Chapter 13

Skills of Library and Information Science Professionals in MOOCs Environment

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ABSTRACT

This chapter argues whether the contemporary competencies and skills of library and information science professionals are sufficient in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) environment by conducting a SWOT analysis of the skills of library and information science professionals from a MOOCs perspective. It further discusses the category-wise and course step-wise skills of library and information science professionals needed in MOOCs settings and concludes with a discussion of how library and information science learners use and develop their skills that fit in MOOC environment in order to support MOOCs movement.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the emergence of internet and information communication technologies, new innovations, services, tools, platforms and pedagogies are dramatically taking place in the online environment. Resultant, users are being shifted their learning patterns and pedagogies from physical or face to face learning to virtual or online learning. Among online pedagogies and learning, Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) has been emerged as new Avatar and providing deeper impact in every discipline

including library and information science area. The full form of MOOC is Massive Open Online Course in which Massive denotes large scale participation, Open indicates openness of course, Online presents learning in the online environment and Course shows structure of the course or pedagogically design to online learning. The Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) term coined by Dave Cormier, University of Prince Edward Island and Bryan Alexander, National Institute of Technology in Liberal Education (McAuley et al., 2010). Though MOOC concept was emerged in the 2008 year but the year 2012 year was noted as a miracle year for Massive open Online Courses (MOOCs).The year 2012, was also declared as the year of MOOC by "New York Times" (Pappano, 2012) and in the same year few MOOCs key players of MOOCs such as Coursera, Udacity, Edx etc. were developed and some MOOCs also created in different subjects worldwide. A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) may be defined as a course in online learning sphere in which any user who has computer/laptop with the Internet connection can participate virtually in any MOOC without the prerequisites of the traditional education system. However, library and information science professionals are adopting, linking and supporting MOOCs activities in their respective libraries and institutions by understanding MOOCs concept as a whole, participating and involving MOOCs activities worldwide level. But, on the other hand, library and information science professionals are facing severe challenges in order understand, adopt involve and support MOOCs activities in the true sense due to lack of adequate competencies and skills especially required for sustaining and surviving in the MOOCs era. However, library and information science professionals are needed to develop their competencies and skills particularly required in MOOCs setting in order to take opportunities and face challenges as well as to involve and support MOOCs activities in the real situation. Competencies and skills terms are sometimes used interchangeably but these are distinguishing each other. The competencies may be technical knowledge, skills, and personal attributes which enable individual's to get the success in a position while skills are the abilities gained through training or workshop by a professional to accomplish a specific job or task. The SWOT analysis is always very useful to know strength, weakness, opportunities and threats in particular purpose. Therefore, an attempt has been made to examine the skills of library and information required in MOOCs environment for adopting and creating MOOCs, as well as involving and supporting MOOCs activities at the worldwide level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectivities of this study are:

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