

Advancing MOOCs for Development Initiative

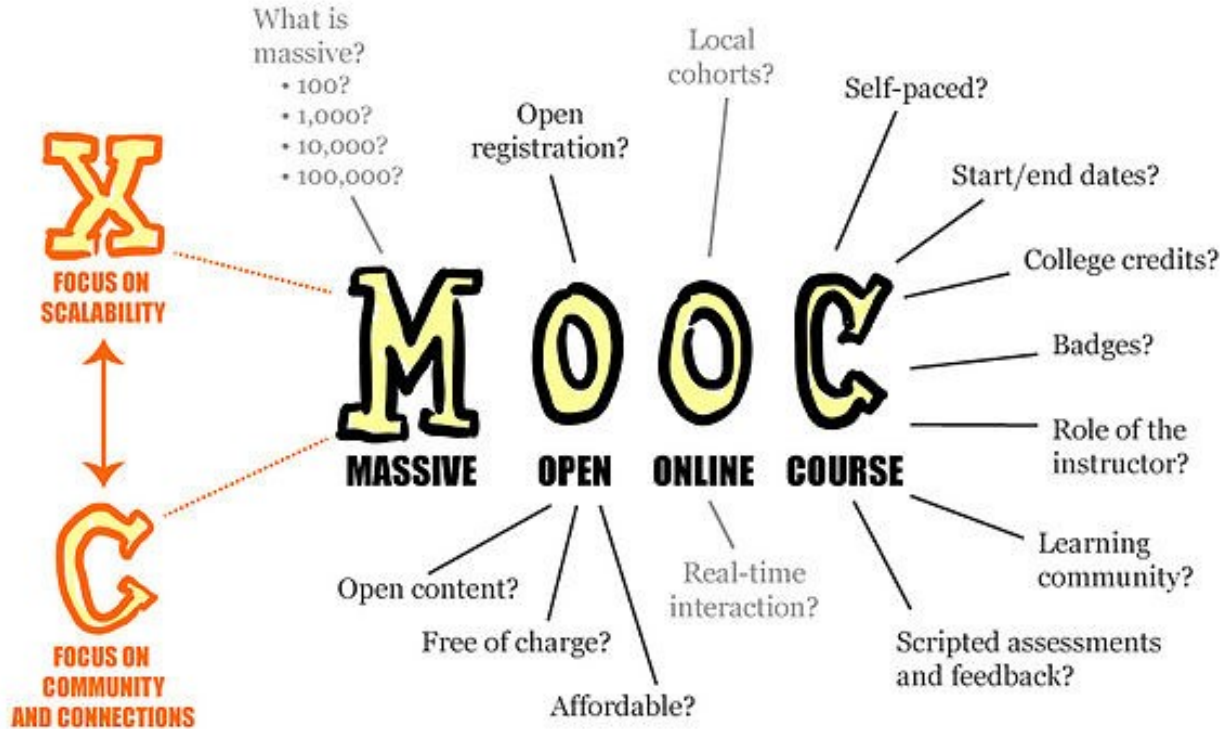
An examination of MOOC usage for professional workforce development outcomes in Colombia, the Philippines, & South Africa



Goals of the Initiative

- Collect data on the use of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in developing countries to better understand their potential for improving employment opportunities;
- Raise awareness of MOOCs among policy makers, employers, and the general public; and
- Determine factors that could lead to increased MOOC usage and higher completion rates of online courses.

What is a MOOC?



Research Questions

- Who uses MOOCs in developing countries, for what purposes, and what are the perceived benefits for users from an employability perspective?
- Who is not using MOOCs, what are the reasons for not participating, and what factors could increase the likelihood for non-users to take these courses?
- What is the general awareness of MOOCs at the government and employer levels, and how might the perceptions influence policy development and workforce decisions?
- What are the general challenges and opportunities for MOOC usage to increase employability for the young workforce in the developing world?

Methodology

- **Convenient sampling:** Total population of MOOC users in the countries is unknown.
- Survey disseminated through **multiple online channels**. **Complemented with field work** (mediated survey collection) to adjust target sample.

Limitations:

- ❖ **Multiplicity of MOOCs** brings inherent biases to the results. Lack of control over content and type of MOOC people engaged in.
- ❖ **Not random sampling:** difficult to generalize results
- ❖ Confusion over **what exactly is a MOOC:** difficult to operationalize

Description of the sample in the three countries

Description of sample in all 3 countries: MOOC users and non-users

Users = 1,400

Individuals 18 years & older who have registered for at least one course



56%

43%

70% are 30 years or younger

60% employed
36% still in school

80% low or medium income

Non-users = 2,254

Individuals 18 years & older who have not registered for a course



62%

38%

83% are 30 years or younger

51% employed
41% still in school

92% low or medium income



90% have internet access at home

41% with basic computer skills



85% have internet access at home

47% with basic computer skills

Key Finding 1:

The socio-economic profile of MOOC users and non-users reflect the populations typically targeted for youth workforce development strategies and poverty alleviation. They come mainly from low and middle income backgrounds and from diverse educational levels.

MOOC user demographic profile per country

MOOC users total sample = 1,400

Individuals 18 years & older who have registered for at least one course



70% are 30 years or younger

60% employed
38% still in school

80% low or medium income



90% have internet access at home



48% with basic computer skills



Half access internet mainly from home | 30% from work



42% on laptop or tablet



26% on mobile phone

MOOC users per country

Colombia = 379



64% are 30 years or younger

72% employed
23% still in school

96% low or medium income



97% with internet access at home

Philippines = 752



86% are 30 years or younger

48% employed
46% still in school

74% low or medium income



81% with internet access at home

South Africa = 269



82% are 30 years or younger

67% employed
26% still in school

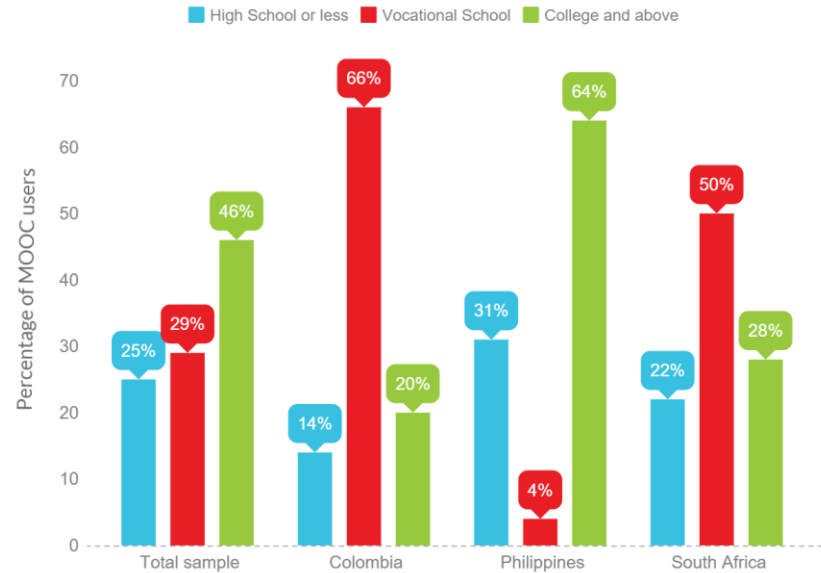
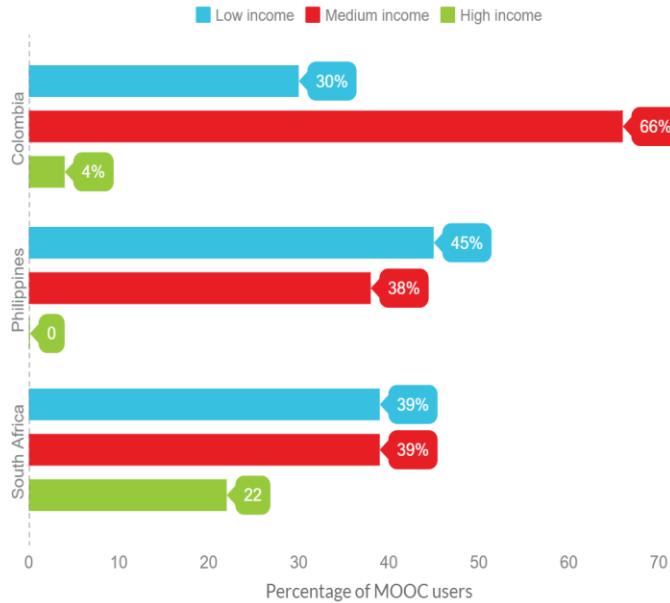
78% low or medium income

77% identify as black, coloured or indian-asian,
22% as white



93% with internet access at home

MOOC users income and educational level is very diverse.



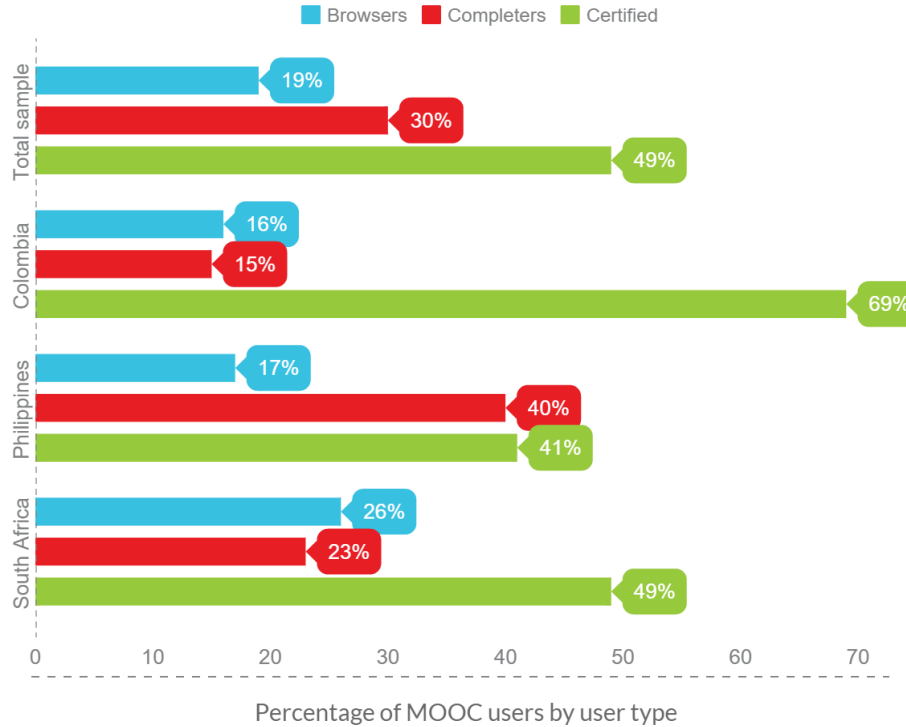
What this finding suggest

- Not a exclusively elite, highly educated population that would discourage a government from taking steps to integrate MOOCs into workforce development and educational initiatives.
- Government programs that currently include MOOCs as part of their strategy are still highly compartmentalized across different institutions. Segmentation and lack of coherent national strategy.

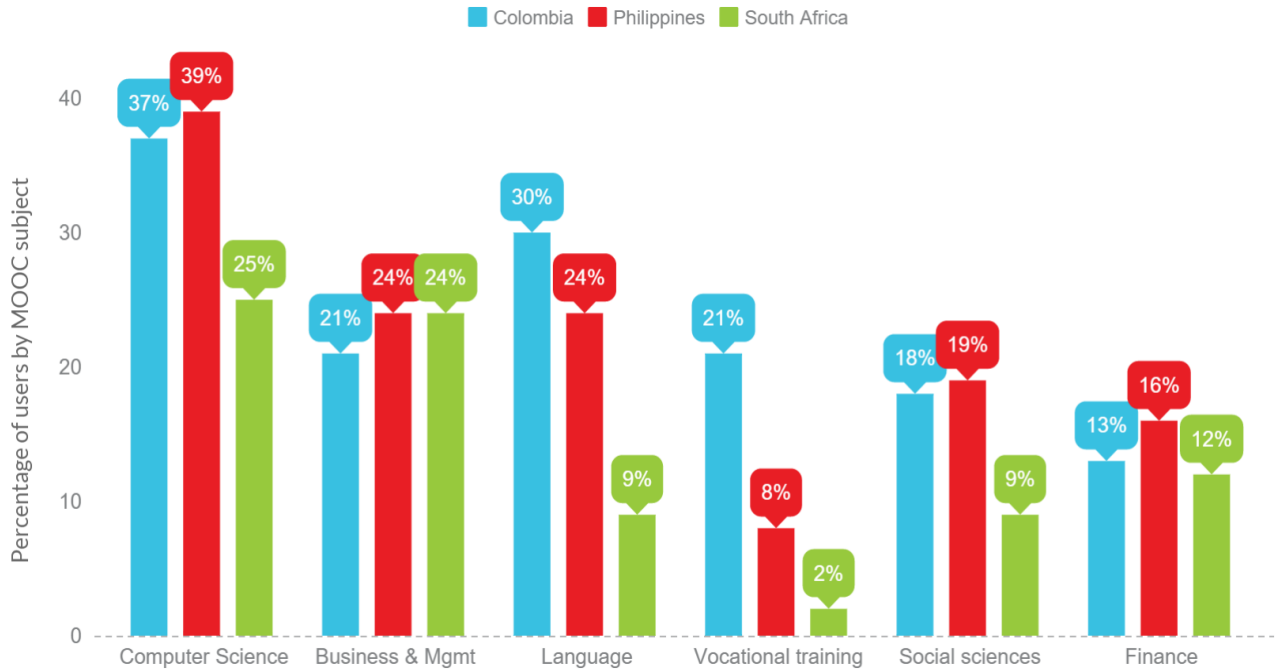
Key Finding 2:

MOOC users across the three countries overwhelmingly complete MOOCs and obtain certification in MOOC courses.

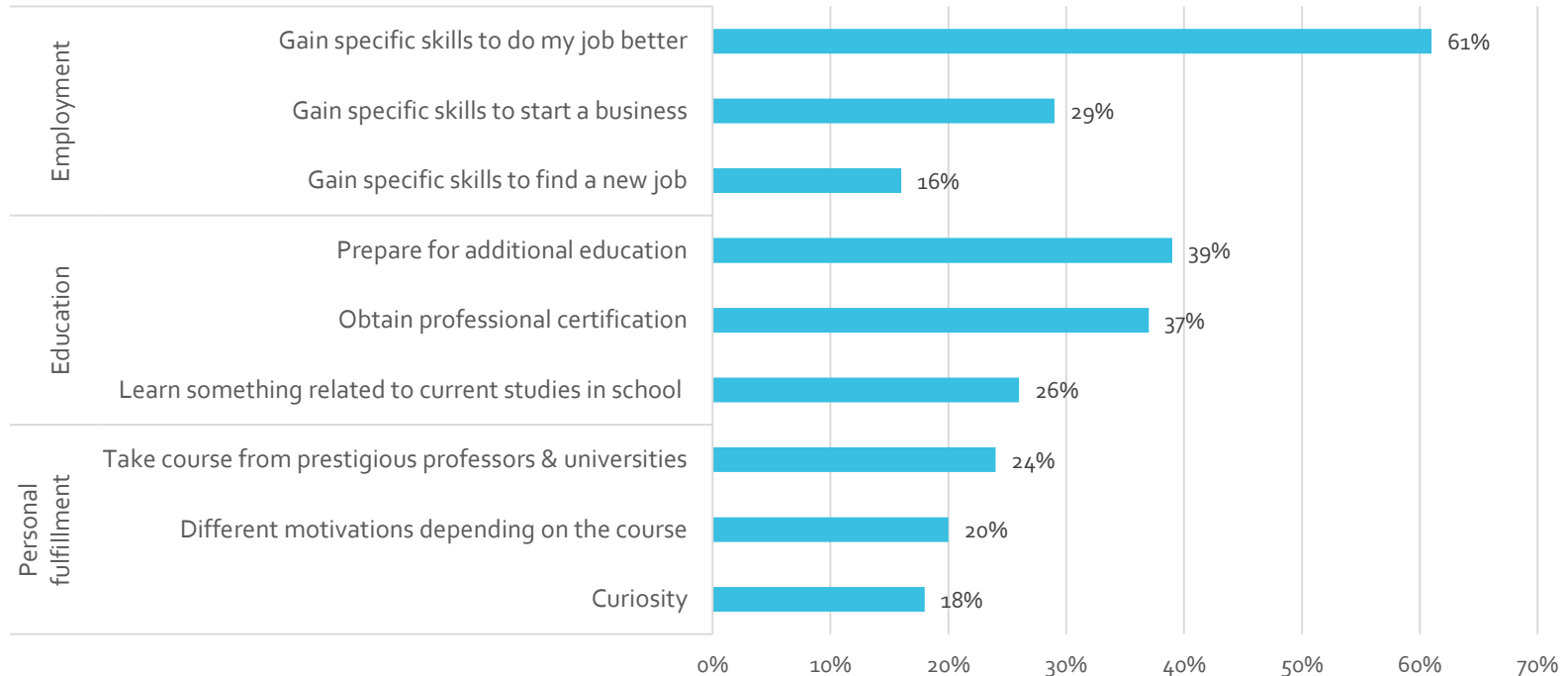
MOOC Completion and certification rates



Computer sciences, language, and business & management are the three most popular MOOC subjects across the three countries.



Gaining specific skills to perform better in their job, obtaining professional certification, preparing for additional education, & finding a new job top motivations of young people to engage with MOOCs.



What this finding suggest

- Countries should look to their own education ministries, or as in the case of the Philippines and Colombia, special education authorities that have been established to promote specific agendas.
- These bodies can play an extremely important role and link between MOOC providers, employers, and and users, lending credibility and a channel to reach large numbers of potential users.

Key Finding 3:

MOOCs represent a viable channel to expand training opportunities for women to gain skills and improve their competitiveness in the labor market, especially in jobs and industries where women are underrepresented.

Women complete and certify in MOOCs at a higher rate than men

Women's participation in MOOCs

- Over a third of these women have taken MOOCs in computer science and business, management, and leadership, areas where women tend to be underrepresented.
- Women MOOC users across the three countries come from low-income backgrounds, particularly in South Africa.
- Lack of awareness of MOOCs biggest obstacles for women to engage with this form of learning.

What this finding suggest

- Government agencies should partner with educational institutions, libraries, and social organizations and implement MOOC awareness strategies that begin in primary and secondary education settings.
- Awareness efforts must encompass the different realities and needs of women in different contexts since they face additional social and cultural obstacles in terms of equal access to education and employment

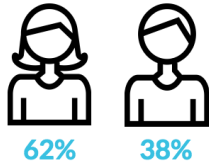
Key Finding 4:

There is a lack of awareness about MOOCs and their benefits for workforce development among the overall youth population, government agencies, and employers, which is a major barrier to maximizing the potential of MOOCs in workforce development.

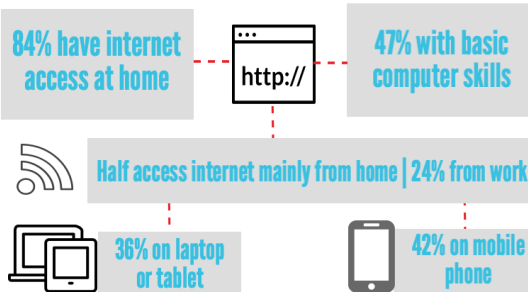
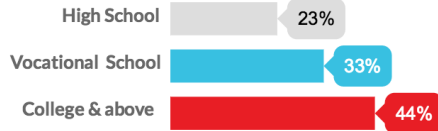
79% of non-users were not aware of MOOCs

MOOC non-users total sample= 2,254

Individuals 18 years & older who have never registered for a course



83% are 30 years or younger
51% employed
41% still in school
92% low or medium income



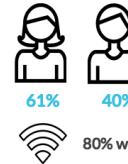
MOOC non-users per country

Colombia = 509



55% are 30 years or younger
66% employed
26% still in school
98% low or medium income
91% with internet access at home

Philippines = 1,076



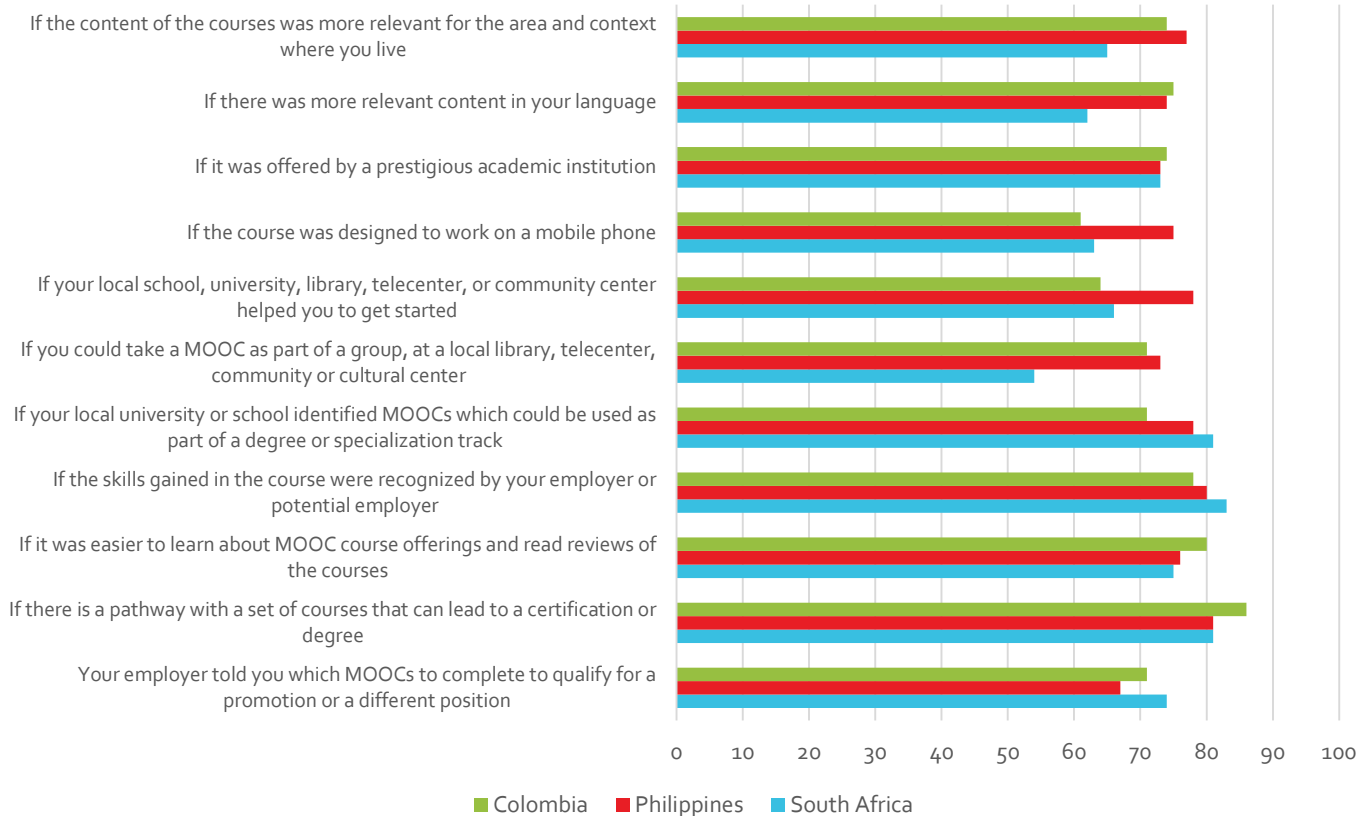
77% are 30 years or younger
48% employed
43% still in school
100% low or medium income
80% with internet access at home

South Africa = 669

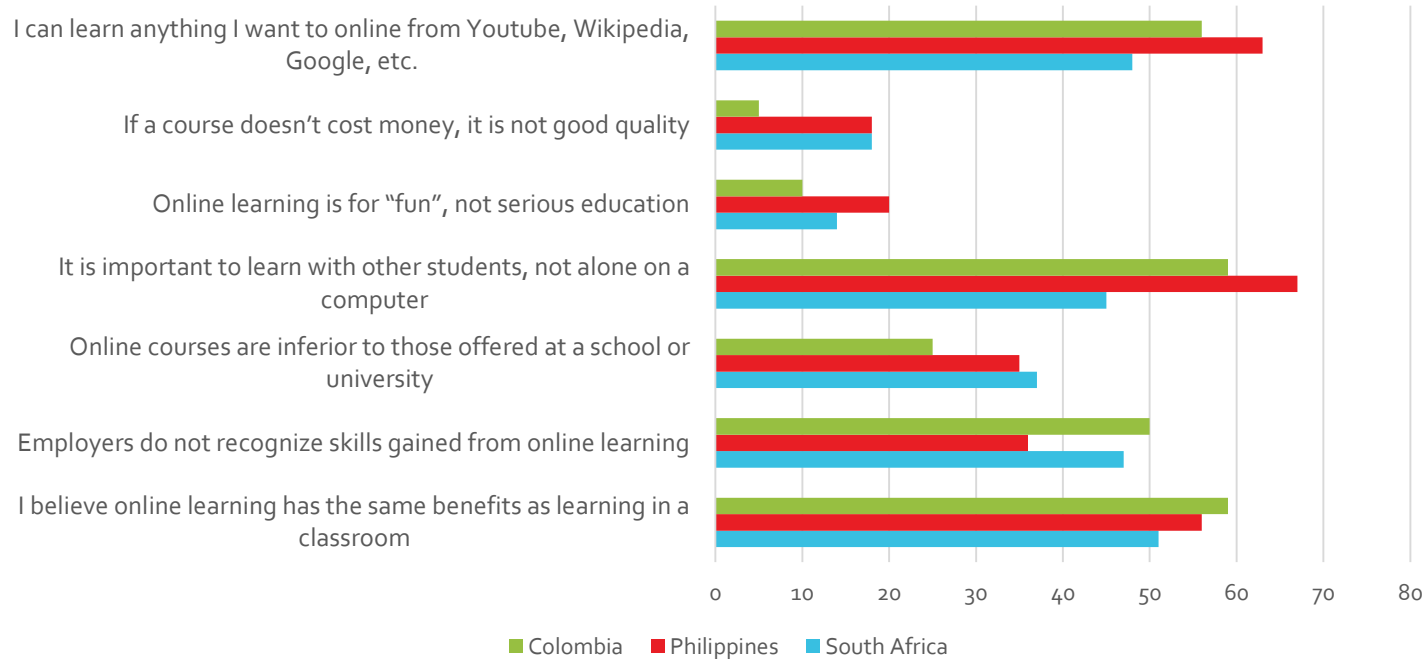


76% are 30 years or younger
45% employed
48% still in school
74% low or medium income
52% identify as black, coloured or indian-asian.
37% as white
84% with internet access at home

Factors that could increase MOOC use among youth.



Harvesting positive general youth perceptions about online learning



What this finding suggest

- MOOC providers should increase their presence in social media to raise awareness among youth about these learning platforms and their potential use for advancing employability goals. Use of social media channels to reach to young people
- MOOC providers should devote efforts to partnering with intermediary institutions such as schools, public libraries, and other social organizations that work with young people.

Key Finding 5:

Employers have generally positive perceptions about MOOCs for advancing or starting careers, but an applicant listing a MOOC course on his/her CV doesn't make a difference in their hiring decisions.

Employer's perception of MOOCs

- Employers across the three countries recognize the value of MOOCs for building up skills of young people starting and advancing their careers.
- However, for hiring or promotion decisions, a completed course does not make a difference
- Employers value the end results in job performance more so than the means through which people learn the skills to perform it.

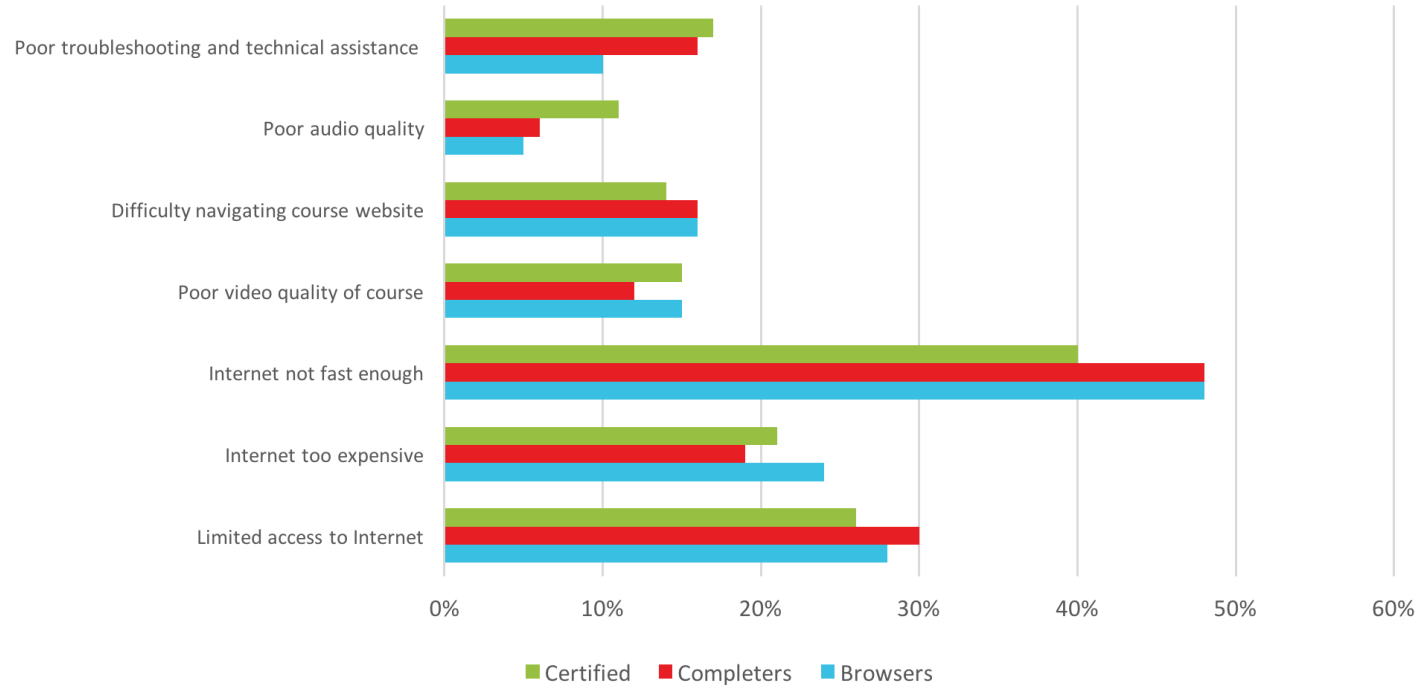
What this finding suggest

- Government workforce development agencies and MOOC providers should work together with employers to jointly identify the skillsets needed for various industry sectors and job categories.
- MOOC providers can develop MOOCs curricula that address these skills and teach them in effective ways.

Key Finding 6:

Slow internet speeds and quality of access to technology are obstacles for youth when engaging with MOOCs, which even when free, can incur data and time costs.

Internet speed the biggest challenge for young people when engaging with MOOCs.



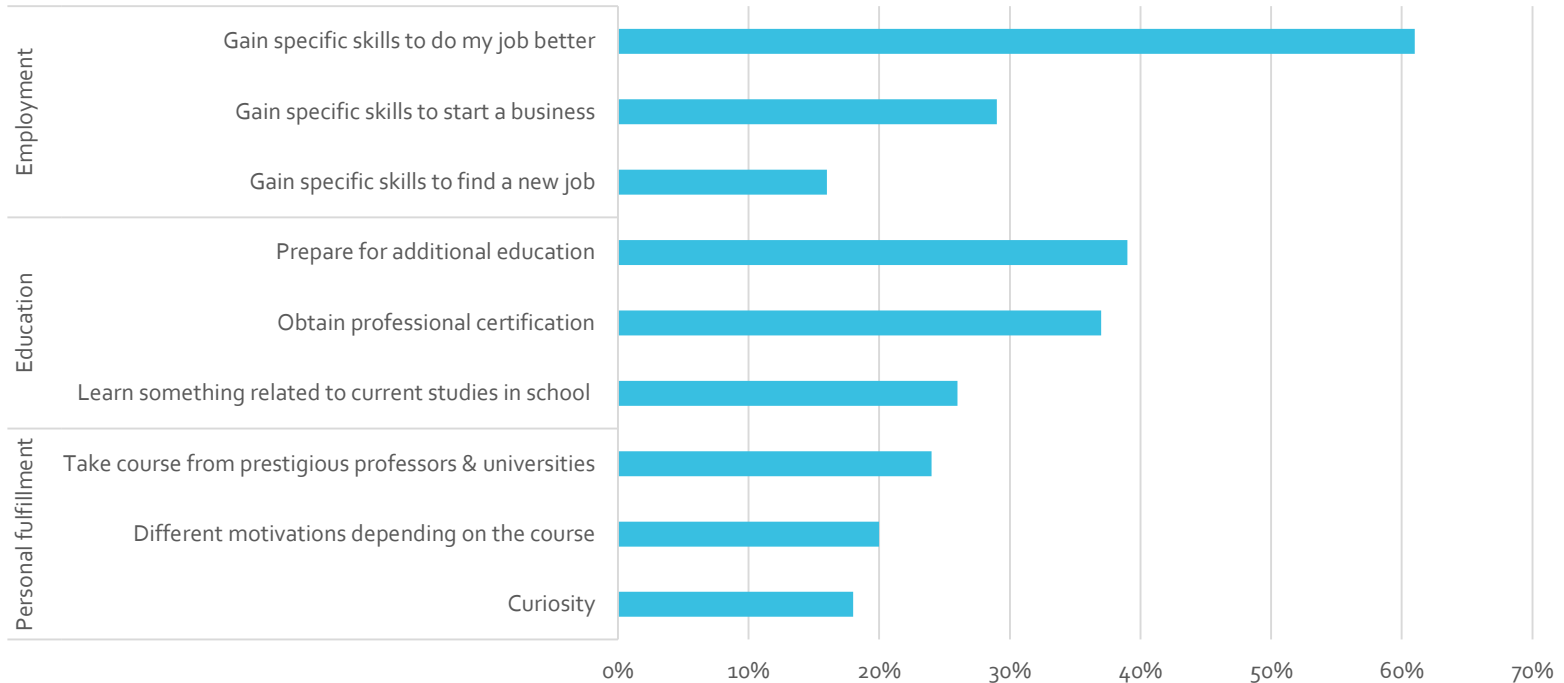
What this finding suggest

- Government agencies and MOOC providers should consider partnering with local organizations that provide internet and technology access and a physical space for learning.
 - Increasing quality digital and physical access to promote MOOC uptake and improve user experiences can be achieved by partnering with educational institutions, libraries, and social organizations.
- MOOC providers should explore providing less bandwidth-intensive course materials and increase the offering of courses designed to work on mobile devices.

Key Finding 7:

Certification is important, but it is a nuanced picture. Most young people in these countries use MOOCs as a means to prepare for professional certification. It is a means to an end.

Young people's motivation for participating in MOOCs

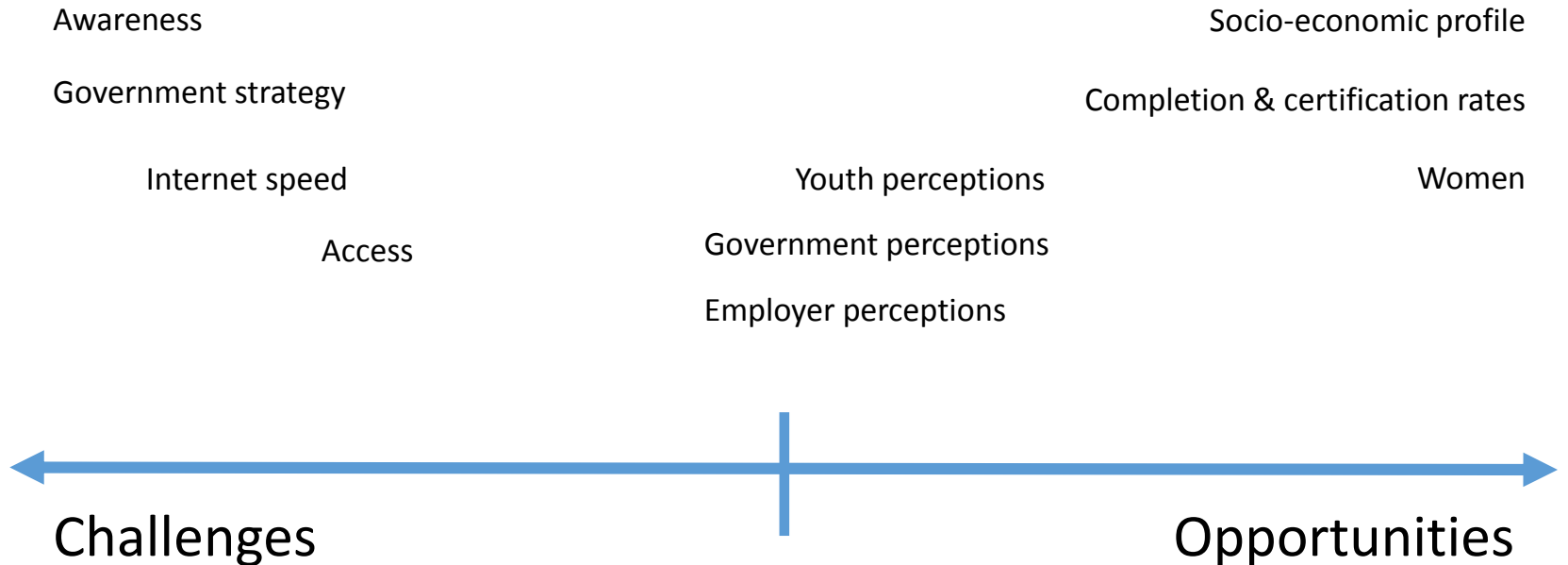


What this finding suggest

- Government agencies should provide guidelines and recommendations for employment pathways and courses to gain certification.
- More so than in the U.S. and other similar environments, governments in many countries have a much larger role in education policy, and MOOCs are no different.
- Governments can be more effective if they previously identify a set of MOOC courses young people can take to prepare for professional certification, specialization or that can lead to a degree.

Conclusions

Multiple opportunities; Challenges surmountable



Food for thought

- **MOOCs offered by prestigious institutions** is attractive for young people to engage in these learning platforms. However...
- **Appropriation of MOOCs by government-employment agencies** in less-developed countries seem to be a game changer.
 - In completion rates and educational outcomes
- **Employability outcomes are determined by context.** Labor markets in less-developed countries place more value in a formal degree.
- Interesting possibilities for future research

Report available

<http://tascha.uw.edu/2016/04/new-report-tascha-study-on-moocs-in-developing-countries-reveals-half-of-users-receive-certification/>

THANK YOU

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