

Chapter 1 : Information Seeking in Context Conference | Carol Kuhlthau

The field of human information behaviour and practice is multi-disciplinary in scope: researchers from information science, information management, management science, psychology, social psychology, sociology, information systems, computer science, and other disciplines all contribute to this field of investigation.

Information retrieval[edit] Traditionally, IR tools have been designed for IR professionals to enable them to effectively and efficiently retrieve information from a source. It is assumed that the information exists in the source and that a well-formed query will retrieve it and nothing else. Yet, internet search engines are built on IR principles. Since the late s a body of research on how casual users interact with internet search engines has been forming, but the topic is far from fully understood. IR can be said to be technology-oriented, focusing on algorithms and issues such as precision and recall. Information seeking may be understood as a more human-oriented and open-ended process than information retrieval. In different contexts[edit] Much library and information science LIS research has focused on the information-seeking practices of practitioners within various fields of professional work. Studies have been carried out into the information-seeking behaviors of librarians, [1] academics, [2] medical professionals, [3] engineers [4] , lawyers [5] and mini-publics [6] among others. The model was intended to "prompt new insights The model has been adapted by Wilkinson who proposes a model of the information seeking of lawyers. Theories of information-seeking behavior[edit] Main article: Information seeking behavior A variety of theories of information behavior â€” e. In addition, many theories from other disciplines have been applied in investigating an aspect or whole process of information seeking behavior. People experience the information search process as an interplay of thoughts, feelings and actions Kuhlthau, Case also wrote a good book that is a review of the literature. Information seeking has been found to be linked to a variety of interpersonal communication behaviors beyond question-asking, to include strategies such as candidate answers. However, the distribution of time among the constituent information seeking stages differs depending on the source. When consulting other people, people spend less time locating the information source and information within that source, similar time understanding the information, and more time problem solving and decision making, than when consulting information repositories. Furthermore, the research found that people spend substantially more time receiving information passively i. Within this scientific discipline a variety of studies has been undertaken analyzing the interaction of an individual with information sources in case of a specific information need , task, and context. The research models developed in these studies vary in their level of scope. Wilson therefore developed a nested model of conceptual areas, which visualizes the interrelation of the here mentioned central concepts. Wilson defines models of information behavior to be "statements, often in the form of diagrams, that attempt to describe an information-seeking activity, the causes and consequences of that activity, or the relationships among stages in information-seeking behaviour"

Chapter 2 : Information seeking - Wikipedia

ISIC intends to reflect and engage with the interdisciplinary character of information research and seeks to attract papers from all of these areas. ISIC is a conference for research papers exploring information as a rich site of study, going beyond the sole focus on technological aspects and exploring a wide variety of contexts.

Description by Waseem Afzal " Information seeking represents the activities that are carried out during the search for information. The process of information seeking is important as it enables the individuals to collect information that can address a need. Depending on the nature of the need and the contemporary trends, the sources of information vary. In the pre-Web era, the dependence on information sources having physical structures was great. However, the emergence of the Web has changed markedly the nature of information seeking. Present-day information seekers use the Web with greater flexibility and ease to seek information pertaining to different needs. Various qualities of the Web play a central role in its adoption for information seeking. These propositions represent the probable influence that the qualities of a medium can impinge on its use. Show Context Citation Context Another important development in information seeking research is the increasing emphasis on the context in which IS takes place. The Web is a mediator between a database and a user; a distributed Make in a Community? The Basic Question by Joan C. The article first states the reasons why this is an essential research question and describes the contributions of current public library planning too The article first states the reasons why this is an essential research question and describes the contributions of current public library planning tools to the determination of impact. It then takes a broad look at the framework that is essential for the intellectual development of this topic and the ability to answer the question, including methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks that will be discussed throughout. While the authors pose this research problem as an evaluation question, this article examines contributions of research in several areasâ€”particularly professional practice, especially reference research that has been informed by qualitative methodsâ€”to its solution. The aim of the study was to broaden our understanding of information-seeking behaviour by linking patterns of information seeking to personality and approach to studying. It is believed that research into psychological characteristics can shed light on variability and It is believed that research into psychological characteristics can shed light on variability and Powered by:

Chapter 3 : Information Seeking in Context | Hazel Hall

When we study information seeking in context it is easy to concentrate on the results specific to that context and to lose sight of underlying concepts that more generally informs physical and intellectual access to information and ideas.

For many years library and information science has borrowed theory from other fields to provide insight into our research findings. We are moving from this borrowed theory approach to creating a conceptual framework for Library and Information Science LIS specifically for application in our field. However, transfer of concepts across branches within the field of LIS remains problematic. I propose three imperatives for continuing to build the conceptual framework of the field while fostering collaboration across the branches of the field in order to unify the work of LIS. For many years researchers in Library and Information Science LIS have borrowed theory from other fields to provide insight into our research findings. We are moving from this borrowed theory approach to creating a conceptual framework for LIS that has been tested, refined and adapted specifically for application in our field. The conceptual framework has developed rapidly during the past ten years with early signs of application in other fields outside of LIS. An important contribution of the research reported at the ISIC conferences is the development of the user centered approach. These have substantially contributed to the conceptual framework of the field and form the basis for extensive research in user studies. Ellis, Allen and Wilson found that even within the concentration of information science, scholars do not cite across the three overlapping areas of information systems, user studies and information retrieval. This unfortunate situation severely limits our ability to solve users information problems. There is a critical need for a broad view of LIS incorporating concepts of each branch of the field into a unified whole. The expansive field of LIS incorporates the great traditions of librarianship, the insights of user studies, and the innovations of information retrieval and information systems. The time is right for a major initiative of collaboration across the branches of the field. I propose four imperatives for fostering collaboration and for continuing to build the conceptual framework of the field. Stay with a problem long enough to verify findings and draw concepts from the findings Apply the broad conceptual framework of LIS to inform the findings of our studies Develop research projects that incorporate concepts of interest to more than one area of the field Design application of the concepts for implementation into systems and services The first imperative is to stay with a problem long enough to test and verify the findings of an initial study in order to draw concepts from the findings. Sustained research is essential for developing concepts. Sustained research involves not only seeing an initial investigation through to completion but staying with a problem to verify findings and to expand understanding of that problem beyond the narrow confines of a single study. Once we are on to something we need to follow up with further investigation applying a variety of methods to exploit the full implications of our research for the field. When we study information seeking in context it is easy to concentrate on the results specific to that context and to lose sight of underlying concepts that more generally informs physical and intellectual access to information and ideas. In my first study of secondary school students I found that forming a focus in the process of information seeking was the main task rather than merely gathering information related to a topic. A student who did not form a focused perspective described great difficulty writing and presenting her work. Her is how she described her dilemma. It was an impossible paper to write. You have to have something to center on. You should have an idea when you start. I figured that when I did my research it would focus in. From this study I drew the concept of formulation within the constructive process of information seeking. Later in longitudinal case studies of information seeking in the workplace, I found evidence to support the concept. The securities analyst talked about finding an angle to present to his clients and the lawyers sought a strategy for presenting a case. Without these extensive studies the work would be interesting but not very useful for contributing to the conceptual framework of the field. Sustained, longitudinal research supports collaboration across branches of LIS by providing confirmed findings that lead to concepts that can apply in more than one context and that more than one area of the field can use for further study and application. The second imperative is to use the concepts developed across the field of LIS to inform and illuminate the findings of our research studies. Once a concept is discovered in one

context it is important to study that concept in other contexts with different users. Major concepts in LIS such as relevance, anomalous state of knowledge, uncertainty as well as models of information seeking behavior and theoretical frameworks such as sensemaking have been examined in a variety of contexts with different types of users to ground the concept for more general application. These concentrations of research not only verify but also extend and develop the concepts for increased understanding and insight that make important contributions to the conceptual framework of LIS. The concept of task complexity, developed by Bystrom and the Tampere team has provided insight in my own research. I am often asked if I think that people always experience the stages of the ISP in every information seeking task. Clearly they do not. But how to differentiate between tasks was a problem for me. In my recent studies I introduced the concept of task complexity and found that workers could easily distinguish between different types of information use in complex tasks and in routine tasks. These studies revealed simple straight-forward information seeking in routine work tasks and a process of construction and formulation in those tasks identified by the user as complex. The concept of routine and complex tasks is critical for understanding when to expect users to experience stages in the ISP. Applying the conceptual framework of LIS offers insight into disparate studies and builds the unified whole of the field. Ingwersen and Jarveline are applying the concept of task in their collaborative work in information retrieval. Information goal is another concept that has helped me to understand different approaches to information seeking by individuals with the same or similar tasks. Limberg has developed the concept of the influence of differing information goals. She found that within the same assignment the goals of fact finding, getting a right answer or analyzing and synthesizing resulted in quite different outcomes. In a longitudinal study of an information worker comparing novice and expert approaches to work tasks, I found that the expert had quite different goals in information seeking than the novice. The novice was looking for the right answer. Here is how this expert explains the change in his information goal. It is not to buy or sell but to add value. The best way I can help my more sophisticated client is by adding value to their knowledge base. The young analyst who is not confident in his industry worries about getting the story right. Now my attention is on adding value. The concept of information goals and tasks are good examples of concepts that are easily applied to more than one area of LIS and are emerging as important for developing collaboration across branches of the field. The third imperative is to develop research projects that incorporate more than one area of the field. Serious problems confronting users in their quest for physical and intellectual access are revealed in user studies. Many of these problems require the attention across the branches of the field to address and solve. Two areas that can benefit substantially from collaboration are user studies and information retrieval. An important problem emerged in my study of the information search process of lawyers that requires the collaboration of these two areas of the field. The problem for these workers was that the systems available to them did not sufficiently support their process of construction in the information search process. This is how they explained the problem. First, they described how they go about their work to accomplish their more complex tasks of preparing for trial. I start looking for A, and while looking for A, I find B. I have found something that really starts to formulate the issue I am looking for. And finally, so far I have never missed, I find the seminal case that turns the key one way or another. I go in not knowing what the case is, but finding it. And once I get there I do the research on it. One lawyer explained that it was difficult to initiate a complex task with the current system in this way. I would never find it using the traditional search program they have now. In light of my experience, I go with the book. I read the case and I see if any cases fall in line that look interesting. And, ultimately, I find what I am looking for. But I do it in such a way that I would never get there using the computer. These systems seemed source oriented not task oriented. Full discussion of this research on the information search process in the workplace is in the second edition of *Seeking Meaning* published this year by Libraries Unlimited. This important problem requires collaboration between user studies and information retrieval researchers and could use some help from information systems people as well. These overlapping areas of information science conduct different streams of research. One stream concentrates on system design and system use mainly at the point of interface. The other stream concentrates on the context and experience of information seeking and use. Both of these approaches address the problem that my lawyers were confronting but neither can solve the problem alone.

Studies that address questions of interest to more than one research area are becoming more common as our LIS departments become more and more integrated across the branches of the field. The Rutgers Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries is studying the impact of school libraries on student learning. We have included investigation of the change in keyword use over the course of the information search process in a school project. Nina Wacholder, a linguist and expert on information classification and organization, is leading this aspect of the study. Collaborative research of this type offers opportunities to apply the findings to designing systems and services that are tailored to specific needs of users. The fourth imperative is to go beyond speculating on implication for practice to developing application for practice. The concepts that emerge from our research need to be applied for improving library and information services and systems. Unfortunately much of our information seeking and use research does not go beyond suggesting implications to having an impact on system and service design. The work of Fisher and Durrance is an excellent example of successful application of concepts drawn from their research to improve library services to meet the specific needs of a wide range user groups see JASIST, 55, In my own work I have sought to make the range of concepts related to information seeking as a process of construction applicable to the two basic library services of reference and instruction by introducing the idea of a zone of intervention. The zone of intervention is that area in which an information user can do with advice and assistance what he or she cannot do alone or can do only with great difficulty. Uncertainty indicates a zone of intervention in the information search process. The model of the stages of information search process shows major decision points where users find intervention helpful. By concentrating on these zones, librarians can provide effective and efficient library and information services tailored to users specific needs. I found that the participants in my studies wanted help in their information seeking but not necessarily the kind of help that they thought was available. The securities analyst explained that a serious problem for many people in his line of work was collecting masses of information but not formulating a focused perspective to present in a report for clients. The student explained that without a focus the paper was impossible to write. Many useful concepts for application into services and systems are emerging from our research, such as finding without seeking Ross; Erdelez , everyday S , browsing Chang , berrypicking Bates , chaining Ellis , monitoring Choo , research styles of fast surfing, broad spanning, and deep diving Heinstrom to name just a few.

Chapter 4 : CiteSeerX " Citation Query Information seeking in context

It may help in understanding the effects of some contextual factors, especially religious status, on information seeking behavior and, consequently, aid in the planning of library and information.