

Review of: "The Design of a MOOC on Health Behaviors: A Practical Blueprint for the Instructional Design of MOOCs"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thanks for this nice work and the extensive review that led to the formulation of the Health MOOC, which was used as an outcome example.

The stated objective of the paper was to “... *describe the systematic development of instructional design principles for our MOOC on health behaviors and showcase examples of how these principles were implemented in practice.*”

The paper has not completely fulfilled that promise – despite the good and extensive supplementary material provided – as it did not present metrics and actual results of the MOOC to show whether the extensively stated problems with MOOC design are resolved or improved with the proposed setup. This may still take some time, and I am looking forward to reading about it.

METRICS in general are important when looking at different possible MOOC design methodologies. What are we measuring, and how would we measure it, leading to how we can improve?

The paper starts by describing the problem (educational impact of MOOCs is limited, typically low instructional design quality, low levels of engagement and completion), but does not discuss other factors that could influence, for example, engagement and motivation, like cost of the MOOCs (if you pay a lot, you have a higher motivation to finish) or reputation of the institution (finishing a certificate MOOC from Harvard has a higher impact than finishing one from a no-name institution) that have not much to do with the quality of the course itself.

It is not quite clear to me why the authors conducted such an extensive review beforehand, starting with the beginning of MOOCs (surprise surprise that “*watching videos and reading text is not supporting skill development and competency acquisition ...*”. That is especially true for the part covering the “*instructional design*” that is or at least should be - as stated - “the cornerstone of learning in any environment”.

The presented 4-step approach (learner analysis, formulate key aspects and guiding principles, implementation) is well covered and informative, and - as mentioned already - the supplementary data provided is very good. Whether that can be used as a blueprint is to be discussed - I personally find it too extensive and complicated.

Looking forward to some measures and result presentations that would indicate that this design actually solves some of the identified MOOC issues.

