

Achieving professional qualifications using microcredentials: a case of small packages and big challenges in higher education

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Abstract

Purpose –This study examined the factors impeding the implementation of micro-credentials and accepting it as a credible source of earning professional qualifications and certifications necessary for pursuing higher education or other career goals.

Design/methodology/approach – The factors were identified by reflecting on the recent literature and Internet resources coupled with in-depth brainstorming with experts in the field of micro-credentials including educators, learners and employers. Two ranking methods, namely Preference Ranking for Organization Method for Enrichment Evaluation (PROMETHEE) and multi-objective optimization based on ratio analysis (MOORA), are used together to rank the major challenges.

Findings – The results of this study present that lack of clear definitions, ambiguous course descriptions, lack of accreditation and quality assurance, unclear remuneration policies, lack of coordination between learning hours and learning outcomes, the inadequate volume of learning, and lack of acceptance by individuals and organizations are the top-ranked and the most significant barriers in the implementation of micro-credentials.

Research limitations/implications – The findings can be used by educational institutions, organizations and policymakers to better understand the issues and develop strategies to address them, making microcredentials a more recognized form of education and qualifications.

Keywords: Micro-credentials, Online certifications, Implementation, Barriers

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