

LEAD2 MOOC Report
LEAD2 MOOC University Governance and Academic Leadership for Senior Leaders
Edition 5: March 2021 – July 2021

PROJECT

Enhancing Academic Leadership and Governance of Chinese and European Universities in the
Context of Innovation and Internationalization (LEAD2)
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WP2 (D2.1 Improvement and implementation of MOOCs)
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I. INTRODUCTION

The LEAD2 MOOC is part of the LEAD2 project, aiming to improve knowledge, skills and competencies in university governance and academic leadership. The MOOC is open for all participants regardless of their countries, institutions, or academic positions. In March 2021, the English and Chinese version of the fifth edition of the MOOC on University Governance and Academic Leadership for Senior Leaders was launched with 446 participants registered.

Participants were invited to fill in the welcome survey to evaluate users' expectations regarding the course, which included closed-ended and open-ended questions. Through utilizing a Likert scale, close-ended and open-ended questions query participants' level of agreement on their motivations for taking the course, the time they planned to spend for the course completion, their prior experience regarding online learning and professional training, their expectations for joining the course. Of 446 participants who registered for the course, 103 respondents voluntarily took the survey. After collecting and cleaning data, data analysis has been set up: descriptive statistics have been calculated for the close-ended questions, while the qualitative approach has been applied for the open-ended questions.

To that end, the report presents the results of this evaluation as follow:

Socio-demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gender •Age •Education attainment •Role •Region of residence
Motivation for taking the LEAD2 MOOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Main reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOC (closed-ended questions and open-ended questions)
Prior experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Professional development courses •Hearing about the LEAD2 MOOC
Expectations related to the MOOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reasons for taking the course •Time planning to spend •Challenges to address •Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills to develop (closed-ended questions and open-ended questions) •Personal and professional goals (open-ended questions)

II. RESULTS

2.1. Sociodemographic characteristics

This section of the report presents the information regarding the participants' sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, region of residence, age, educational attainment, and academic roles. The results are depicted in Table 1.

(N=103)	Category	Statistics	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	67	65
	Female	35	34
	Missing	1	1
Age (M = 36.06, SD = 10.51)	22-29	29	28.2
	30-39	28	27.2
	40-49	26	25.2
	50 or more	12	11.7
	Missing	8	7.8
Educational attainment	Ph.D, J.D, or M.D (or equivalent)	31	30.1
	Master's Degree (or equivalent)	37	35.9
	Bachelor's Degree (or equivalent)	23	22.3
	Other	12	11.7
Academic role	Non-manager academic staff	20	19.4
	Department head, (Vice) Dean	23	22.3
	(Vice) Rector	1	1
	Other	42	40.8
	Missing	17	16.5
Region of residence	Africa	13	12.6
	Asia	40	38.8
	Australia	2	1.9
	Europe	18	17.5
	Middle East	8	7.8
	America	14	13.6
	Missing	8	7.8

Table 1. Socio demographic characteristics of the participants

As can be seen from Table 1, participants from the course edition from March to July 2021 were predominantly male (65%). The mean age was 36.06 (M=36.06, SD= 9.14). When the

education levels of participants were asked, 35.9% reported to have a Master's degree, 30.1% of users reported having Ph.D's degree or equivalent, and 22.3% reported to have Bachelor's degree or equivalent, and 11.7 % reported having other certificates. Regarding the current academic roles, a majority of participants reported to hold other academic role in their institutions (40.8%), 22.3% of users reported holding academic positions such as head of department, dean or vice-dean, 19.4% of the participants reported not holding manager academic staff position while only 1% selected "(Vice) Rector" option. Concerning the region of residence, participants came from different countries in the world. Of these, there were 38.8% of users who came from Asian countries, 13.6% of the respondents who came from America, 17.5% reported that they came from European countries, and 12.6% of the users who came from African countries, 9.7% of the respondents reported that they came from different countries in the Middle East or Australia.

2.2. Closed-ended questions

2.2.1. *Motivation for taking the LEAD2 MOOC*

Participants were asked about the reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOC. Details on this can be seen in Figure 3. More than 70% of survey participants report that they want to find networking opportunities for further research and educational collaborations, 64% reported that they want to connect with the top scholars and/or academic leaders from across different nations (41%). 61% of the users believing that the certificate awarded will help them to have a managerial position in a university. In comparison, 60% of the respondents chose the reason of learning the current approaches and trends in higher education governance through MOOC is convenient for them. 53% of the participants wanted to gain deeper insights into the Chinese and/or European higher education structure and governance. 49% of the users reported wanting to receive different practical ideas that can be applied in their context and 47% of the users reported wanting to learn more about university governance and academic leadership practice in China and in Europe. Around 40% of the participants chose the other options: better understand the practices and decisions of academic leaders in their institution, gain new or broaden existing academic leadership skills, personally enjoy learning about university governance and academic leadership.

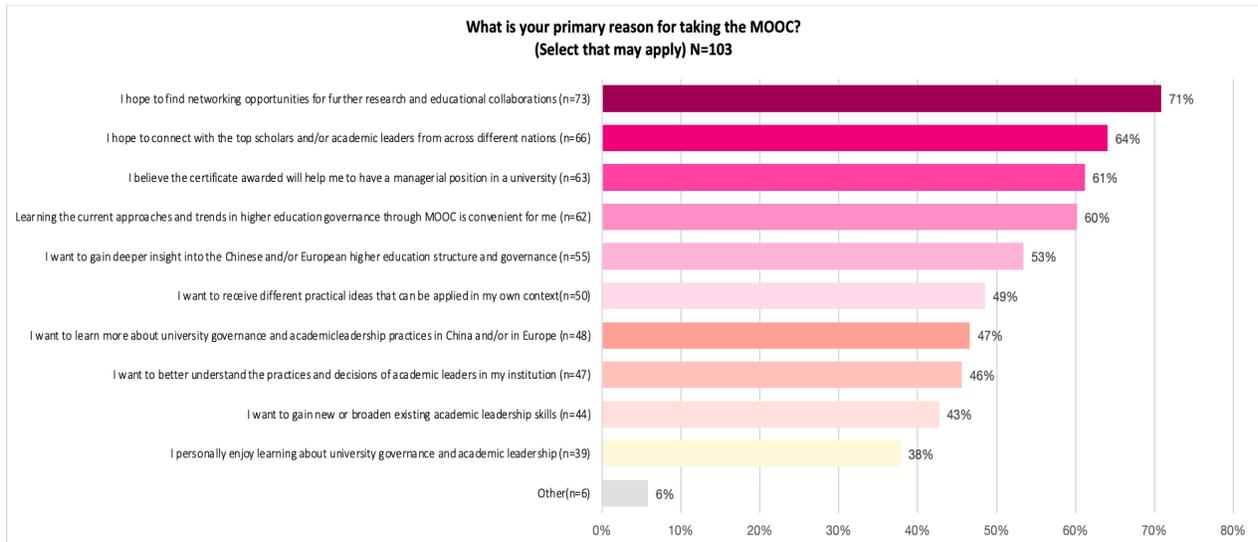


Figure 1. Reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOC.

2.2.2. Prior experience and hearing about the LEAD2 MOOC

Below is the set of variables related to previous experiences of the participant regarding other online courses, professional development courses, and how they heard about the LEAD2 MOOC.

2.2.1.1. Taking other online courses

As users' prior experience of using online platform significantly affect their learning achievement and satisfaction, the MOOC participants were asked whether they have taken an online course before. The findings reveal that respondents predominantly had experience with some online courses on Canvas Network or/and Coursera. Besides, a minority of users who had never taken an online course before. The results (figure 3) show that Canvas Network was the predominant option voted by participants (56%) which is in line with the results for the previous LEAD2 MOOC courses. Of total, 39% was filled by Coursera. Around 20% was filled by other platforms including Exd, Future learns, Udacity while the percentage of never taken an online course before were only 5%.

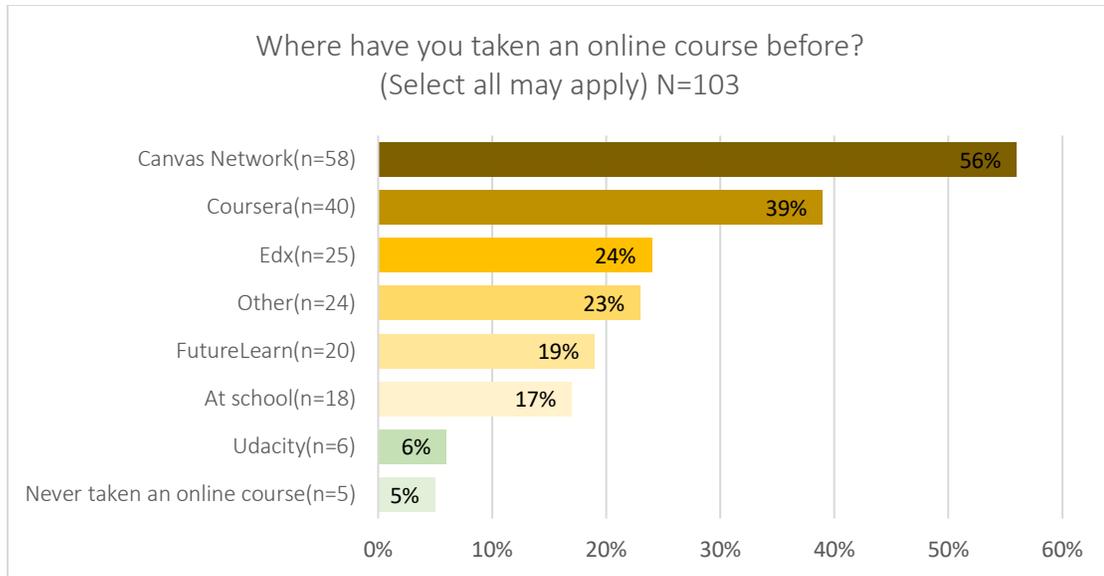


Figure 3. Taking other online courses

2.2.1.2. Prior experience with professional development training on academic leadership

Participants were asked whether they have participated in any professional training or course about university governance and academic leadership before. The findings reveal that a majority of the participants have not experienced with professional training on this theme. It can be seen in Figure 3, a majority of the participants have not experienced with professional training on this theme before (53%) while the number of respondents who did experience were 46%.

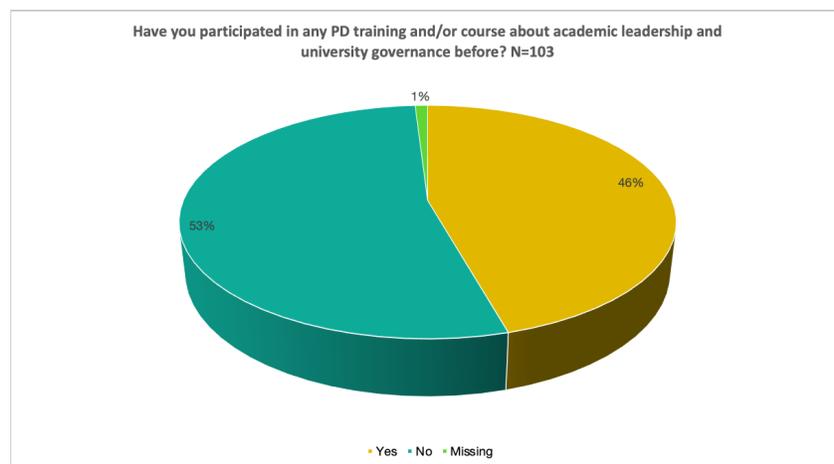


Figure 3. Previous experience with professional development training on academic leadership.

2.2.1.3. Hearing about the LEAD2 MOOC

Users were asked about how do they know about this MOOC. In general, participants know the MOOC from a web search or through a newsletter/website of the university. The findings evidently show the importance of web search, networking, and social media in advertising the online course on university governance and academic leadership.

The results are depicted in figure 4. The findings reveal that knowing about the MOOC from the web search received the highest votes, which accounted for 26% of total observations, followed by through a newsletter/ website of the university (25%). Several participants reported that they know about the MOOC from social media site (e.g., Facebook) or from a friend/colleague/ professor (23% and 15% respectively). Only a few of users reported that they hear about the MOOC through the university event (9%) or because their institution is a LEAD/LEAD2 partner (8%).

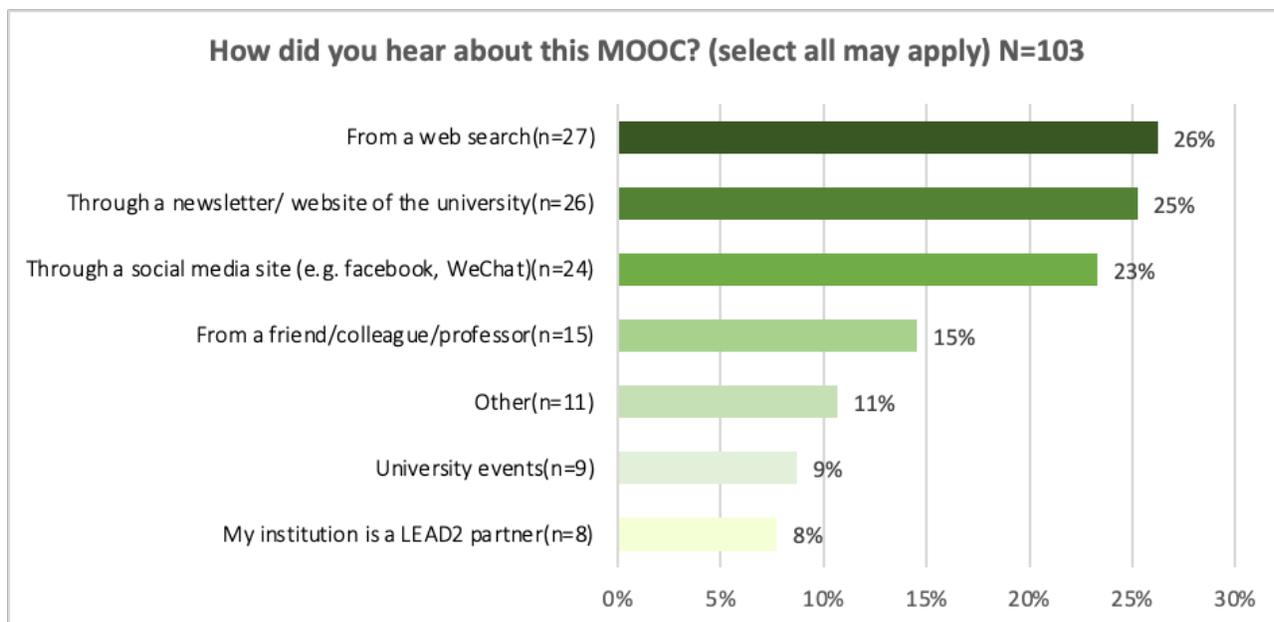


Figure 4. How did participants hear about the LEAD2 MOOC.

2.2.2. Expectations related to the LEAD2 MOOC

2.2.2.1. Time planning to spend

In the expectation category, learners were also asked about the number of hours per week they planned to spend on the course. Between 1 and 2 hours and between 2 and 4 hours were predominantly chosen by respondents in the course.

It can be seen in figure 5, about 34% attendees reported that they intended to spend 1-2 hours per week for learning while 26 % of participants wanted to spend more between 2 and 4 hours a week learning the course. Several users chose the time schedule more than 6 hours (20%), between 4-6 hours (16%), and less than 1 hour (5%).

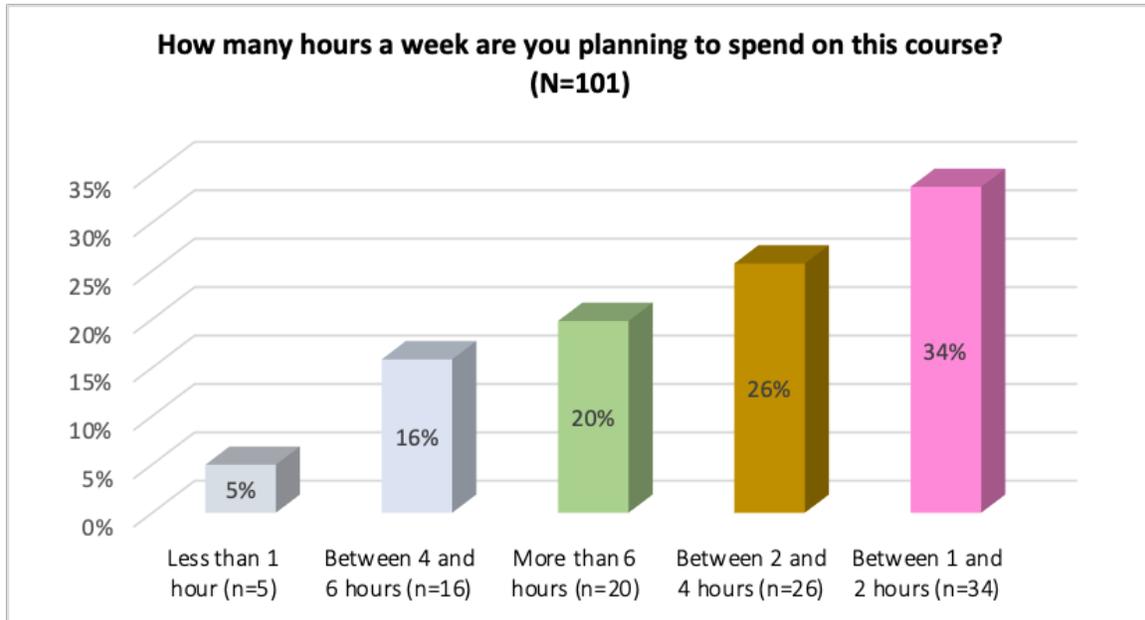


Figure 5. Planned number of hours a week to spend.

2.2.2.2. Challenges to address

Figure 6 plots the percentages of users' expectation on the effectiveness of the course regarding given challenges. In general, users predominantly chose between the two options namely very helpful or extremely helpful. In other words, that a majority of respondents believed that the MOOC will be very or extremely useful to address the ongoing challenges within academic institutions.

Participants were asked to evaluate whether the course will be useful to address the challenge of changing university governance structures. In general, a majority of users believed that the course will be very helpful or extremely helpful to address the chosen challenge. As shown in figure 6, participants predominantly chose the option "very helpful" (38%), followed by "extremely helpful" option (34%). While the percentage of users who reported "moderately helpful" is 19%, just a few numbers of users reported "slightly helpful" or "not at all helpful" (9%).

As for the challenge of globalisation and internationalisation, a majority of participants agreed on the argument that the course will be very useful (48%) or extremely useful (31%) to address the specific challenge regarding globalization and internationalization. Following the two

most frequent choices, 20% of the users thought the course is moderately useful. A few of respondents supported the argument that the course will be not at all useful (2%).

Concerning users' perception on the usefulness of the course with regard to addressing the challenges of research and innovation capacity of the university, participants predominantly chose the option "very helpful" and "extremely helpful". To be specific, a majority of participants agreed on the argument that the course will be extremely useful (37 %) or extremely useful (34%) to address the given challenge. Following the two most frequent choices, 20% of the users thought the course is moderately useful. Only 9% of respondents supported the argument that the course will be slightly useful.

The results of users' expectations toward the usefulness of the course on addressing the challenge of changing academic leadership skills and knowledge are indicated in figure 6. As shown in figure, 42 % of respondents reported "very helpful" and 38 % of users reported "extremely helpful". A few of participants chose option "moderately helpful", "slightly helpful" or "not at all helpful".

Participants were asked to evaluate whether the course will be useful to address challenge of academic leadership for internationalisation. Notably, a substantial majority of respondents expressed high expectation on the productiveness of the course on addressing the selected obstacle. As can be seen in figure 5, respondents predominantly chooses the two options of "extremely helpful"(40%) and "very helpful" (37%). 17% of the users reported "moderately helpful" while the number of respondents who chose the top options of "slightly helpful" and "not at all helpful" was just 7%.

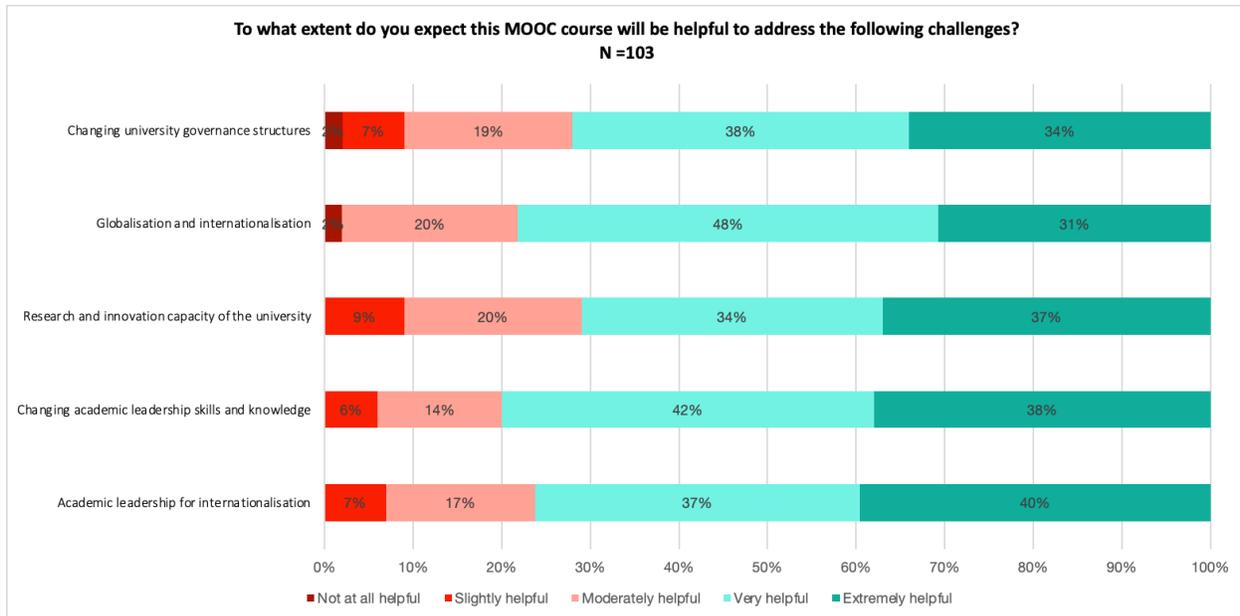


Figure 6. Percentage of expectations on how helpful the MOOC will be to address a given challenge.

2.2.2.3. Competencies, knowledge, skills to develop

Users were asked the extent to which they believed the course will provide them with upgraded specific competencies, knowledge, and skills. The results are plotted in figure 7. In general, a majority of participants agreed that the course will be useful in order to understand about different leadership approaches in university governance, master academic leadership skills, understand current challenges for HEIs, and gain knowledge about knowledge about university structures.

As shown in figure 7, the highest frequent options were for understanding about different leadership approaches in university governance and mastering academic leadership skills (73% and 71% respectively) which is in line with the results of the previous MOOC course. 70% of observations were filled by the option of understanding about current challenges for HEIs and knowledge about university governance structures. 49% of total observations were for grasp of university governance structures in EU and China while only 10% of observations were for other choices.

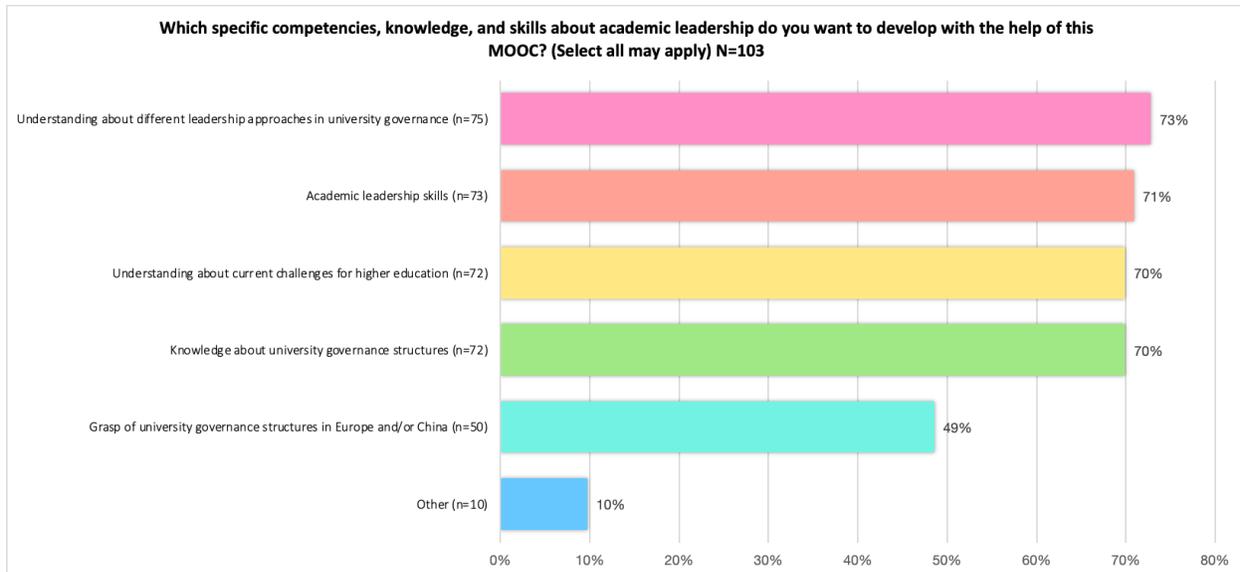


Figure 7. Specific competencies, knowledge, and skills to gain about academic leadership.

2.2.3. Effects of demographic characteristics on users' expectation on given challenges

In order to evaluate the extent to which socio-demographic characteristics have effects on users' expectation related to the effectiveness on addressing given challenges, t-tests and ANOVA were performed. The t-test findings revealed that there is nonsignificant difference in expectation on addressing given challenges between male and female respondents with $t(98) = 3.23, p > .05$.

ANOVA results showed that age group has a non-significant effect on expectation on addressing given challenges ($F(3) = .34, p > .05$). Similarly, the finding revealed that education attainment and academic role has non-significant effect on expectation on addressing given challenges ($F(3) = .69, p > .05$ and $F(3) = .58, p > .05$ respectively).

2.3. Open-ended questions

2.3.1. Main reasons for taking the MOOC course

To gain deeper insights into the motivation for taking the MOOC, participants was asked to share about the main reasons to take this MOOC. The question was posted on the discussion forum of Module 1. Consistent with the close-ended question, several main themes emerged in the discussion includes enhancing knowledges, skills on university governance and leadership,

The first motivation was about advancing skills on leadership. A majority of participants shared that the main motivation to join this MOOC was to master their knowledge, skills on university governance and academic leadership. One participant highlighted that *“I have participated in some MOOC programs in the past. But I am participating in this MOOC program to broaden my experiences about university governance and academic leadership as I am presently pursuing a PhD degree that will enable me to vie for appointment in the departments I have been working with”*.

The second motivation was about understanding of key policies aspects including policy making, framework and implementation, involving stakeholders. According to the majority of participants, this topic is essential for them to deal with ongoing challenges faced by the academic institutions. One participant shared that *“one of the main motivations to join the MOOC is to understand challenges facing university governance and how to resolve them”*.

The third motivation was to understand university governance in China and Europe. One learner shared that *“My main reason to take this course is to gain a better understanding of governance and leadership in education. Even though I have been working in higher education in both the United States and China, I have experienced differing leadership styles and governance. Therefore, I would like to better understand Chinese and European higher education governance”*.

2.3.2. Expectations to meet personal and professional goals

Participants were asked to share about how the MOOC help them meet their personal and professional goals. The comments generally clustered around enhancing knowledge, skills, and competencies on university governance and academic leadership, better understanding of university governance and leadership in HEIs, preparing future careers which are in line with previous findings of the closed-ended questions.

The most frequent comment was about improving competencies and skills on leadership in academic institutions. In particular, respondents mainly highlighted the goal of taking this MOOC was to enhance skills regarding academic leadership. Many participants shared that they are holding administrative positions in academic institutions. Unfortunately, they pointed out the lack of professional development trainings within their institutions. Thus, the goal of taking this MOOC was to sharpen professional skills. Respondents expected that the course will help them to upgrade professional skills and then can assist them in administrative work. One participant stressed the importance of taking this MOOC by saying that *“I have been very active in teaching and research for almost the last 20 years. I have also served my host organizations in different*

capacities like HoD of the department and members of various academic committees like the Academic Council, Board of Studies. Very recently I have got the opportunity to serve in the central administration of the University as Dean Research. During this entire duration, I have closely witnessed the University system, learned various aspects of leadership through watching the people, critically analyzing the decisions and now it is the time to take policy decisions and develop and implement for my organization. During this process, I am facing a lot of challenges that require a deeper understanding of leadership skills, conflict management, change management. I believe this course will also help in understanding the University structures, governance, and academic leadership skills particularly about the Chinese and European Universities, this will certainly help in internationalizing my skills set and learning from various cases. It will make me capable to better serve my university and also getting better positions in near future in the different organizations to acquire richer experience”.

The second theme indicated by a majority of participants was broadening knowledge on university governance in HEIs. Of this, having a comprehensive or extensive knowledge in academic and institutional leadership, understanding university structures, gaining new insights into university governance and academic leadership, and exploring various leadership perspectives in different academic cultures were emphasized. One participant remarked on this issue *“I am in charge of establishing a quality management system in my institution. I think that this course will help me have more insights on better practices regarding higher education governance systems and associated soft skills and a rich practical learning”.*

The third main theme was networking. A number of respondents highlighted that this course provides them with an opportunity to know other learners including teachers, scholars in diverse contexts around the world. One respondent shared that *“Learning the different approaches and trends will help us to gain new skills and to broaden our leadership skills. I personally enjoy participating in online courses, not only to learn about this or that theme, but also like to connect with the scholars and leaders from all over the world. It will help us to learn their experience and we can apply it in our own context”.* The other user said that *“Over the years I have learned academic administration and leadership skills through “learning by observing” and “learning by doing” modes. I always had a plan at the back of my mind to enhance/broaden my Academic Governance and leadership skill by attending/participating in an intensive programme and fortunately, I got a chance to do it through this LEAD2 MOOC where I have the flexibility to complete it at my own pace and while performing my duties of the University too. It will give me a deeper understanding of the practices being followed in top European and Chinese Universities and networking opportunities with academic leaders from these institutions. And finally, a Certificate*

awarded for the training/course completion from the European Union ERASMUS+ LEAD2 programme will substantiate my efforts and offer benefit in my further academic career”.

The fourth main theme highlighted by respondents was about preparing future career. Several participants shared their ambition to obtain promotion in academic institutions. To that end, taking the MOOC and earn certificate was highlighted as a good start. One user highlighted the goal of job promotion by saying that *“I am currently a director of a higher education institution in my country, and I plan to join the university staff in 2022 as vice-President. Therefore, this course will improve my knowledge and skills in higher education leadership and governance.”* The other participant also expressed *“I am applying for a new position in a university and want to learn the new skills on leadership as the post is on student services and welfare at a managerial post. so engaging in this will help me acquire new skills and knowledge to help me navigate through my new post”.* One participant also noted that *“I am interested in joining the academic institutions of higher learning and believe that this course will contribute towards acquiring skills and knowledge that I want towards my future career. And of course, for my personal development as well - life long learning”.*

The goal of conducting research on university governance and academic leadership was also emphasized by a few of users. One participant noted that *“The course will help me to meet my personal and professional as an academic scholar and lecturer. I have been organising tutorial lectures for undergraduates during my undergraduate period many years ago. Right now, I am pursuing a PhD programme which will enhance my chances to become employed as a full-time lecturer in any reputable university in Nigeria and other countries worldwide. Hence, it is important to have a wider knowledge about university governance and academic leadership to equip me further, for my future aspirations in the university community anywhere”.*

2.3.3. Competencies, knowledge aimed to develop

Participants were asked about which knowledge, competences they aim to develop by following the MOOC. In general, learners want to acquire knowledge of university governance and ranking, leadership skills, and knowledge of internationalization in HEIs.

The most frequent topic learners wanted to acquire was university ranking and university governance structure. One of the main reasons for learning this topic, shared by one learner, was *“The mission, vision, and objectives of particular HEIs are constantly reviewed through university ranking”.* The other learner also highlighted that *“University ranking affects higher education in*

the sense that, it makes those at the top of the list to try to maintain their position. Others also strive to be included in the list of top-ranking university worldwide. They see it as a thing of prestige among other universities operating in the same country with them. For instance, the University of Lagos, my country is popularly known for boasting as the UNESCO Center of Mass Communication. Hence, there I'd a signboard at the Mass Communication Department projecting the institution as the best in my country. However, the National University Commission does not confer such recognition on the institution. The common boasting of lecturers and students that the University is the best over the years, has been responsible for a large number of candidates applying for admission into the institution”.

The second main topic learners want to develop was about leadership skills. One participant noted that *“I think MOOC courses are always helpful for continuous learning and up gradation. This course will be helpful to understand the current scenario of Universities. I think university will get the the ranking as per their performances. Similarly, the other learner also highlighted that”.*

The third main theme interested by the learner was about knowledge and skills on internationalization in HEIs. One participant shared that *“This course will overall increase my competencies/skills in Academic Governance and Leadership area. I will mainly be benefited from the University governance for Research, Innovation and Valorization area, which has been my main and prospective functional area of leadership in the University. I would better understand Internationalization which is my current and future focus specifically in research collaboration and networking aspects”.*

III. CONCLUSION

In summary, the survey results reported by participants showed specific motivations and high expectations regarding the MOOC. Also, the findings showed the effects of users' gender, age, education attainment, and current roles on their expectations regarding course-specific topics. In addition, responses given to the open-ended questions also indicated quite parallel results with the quantitative evaluations regarding motivation by yielding the results of enhancing knowledge, skills and preparing for the future career. The welcome survey report and users' experience report serve as a means for internal monitoring of the quality for the implementation of the LEAD2 MOOC; especially the comments and recommendations from the participants are essential elements for taking into consideration for further improvement. These measures are



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crucial for ensuring proper quality implementation and enhancing the impact of the online course on university governance and academic leadership.