Chapter 74
Knowledge Transfer Openness Matrix Facilitating Accessibility in UK Management Education Teaching

Jonathan D. Owens
University of Salford, UK

Usman Talat
University of Salford, UK

ABSTRACT

This is an empirical investigation considering how the Knowledge Transfer Openness Matrix (KTOM) could facilitate accessibility and Knowledge Transfer (KT) for the UK Higher Education (HE) Management Education Teaching when utilising learning technologies. Its focus is where learning technologies applications currently assist the KT process and support accessibility for the HE teacher and learner. It considers the philosophy of openness, focusing on its usefulness to support accessibility within UK HE Management Education Teaching. It discusses how the openness philosophy may assist the KT process for the HE teacher and learners using learning technologies. In particular, the potential to support accessibility within HE Management Education Teaching environments is appraised. There appear several implications for both teachers and learners. These are characterized in the proposed KTOM. The matrix organises KT events based on the principles of the openness philosophy. The role of learning technologies in events is illustrated with regard to teaching and learning accessibility.

INTRODUCTION

If we try and forget the last eight hundred years or so of university tradition of transferring knowledge between teacher and learner, and imagine starting anew with the problem of how best to enable a large percentage of the population to understand and access discussions on difficult and complex ideas. Do

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-7297-9.ch074

you think putting two or three hundred people into a large room for a couple of hours would immediately spring to mind as the obvious solution? (adapted from Laurillard, 2005)

Technological advances over the past century have greatly enhanced our reach beyond our immediate human senses. We are on a technological curve the progression of which signals the increasing availability of systems that store and aid manipulation of data for human learning and Knowledge Transfer (KT) in organisations. With the emergence of the internet the landscape of Higher Education (HE) has changed. Teachers and Learners in UK HE benefit from aided KT because it enhances their ability to experiment with ideas and share them in productive ways (Goh, 2002). Accessibility to HE has been greatly facilitated through the advance of the internet, learning technologies and e-learning environments (Xiong and Winckler, 2008). Accessibility of university websites, virtual learning environment (VLE's) etc. has a critical role in the activities of currently enrolled and prospective HE students (Cook-Sather, 2014).

In HE learning environments, the interactions between users and technology can represent critical points of breakdown and potentially end achievement. However, sometimes these interactions can provide poor accessibility because of human error and limited availability of information (Nonanka and Takeuchi, 1995; Goh, 2002; Paiva *et al*, 2016). Breakdown at this point can mean that both learners and teachers stand unable to benefit and can suffer low levels of KT (Bates, 2001; Jerrard *et al*, 2013).

In this chapter we discuss the KT and the Openness philosophy, which has the potential to facilitate a current generation of teachers and learners in UK HE by sharing the utility and accessibility of knowledge through a Knowledge Transfer Openness Matrix (KTOM). In the HE sector this approach can represent Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) as environments that mediate generatively the transfer of knowledge and accessibility. This involves systems that are open and can enable accessibility of effective KT for both teacher and learner. A particular focus is developed around the issue of accessibility of knowledge in HE. Therefore, this research considers how the development of a KTOM could potentially assist the reduction of KT barriers to accessibility within the organisation.

Understanding Knowledge Transfer

Over the years various researchers (Stewart, 1977; Ratcliffe, 1997; Jackson; 2002; Mougin *et al*, 2015) have the common view that Knowledge Management is often used to describe the management of knowledge within an organisation and this includes KT within the organisation.

Bates (2001) and latterly Mougin *et al* (2015) claim that the value of KT relates directly to the effectiveness with which the transferred knowledge enables educators within the establishment to deal with the current situations and effectively envision and create their future. People; in the case of this research, the teacher and learner; and the connection between these are considered the most critical factor in KT (Denning, 2011). People create knowledge, share knowledge, learn, and use knowledge to complete tasks (Ratcliffe, 1997). Accessibility to knowledge through a structured KT process can increases the ability of individuals to deal with new situations, events, information, and context (Kunmari and Ilomkai, 2016). Research suggests (Nonanka and Takeuchi, 1995;Goh, 2002; Hanna, 2016) there are potentially many barriers to effective KT that could emerge because the process relies heavily on human interactions and relationships that are not designed into the organisation's culture.