

was established only in 1966 under the Faculty of Education, Addis Ababa University. Now the Department functions under University Libraries. It conducts a Diploma programme in Library Science consisting of two years; the Extension programme (evening programme) extends to three years. About sixty students are admitted for the day-programme. Semester system is followed in the university. To man different libraries in the country, more trained personnel will be required.

9 Conclusion

Since education has become more and more library centered, university libraries will have to play a positive role in the process of higher education. It largely depends upon the resources and the manpower available in libraries. Due to expansion of knowledge, students will have to depend more and more on original documents for getting detailed information on any topic of study. For this purpose, libraries attached to universities will have to be built up on high footings.

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29B : a

CONCEPTUAL AND DEFINITIONAL APPROACH TO INFORMATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

A S CHANDEL
AND
VEENA SARAF

[Explains the genesis and concept of documentation and information science by quoting various authorities. Presents the analysis and importance of this development to help users in research pinpointedly, exhaustively and expeditiously. States the methodology and implications of its application to present day needs of scholars. Concludes that information service is extension of library service through mechanical devices.]

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0 Introduction

Many terms have been coined from time to time to denote the concept of collection, storage, display and dissemination of recorded knowledge. The first term used to denote the above concept was 'Library economy' in 1876, with more emphasis given on the physical handling of books. Now, 'library economy', is taken as synonymous term to library management. The term 'library economy' was replaced by 'library science'. At its initial stage 'library science' was not the science in the real sense of the term, because no scientific method of research was applicable to the subject. The term 'science' was added due to the popular trend to call almost any human activity a science that could be studied and about which a certain amount of literature has accumulated. Later on, S R Ranganathan and others were able to introduce scientific method in the functions and operations of library science.

1 Genesis of Documentation and Information Science

In the beginning of 19th century, area of librarianship was extended from recorded knowledge in books to other forms of documents like periodical articles, theses, reports, conference proceedings, etc to include all human activities. Due to this trend, a new term 'documentation' emerged when the name of 'Institute Internationale de Bibliographie' was changed into 'Institute International de Documentation' in 1931. Even before that, as early as in 1905 Paul Otlet is said to have used the term in a lecture at International Economic Conference to denote the scientific activity of gathering, processing, storing, retrieving and circulating documents.[2] He later on, improved upon his own definition by extending its scope. In his first book on documentation "*Traite de Documentation*", he treated 'documentation' as a process by which are brought together, classified and distributed documents of all kinds of all areas of human activities! Another agreeable definition was given by Bradford[3] considering documentation as the art of collecting, classifying, making readily accessible the records of all kinds of intellectual activity.

One school of thought believed that 'documentation' has grown up into as independent status of a subject, whereas another school observed that it is simply an extension of activities of librarianship having expeditious services of nascent micro-thought to specialist, (Ranganathan). Ranganathan further believed that 'documentation' is not a new activity but an extension of long range reference service which forms a part of librarianship. J H Shera also supported Ranganathan's view. Even the definition given by Paul Otlet and S C Bradford show that 'documentation' cannot be treated as an independent subject. Now the scope of documentation is concerned with acquiring, storing, retrieving and disseminating documentary information primarily in the form of micro-literature.

During 1950's technological revolution of automation brought about many changes in librarianship. New technical vocabulary was added from electronics, communication system and information theory. Even the rank of librarianship was invaded by engineers, data processors system designers who also brought in new terminology.

"Thus, reference work became information retrieval; subject headings descriptors; Library information centres and librarians as information specialists. [4]

The term 'Information Retrieval' (IR) was first coined by Calvin Moores in 1950. It connoted necessary operations to gain access to recorded knowledge. Later on, it was felt that information cannot be retrieved unless it is stored. So the new term 'Information storage and retrieval' (ISR) came into use.

In 1962, the term 'documentation' was said to have been replaced by 'Information Science' in a 'Conference on training Science Information Specialist' (Atlanta, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1961-62). Prior to this J Farradane used the term as early as in 1958 which was later used and supported by the Institute of Information Specialists with its establishment in 1958.[5] Calvin Moores used the term in 1959 but it got fully established only in 1968 when the name of 'American Documentation Institute' (ADI) was changed into 'American Society for Information Science' (ASIS).

The term 'information science' was used without determining its scope and coverage. Many information specialists, librarians and investigators have been trying to define 'information science', but so far no agreeable definition has been arrived at. It is rather difficult to define the term due to its wide scope, its use in different context in the different subject areas and its growing tendency into a multi-disciplinary area. Even today, defining term "information" remains a problem.

2 Need for Defining Information

Now, the question arises whether to define 'information' before defining 'information science' is necessary or not? There are two schools of thought—the first is of the view that defining information is not useful line of inquiry because a single precise definition covering all its aspects cannot be easily given. According to Goffman:

"A single precise definition encompassing all its aspects can in principle not be formulated because the term 'Information' is used in so many different context." [6]

The second school of thought which is supported by various authorities like; Artandi, Mikhailov, Chernvi, Giliarevskii, Fairthorne, Yovite Brrokes, Belkin etc are of the opinion that to understand the concept of 'information' is a pre-requisite for the definition of 'information science'.

Fairthorne supports this view by saying that any discipline must define its scope. Yovits [7] says:

"If the definition of information is nebulous, varied and non-rigorous, then the definition of 'information science' is more nebulous, varied and non-rigorous".

Further, he says that information should be understood in its basic manifestations since it must be central phenomenon of science. He again with Whittemore justifies the need to define the term on the ground that only by defining appropriate basic concept, can a science become effective.[8]

Finally, we have to agree with Hayes[9] who says:

"Information is a slippery concept amorphous, loaded with connotations and implications and that it has had a variety of meaning and we must have a suitable definition even if it is at the most elementary level."

3. Definition of Information

Many definitions have been attempted, but not even a single agreeable definition comprehending all its aspects has been arrived so far. Hans Wellisch [10] while analysing 39 definitions of information science found that only 8 of them define 'information' first, while the rest of them remained silent about the definition of the term. The term 'information' has been derived from two Latin words 'Formatio' and 'Forma'. Both the terms convey the same meaning of giving shape to something and of forming a pattern. 'Information' was also Latin synonym for 'news'. Dictionaries define information as an action of telling or fact of being told of something, news intelligence or knowledge. Similar view of considering information and knowledge as synonymous terms is expressed by various authorities. Philosophical dictionary, Moscow defines "Information is certain knowledge, a totality of some data and known facts". Karen also supports this view that information is knowledge in any form in which it can be transformed. In other words, information can assume any format and mode as long as basic requirements that a message is passed through an identifiable channel is fulfilled use of the term is justified." [11]

Knowledge and information are often used interchangeably but some are able to make difference between the two terms. Farradane makes the difference between the two terms while defining both. He says:

"Information is physical surrogate of knowledge (ie language) used for communication. It is neutral in the sense that it does not have to be new to the recipient." While knowledge is, "memorable records of a process in the brain, something available in the mind; production of consciousness in the mind is at present quite unexplained". [12]

Peter Ducker [13] while differentiating between the two terms says:

"Only when man applies information in doing something, does it become knowledge. Knowledge like electricity or money is form of energy that exists while doing work."

Daniel Boorstin [14] feels that information is random and knowledge is orderly, and information is gathered because it is there. According to Brookes [15] Information adds to ones knowledge. Knowledge structure is modified by the information input to give a totally new knowledge structure. This is shown clearly by the formula given below:

$$D1 + (S) \longrightarrow (S + DS)$$

Where D1 is information input which together with knowledge (S) forms a totally new structure (S + DS).

Brillium [16] considers information as data while saying, "Information is raw material and consists of mere collection of data". Similar view is given by Shera who says:

"Information, both in the sense it is used by the biologist and in the sense we librarians use it, is a 'fact'. It is the similar we receive

say that "Information is...the structure of any text which is capable of changing the image structure of some recipient." [25] Burch and Stater have included some essential attributes of information in their definition while defining.

"Information as occurrence or set of occurrence which carry messages and when perceived by the recipient by any of the senses will increase their state of knowledge. The significance or value of information received can only be measured by the recipient." [26]

4 Analysis

In view of the different definitions of 'Information' it would be useful to know the essential attribute of information to see its nature which are summarised as under :

(a) Information and knowledge are not synonymous terms. Farradane, Boorstin, Brookes and some others are able to differentiate between information and knowledge. Acquisition of information adds to knowledge and knowledge in turn when communicated to a person who is ignorant about it becomes information for him. Knowledge is a complex phenomenon, its complete knowing is difficult due to its dynamic nature and unlimited area whereas information is a unit of complex whole.

(b) Information may not be always problem oriented. According to Hoshvosky and Marsey, information is sought when there is a problem in a human mind. Obviously the question arises, don't we communicate or receive information without problem in hand? This means that information received at random may not come under the purview of the above definition. The following instance is relevant to reproduce here in this context :

Jawaharlal Nehru once had a dinner with his members of Parliament. The quality of rice served was exceptionally good. The opposition members asked Nehru, "Sir, is such a fine Dehradun rice reserved for Prime Minister? (Laughter) Why is it not given to us?" Then, Nehru replied "this is not Dehradun rice. This is rice prepared in Mysore Food Research Laboratory" [27]. The reply by Nehru was information received by the opposition members, which was neither sought by them nor required to solve any particular problem. This information, no doubt added to the knowledge of members. Can we deny that the fact mentioned above is not information?

(c) Information can be data of value for decision making, but it may not be always. The above cited instance supports this proposition also. All the members received the information, which was, of course, new to them but did not use it for any decision-making. Moreover, the decision making is utility part of information and has least relevance to its definition. Norman Robert [28] has rightly said, that introduction of decision making into the definition not only narrows social horizons of information science but also creates an additional problem of definition and measurement. It must be said that authors are in no doubt regarding the position to which such arguments lead".

(d) Information brings change in recipient image. This information may or may not be new to the recipient. Farradane [29] says that recipient will exhibit four types of responses on the receipt of information. These are rejection, addition to knowledge without modifying, filling a gap in the initial knowledge structure or changing the previous knowledge structure.

McGarry [30] summarises the following varied attributes of information :

- (i) Information can be regarded as a near synonym of fact :

- (ii) It has a transforming or reinforcing effect on what is known, or believed to be known, by a human being ;
- (iii) Information is used as an aid in decision-making ;
- (iv) Information is the freedom of choice one has in selecting a message ;
- (v) Information is a necessary piece of 'something' when we are faced with a choice. The amount required depends upon the complexity of the decision to be made;
- (vi) Information is the raw material from which knowledge is derived.
- (vii) Information is exchanged with outer world; not merely received ; and
- (viii) Information can be defined in terms of its effect on the recipient.

5 Concept of Information

It is clear from the above description that information is complex in contents, having more than one attribute and to arrive at agreed definition, encompassing all its attributes seems difficult. So, it may be better (though escapists approach from the problem) to understand the concept of information rather than defining it. The distinction is that a definition presumably says what the phenomenon is whereas a concept is a way of looking at or interpreting the phenomenon. Belkin [31] while emphasizing its usefulness say, that by accepting the idea of a concept one becomes free to look for a useful concept rather than a universally true definition of information.

Barnes has also supported the above view He says :

"That activities of a mature discipline are based upon a paradigm or way of looking at the field which is common to all the practitioners of science without such a paradigm, an effective, or mature science cannot exist".

Barnes further says that information science is in a pre-paradigm state and that concept of information is the reasonable candidate for the unifying paradigm about which a mature, effective, information science would be organised. Thus, an agreed upon concept of information science is a prerequisite for information science even becoming a real "mature science". Various authorities have tried to give information concepts for purpose of defining information science but only Belkin has described them in detail. He [32] has given eight concepts based upon three groups of requirements which are as follows :

"Definitional" : This relates to context of the concept.

"Behavioural" : This aspect is based on observed behavioural pattern of recipients. This is further based upon three assumptions :

- (a) Different users respond to same set of data differently.
- (b) Same user will respond to same set of data differently at different times..
- (c) Nature of user's response depends to some extent upon the presentation of data.

"Methodological" : This is concerned with utility of the concept. Information should be generalised beyond individual case. Belkin himself realised this is difficult to achieve in view of the behavioural concept of the human beings because response varies from individual to individual. Further, information should be a means of pre-

diction. It should be able to visualise the effectiveness on the individual.

These three approaches gave rise to total eight concepts which are as follows :

- (a) It must refer to information within the context of purposeful, meaningful communication ;
- (b) It should account for information as a social communication process among human beings ;
- (c) It should account for information's being requested or desired ;
- (d) It should account for the effect of information on the recipient .
- (e) It must account for the relationship between information and state of knowledge ;
- (f) It should account for the varying effect of messages, present in different ways ;
- (g) It must be generalised beyond the individual case : and
- (h) It should offer a means for production of the effect of information.

6 Towards the Definitions of Information Science

The nature and scope of library profession has been increasing with the changing needs of information users. As such different nomenclature were given from time to time to denote the concept. The methodology and techniques for organisation of thought also changed with the technological advancements. The methods of selection, organising, analysis and dissemination of information are ever changing in order to improve the existing ones.

Information science is not independent discipline of librarianship but enlargement and improvement of library science which took place due to ever increasing social needs of information and computer application in Information handling. As rightly said :

"Information science is the discipline that is emerging from cross fertilisation of ideas involving the ancient art of librarianship, new art of computing, art of new media of communication... transfer of organised thought. [33]

The term 'Informatics' has been used by the Russians who Mikhailov[34] and his colleagues say :

"It is in a way a continuation of bibliography and library science but the experience inherited by 'informatics' from these branches of science is being subjected to complete reappraisal and appears in a new quality."

Even D J Foskett [35] wrote as early as 1958 about the new dimension in storage and retrieval of scientific information while saying that

"these services may take many form and often reach the highest level of scholarship and it is my opinion that information officers who organize and perform them has taken librarianship to its most advanced state distinct but has not found new and qualitative profession".

Various definitions of information science have been attempted, but a single agreed upon universal definition is yet to be arrived. At the initial stage of its emergence as a new discipline, various

*Concepts (a), (b), (c) account for definitional approach, (d) and (e) for definitional as well as behavioural approach, (f) for behavioural approach; and (g) and (h) for methodological approach.

contents which it covers were broadly outlined rather than defining its concept.

The first ever attempt to define Information science was made by L B Heilprin at 26th Annual Meeting of American Documentation Institute in 1963. After analysing various aspects, he defined, information science is concerned with stored information i.e the modulation stimuli for sensing the information are characteristically converted from short to long duration.[36] His definition rests upon physically observable objects, message or supported messages. The examination of their structure and functions in the environment used will disclose whether the information has been stored rather than merely read out of a solid (observed). If so, the probability is very high that object is a message and the subject of information science. Artandi says that

"In Information Science we are often concerned with problems that are qualitatively the same as library problems at the same level, except that we are considering these with more sophistication in order to cope with and utilise changes which have occurred in the environment in which we need to operate." [37]

The above view has been further supported by Gluliano who says :

"Information science comprises that set of research and development undertaking, necessary to support the profession of librarianship." [38]

The above definitions make it clear that information science is extension of activities of librarianship. The other view which is supported by various authorities is that information science has an interdisciplinary emergence. Broko defines :

"Information science... that discipline that investigates the properties and behaviour of information, the forces that govern the flow of information and the means of processing information for optimum accessibility and usability. It is concerned with that body of knowledge relating to the origination, collecting, organisation, storage, retrieval, interpretation, transmission, transformation and utilisation, of information. It is an interdisciplinary science derived from and related to such fields as mathematics, logic, linguistics, psychology, computer technology, operation research, the graphic arts, communications, library science, management and other similar fields". [39]

Cuadra [40] while supporting the above view, says :

"The growing fields of information science and technology drawn on fragments and fringes of a number of science, technologies, disciplines, arts and practices elements that provide whatever degree of cohesiveness now exists in the field is a shared deep concern with information... its generation, transformation, communication, storage, retrieval and use." Belzar says : "Information Science deals with many aspects of information, its properties, organisation, manipulation, structure, control and use... concerned with information system, their design, operations, evaluations and components. It cuts across such disciplines as logic, behavioural science, cybernetics, communication theory, language, machine translation and pure and applied mathematics. It interacts as strongly with storage and retrieval and communication, transmission and display of information". [41] This is... an emerging scientific discipline, the information science is still not fully defined, but resting on a base in logic, system theory, psychology and neuro-psychology". [42]

Fairthorne argues that information science is a social science. He says :

"...whatever label may be preferred, it denotes interest in aspects of production, manipulation and application of signs and symbols,.... sign and symbols are not spontaneous.... must be derived.... required phenomenon which is controllable and repeatable.... information science is therefore, a social science". [43]

Farradane [44] includes the scope of information science and its usability by saying that information science is concerned with use of information by human where this use may involve storing, processing and transmission by machines and is concerned specifically with a way in which human search for information, systematically and un-systematically. Erik Hollnagel also gives the scope and coverage of information science when he says:

"Information science is concerned with systems, human, and/or machines which are retrieving information rather than just receiving information". [45]

7 Conclusion

The above authors have mainly given the scope of information science rather than defining it, because of its interdisciplinary and extending nature, its concern with sociological and psychological phenomenon, which have made its definition elusive. The definition of information science may be possible when it reaches its zenith, whatever, may be the nature and scope of information science, this dilemma can be resolved without bothering much about its definition at this stage. Librarianship from "physical handling of books" has reached a stage where we are more concerned with the storing and retrieval of information with the aid of sophisticated machines. The techniques of organising knowledge has been changing with the social needs of the society and the different terminology was used to denote it from time to time. Did librarians change in their objective?

"Our ultimate aims has been the same i.e. to bring human mind and the graphic record together in a fruitful relationship but for the growth of knowledge is still the goal". [46]

Hence, the core of librarianship even today is unchanged. Of course, information science has reached new dimensions and is using sophisticated equipments for handling information.

In summing up, information science deals with processing storing and communication of information which comprises of knowledge, facts data, message, signs and symbols representing certain meanings. Since information science is in its growing stage, a single agreeable definition may not be possible which happens with every new discipline. Until, information reaches its maturation, we should be contented with its concept and attributes rather than bothering much about definitional part to serve the purpose.

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A STUDY OF INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF DOCTORAL CANDIDATES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

T SUBRAHMANYAM

[Analyses information seeking behaviour of doctoral researchers in social sciences. Makes a review of user studies, and points out the lack of accessibility of documents. States that researchers make use of non-formal sources considerably. Brings out that the university library service need to be further geared up in meeting the information needs of the researchers.]

6 Introduction

Promotion of research is one of the prime functions of the university. Research is carried in the university at two levels—first, by the faculty members as their obligation in extending the boundaries of knowledge and for their own professional prospects and secondly, by the research scholars for the award of Ph D degree, which is the highest academic degree.

The main function of the university library is to collect and organise the records of knowledge to support teaching and research programmes of the university. It should so plan, organise and develop its services that the information needs of its users are fulfilled to the best extent possible. Knowledge about the users and their information needs is a prerequisite for the planning, organisation and development of library service. Thus, studies about users and their information needs have become necessary. Such studies are termed as 'user studies'. The present study is one in this direction, studying the information seeking behaviour of doctoral candidates in social science in the process of their research work.

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