
Contents

Figures and Tables	xiii
Preface	xv

One

Introduction and Examples

1

Information Behavior: An Introduction

1.1. Introduction	4
1.1.1. A Bit of Vocabulary	5
1.1.2. Emphasizing People Rather Than Systems	6
1.1.3. Ten Myths about Information and Information Seeking	7
1.1.4. When, Why, and Where Information Behavior Has Been Studied	9
1.1.5. The Contexts in Which Information Behavior Is Investigated	12
1.1.6. The Scope of "Information Behavior"	13
1.2. How This Book Is Organized, and How to Use It	14
1.2.1. Organization of the Chapters	14
1.2.2. Which Chapters to Read If . . .	16

2

Common Examples of Information Behavior

2.1. Five Information Seeking Scenarios	18
2.1.1. Buying Products	18
2.1.2. Finding Information in a Library	22
2.1.3. Betting on Race Horses	25
2.1.4. Finding the Law	29
2.1.5. "I Want to Know More about Cancer"	31
2.2. Summary	33

Two

Concepts Relevant to Information Behavior

3

The Concept of Information

3.1. Searching for a Definition of Information	40
3.1.1. Explicating "Information"	41
3.1.2. The Concept of Information	42
3.1.3. Typologies of Information Concepts	43
3.2. Definitions of Information and Their Problems	45
3.2.1. The Influential and Restrictive "Information Theory"	46
3.2.2. Five Problematic Issues in Defining Information	49
3.2.3. Uncertainty as a Requirement	50
3.2.4. Physicality as a Requirement	52
3.2.5. Structure/Process as a Requirement	53
3.2.6. Intentionality as a Requirement	56
3.2.7. Truth as a Requirement	57
3.3. Must There Be a Universal Definition of Information?	58
3.4. Distinctions among Information, Knowledge, and Data	61
3.5. Summary	62

4**Information Needs and Information Seeking**

4.1.	The Motivational Puzzle	65
4.1.1.	What Is a "Need"?	65
4.1.2.	Needs versus Demands	67
4.2.	Four Scholars Ponder Information Needs	68
4.2.1.	Seeking Answers	68
4.2.2.	Reducing Uncertainty	69
4.2.3.	Making Sense	70
4.2.4.	The Spectrum of Motivations	71
4.3.	The Trouble with Information Needs	73
4.4.	Information Seeking and Information Behavior	75
4.5.	Summary	76

5**Related Concepts**

5.1.	Decision Making	80
5.1.1.	Making Decisions	80
5.1.2.	Solving Problems	83
5.2.	Browsing, Etc.	84
5.2.1.	Browsing, Scanning, and Serendipity	84
5.2.2.	Additional Distinctions	86
5.3.	Relevance, Pertinence, and Salience	88
5.3.1.	Relevance and Pertinence	88
5.3.2.	Relevance in Information Retrieval	89
5.3.3.	Salience	91
5.4.	Avoiding Information	92
5.4.1.	Selective Exposure and Information Avoidance	92
5.4.2.	Knowledge Gaps and Information Poverty	95
5.4.3.	Information Overload and Anxiety	98
5.5.	Information versus Entertainment	102
5.6.	Summary	108

Three

Models, Paradigms, and Theories in the Study of Information Behavior

6

Models of Information Behavior

6.1. Models	114
6.1.1. What Is a Model?	114
6.1.2. Models of Information Seeking	115
6.2. Examples of Information Seeking Models	116
6.2.1. Wilson Models	116
6.2.2. Krikelas Model	119
6.2.3. Johnson Model	122
6.2.4. Leckie Model	126
6.2.5. Comparing the Models	128

7

Perspectives, Paradigms, and Theories

7.1. Perspectives and Paradigms	132
7.1.1. Perspectives	132
7.1.2. Paradigms	133
7.2. Theories	135
7.2.1. What Is a Theory?	135
7.2.2. Levels of Theory: Grand to Grounded	136
7.3. Sources of Theory in Information Seeking	138
7.4. Some Relevant Paradigms	140
7.4.1. Zipf's Principle of Least Effort	140
7.4.2. Uses and Gratifications	143
7.4.3. Sense-Making	146
7.4.4. Media Use as Social Action	148
7.4.5. Play Theory and Entertainment Theory	149
7.5. Other Theories	152
7.6. Summary	153

Four

Methods for Studying Information Behavior

8

The Research Process

8.1.	Relating Theory to Methodology	160
8.1.1.	Why We Need Methods	160
8.1.2.	Techniques of Measurement and Analysis	162
8.2.	Basic Considerations in Research	163
8.2.1.	Stages of Research	163
8.2.2.	Induction and Deduction	165
8.2.3.	Validity and Reliability	166
8.2.4.	Purpose, Units, and Time	169
8.2.5.	Ethics in Research	171
8.3.	Summary	174

9

Methods: Examples by Type

9.1.	Types and Examples of Methods	178
9.1.1.	The Case Study: Analyzing an Analyst	178
9.1.2.	Experiments: Shopping for Cars and Cornflakes	183
9.1.3.	Surveys: CEOs and Scholars	190
9.1.4.	Brief Interviews: Studies of Everyday Folks	194
9.1.5.	Intensive Interviews: The Lives of Janitors and Brothers	199
9.1.6.	Focus Group Interviews: Doctors and Nurses Search for Information	202
9.1.7.	Diaries and Experience Sampling	205
9.1.8.	Unobtrusive Approaches: Historical Analysis	207
9.1.9.	Unobtrusive Approaches: Content Analysis	210
9.1.10.	Using Multiple Data Sources in a Single Investigation	211
9.1.11.	Meta-Analysis	213
9.2.	Summary	215