# On the Formation of University Library's Initiative in the MOOC Context

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## Abstract

**Massive Open Online Courses first originated in the Western countries and were soon widely applied by the Western universities to conduct online education. Up to now, many well-known universities have followed suit and established cooperative relationship, so that they can share online courses, build information resource platform in a joint way, and finally realize resource sharing. The libraries in Chinese universities should take initiative in building online education platform. They should make full use of their own advantages in information resources, talent pools and professional infrastructure construction during the exploration upon MOOC so as to provide diversified service and support for MOOC education.**

## Keywords

**MOOC; university libraries; online; platform construction.**

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of modern information technology and education technology, the traditional education concept and model have been completely overturned. In 2012, online open courses like MOOC has gone viral in the whole world. In a relatively short time, many well-known universities from the Western developed countries have employed such education model and learning model in college education, professional education and social education and made exciting achievements during the process. The university library is the guarantee institution which provides service for the university personnel training and the scientific research. As a result, it should also pay close attention to the education mode of the university itself and make this model suitable for local education development. It must take the market demand as the guidance as well, positively seek for changes in running university libraries and take initiative to explore new ideas and measures in the context of MOOC.

## 2. Definition and Features of MOOC

The MOOC is translated into muke (慕课) in Chinese. This term was put forward in 2008 by a director of network communication innovation named Davecarrnie at the University of Prince Edward Island in Canada, and a senior research fellow named Bryan Alexander from Institute of Applied Technology in Humanistic Education. The scientific connotation of MOOC is an open learning platform with interaction, collaboration and evaluation functions. This platform is based on network technology, it boasts various learning resources and aims to enhance knowledge dissemination. Participants in this platform can subscribe to the course content and choose their own tools to participate in the course. MOOC is generally composed of learners, experts, resources, assessment system and interaction system. Among them, resources, assessment system and interaction system constitute the platform of MOOC. Resources are mainly composed of curriculum video, electronic text, audio files and other graphic and text

resources. Therefore learning objects can be freely selected in the platform according to the need of the participants. Assessment system is to check the completion of homework in the learning progress of participants. The participants will choose the objective test assignments and the system will determine their scores. And interactive system is a combination of all kinds of network social tools in one communication platform. Experts and participants can share resources together, make cooperation and experience Q&A session in this system. Teachers will also publish preview materials and teaching syllabus on the system. Meanwhile learners can also participate in real-time discussions through BBS, QQ, WeChat, video and other tools in this system. Questions and answers are completed in this system as well. Questions and answers are completed in this system [2]. Compared with the traditional education mode, this online learning mode presents many new features in the following aspects:

As MOOC is an online learning platform, the number of participants is not limited, and people can sign up at any place and time, and this is the most visible feature of this platform. Within the MOOC platform, students can actively participate in various courses regardless of nationality, race, gender, age, time and geographical restrictions. This kind of large-scale network learning mode is something that traditional learning mode cannot achieve. The innovative learning model of MOOC, which allows participants to learn new knowledge and obtain new information regardless of time, space and place, quickly became accepted by many learners and became popular all over the world. The second feature of MOOC is that participants can acquire online leaning resources without spending a single penny. This can be hard for any traditional education organizations, for they have to pay for new information or the latest scientific and technological achievements. Paying fees is a natural business practice. Thus it is beyond reproach that a school should charge learning fees from learners. MOOC, however, does not charge at all, and participants can share learning and teaching resources platform, which can certainly be widely accepted by learners. The third feature of this online platform is that all the resources here are open to all the participants so that they can learn from each other, share opinions and achievements with each other. The platform is inclusive and participatory, and the resources are free and open to learners of different groups and nationalities. All kinds of high-quality resources can be shared on the platform without any charges. It is the diversity of users and the openness of resources that makes MOOC rapidly be promoted by world-renowned universities and become an important guarantee for infrastructure construction of education to build up talent pool in the future.

## 3. The Changing Concept of "Library's Reader Service" in the Context of MOOC

In the era of information network, the idea of building library must keep pace with the times. Libraries in universities should shoulder the responsibility to provide diversified products in teaching and research, meanwhile they have to pay close attention to the need of readers and aim to provide high-quality information products and realize information resource sharing. This is not only the core function of the university library, but also the guiding ideology for these libraries to seize the exciting opportunities for better development. Under the influence of MOOC, university libraries should not ignore the new changes of the university personnel training mode, let alone ignore the new changes of the learning mode in the information network era. In order to better serve the needs of scientific research and personnel training, the libraries must closely follow up and study the new changes in information society and information resources, and transform the role of themselves [3]. MOOC is known as a "digital tsunami" in the world. Featured by open online access, large-scale interaction and high-quality micro-courses, it represents the world's latest educational technology system and teaching model. More importantly, it leads the future direction of higher education teaching reform. A

number of leading universities in China have attached great importance to this new learning mode, and soon this mode has been promoted in China. In 2012, Shanghai Education Commission took the lead in establishing the MOOC platform of Shanghai university curriculum center and implemented its construction in several well-known universities in Shanghai. Following this trend, famous universities in Beijing, Guangdong, Wuhan, Chongqing, Nanjing and other places have established MOOC partnership. These universities have put joint efforts to set up standards for open courses and build up sharing mechanism to share online courses. Besides, they have also carried intercollegiate course selection, minor major joint training, mutual recognition of credits, etc. In 2014, a website called "icourse" was officially launched by the Ministry of Education as a MOOC platform for Chinese universities and all types of universities in China can study online through this platform. These new changes and trends in the development of higher education in the world have also been rapidly promoted in different types of universities in China. Provincial education authorities and even the national Ministry of Education have incorporated the construction and promotion of MOOC into the overall planning for the future infrastructure construction of universities. The university library should find its own position in the future university planning and construction so as to push forward the development of university-running. Faced with the new changes in education and teaching mode brought by the information network era, university libraries must think about their own development orientation, and only with accurate orientation can it bring the management of these libraries to a higher level [4].

## 4. Measures by the University Library in MOOC Context

University libraries have more exclusive advantages and unique space to develop their own MOOC services for abundant resources they have. Whether it is the construction of independent resources or the absorption of external resources, university libraries have their own advantages that other scientific research institutions cannot compare. The university library can not only provide a service platform for MOOC of famous teachers in the university, but also share the resources of MOOC created by other famous universities all over the country and the world. At the same time, it can also provide rich resources for readers to do preview before class, answer questions in class and take review after class [2]. The university libraries should maximum their own advantages in document resources and information resources, which can provide resources needed for teachers, students and readers. It can not only give full play to the advantages of university library resources, but also make use of its own information technology and professional advantages to provide readers with a variety of quality services.

The university libraries also needs to make full use of their professional technical teams to provide technical support for the future development of MOOC. No matter it is a world-class university, state key university, a comprehensive university and local application-oriented university in China, they all have a group of professional information consulting and information retrieval talents. These universities have also set up a number of information platforms for readers, a variety of professional databases, and a large number of technical experts were in the featured databases. It can provide highly specialized technical support and services to solve the problems in the interaction between lecturing and learning during course-designing process of MOOC. The university library should assign professionals to set up an institution dedicated to the development of MOOC, build a professional platform for the follow-up development of MOOC, and actively participate in the process to share the new achievements in MOOC. In other words, university libraries should not ignore the revolutionary changes in education brought by MOOC, they should take the initiative to be a part of this process. Besides, they should make good use of their professional and technical advantages, and try to be creative in MOOC platform construction. The university library should give full play to the advantages

of its information service platform so as to provide diversified services and support for the majority of MOOC readers. MOOC is an innovative learning model derived from a web-based education model, and its powerful online platform is the operational basis of this kind of lecturing and learning process. The university library is a network service platform that boast a large number of professional and technical personnel as well as rich information resources. These two advantages can provide a stable network system for MOOC and guarantee the input and outflow of data from this platform [2]. For the efficient operation of MOOC service platform, the system must require professional and scheduled maintenance, as well as regular upgrade to ensure the sustainable operation of this platform. MOOC course resources are mostly in the form of video, and university library professionals can make full use of these resources to implement in-depth development and provide more services for readers. University libraries can improve their ability to serve teaching and research by participating in MOOC. At the same time, through the future development of MOOC, libraries can expand the service function of themselves in the information network era, making it more convenient and fast for readers to acquire knowledge they need. [5].

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