

Part 1: Description of the research question

This questionnaire aims to answer a question about the participation in the discussion forums of MOOCs if points are awarded for doing so. The main research question is as follows:

How does making discussion forum participation part of the assessment of a MOOC influence the participation by students in these forums?

The following definitions are used in this questionnaire:

- Discussion forum: space where students can post questions, comments and reflections about the course topic and discuss course content.
- Participation: the act of contributing to a discussion by posting questions, comments or reflection on the discussion forums.
- MOOC: xMOOC; institutional MOOC that is instructor led following a fixed timeline.
- Students: people who enrolled in a course.

This study is conducted to develop new metrics to measure the success of MOOC. As traditional metrics such as course completion rates do not capture the full spectrum of learning that takes place in MOOCs, new metrics need to be developed. One proposed metric is participation by students in discussion forums. As part of this bigger project, this study aims to investigate the effect of making forum participation part of the assessment strategy on this kind of participation. Due to the limited data on this topic this study has an explorative character, using self-reported participation data.

Part 2: Sub-dimensions that need to be studied

The following sub-dimensions can be identified in this project:

- Forum participation part of the assessment
 - o Yes
 - o No
- Degree of participation required to receive full points (number of posts)
 - o 0
 - o 1 – 2 per week
 - o 3 – 4 per week
 - o 5 or more per week
- Type of participation
 - o Creation of new threads
 - o Posting new contributions within a thread
 - o Commenting on existing contributions

- Up or down voting of contributions
- Effect on assessment requirements on participation in the forum

Part 3: Listing of questions

The following questions were developed for this questionnaire:

1. Effect of assessment on forum participation (sensitive question)
 - a. If your participation on the discussion forums was graded how would this affect your participation in these forums?
 Answer options: It would strongly decrease, It would decrease, It would be unaffected, It would increase, It would strongly increase
 - b. If your participation on the discussion forums was graded how would this affect your participation in these forums?
 Answer options: It would strongly decrease, It would decrease, It would be unaffected, It would increase, It would strongly increase
2. Participation in previous courses (recall question)
 - a. During your last MOOC you took part in, was forum participation part of the assessment (if you take more than one MOOC at the same time, choose the one that started the latest)?
 Answer options: Yes, No
 - b. During your last MOOC you took part in, was forum participation not part of the assessment (if you take more than one MOOC at the same time, choose the one that started the latest)?
 Answer options: Yes, No
3. How do you usually participate in the discussion forums when you take a MOOC?
 Answer options (multiple answers possible): I create new threads, I post new contributions in existing threads, I comment on existing contributions, I vote (either up or down) on posts of other students
4. What degree of participation do you feel should be required to receive full points (number of posts)?
 Answer options: 0 times per week, 1 – 2 times per week, 3 – 4 times per week, 5 or more times per week
5. How do feel about including forum participation in the assessment of a MOOC?
 Answer options: Strongly negative, Negative, Neutral, Positive, Strongly positive