ERP EDUCATION IN ACCREDITED U.S. UNIVERSITIES – A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) has grown rapidly in use by companies of varying sizes over the past number of years (Ruhi, 2016) and across numerous countries. These types of systems have provided comprehensive business functionality in an integrated fashion by exploiting the use of a state-of-the-art IT infrastructure (Watson and Stewart, 1999). Today, standardized enterprise resource planning systems are used in a majority of enterprises around the world (Winkelmann and Leyh, 2010). This trend towards enterprise resource planning in large and mid-sized organizations has a significant impact on IS careers paths. ERP essentially changes fundamental business work processes thus implying that the system that supports these processes, and the design and development of these systems, also changed. Yet, most IS curricula do not provide significant coverage of ERP concepts, nor do they graduate students who are knowledgeable about these systems and the impact that these systems have on industry (Watson and Stewart, 1999).

Over the years there has been an increased effort to include more coverage of enterprise resource planning systems in the business school curriculum (Antonucci et. al., 2004). This is in large part due to the increased demand from businesses for graduates with ERP experience. Enterprise resource planning systems in business environments demand multidisciplinary understanding and collaboration between functional departments. The traditional educational paradigm isolates the learning of each functional discipline as if business people operated in functional isolation. ERP system value can only be realized by collaborating across business functions. Integral to the success of ERP use is the tacit or unconscious understanding of the concepts underlying business processes and the dynamic interplay of collaborating business functions (Freeze and Schmidt, 2015).

There is, however, uncertainty regarding whether there is enough being done to prepare college students to enter the work force with ERP skills to meet the current need for enterprise systems users. In this paper, we examine whether accredited universities in US are offering courses and programs to students in this career path. Although the research is exploratory we provide implications for the findings.
REFERENCES


