University of Huddersfield Repository

Conlon, Jo

Embedding Product Life-cycle Management (PLM) in Higher Education: A Case Study in Fashion Business

Original Citation


This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/25988/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
**INTRODUCTION:**

Research Question: How might Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) be employed to foster a critical mindset and better prepare learners for occupational practice?

Product lifecycle management (PLM) combined with business process modeling (BPM) tools are providing organizations with the means to manage the complexities of product that is created, sourced and retailed globally.

Challenges of PLM / technical innovation for industry-orientated educational courses:

- Independent processes, disciplines, functions and applications (Stark, 2011:8).
- Plethora of software makes teaching expertise unlikely.
- Courses traditionally have a function-focus perpetuating a “functional silo” view.
- Courses are perceived to be disconnected from reality.
- There is a paucity of robust evidence of the impact and value of educational developments involving PLM (Grieves, 2011; Peters, D., Gomez, J.M., 2013).
- Traditional education is perpetuating the status quo in the industry model.
- Courses are traditionally taught to foster the making of practitioners.
- There is a need to integrate across all education practices.
- There is a need to develop a praxis stance / moral purpose as an aim for all professionals.

**METHODOLOGY:**

A case study approach is adopted to explore the learning experiences and practices that underpin curriculum development. This research is located within the intervention paradigm.

A case study approach is adopted in order to gain sufficient emphasis on the particular site of the project influenced by Schoch’s (2005) conception of the environment. In this way, the influence of the site is recognized beyond a description of the context where the practice occurs but to understand how the site is also a set of conditions impacting on the practice. This is consistent with social practice theory where the practice landscape and its associated practice traditions are recognised to be as significant as the practices under scrutiny and transformation (Kemmis 2014:4) and states: we cannot transform practices without transforming existing arrangements in the intersubjective spaces.

**DATA ANALYSIS:**

With a social practice perspective the level of analysis is at the level of the work group rather than the individual. This study represents one of the first attempts to embed a PLM philosophy and system within an undergraduate course and sets the stage for further research in this area.

**BENEFITS / PRELIMINARY FINDINGS:**

For curriculum design:

- The visual representation of PLM enables the curriculum to be contextualised in the industry.
- Provides a mechanism to foreground a praxis stance / moral purpose as an aim for all professionals.

For learning:

- Provides a map through which the significance of the constituent parts of product realism can be readily identified offering a pathway to develop higher cognitive skills.
- PLM provides a theoretical and practical basis for active participation and application of ideas in an authentic setting.
- It has enabled PLM to be identified as a representation of a “threshold concept” – the interaction of all the elements in a process of over-increasing complexity (Meyer and Land, 2003).
- Facilitates the critique of current practices and processes.

For preparation for future practice:

- Learners develop creative alternatives in response to the challenges and opportunities in the industry.
- Provides a mechanism to foreground a praxis stance / moral purpose as an aim for all professionals.