

MOOC's motivate!

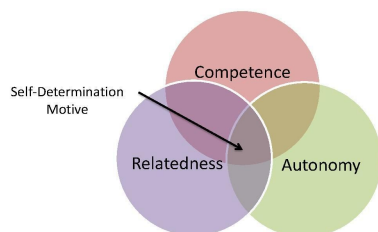
One of my biggest questions, being part of a MOOC, is the question why this kind of education is attractive to me. So I started to look for information about motivation, to see if this would help me to understand my own reasons to start this course.

One of the biggest theories of motivation is from Ryan and Deci (2000). In a youtube movie Dr. Derek Bruff, Director of the Center for Teaching, explains this theory and he tells how we can use this knowledge to apply in education, so learners will be motivated.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFDFE6mK108>

In short, Deci and Ryan (2000) use four concepts, important to be motivated: Competence, autonomy, purpose and community. Competence is about having the feeling you are able to deal with the assignment or the topic. Autonomy is self-governance or rule by the self, meaning students for example have some freedom how to present the assignment, or when they will finish it. Purpose, the third concept, is the need to know why, what for, you are learning. And finally being part of a community, being related to others by accomplish the assignment is also important for being motivated.

Three Innate Psychological Needs Comprise The Self-Determination Theory of Student Motivation



Source: Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (2000). The "What" and "Why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.

Looking at MOOC's, and more specific to Coursera and Scholar, these specific concepts are indeed part of the system. For example, you can choose a course you feel confident about, looking to the goal that is presented in the information you can decide if that is what you want to learn. You can organize the course by yourself, setting weekly goals you can handle, look to the videos when you have time and use sources you like. Ubiquitous learning appeals in every way to autonomy. And finally, using the discussion forums, you are also part of a community, by asking for peer reviews you relate with other students. It is likely MOOC's will also be growing in the future, considering all the ways it helps student to stay motivated to learn.

Two inspiring examples show the effect from MOOC's at motivation. These examples emphasize the profit of the community aspect. First, Suga Mitra gave children self-supervised access to the web. Although this project isn't totally ubiquitous, the place to learn is fixed, the principles of discover new things on your own time still exist. It is amazing to watch in what ways the children developed themselves and how they explained each other the program with great enthusiasm.

https://www.ted.com/talks/sugata_mitra_the_child_driven_education

The other example shows the project of Shimon Shoken. In this Tedtalk, he tells the public about the self organizing computer course. https://www.ted.com/playlists/141/moocs_101

They discovered while the use of the computer is very common, the computer itself looks so complicated, a lot of people don't know how it works anymore. So they decided they wanted their students to built a computer by themselves, thereby giving them insight in the computer itself. By dividing the (practical) knowledge of building a computer into little pieces, and placing this information on the internet, students all over the world start using their course, creating their own computers, building new computers and sharing it on the internet to other people. And by relating in this way, they became part of collective intelligence.

These projects appeals to selfstudy, self exploration and self empowerment.

MOOC's are meeting the needs of students. Students who are diverse, curious and creative. MOOC's motivate them to learn. (https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_how_to_escape_education_s_death_valley?)

Back to my own experience: I recently moved with my family from the Netherlands to California. In the Netherlands I had a job, these days I'm busy driving my kids to school, to sport, to friends, to Right now, going to school by myself, or having a job is not

easy to organize, or even preferable for the kids regarding all the recent changes. Still, I liked to be challenged in a cognitive way, and seeking opportunities to connect to my previous job. A MOOC gives me a chance to develop, to learn, amidst my taxidiving life!

A MOOC motivates me!

Cope, B., and Kalantzis, M. (2016). Conceptualizing e-learning. In B. Cope and M. Kalantzis (Eds), *e-learning ecologies*. New York: Routledge (forthcoming).

Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (2000). *Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being*. *American Psychologist*, Vol 55(1), 68-78.

Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2015). Learning and new media. In D. Scott and E. Hargreaves (Eds.), *The sage handbook of learning* (pp. 373-387). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

