1. Names:

2. Practicing humour: information and knowledge sharing and humour in the workplace.

3. Keywords. information practices, information behaviour, practice theory, humour

4. Full paper

5. Abstract:

Introduction. Information and knowledge sharing activities are seen as central to the success of a range of initiatives undertaken by Australian national, state and local governments as they work towards more sustainable practices (Cundill 2010). Such organizations encompass a range of different disciplines and specialist knowledge including finance, engineering, communications and urban horticulture as they come to terms with issues and develop the ability to change ways of working which depend on the sharing of these specialist knowledges (Blackmore 2007). Conventional wisdom in library and information science research and practice points to information and knowledge sharing activities as unfolding through a rational process involving participants exchanging their specialist knowledge verbally and via information resources and artefacts in a largely methodical manner (Kleinberg & Ligett, 2013, Xiao & Witherspoon, 2016). Recent practice-based, socio-cultural approaches to LIS research, such as that taken by Lloyd (2010) question this rational approach to information practices and focus on their embodied and affective dimensions.

This study takes such a sociocultural approach and focuses on one aspect of information and knowledge sharing, the use of conversational humour. Through a practice theoretical lens (Schatzki 2002), the study investigated how humour is associated with knowledge and information sharing and how power may be exercised in the practice.

Method. Nine meetings of a multi-disciplinary project team established to manage environmental issues in local government and to model new work practices were observed, audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Analysis. Content analysis of the transcriptions of the meetings was carried out, using emergent coding. Instances of humour were identified by the presence of laughter and through the researcher's impression of an attempt at humour that did not elicit laughter. The frequency, types (Dynel 2009) and themes of humour used by the team were subsequently identified and considered in the context of information activities (Lloyd 2010).

Results. Fifty-two instances of humour were recorded with the three most frequent types being witticisms, put-downs and self-denigration. The emergent coding identified three key themes in the instances of humour, namely creativity, exercising control and superiority to others. The use of conversational humour around *Information Work*, in particular, demonstrated a paradox between needing to act collectively as a creative and innovative team in order to model a 'new way of working' and continuing to work in the traditional reporting and communication structures of the traditional workplace. For example, creative humour was used to herald the 'new way of working' while exercising control and superiority humour was used to disparage more traditional practices.

Conclusion. The practice theoretical approach proved very useful in investigating the non-cognitive dimensions of information and knowledge sharing. The results draw into question the logical and rational aspects of information and knowledge sharing practices and highlight the role of affective dimensions.

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