

## What Drives a Successful MOOC? An Empirical Examination of Criteria to Assure Design Quality of MOOCs

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### Abstract:

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have gained a lot of attention in the last years as a new technology enhanced learning (TEL) approach in higher education. MOOCs provide more educational opportunities to a massive number of learners to attend free online courses around the globe. Discussions around MOOCs have been focusing on the potential, social, institutional, technological, relevance, and marketing issues and less on the quality design of MOOC environments. Several studies have reported a high drop-out rate in average of 90% of course participants and other pedagogical problems concerning assessment and feedback. Thus, the quality of MOOCs design is worth additional investigation. Although several studies identified a large set of criteria to the successful design of TEL systems in general, not all of them can be used in the MOOC context, due to some unique features of MOOCs. This study is a first step towards identifying specific criteria that need to be considered when designing and implementing MOOCs. The results of this empirical study are based on a large survey targeting learners as well as professors, both with MOOC experience. As a result, we identified and rated 64 indicators classified into our two main dimensions of pedagogical and technological criteria distributed over six categories. From these, the learning analytics and assessment categories were found to be the key features for effective MOOCs.

**Keywords:** E-learning Criteria; MOOC; MOOC Design; Quality