DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A MOOC IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR STUDENT TEACHER EDUCATORS

An

Executive Summary of the Thesis

Submitted

To

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

for the Award of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In EDUCATION

Guide:

Prof. Ashutosh Biswal

Researcher:

Ms. Shama Parveen Ansari

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CASE)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

VADODARA

GUJARAT – 390002

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Sr. No	ABBREVIATIONS	FULL FORM
1	MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
2	ODL	Open Distance Learning
3	IT	Information Technology
4	NEP	National Education Policy
5	GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
6	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
7	ARPIT	Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching
8	MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource and Development
9	SWAYAM	Study Webs of Active–Learning for Young Aspiring Minds
10	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
11	OER	Open Educational Resource
12	NPTEL	National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning
13	NEMICT	National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology
14	MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
15	xMOOC	Extended MOOC
16	cMOOC	Connectivist MOOC
17	SPOC	Small Private Online Course
18	VOOC	Vocation Open Online Course
19	LMS	Learning Management System
20	AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
21	NPTEL	National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning
22	UGC	University Grants Commission

23	CEC	Consortium for Educational Communication
24	NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
25	NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
26	NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
27	IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
28	IIMB	Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
29	NITTTR	National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research
30	UNED	National University of Distance Education
31	IIT	Indian Institutes of Technology
32	M.Ed.	Master of Education
33	NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
34	NCFTE	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
35	HEI	Higher Education Institutions
36	B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
37	SD	Standard Deviation
38	MAT	MOOC Awareness Test
39	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
40	ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
41	SJSU	San Jose State University
42	ADDIE	Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate
43	DFPS	Digital Fluency Perception Scale
44	CBPS	Community Building Perception Scale
45	POGIL	Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning
46	URL	Uniform Resource Locator

47	CMS	Content Management System
48	TECHTOR	Technology Tutor
49	MAC	Macintosh
50	H5P	HTML5 Package
51	MCQ	Multiple Choice Question
52	SA	Summative Assessment
53	FA	Formative Assessment
54	PNG	Portable Network Graphic

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology into education has resulted in the implementation of diverse teaching approaches in classroom, such as flipped classrooms, blended learning, game-based learning, and online learning. Many Higher Education institutes have adopted this online learning by creating virtual classrooms. The cost-effective, flexible, and self-paced nature of online learning makes students attend classrooms during their own free time, and they can also get an opportunity to interact with other students and faculties in a virtual mode. One of the recent and most innovative evolutions of online education is MOOC which stands for Massive Open Online Course. They use online platforms to deliver instruction and allow students to interact with one another and the instructor. They have become an effective platform for reaching many people who would not otherwise have access to education. To improvise students' level of engagement and learning outcomes, the potential of MOOC is still being tested and tried.

The potential for integrating MOOCs into Teacher Education, both in pre-service and in-service modes, remains largely untouched, indicating a neglected aspect. In the context of Teacher Education in India, the progress towards modernization and the adoption of technological innovations for effective educational practices has been slow. The adoption of MOOCs into education can bring about the necessary change and influence teaching and learning practises at all levels of Teacher Education. Teacher Education is a professional course where competent teachers and Teacher Educators are being produced who need to know a variety of information and be updated with the knowledge explosion. The purpose of Teacher Education in India is to provide aspiring teachers with the knowledge, skills, and expertise necessary to effectively educate and support their students. Out of the many courses being taught in professional courses like Teacher Education is Research Methodology. It is an essential course taught to both pre-service teachers and Teacher Educators (i.e. student teacher educators) although its weightage at the master level is supreme where students have to prepare their dissertation. It is no longer possible to complete the preparation of Teacher Educators without having a sufficient foundation in a range of research aspects (NCTE,1998). The course can bring positive changes in the attitude, mindset, teaching, and learning of Student Teacher Educators. Developing a MOOC in this subject can help them get a concrete understanding of

the subject and the necessary skills to carry out research in their respective interest areas. The study is an attempt in this direction. The researcher in the present study developed a MOOC for Student-Teacher Educators and studied its effectiveness. The developed MOOC enabled students to get acquainted with a new method of teaching-learning, compelling them to use various authentic Open Educational Resources available on the online platform, enabling self-paced and flexible learning among them, and introducing them to an alternative mode of learning.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher tried to study the work conducted in the field of Massive Open Online Courses concerning the present study. This chapter highlights the research in the area of awareness, development, and components of MOOC and also on the teaching-learning of Research Methodology. The reviews of the study are categorized as under.

- Studies related to awareness of MOOC
- Studies related to Teachers' and Students' perceptions of MOOCs
- Studies related to users Teachers' and Students' factors and motivations to adopt MOOC
- Studies related to the experience of Teachers and Students' in using MOOC
- Studies conducted on different components or Quadrants of MOOC
- Studies related to drop-outs in MOOC
- Studies conducted on the development and implementation of MOOC
- Studies conducted in the area of teaching-learning of Research Methodology

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In India, the number of internet users has grown significantly, from only five million in the year 2000 to 755.8 million in recent times (Internet World Stats, 2021). This substantial increase in internet connectivity, particularly in developing countries, has led to the global accessibility of online content and interaction (Ahuja, 2018). MOOCs have emerged as a revolutionary force in the higher education sector. With an estimated 20-26 million children being born in India annually, it is projected that within the next 35-50 years, approximately 700 million to 1.3 billion Indian youth will require access to higher education (Kumar, 2018). Meeting this challenge and providing quality higher education to prepare them for their future

careers is both an opportunity and a defining task for India in the 21st century. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) highlighted the importance of exploring unconventional models of education such as distance learning, open learning, and flexible learning approaches in a position paper in 2006. They emphasized the need for flexible systems, forward-looking curricula, and a career-oriented focus aligned with the demands of the 21st century. It is crucial to engage the education system to play a significant role in improving the teaching and learning environment, making it more meaningful for both teachers and students. In this context, MOOCs provide a solution to these challenges by offering access to education for large populations. Moreover, MOOCs can deliver diverse and high-quality instruction that individual instructors may not be able to develop on their own (Daniel, 2012).

According to Punia, (2017), "the advent of MOOCs in the classroom helps in getting the student move towards the knowledge section rather than the information. The inclusion of MOOCs as a medium of Instruction, either solely or as a supplement does result in better achievement of the students." The UGC chairman, who still teaches in an honorary capacity at IIT Delhi, explained why and how the UGC has to become a catalyst for change in an exclusive interview with the Deputy Editor of India Today, Kaushik Deka. The UGC chairman stated that online degrees are not a replacement for traditional classes, these are added benefits. The goal is to reach as many people as possible with education. Online schooling is a huge help in this regard. Our prior regulations on digital education were restrictive. It was believed that colleges would have all of the necessary infrastructures to develop and host digital material. But now focus is to allow them to work with Ed-tech companies to improve their material and integrate it with current technology. The content can be housed on Ed-tech businesses' cloud platforms. Prospective employers can be onboarded by universities so that both recruiters and candidates are aware of each other's needs (Deka, 2022).

According to Chauhan (2017), there is a growing need to enhance the understanding of MOOCs among Teacher Educators and equip them with the necessary resources to effectively integrate MOOCs into their regular classroom practices. The National Educational Policy (2019) emphasizes the importance of encouraging and supporting teachers in the country to design and deliver MOOCs based on their areas of expertise. Additionally, it is crucial for faculty and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering MOOCs to establish reliable and credible methods of student assessment and institutionalize appropriate mechanisms for delivering high-quality content in the online mode. There are several reasons why a teacher might want to develop their own MOOC:

- Reach a wider audience: MOOCs allow teachers to reach a global audience, as anyone with an internet connection can access the course. This can be especially useful for teachers who want to share their knowledge and expertise with a larger audience.
- Flexibility: MOOCs offer flexibility for both teachers and students. Teachers can design the course content and delivery method to fit their teaching style and schedule, and students can complete the course at their own pace.
- Professional development: Developing a MOOC can be a great way for teachers to enhance their professional development and showcase their expertise. It can also be a rewarding and fulfilling experience to create and share knowledge with others.
- Passive income: If a teacher charges for their MOOC, it can also be a source of passive income.

It is also important to note that developing a MOOC requires a significant investment of time and resources. Teachers should carefully consider whether they have the necessary resources and commitment to successfully develop and deliver it. Singh & According to Chauhan (2017), there is limited awareness among Teacher Educators in India regarding various MOOC initiatives, and sincere efforts are needed to enhance awareness about Indian initiatives aimed at promoting MOOCs in higher education, especially in the field of Teacher Education. In India, Teacher Educators generally exhibit resistance to innovation and experimentation in teaching methods, and their familiarity with modern classroom communication devices is also significantly lacking. (Dixit,2014). Most of the time lecture method is adopted in the classroom and sometimes teachers make use of ICT components like videos, PowerPoint slides, or audio to teach students. Students most often have no knowledge about MOOCs courses available on various platforms neither they are made aware of the same by their teachers. Despite the availability of some practises and research, a great number of educators and students are still learning about MOOCs as an educational endeavour. However, an increasing number of institutions are following the norm in their efforts to create open MOOCs and online learning to adhere to contemporary pedagogical trends, to make the institutions visible in the market for learning services and to reach larger communities of learners (Sekret & Morze, 2017).

According to Daniel (2018), Research Methodology equips students with the essential knowledge to improve their research skills and potentially pursue successful careers in research. However, research has consistently highlighted poor learning outcomes associated with research methods courses in universities. These courses are often described as pedagogically rigid, conceptually challenging, and lacking adaptability to future career paths.

Students often perceive the content of research methods courses as disconnected from practical applications. They also encounter various challenges in learning Research Methodology, such as formulating research questions, comprehending theory or literature, grappling with data analysis, understanding technical terminology related to fundamental concepts, and lacking numerical skills for quantitative methods. Addressing the difficulties in teaching research methods courses is a challenging task due to the limited pedagogical research on innovative teaching approaches in this subject. MOOCs in Research Methodology can serve as a viable alternative for delivering these courses effectively. Despite the rapid growth of MOOCs in recent years, this format is still evolving and not yet fully established. To attract more students, MOOC providers need to focus on offering improved learning tools rather than solely relying on providing high-quality multimedia materials online (Rai & Chunrao, 2016). While MOOCs have gained momentum globally, their implementation in India is still in its early stages. With the increasing connectivity, initiatives like Digital India, and a growing emphasis on online learning, it is an opportune time for the Teacher Education system to align with these emerging trends (Singh & Chauhan, 2017). UGC recently in April 2022 published the guidelines for pursuing two academic programs simultaneously in hybrid, physical or online mode. This policy will also promote more institutes to offer MOOC programs to students so that the problem of student attendance and being present in two places at the same time is solved.

Efforts need to be taken to maximize the engagement among learners, monitor their learning, and make learning interesting so that the dropout rate can be minimized. This study can provide Student Teacher Educators not only a new platform for teaching and learning but will also promote them to adopt such practices in the future. It will provide a path for future Teacher Educators to get acquainted with an innovative teaching-learning platform, promote professional development, create awareness for MOOCs and equip them with 21st-century technical skills. From the review of the literature, the investigator did not come across any study, research, or investigation based specifically on developing a MOOC for Student-Teacher Educators. Therefore, the investigator was enthusiastic to work in this area and to develop a MOOC on selected topics of Research Methodology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Research question

Through the present study, the researcher tried to find the answers to the following research questions.

- To what extent MOOCs can be effective for professional courses like Teacher Education?
- To what extent MOOCs can be interesting for professional courses like Teacher Education?
- To what extent MOOC can be developed for skill-based subjects like Research Methodology?

Objectives of the study

The researcher had formulated the following objectives to complete the present study in a step-by-step approach.

1. To develop a MOOC on Research Methodology for Student Teacher Educators.
2. To implement the MOOC on Research Methodology for Student Teacher Educators.
3. To study the effectiveness of MOOC in terms of achievement of Student Teacher Educators.
4. To study the effectiveness of the developed MOOC in terms of the reaction of Student Teacher Educators on the following components.
    - Course structure and planning
    - Video Lessons
    - Discussion forums
    - Assessment
    - Additional resources
    - Feasibility
    - Instructor support
    - Overall effectiveness
5. To study the experiences of Student Teacher Educators in learning through MOOC.

VARIABLE IN THE STUDY

The two variables taken into consideration in this study were as below:

Independent variable

Massive Open Online Course developed in Research Methodology was the independent variable. This independent variable was implemented on the experimental group and its effect on the achievement and reaction of the experimental group was evaluated.

Dependent variable

In the present study, the achievement in Research Methodology of student teachers educators in Research Methodology was one dependent variable, and reactions & experience of student teachers educators towards the implemented MOOC was another variable.

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at the 0.01 level of significance.

H_0: There is no significant difference in the post-test mean achievement score of the control and experimental group in Research Methodology.

Delimitation of the study

The study was limited to the topics, Introduction to Educational Research, Sampling and Types of Research Methods (Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Method) taught in the curriculum of M.Ed. the first year.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study was quantitative and an experimental study was adopted. The quasi experimental design was selected. Here manipulation of the independent variable was carried out but there was no random assignment of individuals to the control and experimental group. As the quasi-experimental has various designs under it, a pre-test post-test non-equivalent comparison/control group design was adopted. The research design can be represented as follows:

O1	X	O2
O3	C	O4

Where, O1 and O3 are pretest, O2 and O4 are posttest

X represents experiment group

C represents control group

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population consists of all those items, objects, or things which are having certain characteristics common in all and are of interest to the researcher. The present study population comprised of all the student teacher educators studying in the two-year M.Ed. program in India in the academic year 2021-2023. Two institutions from Gujarat state with sufficient enrolment were chosen conveniently to conduct the research.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The following tools were used by the researcher for the purpose of data collection:

- Achievement test
- Reaction scale
- Post Experimental Interview Schedule

PLAN AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Starting from the development of the Massive Open Online Course and the tools to the analysis of the data different phases were involved as follows:

Phase 1-Development of MOOC and tools for data collection

MOOCs are Online Courses with the capacity to enrol unlimited students, open to all and consist of components like video lessons, assessments, discussion forums and additional resources. MOOCs are then hosted on a platform. In the present study the platform to host the Course was called techtor.in. The researcher developed the MOOC, along with its different quadrants and platform, to host the MOOC. The following steps were involved in this process:

- Self-enrolment in MOOC to understand its basics and technology
- Selection and analysis of content for MOOC
- The content selected for MOOC was then divided into three Specialisations Course
- WordPress was selected as a Content Management System to design the website
- Designing various web pages on the platform WordPress
- Selection of an LMS plugin called LIFTERLMS to develop the course
- Development and selection of resources for quadrants in MOOC including video lessons, discussion forums, assessments and additional resources.
- Assembling the Quadrants in the Course Builder feature of the LIFTERLMS. i.e. planning the Lesson and Modules.
- Designing Additional elements of MOOC like pre course survey, course feedback form, badges, certificates and others.
- Development of an E-Manual to assist users in understanding how to effectively and efficiently use the course
- Development of a step by step tutorial video to navigate the course smoothly
- Development of an Orientation Presentation on MOOC for the experimental group
- Validation of the MOOC by experts
- Piloting and self-piloting the MOOC

After the pilot of the MOOC was done, the MOOC was ready to be implemented on the M.Ed. students. Then tools for data collection including achievement tests for pre and post-test, a five-point Likert type scale to get reactions of the student teacher educators towards the developed Massive Open Online Course, a and post-experimental interview schedule was developed.

Phase 2-Implementation of the MOOC

Before the implementation of the MOOC and the tools permission was taken from the concerned authority in both the institutes of control and the experimental group. Then pre-test was conducted on both the experimental and control group and matching was carried out. Then MOOC was implemented in the experimental group. After the achievement test was implemented on both the control and experimental group, the reaction scale along with the interview schedule was implemented on the experimental group.

Phase 3-Data Analysis

After the collection of the data, descriptive statistics were carried out on the post-test achievement score of both the control and experimental group. Then hypothesis was tested using the Mann-Whitney U test and the reaction scale was analysed using frequency, percentage, and intensity index. The data collected through post-experimental interviews were analysed using content analysis.

DATA COLLECTION

The study was carried out in September 2021, when institutions were getting back to normal after the second wave of the pandemic, and the majority of the students and teachers were working from home. The researcher sent an email to different instituting running two years M.Ed. Course in Gujarat, to get permission to conduct the study. The institution which replied to the email and gave permission was taken as a sample for the study. A formal letter approved by the guide was then sent to the institution which agreed to be the control group. Data were collected from the experimental and control group during the implementation phase. Pre-test and post-test were administered in both the control and experimental group. The Massive Open Online Course was implemented in the experimental group and the control group was taught through the Conventional method. Here conventional method means the method adopted by the teachers in the control group to teach their students and as it was a time of Covid-19 so conventional method mainly comprised of online teaching on Zoom and Google Meet platforms. The data collection process lasted for around four months.

DATA ANALYSIS

In order the determine the effectiveness of the developed MOOC the data collected through achievement tests, reaction scales, and post-experimental interviews were analysed and interpreted. The researcher used the Mann Whitney U which is a non-parametric equivalent of a t-test and is used when purposive or convenience sampling is used instead of random sampling to test the hypothesis. Achievement test scores of the control and experimental group were analysed using the Mean, Standard deviation, and Standard error of the mean. To analyse the reaction scale Frequency, Percentage, and Intensity Index(II) were used. The data collected from the interview schedule was analysed using Content Analysis.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following findings have been derived.

- The Massive Open Online Course was found effective in terms of significantly enhancing students' achievement in Research Methodology.
- The Massive Open Online Course was also found effective in terms of the positive reaction of students towards it.
- The student-teacher educators found the course interesting, flexible and self-paced.
- The ideal videos are those where the duration is less than ten minutes and the presence of embedded interactions is present.
- MOOCs and traditional learning both are equally important. The instructor is of prime importance for any course, be it online or in face-to-face mode.
- The primary challenge encountered by students on the MOOC platform pertained to distinguishing between the processes of registration and login within the course. Students found it difficult to differentiate between these two procedures.
- On the other hand, the student-teacher educators expressed immense enthusiasm and eagerness to develop courses similar to this one for their students in the future. Their excitement stemmed from the positive experience they had with the MOOC and the valuable learning opportunities it provided.

IMPLICATION OF PRESENT STUDY

From the findings of the present study, the following implication can be drawn for teacher educators, administrators, researchers and policymakers:

- The effectiveness of the MOOC suggests that incorporating MOOC can be a valuable addition to traditional educational methods. Teacher education institutes should consider integrating MOOCs into their curriculum to enhance student learning outcomes in skill-based subjects like Research Methodology.
- Teacher educators need to be trained for developing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) in their respective subjects by utilising the various free open-source software available online.
- All teacher educators must be encouraged to develop MOOC courses for their professional growth.

- The administration of teacher education institutes must provide relevant support in the form of technical devices so that MOOCs can be integrated into teaching-learning effectively.
- Researchers should develop MOOCs which are similar to the curriculum of the M.Ed. course so that they can be used for students unable to attend face-to-face classes.
- All higher educational institutions should provide options to learn through offline or online mode using MOOC.
- Policymakers must allow students to learn through MOOCs available on various global and local platforms and credits should be accommodated in their study.
- Teacher educators should explore different platforms available on the web to make MOOC courses and also for implementation in the classroom.
- Through various awareness programmes, student-teacher educators should be made aware of the MOOCs
- More research should be done in designing affordable and sustainable MOOCs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

From the findings of the present study, the following suggestions are proposed for further research:

- Development of MOOC in other subjects of the M.Ed. curriculum can be considered.
- A study on awareness about Massive Open Online Courses among M.Ed. students can be considered.
- Implementation of MOOC available on SWAYAM or other global platforms and its effectiveness can be studied by M.Ed. students.
- The effectiveness of a MOOC in a blended mode along with a face-to-face mode can be considered.
- The effectiveness of different quadrants in a MOOC on student-teacher educators can be studied.
- The effectiveness of a MOOC on a larger sample of M.Ed. students can be done, whereas a pre-experimental design can be adopted.
- Research on the importance of the Instructor's role in a MOOC environment can be studied.
- A comparative study of blended learning and MOOC can be carried out.

- Research could be conducted on the implementation of MOOC learning at various levels of Teacher education programmes.
- Research on using Massive Open Online Course as supplementary material and as a resource in blended learning can be studied in the M.Ed. programme.
- Research on teachers' and developers' views on developing a MOOC and challenges faced while designing a MOOC can be studied.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown affected all the sectors in the country. As colleges and universities got closed teachers resorted to online learning. Experimentation with different platforms began and MOOCs emerged as one of the major sources of remote learning. Although MOOC was not a new concept before the pandemic and has its existence since 2009, its acceptance among learners increased during the Covid-19 period. MOOCs are not only accessible from anywhere but also accommodate massive students at the same time at no extra cost. They are a plethora of platforms where students from arts can learn a subject of science, with only one requirement and that is interest in learning. Higher education institutes from around the globe, from various fields are trying their best to make MOOC and reach millions of students but its infusion in the area of teacher education in general and M.Ed. programme in particular is still limited. The present study attempted to develop a Massive Open Online Course for student teacher educators in the subject of research methodology. The platform for hosting the MOOC, its quadrants, a manual, a tutorial video and an orientation presentation were developed by the researcher and implemented by student-teacher educators. The distinguishing features of the course development were that it had interactive videos, modules with numerous lessons, a variety of additional resources, a personalised open source platform to host the MOOC, ample opportunities for students to get support from the instructor, automated assessment and set start and end date which where flexible.

This MOOC was not only effective in terms of achievement of student-teacher educators but they also had positive reactions for the same. The student-teacher educator found the course interesting, self-paced, fun, and engaging and they also preferred to learn other topics of research methodology through MOOC in the future.

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