

The Role of Social Software for On-the-job Information Seeking Behavior of Young Professionals

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An information-scientific study with an
intercultural perspective on management consulting



Introducing Theoretical Framework

Social Software as Information Source

Key Considerations

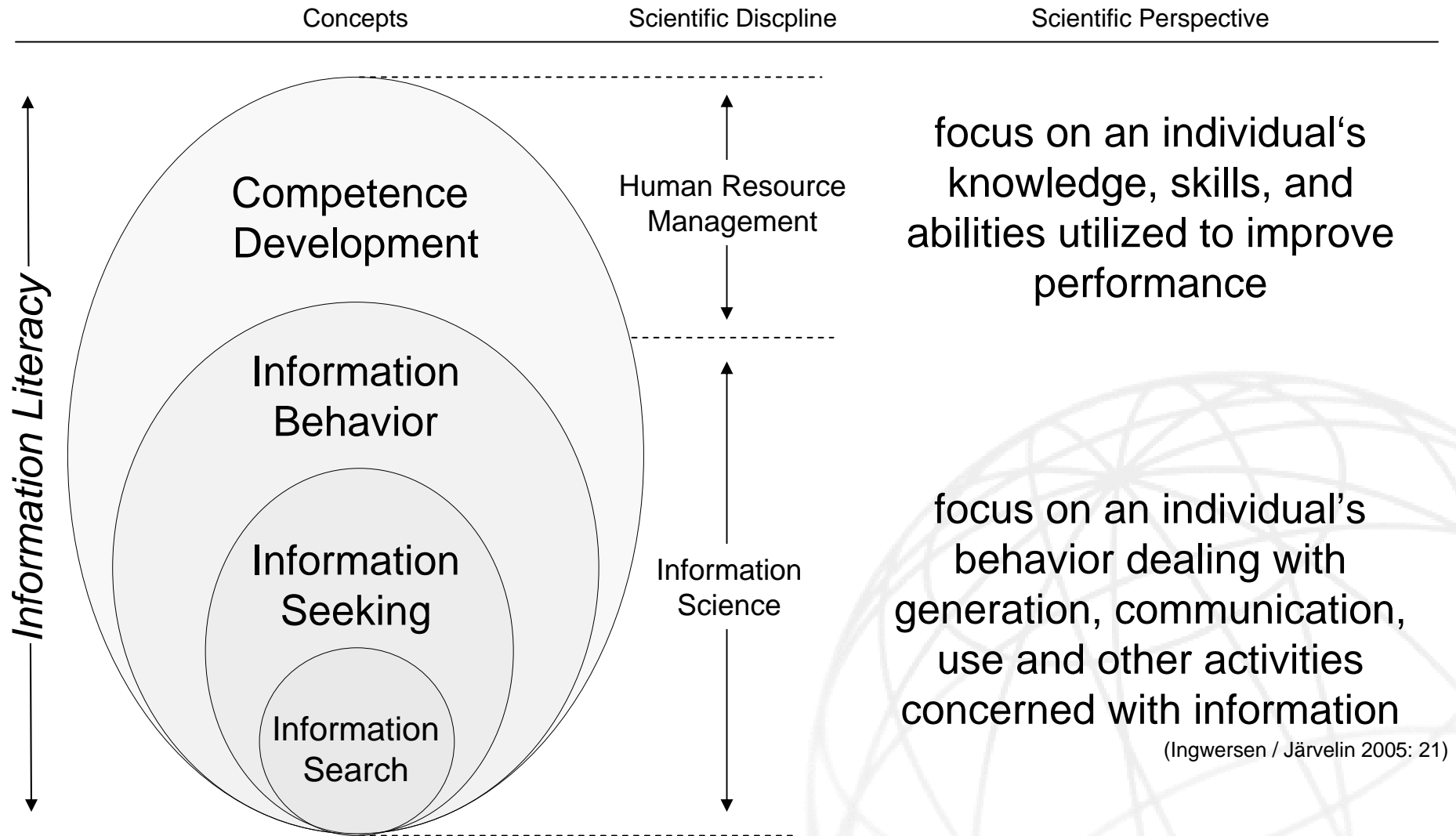
Research Methodology

Current Status

Outlook & Discussion



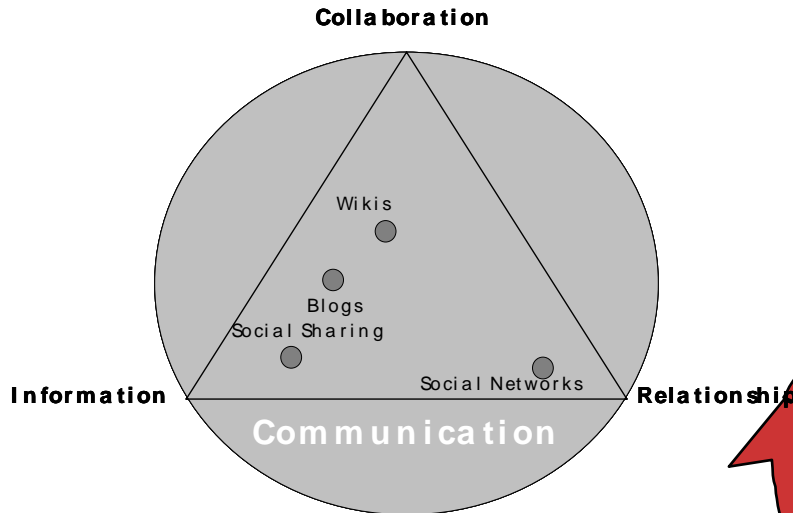
Introducing Theoretical Framework



(Ingwersen / Järvelin 2005: 21)

Social Software as Information Source

Social Software

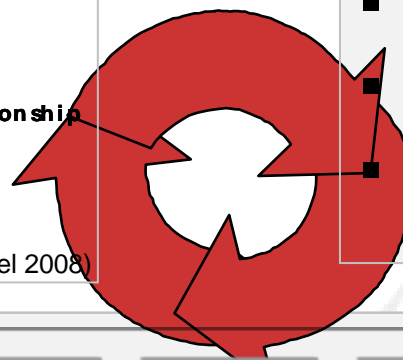


(cf. Ebersbach / Glaser / Heigel 2008)

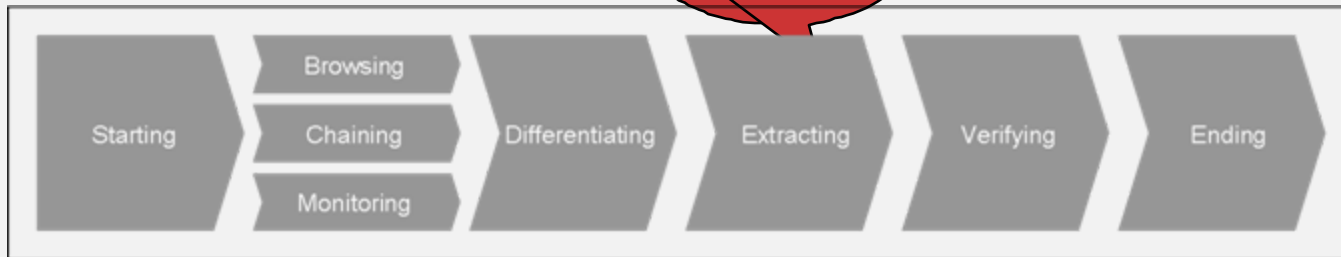
Information Source

- *User-Generated*
- *Personalized*
- *Informal*
- *Up-to-date*
- *Self-Organized*
- *Experience-Based*

to be confirmed



to be confirmed



(cf. Ellis / Wilson 1989 / 1999)

Information Seeking Behavior

Key Considerations

What are the elements and underlying process steps of information seeking behavior and competence development of junior employees in the workplace?

Do young professionals in the management consulting industry show common characteristics in their information seeking behavior?

What role plays the dimension of culture on information behavior in the management consulting workplace and the use of social software?

What are the particular characteristics of social software applications and what types of information do they contain?

How do organizations need to react to the rising availability of social software applications as information sources in order to effectively support competence development of young professionals?

Mixed Method Approach

Qualitative

Literature Research & Status Quo

- ➔ *Scientific definition of core concepts and comparison to use in practice*

Qualitative / Structured Observation and Semi-Structured Interviews (Critical Incident Method)

Process exploration of information seeking behavior, workplace information sources and

cases of information behavior

Quantitative

Survey (Online-Questionnaire) of Information Seeking Behavior

- ➔ *(Culture-) Specific information behavior and competence development profiles*

Corpus Analysis of Social Software Information Sources

- ➔ *Classification of information types contained in social software applications*

Consolidation of Findings

Current Status

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Explorative Study	Austria, Switzerland, Germany 	<i>North America (planned)</i>
Number of Projects / Analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 analysts on 3 different projects ▪ 9 Structured / 7 Qualitative Observations ▪ 9 Interviews 	<i>2 – 3 Projects / 2 – 4 Analysts</i>
Type of Projects	<p>Management Consulting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training development @ <i>Energy Industry</i> ▪ SAP introduction @ <i>Chemical Industry</i> ▪ Supply chain optimization @ <i>Chemical Industry</i> 	<i>Management Consulting projects @ Chemical, Energy, and Communication & HighTech Industry</i>
Project Phase / Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average 2,5 months into project ▪ Average of 12 months corp. affiliation ▪ Average age 26,7 ▪ 5 female / 2 male ▪ 5 German, 1 Austrian, 1 US 	<i>Overall project initial phase or at least roll-on phase of analysts</i>
Time Frame	February 2009	<i>April 2009</i>

Outlook & Discussion

Mixed Method Approach

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Consolidation of Findings

Any Questions or Remarks?

How would you approach the classification of information types contained in social software applications?

Automatic / Quantitative

Manual / Heuristic

Thank you and feel free to contact me any time.

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