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Fourth Revolution, MOOCs and K-MOOC

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The 21st century saw globalization, informatization, and democratization as major transformations. As these great transformations have deepened, we are now entering a new era of what is called “a Fourth Industrial Revolution.” According to Klaus Schwab, the Fourth Industrial Revolution is based upon digital revolution which is characterized by a convergence of technologies “that are blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres.” Before that, the World Economic Forum (What is called “Davos Forum”) had already published two important documents, all of which emphasize the importance of education that strengthens the foundational literacies, competencies, and character (emotional) qualities which the 21st century needs.

Together, there have been upsurges of MOOCs as a disruptive innovation in higher education since 2012. In partnership with universities and industry, leading education platforms such as US-based Coursera and edX have made a significant impact upon higher education and vocational education field. They are followed by several national MOOCs in France, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand, which have actively developed and operated their own MOOCs.

Against these backdrops, this presentation will look at opportunities and challenges of MOOCs preparing for the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. First, it considers what the Fourth Industrial Revolution is as well as what impacts it has upon education. Secondly, it looks at the problems that the traditional form of education has had, which is followed by the goals that future education is assumed to pursue. Thirdly, it will point out the characteristics of future education based upon MOOCs. After examining the significances of MOOCs and major issues facing MOOCs, we will review the major development and achievements of K-MOOC, which has been initiated by the Ministry of Education, ROK and implemented by the National Institute for Lifelong Education under the supervision of the MOE of ROK.

Having considered, this presentation argues that MOOCs can be one of the most important alternatives for an active preparation for the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and K-MOOC can be a good example of it.

Keywords: Fourth Industrial Revolution, Future Education, K-MOOC