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TRANSCRIPT

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“Scope of MOOC in Online Learning”

Dear All,

Brothers and Sisters,

Warm greetings from Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, a Deemed-to-be University.

I am happy to welcome you for this third episode of ‘Dear All’. Today, I will be sharing my thoughts on the role of MOOCs in Skill Development, Capacity Building, and Employment opportunities.

Massive Open Online Courses commonly known as MOOCs refer to a group of rapidly emerging novel online learning platforms which offer a multitude of courses that are open in nature and usually subscription free. The Acronym “MOOC” was coined by Cormier and Alexander in 2008 while commenting about connectivism and connective Knowledge. However, this concept was popularized only after the launch of “Udacity”, one of the first MOOC platforms. MOOCs are considered “Massive” as they can take up thousands of students in a single course. They are considered to be “open” because they are open to everyone, the course material, content and assessment process are also open.

Since the last decade we have seen an overwhelming development of online educational MOOC platforms like Coursera, EDX, Future learn, Moodle, etc. I am sure that as of today over a million students from hundreds of countries will be participating in thousands of MOOC courses all over the world. Though a variety of MOOC courses are available, their role in medical education is currently uncertain. The number of medical MOOCs are gradually on the rise in various platforms.

Dear colleagues, in the COVID-19 era, we are bound to witness an exponential rise in the demand for online learning platforms as the traditional teaching (face-to-face) has been significantly affected. Even in these circumstances, MOOC courses offer a unique opportunity for the participants to enroll in the course of their choice. This asynchronous form of learning will help the takers to continue to work towards their professional goals and keep moving forward.

Medical MOOCs offer a brilliant opportunity for the medical students to learn and experience new topics of their interest. They can also learn skills generally not supported in the medical schools during their spare time. Medical MOOCs have already been

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established as ideal models for CME Accredited courses and in augmenting the medical school curriculum by supporting Continued Professional Development, Interprofessional education, and complementing blended learning in the curriculum. MOOCs also serve as an excellent platform for encouraging interaction and collaboration among students sharing common interests.

SWAYAM is India's national MOOC platform, which has been designed with a vision to accomplish the 3 cardinal principles of Education Policy of the nation, namely access, equity and quality. The best part of the courses offered in SWAYAM is that participants can enroll in them for free and benefit themselves, and nominal money needs to be paid only if the candidates require certification. The MOOC courses have a definite scope in employment and offers an additional advantage to the learners in any competitive field.

My dear students, MOOCs have already started to play a major role in Continuing Medical Education. Even the Medical Council of India has recognized the significance of MOOCs by mandating the Basic course in Biomedical research for postgraduates for becoming eligible for their summative examinations and for medical faculty for their academic promotions. Acknowledging the role of Medical MOOCs in ensuring continuous faculty development, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth has identified a set of MOOC courses applicable for staff from different streams and is encouraging them to utilize the opportunity for their professional development and capacity building.

Though the popularity of Medical MOOCs is on the rise, one needs to understand and accept the limitations of these courses as well. MOOCs are currently as efficient in delivering advanced theory-based courses, while their application in delivering clinical skills is yet to be explored. It is the need of the hour to explore the role of MOOCs in premedical programs and their scope in offering additional Academic Credits in a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

Dear All, amidst the large number of MOOC courses which are available, the most important thing is to select the right course after carefully analyzing the scope of the offered courses and based on your needs. A candidate should take a well-informed decision before enrollment in a course which can help them for vocational opportunities.

We wish you all the best in each of your endeavors. At this time, I also wish you the best of health. I eagerly look forward to staying in touch. Till then...

Namaste, Jai Hind.