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Why are Faculty Unfavorably Disposed to MOOCs? – A Sharing of Views by Chinese Hospitality Educators

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the negative disposition of many hospitality higher education faculty toward MOOCs, an increasingly prominent delivery mode in pedagogical discourse which potentially enriches student learning. Such enrichment is particularly welcome in the case of hospitality because of its diverse stakeholders and student learning needs. The researchers conducted an in-depth and qualitative exploration with faculty members in mainland China. They combined the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) approach and theory of motivation to propose five dimensions that account for groupings of resistance to deploying MOOCs. These are attributes and complexities, perceived incompatibility, unsuitability for trial, and lack of observational capacity. The study contributes to knowledge by examining the perspectives of faculty who have the capacity to constrain the deployment of MOOCs. The authors suggest that faculty members should be encouraged to embrace MOOCs as an innovative medium for learning and teaching.

KEYWORDS

MOOCs; hospitality educators; resistance to innovation; motivations; diffusion of innovation theory; faculty members

Introduction

An increasing number of higher education institutions have harnessed the capacity of network technologies, including the deployment of massive open online courses (MOOCs) as a medium for on-line teaching (Deale & Lee, 2018; Murphy et al., 2016). The provision of MOOCs has developed rapidly with revenues estimated at 6.8 billion USD (Mordor Intelligence, 2020). Forecasters have predicted that the growth of the MOOCs sector will continue to accelerate, driven in part by the widespread adoption globally of distance learning methods during the COVID-19 pandemic (Business Wire, 2020). The growth of MOOCs provision offers students the prospect of acquiring knowledge through either a computer or through their mobile device, thereby overcoming issues of time, accessibility, and money (Phan et al., 2016; Shapiro et al., 2017). Gaebel and Gaebel (2014) defined MOOCs as freely available on-line classes that have no barriers to entry or enrollment and offer the option of a certification of completion, without requiring the acquisition of academic credit. For lifelong learners, MOOCs are an alternative and potentially positive learning style and environment (Ryan et al., 2016). Furthermore, many universities permit MOOC credits to be substituted for regular class-based modules that are normally delivered face-to-face. The move by higher education institutions to adopt MOOCs as equivalent to some or all of their programs or courses has prompted discussions about the equivalence of on- and off-line qualifications (Xiao et al., 2019). By late 2017, over 800 higher education institutions were offering around 94,000 MOOCs, serving 81 million registrations globally (Annaraud & Singh, 2017). A prominent provider is the edX MOOC platform, established in 2012 by Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). EdX has more than 2,500 online courses which are offered from 140 institutions (edX, 2020).

MOOCs were developed in China somewhat later than elsewhere. The year 2013 was significance because Peking University and Tsinghua University joined the edX platform and Hong Kong University joined Coursera. As well as sharing foreign curriculum resources, Tsinghua University proceeded to create its own Chinese "Xuetang Online" MOOC platform, based on the edX equivalent. Later, NetEase and Ai jointly established the so-called Chinese University MOOC which is now used by 685 participating universities across the Mainland. With delivery continuing to accelerate through the COVID-19 pandemic, it is timely to

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consider the challenges that faculty members have been encountering when dealing with MOOCs, given their role as front-line teachers (Annaraud & Singh, 2017). University leaders have had various motives for developing MOOCs (Weinhardt & Sitzmann, 2019). These include a desire to enhance institutional reputation, recruit prospective students, become immersed within a professional community, develop business models to support future course developments, and attract donors (Annaraud & Singh, 2017).

The hospitality and tourism discipline provides a suitable context to investigate how faculty members view the prospect of developing and producing MOOCs (O'Mahony & Salmon, 2014). There is growing recognition that the hospitality industry will need to embrace lifelong education if it is to adapt and flourish in the face of digital disruptions. Noting the multiplicity of stakeholders in hospitality education – employers, academics, educational institutions, and learners – an increasing diversity of student learning styles is apparent necessitating the provision of knowledge dissemination through multiple channels and in a variety of formats (Ryan et al., 2016). So-called "microlearning" through MOOCs provides a potentially viable option for the professional education of younger workers who need to keep up with the latest industry trends (Goh & Lee, 2018). The MOOC medium can potentially improve the balance between theory and practice across the hospitality curriculum (Dredge et al., 2012; Gross et al., 2017). Despite the obvious potential, little empirical evidence has informed MOOCs in the hospitality and tourism context (Annaraud & Singh, 2017; Goh & King, 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2014). Lin et al. (2018) have observed the relative underdevelopment of MOOCs in hospitality and tourism, leading to a lack of sector-specific studies (Ryan et al., 2016). The current authors are unaware of any previous investigations into resistance toward MOOCs amongst hospitality faculty members although Goh and Sigala (2020) drew upon Diffusion of Innovation theory to provide practical suggestions about integrating ICTs into teaching pedagogies and classroom instruction. In another recent contribution to the literature about online delivery of hospitality courses, Goh and Wen (2021) used the technology acceptance model to examine student perceptions and motivations toward electronic discussion boards in hospitality courses. Perceived utility and ease of use influenced the extent of student engagement.

First developed by Rogers and Simon & Schuster (2003), the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) concept has been widely acknowledged as the most suitable theoretical framework to investigate technology adoption in educational contexts (Sahin, 2006). In the DOI context faculty members may be viewed as gatekeepers for innovations that are subsequently diffused into educational settings. Training is essential for such faculty members if they are to undertake integration into applicable learning environments (Haber & Mills, 2008; Steinke, 2012). Innovation theory may be used to explain both motivations and resistance and how diffusion occurs over time (Rogers et al., 2003). In focusing on barriers, the current researchers combine diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory and motivation theory as a framework to explore if and why a) hospitality faculty members dislike MOOCs and b) to investigate any factors that hinder implementation. The study contributes to theory by addressing the research gap about what constrains faculty from using MOOCs as a medium for teaching. The authors contribute to practice, by proposing prospective encouragement for faculty to use MOOCs as an innovative method.

Literature Review

MOOCs in Hospitality and Tourism Education

MOOCs have been viewed as an innovative form of distance learning (Ryan et al., 2016). Rose and Martin (2012) used the expression *disruptive innovation* to describe the impact of MOOCs on higher education. The commonplace restrictions to entry into degree programs are set aside. Furthermore, the deployment of on-line forums and the absence of entry requirements for MOOCs allows for unlimited participation and open access to on-line resources with the support of fellow learners. Some MOOC websites also inform candidates about how to acquire a certificate of completion (Ryan et al., 2016). The MOOC environment is suitable for lifelong learners and accommodates a diversity of learning styles (Ryan et al., 2016). The capacity of MOOC delivery styles to provide an escape from the boundaries of geography, time, and human resources has even been described as a "mania" or "tsunami" which has "redefined" higher education (Joseph & Nath, 2013; Xiao et al., 2019). The adoption of MOOCs has extended into diverse academic disciplines and is playing a substantial part in both off-line and on-line learning modes (Annaraud & Singh, 2017; Marchiori & Cantoni, 2018). As a reference point, it is noted that traditional online learning may combine asynchronous and synchronous experiences along with expository instruction, active learning, and interactive learning (Means et al., 2009). In the case of MOOC delivery, the content may involve video lectures from renowned subject experts from noted universities and the deployment of multiple-choice on-line quizzes (Deale, 2015).

MOOCs had already been embraced by other disciplines across higher education before reaching hospitality and tourism (Murphy et al., 2016). Despite the somewhat later adoption, it is anticipated that technological developments will accelerate and become increasingly commonplace in hospitality (Murphy et al., 2015). MOOCs are one of an increasing array of emerging training and educational delivery methods (Deale, 2015; Lin et al., 2018). However, without the "rapid development of MOOCs in tourism higher education," a growing gap may occur between "the demand and supply of human resources in the industry" (Xiao et al., 2019). Pre-pandemic training within this particular sector was struggling to keep up in the face of rapid tourism growth and an associated need for a qualified and skilled workforce. This suggests that MOOCs are likely to play an important role in future hospitality education, though it will be important for proponents to take account of the motives of student for pursuing hospitality degrees (Frawley et al., 2019; Goh et al., 2017).

Perceptions Toward MOOCs Amongst Faculty Members

The motivations of faculty members to deploy on-line teaching tools may be influenced by knowledge, perceptions, and skills (Mohamad et al., 2015). Those best placed to appreciate the challenges associated with MOOCs will be Faculty who possess knowledge or experience about distance learning pedagogies and delivery (Carlson & Blumenstyk, 2012). However, some faculty may fear a contraction of employment opportunities if MOOCs become more commonplace in education (Annaraud & Singh, 2017). Such fears may have been compounded through the COVID-19 pandemic with its incumbent job insecurities. Impediments to applying on-line teaching include setting expectations, providing feedback, and interpersonal relationships (Davis et al., 2019)). The latter authors identified the main barriers to teacher adoption of online delivery as setting expectations, providing feedback, and interpersonal relationships. Deale (2015) exploratory research note identified that hospitality and tourism educators were unfamiliar with MOOCs and were at best lukewarm about their adoption. As the current authors will report later, respondents were also comparatively unaware of the MOOC phenomenon.

The Theory of Diffusion of Innovation

In educational settings faculty members play the role of gatekeepers for the diffusion of innovations. If such faculty are to embrace change and to incorporate the tools into relevant learning environments they will need to be trained (Haber & Mills, 2008; Steinke, 2012). Developed by Rogers and Simon & Schuster (2003), the DOI concept has been acknowledged as the most applicable theoretical framework to study the adoption of technologies in educational contexts (Sahin, 2006). In DOI theory, certain characteristics of innovation determine the extent and speed of diffusion. Table 1 shows that the rate of adoption is partially influenced by innovation-related characteristics, including relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, complexity, and observability.

Table 1. Characteristics affecting individual adoption of innovation (adapted from Rogers et al., 2003).

Key Elements	Description	Rate of Adoption
Relative advantage	Innovation has more advantages than the method it replaces.	Positively related
Compatibility	A degree of conformity with existing values, past experiences of potential recipients, and individual needs.	Positively related
Complexity	The ease with which an innovation is understood or used.	Negatively related
Trialability	The possibility that innovation can be tested under certain conditions.	Positively related
Observability	Refers to the extent to which an individual can see the results of an innovation.	Positively related

Faculty Motivations for Using MOOCs

Resistance and motivation are essential elements of DOI theory (Rogers & Simon & Schuster, 2003). Motivational theories derive from how or why people are motivated and recognize the presence of resistance factors (Pinder, 1984). Gautreau (2011) identified seven motivational factors which influence the integration of online tools: rate of pay, responsibility, achievement, advancement, administration and company policy, the work itself, and recognition. Schifter (2000) characterized motivators as personal motivation, previous technology training, scholarly pursuit, and reduced teaching loads. Various studies have illustrated the equivalent extrinsic and intrinsic factors for consistent faculty engagement in online teaching. The factors driving faculty to teach online include intrinsic rewards such as flexibility, challenge, and personal satisfaction (Betts, 1998). According to James and Fairweather (2005), intrinsic motivations are most influential on faculty involvement in online delivery. The most fundamental intrinsic factors are flexibility, personal satisfaction, and attracting more students. Though extrinsic factors play a role – notably stipends, potentially reduced workloads, and studying new technologies – it was found that intrinsic factors have a greater impact on faculty motivations (Parker, 2003; Steinke, 2012).

With the increasing importance of MOOCs in contemporary higher education and rising employment in hospitality and tourism (at least before Covid-19), the MOOC medium offers the prospect of supporting a lifelong learning approach that is consistent with longer lifespans and industry employment to a more advanced age. Noting that hospitality and tourism higher education providers are starting to embrace MOOCs it will be critical to understand opposition on the part of faculty members to ensure more widespread acceptance and promotion of this medium. The study will now address the following research questions:

(1) Why are some hospitality and tourism faculty negatively disposed to MOOCs? And
(2) What are the potential implications of such dispositions?

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers adopt a constructivist paradigm to explore why hospitality faculty are uncomfortable about using MOOCs. A qualitative and exploratory approach is adopted and contends that social contexts shape attitudinal and behavioral differences (Crotty, 1998). Such approaches facilitate interpretation of these phenomena and the exploration of views and perceptions (Heigham & Croker, 2009). The authors conducted semi-structured interviews with a view to understanding central themes in the lives of interviewees (Qu & Dumay, 2011). This approach offers the prospect of achieving depth of insight.

Data Collection

The researchers adopt a purposeful sampling approach because of their intended focus on faculty members who are familiar with MOOCs and are capable of using relevant platforms. It is anticipated that since MOOCs bring substantial disruptions to established delivery modes, the target audience may nevertheless have some reasons to dislike them and/or what they represent. Purposive sampling was deemed appropriate since it allows the ready identification of participants or angles that will help to understand the research problem (Creswell, 2018). The authors collected insights from the intended sample through interviewing and sorted through the findings to the point of saturation, namely the emergence of no new content and perspectives. Interview guidelines were applied to ensure a consistent approach. Congruent with prominent topics across the literature, the researchers assembled the following interview questions: (1) Have you heard of MOOCs? If yes, please proceed to the next question. (2) Are you capable of producing courses on a MOOC? (3) Have you experienced any negative feelings about MOOCs? (4) Where did you hear about MOOCs and can you describe in detail the process of knowing about them? (5) Could you explain in detail the reasons for your negative feelings about MOOCs? (6) Have you ever intended to produce a course on a MOOC, and subsequently abandoned your plan? Please provide a detailed description of this process.

The sample selection was based primarily on answers to the first three questions. The study sample is confined to those familiar with MOOCs and who are capable of proceeding to production, though have some negative feelings. Whereas the preceding questions provide a starting point for in-depth interviewing the final three questions are based on the study objectives. The choice of wording was designed to assist the interviewers to collect a combination of basic, though rich, and comprehensive data. The principal author acted as an interviewer to ensure the authenticity of the data. A neutral attitude was adopted through the interview process, with objective questioning, and encouragement given to interviewees to share their full spectrum of opinions. Extensive notes were taken during the conduct of the interviews in early May 2020. Data were checked carefully after the interviews to ensure that all designated questions had been answered. The interviewers also collected demographic information, including respondent ages, gender, and prior work experiences. Interviews took 40–45 minutes on average. Ultimately, a total of 14 valid samples were collected, with equal gender balance – seven of the interviewees were female (F) and seven were male (M). The respondents were drawn from 12 universities across mainland China, including in Zhejiang, Henan, Guangdong, and Anhui Provinces and in Chengdu (Suchuan Province).

Data Analysis

All of the interview responses were provided in Chinese and were subsequently translated and back-translated between English and Chinese. The data were then coded by the first author and with two others familiar with the study. The review of progress concluded at the point of consensual agreement. Thematic analysis was used for the coding of transcripts. The authors followed Braun and Clark's six phases and analyzed the themes together manually (Braun & Clarke, 2006). They excluded any items that were irrelevant to the research objectives. Figure 1 presents the resistance dimensions that are embedded in the DOI model. The details are outlined in the following section.

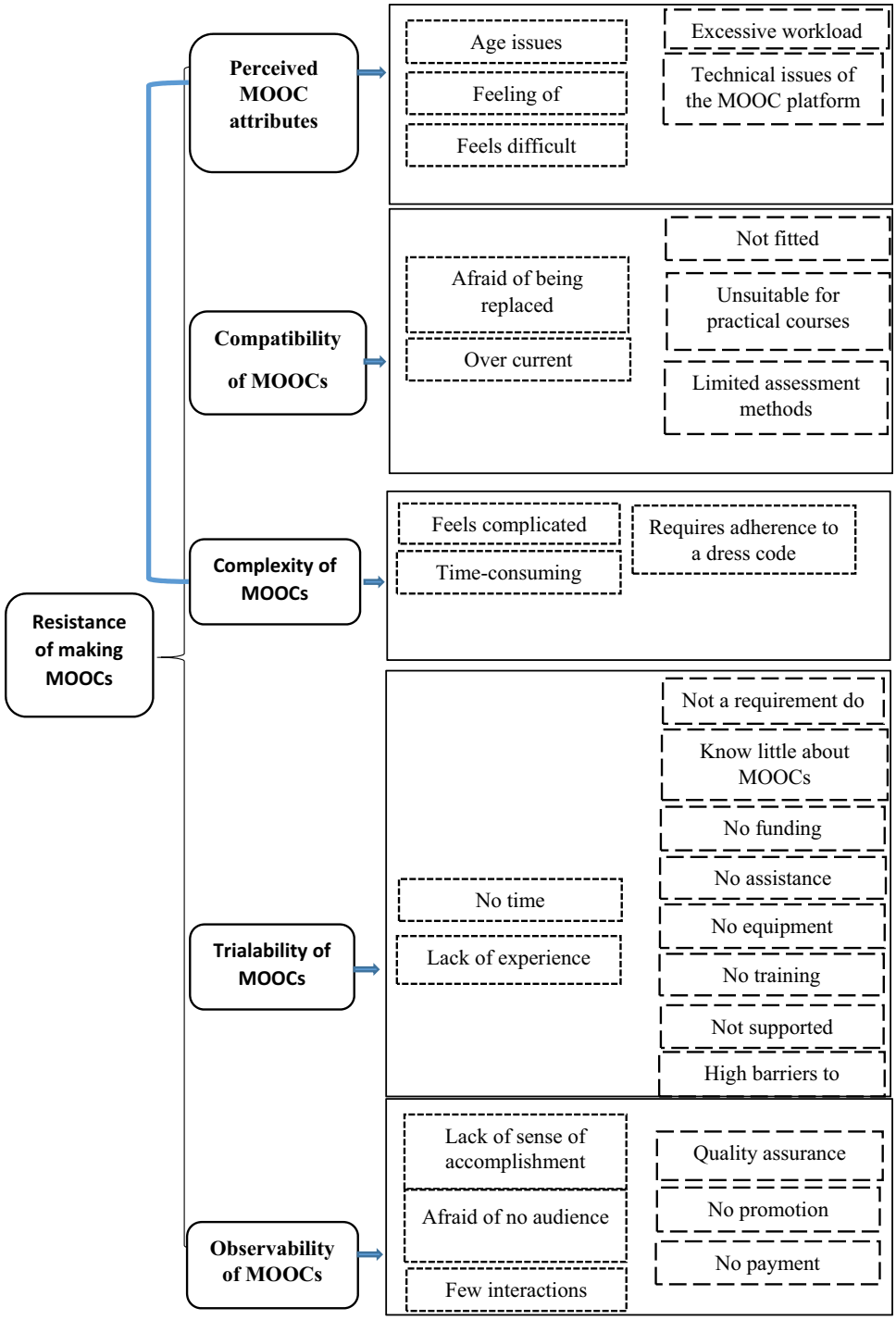

Figure 1. Faculty resistance dimensions to making MOOCs.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 presents the interviewee demographics based on the assembled data. The respondents ranged between age 20+ and 50+ and had work experience ranging between four and 27 years.

The researchers assembled five dimensions of resistance to MOOCs based on the DOI findings: perceived attributes and complexity, perceived incompatibility, trialability of MOOCs, and inability to observe.

Perceived Attributes and Complexity

During interviewing, most respondents noted the complexity of developing MOOCs. Even when they had the opportunity to engage, this was a discouragement. It was

Table 2. Interviewee demographics.

Interviewee	Gender	Age Range	Title	Area of Specialization	Years of Relevant Experience	Affiliation
M1	M	40+	Professor	Tourism planning and economics	27	Zhejiang Gongshang University
M2	M	50+	Professor	Tourism Economics	21	Zhejiang Gongshang University
M3	M	40+	Associate Professor	Hospitality Management	20	Zhengjiang Gongshang University
M4	M	40+	Associate Professor	Hospitality Management	10	Luoyang Normal University
M5	M	40+	Associate Professor	Hospitality Management	10	Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages
M6	M	40+	Associate Professor	Business Management	15	Zhejiang Gongshang University Hangzhou College of Commence
M7	M	30+	Lecturer	Tourism Management	7	Jinan University Shenzhen Campus
F1	F	30+	Lecturer	Hotel Management	4	Gingko College of Hospitality Management
F2	F	30+	Associate Professor	Business Management	10	Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages
F3	F	40+	Associate Professor	Tourism Management	16	Zhejiang Normal University
F4	F	30+	Lecturer	Tourism and Hospitality Management	7	Luoyang Normal University
F5	F	30+	Lecturer	Tourism Management	8	Zhejiang Gongshang University
F6	F	20+	Lecturer	Tourism Management	4	Bozhou University
F7	F	20+	Lecturer	Tourism Management	4	Zhengzhou Sias University

widely held that developing MOOCs is more time consuming that its face-to-face counterpart and may involve special dress requirements.

> I felt it is very difficult. (F4)
>
> It takes a lot of trouble to get a video camera and to produce a recording. I feel it is so complicated. You also have to choose the background and post-production. (F3)
>
> MOOC lectures require a dress code, whereas I can wear whatever I want in my offline class. (F7, F4, F3, F2)
>
> The older professors do not like to produce MOOCs. (M2)
>
> The platform often has bugs and is difficult to operate. (M3. F1)
>
> The technology could not meet the necessary requirements and had limitations. (M5)

Sense of Incompatibility

The dislike of MOOCs amongst some interviewees stems from a view of their inadequacy as a replacement for many university subjects, particularly in the case of the more practically oriented. Some interviewees consider that MOOC-related assessment methods are poorly suited to certain courses. The more practical orientation of many University hospitality and tourism subjects may require different forms of assessment.

> MOOCs are an innovation, but they cannot substitute for face-to-face education. The transfer of knowledge should be extensive and not confined to theoretical conceptualization. In my opinion, MOOC is a popular teaching tool, but courses in MOOC platforms in China seem too theoretical. (M3)
>
> MOOCs are over-reliant on multiple-choice questions for assessments and assignments. Their assessment method is basic, and ill-suited to some practical courses. (M2, F5)
>
> For example, I used the Chinese MOOC this year. The assessment method was too simple, only multiple-choice questions. For the study of knowledge, the most important thing is the application, which requires use by students after graduation. Students may pass the exam, but they may be unable to use the knowledge after graduation. (M4)

Xiao et al. (2019) identified some notable differences from on-campus hospitality management classes, namely: "(1) the insufficient hurdle role of MOOC assessments to verify qualifications, (2) inadequacies in training and assessing higher-order practical competencies, and (3) the unfulfilled role of learners as co-creators and co-assessors." As a complement to the previously reported findings, some current interviewees expressed fear that their jobs would be made redundant by the arrival of MOOCs. Some intrinsic factors also elicited faculty resistance as follows:

> Some instructors will feel that it affects their workload. They fear that if students learn through MOOCs; then they will be unwilling to go to the offline class. There will be fewer offline classes. There will be conflicts in the interests of instructors. They are worried about being replaced by MOOCs. (F3, F7)

Un-trialability of MOOCs

Most current respondents attributed their dislike of MOOCs to barriers such as a lack of experience with the method and also to limited time. Others mentioned that because MOOCs are not compulsory, faculty have had limited opportunities to accumulate knowledge. Some also noted a lack of support whether financial, equipment, training or other.

> I have thought about it. But I did not subsequently apply for funding. My idea is to build on the application which was not approved. If my project is approved and I have funds, I will do it. If I have no funds, I will not do it. (F4)

> I really want to do MOOC. The reason why I haven't done anything yet is that the school has not asked. There is no time to do it, I am so busy. (M1)

> We hope that the school will give us systematic training and help. Schools are required to provide instruments, with supporting facilities. (M6)

> Our school is facing bankruptcy, and the college is unwilling to support or invest in us to make MOOCs. (F3, F6)

> I have some doubts. I lack experience. I lack basic knowledge about MOOCs and have not received systematic training. (F1)

One interviewee mentioned high barriers to entry and that that opportunities to develop MOOCs on the applicable platform are not available to everyone.

> The requirements for Chinese MOOCs are very high. It is a requirement to pass the provincial assessment before uploading the project for construction. (F6

Hsu (2016) identified a significant association between promoting technologies in hospitality education and teacher adoption of in-class technologies. A significant relationship has also been shown between teacher intentions to adopt and budgetary commitment by schools to innovative technology-based instruction.

Cannot Be Observed

A final faculty resistance to MOOCs stems from an inability to enjoy the fruits of innovation. Some interviewees mentioned their unwillingness to be involved because no additional payment is applicable. Others mentioned that the investment of time is unhelpful when applying for promotion. Many interviewees also expressed concerns about the quality of student interactions online, leading to an accomplishment deficit.

> Why should I make extra work for myself? The payment is not equal to my efforts (F2)

> It is a waste of time. MOOCs cannot get you promoted. So, it makes no sense. (F1, F4, M3)

> I can't feel that it is a real class, especially because of the lack of student interaction. (M3, M4, F2, F5, F7)

> It is difficult to interact with students remotely; I cannot obtain a sense of accomplishment. (F4)

Several interviewees mentioned the poor quality of MOOCs. One observed that students prefer MOOCs from famous universities and that those associated with lesser-known institutions have lower appeal.

> As far as I understand, on the platform of Chinese MOOC or edX, for schools like ours, there are very few students who are willing to join. Students are naturally willing to listen to the courses of famous universities instead of ordinary institutions. You put a lot of effort into making it, but no one listens. (F6)

> The quality of MOOCs is not very good. (M3)

Rai et al. (2016) noted that much of the success of MOOCs is attributable to a good reputation on the part of offline universities and teachers (as cited in Xiao et al., 2019).

Conclusion, Limitations, and Opportunities for Future Research

This in-depth qualitative study has provided insights about the thinking of hospitality faculty who are negatively disposed toward MOOCs. It has addressed the question of why this situation has arisen and its implications. Drawing upon DOI, five causes of resistance to MOOCs have been identified. These are: perceived attributes and complexity, incompatibility, untrialability, and that MOOCs cannot be observed.

Previous scholars have deployed the ARCS Motivation model to identify the factors affecting faculty motivations to use online teaching methods (Mohamad et al., 2015). However, the factors proposed by previous authors are rather general and have usually adopted the user perspective, namely: knowledge, perceptions, and skills. The present study has connected educator motivations toward the production of MOOCs, with the characteristics determining the innovation diffusion rate (DOI). By analyzing emergent themes from interviewee comments, the authors proposed factors that affect the rate of innovation diffusion and proposed a systematic summary of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Future researchers have an opportunity to verify and further develop an extended thematic map by adopting a quantitative approach with richer data and undertaking a similar investigation in different settings. They may undertake quantitative testing of how determining factors influence the degree of diffusion of disruptive innovations.

Some research findings are particularly notable. It has been observed that some faculty are reluctant to appear in MOOC recordings, because they feel a need to wear "MOOC appropriate" dress. Future researchers may explore whether this finding is unique to the Mainland China education environment, or whether it also applies in other countries and cultures. Finally, although the current authors have used the expression Observability of MOOCs as a classification of quality assurance in the thematic map, the deployment of quality assurance processes may allay educator concerns. Future researchers may consider quality assurance and the associated system as impacting the diffusion of innovation for MOOCs as a disruptive innovation.

This study can contribute to higher education practice by encouraging institutional leaders to take account of resistance when adjusting future MOOC development strategies. Such leaders may provide more targeted funding, assistance, support systems, training, payments, and promotion for interested faculty members. The urgency to encourage educators in developing and delivering MOOCs and for blended learning has been accelerating through the Covid-19 pandemic. Educational institutions may capitalize on the pandemic experience by deploying MOOCs and other flexible options as a partial replacement and/or supplement to the longer-established face-to-face teaching. This may sometimes require higher education institutions to engage in MOOC production. They may also revise the long-established focus of performance appraisal systems on face-to-face teaching and academic research and consider delivering education online through channels such as MOOCs. Institutions may reward faculty who are willing to produce MOOCs and to teach online. Higher education institutions also need to direct funding to support faculty. For faculty members who are unable to record MOOC videos, educator worries may be defused by outsourcing the process of video recording to professional recording and editing companies. Institutions may also help older and less "tech-savvy" faculty to learn about making MOOCs or to hire a professional team that can help and guide educators in addressing issues.

The findings have evidenced some limitations of deploying MOOCs. It may be necessary to adjust the applicable platforms by improving user-friendliness, diversifying assessment, applying quality assurance, extending opportunities to all, and providing more equitable promotion for the applicable universities. The reputation of universities and their faculty accounts for much of the success of MOOCs (Rai et al., 2016). Based on the currently prevailing environment, less famous universities and faculty have fewer opportunities to become familiar to students via MOOC platforms. Applying a quality assurance system may improve perceptions of the quality of MOOCs and encourage different universities and faculty to participate MOOC Production. It may be possible to "borrow" Quality Assurance (QA) systems from established institutions to measure the quality of MOOC (Xiao et al., 2019). According to Xiao et al. (2019), cooperation may be needed between MOOC platforms and offline programs to address the challenging practical teaching requirements of hospitality and tourism education. Similar issues have arisen through the current study. Interviewees worried that student learning outputs cannot be assessed effectively using the singular course assessment methods provided by the platform. Such worries may be overcome if platforms provide a wider range of assessment methods and/or add plug-ins that assist real-time interactions between faculty and students.

The current study has some limitations. Firstly, the small sample size cannot be viewed as representative of the whole population of hospitality and tourism faculty. Future researchers are encouraged to adopt larger sample sizes from a wider diversity of demographic backgrounds to improve the validity of the research design. Secondly, since the study targeted University faculty members in mainland China, the findings may not apply elsewhere. Interested scholars are encouraged to design comparative studies or expand the study sites to test for prospective new findings. Thirdly, due to the qualitative nature of the research, subjectivity is a potential limitation. Future researchers might adopt a quantitative or mixed-method to provide empirical evidence in support of the verification or development of the perceptions map. Finally, the research team approached the investigation by narrowing down the range of respondents to those with a negative disposition. They acknowledge that an alternative approach would have been to "set the stage" by focusing on issues rather than barriers.

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