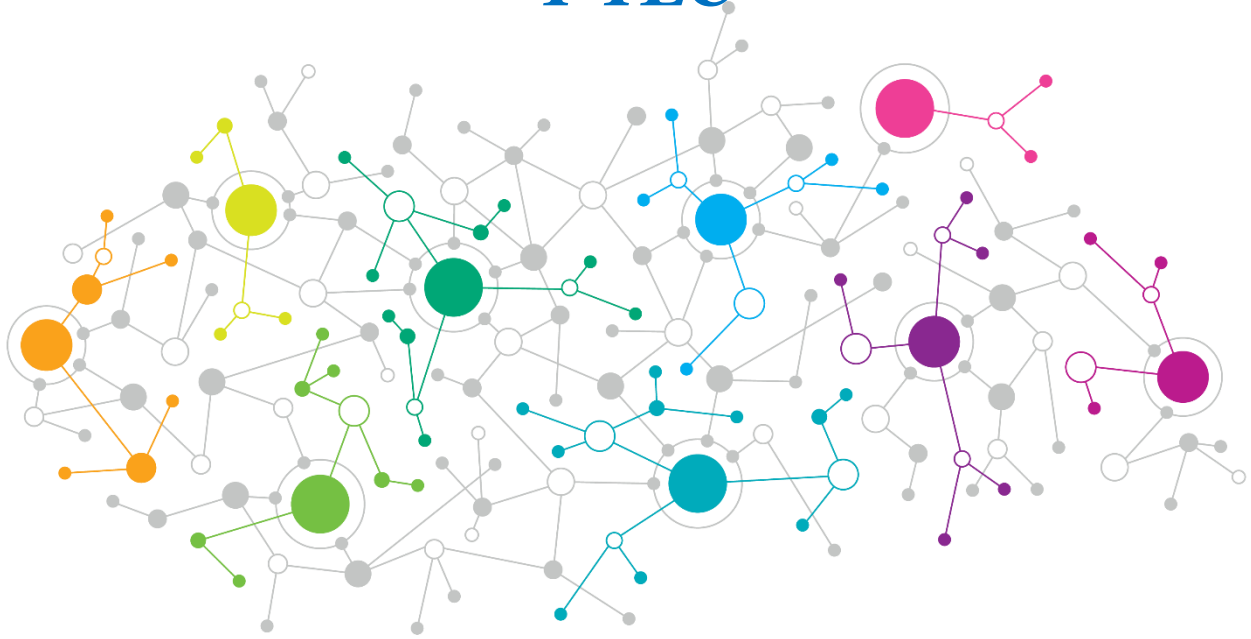
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Appendix

With the rise of information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet, societies have transformed into networked forms of organization. The profound social, economic, and cultural changes brought about by the networked communication technologies and how they impact various aspects of contemporary society, including education, cannot simply be ignored. Educators, researchers, stakeholders and practitioners are aware that modern technologies have the potential to reshape the conventionally-oriented educational landscape. The advent of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) marks a turning point in the progress of education which presently transcends the boundaries of formal settings, offering new learning opportunities to thousands of learners outside the constraints of time, space, and age. While MOOCs have gained popular currency since 2012 - when it was the educational buzzword of the year - among scholars and academics, further research is needed to investigate their implications for the 'traditionally – taught' courses. This questionnaire is designed to elicit the reactions of four groups of Master's students towards MOOCs in a contemporary micro-learning environment.

1.   Name (optional):

Gender:

Age:

Academic Program:

2. How familiar are you with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)?
(Please highlight the right answer)

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not very familiar

Not familiar at all

3.Are you familiar with a specific open online course (i.e., Coursera, Khan Academy, etc.). If yes, please mention its name and some of its salient characteristics, goals, pedagogical orientations, etc.

4.Have you ever taken a MOOC or benefited from a free access to some of its proffered courses? If yes, please briefly describe your experience.

5.What do you believe are the key advantages of MOOCs in the context of higher education?

6. In your opinion, what are the main challenges or limitations of MOOCs for learners?

7. Have MOOCs had any transformative effects on your learning experiences or educational perspectives? If yes, please describe these effects.

8.Can you share any specific examples of how MOOCs have influenced your academic or professional growth?

9. How do you perceive the relationship between MOOCs and traditional classroom-based education?

10. In what ways, if any, do you think MOOCs challenge or complement traditional educational models?

11. Have you ever enrolled in MOOCs? If yes, what have motivated you to enroll in them? (e.g., career advancement, personal interest, skill development, the consolidation of what you have learned in the traditional classroom-based education, or any other motive).

12. Have MOOCs influenced your motivation to pursue further education or engage in lifelong learning? If yes, how?

13.What pedagogical strategies or approaches used in MOOCs have been most effective in promoting your engagement and learning?

14. Have you encountered any pedagogical challenges in MOOCs that affected your learning experience? If yes, please describe them.

15. In the literature, MOOCs are often lauded for their contribution to the democratization of knowledge beyond economic, cultural, and racial constraints. What do you think?

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AUTHOR BIODATA

Mohamed HANDOUR is currently Professor at the English department of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Sultan Moulay Sliman University, Beni Mellal. He completed his PhD degree in Anglophone Arab Literature. He has published a number of articles on identity and culture and a collection of short stories. His areas of interest include, but are not limited to, Diaspora Literature, Applied Literary Theory and Continental Philosophy.