Developing collegial cultures of teaching innovation: Motivating influences and impact of university colleagues sharing digital stories of learning and teaching

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Fostering cultures of teaching innovation contributes to the transformation of learning and teaching practices in higher education. Enabling university colleagues to share their practice stories is essential for the development of collegial and collaborative communities of practice that provide peer support for colleagues engaged in continuing professional learning related to learning and teaching practice enhancement. This paper describes a university-wide technology-enhanced professional learning strategy aiming to provide a dynamic collection of multimedia digital narratives of teaching practices via an open education resources (OER) repository. This study investigated the factors that motivated university colleagues to share their learning and teaching experiences and practices, the value of sharing their practice with others and the perceived impact of creating these narratives. The results of a preliminary online survey of contributors included that respondents were very strongly motivated to share their practices with peers (92%) and found the process valuable for promoting reflective practice (75%). Semi-structured interviews with contributors indicated the value of collegial conversations involved in creation of the resources. Implications for developing sustainable cultures of university teaching innovation in discipline contexts and future directions for further studies are discussed.

Keywords: digital stories, peer professional learning, innovation, reflective practice, virtual learning environment

Introduction

In 2016, the central learning and teaching unit at Griffith University began publishing just-in-time professional learning resources called Faculty Stories and Faculty Sparks. The intent of this type of professional development is to promote a collegial culture of teaching innovation through a peer learning model that is scalable. By authoring a digital narrative, academics can reflect on their own practice (a learning experience for them) as well as share their successful teaching practices and experiences with colleagues in and out of the University. Faculty Stories and Sparks are publicly available on Griffith Explore Learning and Teaching (ExLNT), a professional learning open education resource platform / repository.

The purpose of the research detailed within this paper was to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations of academics who have shared their teaching practice as *Faculty Stories* and *Faculty Sparks*, the impact that participation has had on their own learning and teaching practice and the perceived value of sharing one's practice via authoring a *Faculty Story* or *Faculty Spark*. The academics in the study (members of all four academic groups) had authored one of two types of media enriched entries (i.e., Faculty Story (3) and Faculty Sparks 63) within the University's professional learning online education research repository.
The research team was guided by three research questions to guide:

- Research question 1: What are the motivating factors for university academics in sharing their learning and teaching experiences and practices in a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark?
- Research question 2: What do university academics and supporting colleagues perceive as the value of sharing one's practice by creating a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark?
- Research question 3: What has been the impact of participating in the creation of a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark on university academics' learning and teaching practice?

Important to note, the impact on the consumer of this type of professional learning (i.e., Faculty Sparks and Stories) was out of scope for this study. It will be addressed in a follow-up study.

Literature Review

Sharing professional practice: Motivation and impact

What motivates people to share their professional practice and subsequent knowledge? It would not be uncommon to refer to today's economy as a knowledge-based economy (Cheng, Ho & Lau, 2000). In this economy, Quinn, Anderson & Finkelstein (1996) see knowledge as a professional intellect that embraces know how, know-what, know-why and self-motivated creativity in an organisational setting. Davenport, De Long & Beers (1998) view knowledge as experience, context, judgment, belief and information. So, what makes people interested in sharing their knowledge? Yang (2007) says that knowledge sharing happens when an individual is willing to assist as well as to learn from others in the development of new competencies. When it comes to motivation for sharing knowledge, people perceive knowledge as one of three things, knowledge as an object, knowledge of individuals, or knowledge within a community (McLure Wasko & Faraj, 2000). When knowledge is viewed as an object, people feel motivated to share their knowledge for incentives such as pay or promotion (McLure Wasko & Faraj, 2000). If knowledge is deemed to be owned by an individual, people are motivated to share for reputation or self-esteem gains (Constant et al. 1994). Knowledge being viewed as a community commodity, the motivation was more for moral obligation or community interest (Ardichvili, Page & Wentling, 2003). Technology could possibly also be a motivating factor for knowledge sharing as the rise of social media platforms has made it easier and faster for knowledge to be shared in a range of formats. Brazelton and Gorry (2003) however don't agree with the idea that technology alone effectively encourages knowledge sharing. Trust can be seen as another motivating factor for an individual's willingness to share their knowledge. Trust relationships are critical to effective communication (Dodgson, 1993); trust improves the quality of discussion and enhances the knowledge-sharing. Kimmerle et al (2007) found that participants with higher trust in their colleagues were more cooperative with information-exchange.

Knowledge sharing will have inherent impacts. Cheng et al. (2000) see there being two non-exclusive ways of knowledge sharing, closed network (person to person) and open network sharing (through a central repository). The knowledge sharing process involves more than just collection and dissemination of information, so if the process is managed properly, the value of the knowledge is expanded when it is shared (Cheng, Ho & Lau, 2000). Organisations should be able to learn continuously and leverage off the knowledge that they capture to increase innovative knowledge (Liedtka, 1999) giving rise to one of the impacts of knowledge sharing being the gathering of organisational knowledge and creation of communities of practice. Participating and contributing to an online community of practice brings different benefits and impacts to its' participants. In a study completed by McLure Wasko & Faraj (2000), participants contributed to enhance standing in their profession, establishing a reputation that would hopefully translate into a job or a promotion. People also participated to enhance their own learning and self-efficacy, refine their thinking, and contribute to new developments. Organisational learning and knowledge sharing enables an organisation to improve organisational behaviours by way of the creation of advanced knowledge (Yang, 2007).

Peer observation of teaching: A valuable professional learning strategy

Peer observation of university teaching is acknowledged as a valuable strategy for fostering reflective practice and practice enhancement of the observed teacher. Within the Australian higher education context, peer observation of teaching generally refers to a process whereby a teaching academic invites a colleague to firstly observe their teaching practice and secondly provide constructive feedback in order for the observed teacher to reflect on their practice and identify areas ripe for enhancement (Carbone, Ross, Phelan, Lindsay, Drew, Stoney & Cottman 2015). These processes are implemented in a specific academic context in order to provide an opportunity for the observed teacher to reflect on their practice (Bell, 2001; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond 2005) and plan for practice enhancement, thus supporting a developmental approach to continuing professional learning related to teaching (Drew, Phelan, Lindsay, Carbone, Ross, Wood, Stoney & Cottman, 2016). Research has shown that a peer observation approach not only leads to overall improvement in student satisfaction related to educational quality of units (Carbone, 2014; Carbone et al, 2015), it also effectively supports processes of reflective practice, leads to improvements in teaching practice, develops confidence of participants, provides ongoing professional learning and develops collegiality (Bell, 2001). In addition, studies have found positive impacts on the teaching practices of peer observers (Engin, 2016; Thomson, Bell & Hendry, 2015).

Research regarding the peer observation of university teaching within an online context is gaining momentum. Studies of online peer observation in synchronous virtual classrooms have showed that participants perceived an increase in their confidence and greater willingness to experiment; appreciated better how they fitted into the

wider open university teaching community, built new professional friendships and flexible communities of practice, and developed a better understanding of how to progress their own self-development (Harper & Nicolson, 2013) and the use of synchronous conferencing tools was influential in shaping the relationship between participants on the programme (Walker & Forbes, 2017). Jones & Gallen (2015) studied the dialogue between peers' post observation and found that participants report experiences of self-reflection prompted by the discussions. Marsh & Mitchel (2014) explored the affordances of video-enhanced teacher education, highlighting the potential for video to be used to foster dialogue between theory and practice, build capacity for reflection; noting that asynchronous opportunities afford the luxury of time for post observation discussion and reflection. However, there is little research evidence evaluating professional learning opportunities that support both the teaching and observer colleague within an asynchronous online environment.

Open education resources repository as a structure in which to share professional practice

The term Open Education Resources (OER) was invented by UNESCO in 2002. In 2017, the NMC Horizon Report: 2017 Higher Education Edition stated, "OER, learning materials with free use and remixing rights for educators, offer another alternative to improve equity in higher education" (p30). It even reported that in many cases, OER positively impact learning (Adams Becker, Cummins, Davis, Freeman, Hall Giesinger, & Ananthanarayanan, 2017). To collect and make these resources easily available for intended audiences, web-based repositories are created. There are OER Repositories available from vendors who host resources for a fee, open source platforms for hosting by an institution as well as bespoke systems that are developed by the implementing University (Olcott, 2012). The key characteristic of all of OER Repositories is that the resources they host are openly available to the public and the content can be used and even customized by those that access it (Browne, Holding, Howell & Rodway-Dyer, 2010). In the context of the article by Browne et al, and many other articles regarding OER, the intended learners from the content are students.

The design and implementation of an OER must consider a multitude of factors including, resource quality, distributed curation, professional development, contributor trust, contribution recognition, sustainability, content curation, copyright, intellectual property, system maintenance, marketing, (Browne, Holding, Howell & Rodway-Dyer, 2010; Olcott, 2012). While these factors were identified for OER Repositories for student learners, they would certainly apply when learners are professionals. While there is a robust body of literature on the provision and use of OER for students, there is a clear absence of literature in their use and collection in support of professional learning.

Background

Faculty Stories are collections of inspiring digital stories of university colleagues and their students reflecting on their teaching and learning practices. The in-depth stories include short reflective videos based around contemporary themes; accompanying resources linked to each topic, such as further readings, templates, frameworks, lesson/unit plans and quotes; and question prompts for further professional learning. These stories are designed to encourage viewers/observers to engage with reflective practice regarding their learning and teaching practice, with the view that this will foster plans for enhancing their educational practices in order to transform the student learning experience. In this way, the Faculty Stories project enables online, self-selected, asynchronous, peer learning that is highly accessible, self-paced, 'just in time' and 'just for me'.

Faculty Sparks are designed to encourage sharing of knowledge around teaching practices with the ultimate aim of enhancing student learning. They are brief digital entries that share challenges and their solutions related to teaching practice. These resources provide brief reflective videos based around a specific challenge, together with descriptive content. They address topics such as active learning, embedding graduate attributes and using ePortfolios. The entries explain how the academic addressed the challenge, discussion of outcomes from the approach taken to meet the challenge including anecdotal feedback and statistics, followed by reflection about the process and advice for others who might like to follow the same approach. Supporting documents (e.g., rubrics, presentations and further readings) to support the discussion and provide context are included. They are an accessible, self-selected peer learning resource that can be accessed anytime.

Explore Learning and Teaching was developed to meet the need for a University-wide online repository of professional learning resources. Essentially Griffith's ExLNT is an Open Education Resources (OER) Repository that allows users (e.g., academics, students, learning and teaching professionals) to access learning experiences (e.g., case studies, *Faculty Stories* and *Faculty Sparks,* and workshop descriptions) related to teaching practices and supporting technologies. While the resources are available to the public, additional functionality is available to University personnel including favouriting entries and adding related experiences to

a given entry as comments. It was created in partnership with stakeholders from across the University to insure it met the needs and desires of the broader learning and teaching community. Currently the content is provided by members of the Griffith Learning and Teaching Community with distributed content curation as principal to its design.
Using OER for learning and teaching in the professional learning context is as appropriate as it is for the discipline content context. Contributing to ExLNT is one-way academics can share their successful practices with their discipline, institutional and global colleagues. As of June 2018, 80+ academics from across all four academic groups have contributed *Faculty Stories* and *Faculty Sparks*. The pace of contribution continues to increase as ExLNT's reputation as a source of professional learning increases.

Methodology

To answer the research questions, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, employing an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The questions within the survey focused on teaching practices and several aspects of the experience of creating a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on the latter. The interviews focused on topics related to the creation and sharing of the Faculty Story or Faculty Spark.

Participants

All potential participants received an email from the chief investigator with an introduction of the research and link to a detailed online information page which identified the participatory status of participant individuals, and how the researchers will ensure that staff do not feel any pressure to participate. A link within the online information / consent page served as the entry to the survey. Clicking in the link to begin the survey served as consent for anonymous participation in the study. In addition, an invitation to participate in an interview was issued. Interested persons were asked to reply to the email to arrange a time and date that suited them. This method insured the anonymity of the survey results.

Data Collection & Analysis

Participants undertook a 20-minute online survey with quantitative and qualitative items and were then invited to participate in a semi-structured interview (approximately 45-60 minutes) at a time and location preferred by the participant. An online survey was constructed and published using a fit for purpose tool. Branching was used within the survey to customize question paths for the two participant pools, Creators and Supporters. Creators are the contributing academics who have completed a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark and university colleagues who have supported these. The 62 academics have published a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark made up this pool of participants. The pool included teaching academics (e.g., sessional staff, lecturers, demonstrators, tutors) and those that support them (e.g., educational designers). Supporters are the learning and teaching professional staff (e.g., Blended Learning Advisors, Educational Designers, Program Directors, etc.) who supported Creators before, during or after the creation process. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data was conducted. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis of responses to the open-ended question are reported. Five interviews were conducted following closure of the survey. These semi-structured interviews were facilitated by the researchers using a set of 12 questions written by the researchers and approved by the ethics board. Interviews, lasting between 45-60 minutes, were digitally recorded (audio-only). Transcripts were generated. These were sent to the interviewees for member checking to increase the accuracy and validity of the transcripts (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter: 2016). In order to preserve anonymity, codes were allocated to each participant (such as P1 for participant 1) transcript. An initial inductive thematic analysis of open-ended survey questions and interviews was conducted to align with research questions in order to allow findings to emerge from the data, followed by a deductive method which compared data to established research frameworks.

Findings

Participant Characteristics

A survey response rate of 24% was obtained with 18 of the 75 potential participants responding. Of these respondents, 17 were Creators of a Faculty Story or Spark and one was a Supporter of a Creator. Lecturers or course convenors constituted 83% of the respondents. 93 percent of the survey participants identified as having greater than five years teaching experience with 72 percent of the respondents currently teaching undergraduate students. Academics with various levels of appointment (i.e., lecturer, senior lecturer, associate professor, professor) and serving in a variety of learning and teaching roles (i.e., sessional teaching staff, course convenors,

program directors, head of department) participated. The Likert scale for all data reported is Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Table 1: Motivation to share your practice by creating a Faculty Spark or Story. (N=12)

Statement	Percentage Agree & Strongly Agree
Desire to share my practice to help others	95
Requirement for grant application or expression of interest.	8
Requirement for a teaching award application.	8
Deliberate support of peers in my discipline.	75
Disseminate project information.	25
Deliberate support of peers in the teaching community in my Group.	75
Support of peers in the Griffith teaching community.	83
Fulfilling a goal in my Academic Staff Career Development (ASCD)plan.	25
Create a product for my academic portfolio.	42
Recognition for doing interesting and innovative practices.	75

Table 2: Value to colleagues of sharing one's practice. (N=12)

Statement	Percentage Agree & Strongly Agree
Valuable for yourself	88
Valuable for discipline-specific peers	42
Valuable for peers across the University	50
Valuable for peers across the broader higher education community	50

Table 3: Desired impact of creation and / or sharing of a Faculty Spark or Story. (N =12)

Statement	Percentage Agree & Strongly Agree
Enhanced practice to address issues such as graduate employability, quality of the education sector etc.	74
Contributed to collegial conversations practice at the discipline level.	75
Contributed to collegial conversations about practice at the Group level.	67
Contributed to the collegial conversations about practice at the University.	50
Impacted my teaching practice.	67
Impacted a colleagues' teaching practices.	16
Impacted my team's teaching practices.	60
Impacted my reflective practice.	76
My own innovation in teaching.	67

Table 4: Technical aspects of authoring a Faculty Story or Spark (N=11)

Statement	Percentage Agree & Strongly Agree
Ease of creating a Faculty Spark	91
Ease of creating a Faculty Story	88
Visibility of Faculty Sparks and Stories on the Explore Learning and Teaching platform	78
An effective approach to showcasing my innovative practice	81
Public resource accessible by anyone	61
Asynchronous peer to peer sharing/mentoring	73
A unique URL that can be shared via social media and email	91
Ability for viewers to share similar experiences on the same webpage as the Faculty Spark.	82

Discussion

Motivation for Sharing Practice

Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding their motivation to share their practice through the creation of a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark. Out of the respondents, agreeing or strongly agreeing that the motivation was a desire to share their practice with their peers was quite high at 92%, with 83% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the motivation was in support of the Griffith teaching community. In deliberately supporting their peers in their discipline, 75% agreed or strongly agreed that was their motivation, with deliberate support of their peers in the teaching community of their Faculty Group also 75%. This led to a strong theme in seeing knowledge sharing as a community responsibility. Of the further results, 75% agreed or strongly agreed that their motivation was recognition for doing interesting and innovative practices, while having a colleague recommend that they develop a Story / Spark, 67% agreed or strongly agreed. The ability to tell their story through narrative followed up with 65% agreeing or strongly agreeing that this motivated them to share.

Themes that came through the responses to the open-ended questions included contributing to the profession.

> I have a very strong interest in giving back to the teaching profession and I saw this as one way of achieving that goal. It also was a powerful reflective tool to refocus on my practice.
>
> Sharing and discussion of practices; encouragement by others to share the discussion. Hoping to start a conversation with others.

An analysis of the interview transcripts revealed the following quotes which illustrate the three perceptions of knowledge (i.e., object, owned by individual or community knowledge.)

Knowledge as an object

> [this is] something that I can include in my Academic Performance document, my TERS [Teaching Excellent Recognition Scheme, point allocation based on various research factors where research funds are then allocated due to points gained] application. We get funding if we do research, we have teaching funding for various articles we publish in scholarship of teaching. Things like Faculty Sparks ... sharing your practice and innovation, goes towards point for funds so the more points you have by doing all the activities, the more funds you get, but that was the motivation for me to do it. (P3)
>
> I mentioned it in my fellowship and I've put a screenshot in my promotion document. (P2)

Knowledge as owned by the individual

> It's just a way I guess of, packaging up nicely, what & how, to share that internally and externally. It's just providing in a nutshell what it is that I am doing when people ask (P2).
>
> One of the blended learning advisors or educational designers encouraged me to share the practice. And I thought OK I'll do it if you think it's cool because by this stage I thought 'Oh that's old news, who would be interested to find out about this' because I've been doing it for so many years I didn't think it was cool enough anymore but she said, no it's OK let's do it. (P3)

Knowledge as owned by the community

> It's my nature to share, I don't believe in keeping information to myself… there's no point reinventing the wheel if it can be used by the people, then I think that many hands make light work … If I'm going to use other people's good ideas, it's natural for me to share my own (P1)
>
> [It's a] good way to start sort of disseminating that information on varying things because we know from experience that many academics who run group work in their courses struggle with how to manage it and students struggle with it as well you know (P5)
>
> That was about sharing what I'm doing because I think it's new in the online space, so I can see, I can read a lot of about problem-based learning, in the literature and there's lots of material about that but there's not a lot in terms of how to do it in the online space (P2)

Value of Sharing Practice

Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagreed with a series of statements related to the value of sharing their practice: "To what extent do you agree or disagree that the creating and sharing of your Faculty Story or Faculty Spark has been valuable for yourself and / or others in the learning and teaching community?". Results indicated that respondents (N=12) perceived the greatest value for creating and sharing a Faculty Story or Spark has been for themselves (88%) (Table 2) with lesser value for peers across the university (50%) and peers across broader HE community 50% and least value to discipline-specific peers (42%). In addition, respondents perceived that the creation of the digital stories was valuable for promoting reflective practice (76%) (Table 3). Themes emerging from the open-ended questions and interview transcripts support these findings. Participants recognised the creation process as being valuable for creating a product or artefact that was a valuable personal record of innovation of practice:

> I think it is useful to have a permanent record of the innovation on the university Website (P1)
>
> It is something I can include in my Academic Performance document and Teaching Excellence Recognition Scheme (P3)

Individual reflective practice was also recognised as a valued by-product of the creation process:

> It has been part of a reflective process for me and the value is in that aspect (Anonymous)
>
> Having the videos ready and available is fantastic from a professional point of view, [but] to me the value was that reflection on my practice (P4)

In addition, participants expressed that their digital stories would be of value to their colleagues and students:

> A lot of us are just spinning around in circles redoing stuff that's been done ... Collectively we can improve our quality of teaching which then benefits students. (P1)
>
> There are aspects of teaching that are, you know, universal… so we thought this [Faculty Spark] was something that can help people of all persuasions around the world (P5)

Furthermore, interviewees discussed the value in facilitating collegial networks and communities of practice:

> We have all these remarkable examples of teaching out right here within these Sparks and that's good for everybody, it's good for the institution it's good for the person who's authored the spark. And it will also create longevity in terms of alumni." (P1)
>
> In the future there might be a community of practice that uses these to have their conversations (P4*)*

Impact of sharing practice

Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding the impact the creation and / or sharing of a Faculty Story or Spark on their practice and that of others in the sector. The responses support the idea that the creation of a Faculty Story or Spark serves as a professional learning experiencing for the creator. The creation process was identified by 75% of the respondents to have "enhanced practice to address issues such as graduate employability, quality of the education sector". Sixty-seven percent agreed or strongly agreed that authoring the Story/Spark "Impacted my teaching practice." Both are strong indicators that the creation of this type of digital story does serve as a professional learning experience for the creator. Two-thirds (76%) of the respondents indicated that they thought the creation of a Faculty Story or Spark "Impacted my reflective practice." This finding reinforces the researchers' hypothesis that the creation of a digital story would impact a creators' reflective practice. With collegial conversations being a critical element of an academics practice, the fact that 75% of the respondents responded favourably to "Contributed to collegial conversations about practice at the discipline level" indicates the authoring of Story/Spark is a favourable endeavour. Respondents also agreed that authoring a Story/Spark "Contributed to collegial conversations about practice at the Group level (67%).

Themes that came through the interviews and open-ended questions within the survey included the value of reflection. These two quotes are illustrative of this point.

> Faculty Stories reminded me of the **importance of reflection**. I mean, I do it already and it's deeply ingrained, but the whole process allowed me to take it to a whole other level which was great.

It has meant **I continue to reflect upon** the issue of providing feedback to students more frequently and consistently.

A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that interviewees perceived that the creation of digital stories regarding one's practice is perceived by the creator as having a positive impact.

- Evidence of learning and teaching practice, scholarship & leadership
  I'm going to be adding it into my citation, that's the point of the link, I've shared it with external people ... A link is a lot easier for me [than an article] to pop on an email and say, 'have a listen.' (P1)

  I mentioned it in my fellowship and I've put a screenshot, in my promotion document. (P2)

- Social media outlets
  I put it on my LinkedIn, on Facebook, told my Head of department, our marketing staff and shared with department colleagues. (P2)

  I put it on LinkedIn Facebook and twitter… I got some 'likes' and comments on Facebook and LinkedIn from my colleagues in [my department] and graduate students. (P3)

- Shared across departments/university
  Shared within our department [through] the newsletters from the PVC (P2)

  You know the immediate people that will have an impact on this, I think, is building this resource almost like a library, of best practice, in learning and teaching. (P4)

Technical aspects of creating and sharing digital stories

Participants were asked to indicate the level to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding the processes involved and technical aspects of creating a Faculty Story or Faculty Spark is important. Respondents agreed/strongly agreed that it was easy to create both a Faculty Story (88%) or a Faculty Spark (91%). This confirmed that the process of making such a resource was not a barrier for academics to share their practice. Ninety-one percent agreed/strongly agreed that "A unique URL that can be shared via social media and email" was a positive result of having created the resource. This functionality allowed creators to share the link to evidence their innovative practice with 81% agreeing/strongly agreeing that this was valuable. The creators also valued the ability for viewers of their resource to comment (82% agree/strongly agree) and the visibility of Faculty Stories and Sparks through ExLNT (78%). Over half (61%) agreed/strongly agreed that being able to share theirs with the public had a positive impact.

Implications for practice

In light of the findings above, there are several ways in which the process of supporting colleagues in creating, using and promoting their Faculty Story and Faculty Spark may be enhanced.

Supporting motivation & perceived value to create and share
To support academics to share their practice, it would be beneficial to provide detailed information to all colleagues involved in learning and teaching, describing each initiative, the benefits for self and others in participating, the support mechanisms available and an invitation to participate. This would include highlighting the potential multiple purposes and uses of these resources: as evidence of practice for performance reviews, promotion justification, learning and teaching grants, awards and fellowships; to foster individual reflection, collegial conversations about learning and teaching and collaborative professional learning.

Supporting evaluation and the optimisation of impact of sharing
Few participants in our study indicated that they had thought about measuring the impact of their stories or weren't sure how to promote their stories. For example, one academic reported that she was not sure whether the Spark resource had been viewed or used by others "*I don't know if anyone has [used the resource], no one has said anything to me... I don't know if it's created any change yet"* (P2). To support the process of evaluating impact, information and support regarding indicators of impact and how to measure the impact of their stories could be provided. One participant suggested the use of altmetrics for tracking impact, *"You can actually see how many times it was shared, you get all these different metrics that give a different perspective of impact.*

That's a nice way to show that you're having impact" (P1). Another academic reflecting on ways the digital story had been promoted stated: "*I think for me it's a matter of I'm not sure how… I don't know how to promote myself"* (P1) and "*it would be really nice to know how better to actually share"* (P2) indicating that methods for how to share the stories with peers would be useful and appreciated by colleagues.

Enhancements to ExLNT
Interviewees recommended the following enhancements:

- Linking stories with professional learning: "*What I would like to see is those tags being then linked with the professional development ... microlearning opportunities of professional development*" (P4)
- Enabling 'favourites': "*It would be nice to favourite something … and then come back later"* (P1)
- Automated online creation: "*On the Spark home page you could automate it with a button saying, 'I have an idea' … we have an account, we could step through it and save it online"* (P1)

Creating sustainable support systems
Participants recognised the value of being able to discuss the creation and sharing process with a Learning Futures colleague and not just getting template to fill in. Suggestions were made that initially, interested contributors might view a selection of exemplar Sparks, with annotations and explanations of various valued features. Another idea included making the first creation experience face-to-face and fully supported with a completing handover explaining the process for future creations involving templates and support resources.

Limitations of the study

As the study intended to explore the motivations, value and impact of the creation and sharing of digital stories by colleagues at one Australian research-intensive university, the findings relate to a specific context within the Australian higher education sector. In addition, due to the limited number of participants in the online survey within this study, findings are not able to be generalised across contexts. However, insights gained and shared through the study may be relevant to learning and teaching colleagues in universities in similar contexts or may be useful for readers to reflect on similar concerns at their own university.

Future Studies

Further investigations are needed to evaluate professional learning from asynchronous peer sharing using digital stories, specifically measuring the motivation of, and impact on, the learner of engaging with a Faculty Story or Spark.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the motivating factors for university academics in sharing their learning and teaching practices via online digital narratives; the perceived value of sharing one's practice in this way; and the perceived impact of their asynchronous sharing. Findings indicated predominantly that *knowledge was viewed as a community resource* to be shared; the perceived *value of creating and sharing* the digital stories was a fostering of individuals' reflective practice and provided a personal record of innovation; and over two-thirds of the respondents identified that the *creation of the digital story positively impacted* their teaching practice and their reflective practice. Considerations for future research includes exploring the motivation of academics for interacting with open education resources, specifically Faculty Stories and Faculty Sparks, in order to engage in professional learning; and the impact of engaging with these resources on the academic colleague (learner).

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