Bonk, Lee, Kou, and Sheu, Roundtable, AECT, 2013
Documenting Life Change from Open Educational Resources and
Participation in Massive Open Online Courses
Open-Ended Questions

(28) Can you describe your most interesting or successful informal learning experience? What did you accomplish?

(30) Why did you want to do this learning activity or task? What was your purpose or goals? Please describe what captured your interest.

(31) Has your life changed in a small or big way as a result of this informal learning activity or experience? If so, how?

(32) What was the key moment when learning informally with technology where you felt a personal change? If so, please describe that moment, as best you can.

(34) Did you face any obstacles or challenges during this time when learning informally with technology? If so, how did you overcome them?

MIT Data:
Inspires and Changes Ed Systems
(18-20 year old male, Middle East)

When i was 14 years old i found MIT OCW during my search in..(physics) by Prof Walter Lewin looked really interesting and i became interested in physics. To be honest OCW changed my way of living and i found how beautiful physics is...informal learning is interesting because you can have access to some of the best courses provided by the best universities in the world...MIT OCW or Stanford open courses have also changed the educational system in some poor countries and have taught the teachers and professors in those countries how to teach a subject in a modern way.

open course

MIT Data:
Self-Taught on Social Media
(21-30 year old unemployed female, North America)

At first my purpose was to fulfill boredom ...After graduating with a MS, I was faced with unemployment. I took the opportunity to read blogs, watch Youtube videos, and more to learn about blogging and social media. Since than I have become well versed in social media and other business topics and started a business... I decided not to pursue a PHD because I am learning a more rapid pace. Instead of spending 5 years in school, I can be flexible and work on what I am learning.

MIT Data:
Enhances Current Job Prospects
(31-40 year old male, Asia)

I learnt scheme from MIT OCW. Which helped in learning elisp/lisp. The programming techniques increased my software design knowledge. Algebra - mit ocw course was very useful, it helped me to refresh the basics of Digital signal processing. - I have learnt a lot of "applying my knowledge" than just learning the "theory" - Various online classes allow for multiple perspectives of the same topic thus showing us how the same thing can be applied in different fields.

Apply Now

MIT Data:
Prepares to Reenter University
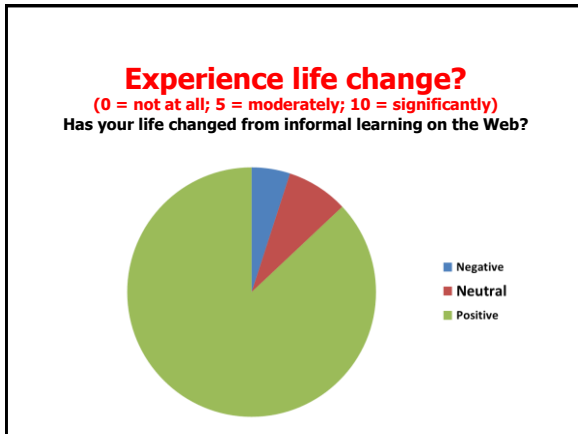**(41-50 year old male, Middle East)**

Most interesting experience of my own was my use of MIT OCW to refresh on Calculus. I purchased the textbook and followed one of several calculus options on the site. This was quite successful in re-introducing Calculus, as a prep to re-entering college 28 years after graduation - this time to study for a Master's.

MIT Data:
Retiree Develops New Hobby
(65 year old male, North America)

I retired from education I became a lifestyle entrepreneur. I was trying to learn software to develop a business website for our sailing business. I discovered...Lynda.com. I was learning web development, video editing and photoshop. I realized that I could learn this software without going to a formal class and that was an "eureka" moment.. My wife and I travelled and started a yacht delivery and training business that has taken us all over the world. We learned technology and social media as we travelled and ended up with many fantastic experienced in some very exotic places. We taught ourselves web development and have been figuring out online learning as we went. Now at 65 years of age we are going back to university to take a Computer Science Degree and start a new tech business relating to interactive educational media and games. All very exciting :-)

Experience life change?
(0 = not at all; 5 = moderately; 10 = significantly)
Has your life changed from informal learning on the Web?

- Negative
- Neutral
- Positive

Blackboard Data
Life Changing Example #1

Yes. I plan to focus my Ph.D. research on alternative forms of learning (informal DIY) and credit (like open badges) and the changes higher ed and employers will have to make to accept these forms of credit.

Blackboard Data
Life Changing Example #2

It has made my job much easier and it's been easier for me to execute certain tasks, making me more willing to take on bigger challenges. It was also shown me how enjoyable it is to learn a computer language. It opened my mind to considering possibilities in this area. It also made my husband respect my ability around computers a bit more.

Blackboard Data
Life Changing Example #3

My life has changed in a big way. I used these new skills to create a small business that supplements my income. I couldn't use this income soley to support myself, but it does pay some bills.

Blackboard Data
Life Changing Example #4

Without the opportunity to learn informally, my options within my doctoral program would be limited to the ideas and experience of the three instructors in my program track. I would be graduating with a firm grasp of 20-year old dated ideas!

We thank you for attending!
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Email: curt@Indiana.edu; mlee7@uh.edu; xkou@Indiana.edu