

Scalable learning: The beautiful paradox of massive open online courses (MOOCs)

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The Australian National University has recently joined with edX.org to offer two massive, open, online courses. This showcase presentation examines the organisational thinking and approach behind the development of the course, Engaging India from the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. In general, this presentation examines the theory, planning, and practice of MOOC delivery and questions the impact on teaching and learning, educational research, and higher education organisational behaviour. More specifically, this showcase first seeks to engage participants in a dialogue on the “paradox” of distance learning and mass scale as one that actually allows for a more personalized, down-scaled, custom design of education for individual needs. In doing so we will explore the evolving educational theory of teaching in an open and massive online environment and the implication of the massification of teaching online. There is a beautiful and interesting question at the centre of all of this and much like that at the heart of the purpose of higher education that opens up an important debate about the evolving role of technology in higher education and, in turn, the changing place of higher education in the society in which it functions. Presentation attendees will garner an understanding of not only the planning and implementation process but also interrogate how MOOCs transcend the formal and informal learning space as well as examining the impact on evolving understanding of pedagogy through this new medium of learning.