

INFS 111

INFORMATION IN SOCIETY

Session 1 – The Impact of Information in Society

Lecturer: S. Nii Bekoe Tackie, School of Information and Communication Studies,
Department of Information Studies
Contact Information: snbtackie@ug.edu.gh



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

College of Education

School of Continuing and Distance Education

2014/2015 – 2016/2017

Session Overview

We are inundated by information to the extent that information has become like the air we breathe. Every day, we receive and deal with information consciously or unconsciously. To help you understand and realize the pervasiveness of information in the world we live in, this session deals with information activities in our daily lives which we may or may not be conscious of.

Session Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:

- Match devices for use of information to the mode in which the information is received.
- Describe how information is used in society to control and influence behaviour.
- Discuss how individuals differ in the ability to access and use information.
- Explain how the use of information is changing the world today.

Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are:

- Topic One: Daily Encounters with Information
- Topic Two: Information Devices around the world
- Topic Three: Uses of Information in Society

Reading List

Alemna, A. A. (1998). Information in African Society. *Information Development*, 14(2), 69-72.

Alemna, A. A. (2000). *Libraries, Information and Society*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press. 39p.

Debons, Anthony. (2008). *“Information Science 101”* The Scarecrow. Plymouth, Uk: Press,Inc.

Lester J. and Koehler W. C. (2007). *“Fundamentals of Information Studies: Understanding Information and Its Environment”*. Second Edition. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

Topic One:

DAILY ENCOUNTERS WITH INFORMATION

Daily Activities

From waking up to bed time we interact with information in different ways;

- Aurally
- Gustatorily
- Olfactorily
- Tactilely
- Visually

Transforming Information

- A persons daily information activities may involve transforming information from one format to another, example:
 - a piano student
 - architectural drawings

Escalation of Information

- On a daily basis, information grows by leaps and bounds.
Example:
- Information produced in 2002:
 - equivalent to 37,000 libraries with their collections the size of the Library of Congress
 - Approximately 800 megabytes of information for each person in the world(Lyman and Varian, 2003).
- information produced in 2006:
 - Estimated digital data production, 20 exabyte (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, 2006)

Gathering and Managing Information

- Individuals use an increasing array and number of information sending, receiving, recording, tracking and manipulation devices as well as expanding number of information services. Example:
- 2004: Over 60% of USA households had computers : more than half of all American homes had internet connections (US Department of Commerce, 2004: 4)

Gathering and Managing Information

- 2005: 80% of adult Americans had internet access at home or workplace (US Census Bureau, 2006)
- 2006: the average American home had 8 radios and 2.4 television sets(US Census Bureau, 2006)

Broadband penetration

- Increased from 11.7% inhabitants in June 2005 to 15.5% in June 2006 in Organization for Economic Corporation and Developments (OECD) member countries ((OECD, 2006).

Use of Information Devices

- In 2006, it was common for an individual in the developed countries to own and use most of the following information devices on a daily basis

Clock	Watch	Radio
Computer	Printer	Television
Telephone	Telephone Answering Machine	Cell phone
DVD Player/Recorder	Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) Eg. Palm Pilots	Fax Machine
Calculator	Thermostat	Scanner
MP3 Player	Calendar	Book
VCR	CD Player	Camera
Security/Alarm System		

Use of Information Services

- Individuals in 2006 were likely to have used one or more of the following information services in addition to the devices in the above slide;
 - Telephone Service
 - Cable Television Subscription
 - Satellite Radio Subscription
 - Internet Access
 - Security Monitoring Service
 - Wireless Phone Service

Total Media Usage (TMU)

- Total media usage is computed per person per year in hours. Thus, in 2008:
 - TMU was 4059 hours per person
 - Television viewing was first with 1669 hours per person
 - Radio was second with 1032 hours per person
 - Use of newspapers, magazines and books decreased
 - Use of other media like the internet and video games increased

Sample Question for Consideration

- The conduct of daily life is affected by the number of different information devices for sending, receiving recording, tracking and manipulating information one owns or can access. Which of the information devices that you use would have been available to your parents when they were your age?
- How does having the information devices that you use make your life different from how theirs was?

Topic Two:

INFORMATION DEVICES AROUND THE WORLD

Cell Phone Subscription

- Statistics from International Telecommunication Union (ITU) showed that in 2005:

Country	Number of subscribers per 100 inhabitants
USA	67.62
Hong Kong	122.65
Israel	113.04
Italy	123.14
Czech republic	115.22
Croatia	65.55
South Africa	65.36

Broadband Penetration

- Broadband penetration that is DSL cable modems and other technologies;
 - Iceland leads
 - Korea is 2nd
 - Netherlands is 4th
 - Taiwan is 12th
 - United States is 16th

Current Range of Information Devices

- Portable MP3 player
- Digital camera
- Portable video player
- IPad
- Tablets
- Improvement in capabilities of existing devices
Eg. smart phones that combine the cell phone,
camera and PDA

Current Information Service Provision

- Information service provision has also been expanding.
Eg.
 - Apples iTunes (digital music service)
 - Downloadable movie services
 - VoIP(Voice over internet protocols)
 - Cell Phone service in flight (flight mode)
 - Blogging

Summary

- Information devices and services provide information to individuals which they use for a variety of purposes as they carry out their daily life.
- Basically, information is used for:
 - Decision making
 - Resolving uncertainty
 - Recognition of the uncertainty
 - Awareness that information may resolve the issue
 - Analysis of the kind of information that would be needed
 - Knowledge of the availability of the required information
 - Access to the required information
 - Skills needed to locate and interpret the information

Topic Three:

USES OF INFORMATION IN SOCIETY

Introduction

- Information is a powerful and indispensable factor in the operation and functioning of society.
 - Used as an instrument of influence and control in the lives of individual citizens
 - Political structure of the country
 - In the relationships among nations

Instrument of influence and Control

- The economic environments:
 - The use of advertising to influence behaviour
 - It's information that makes all other resources available for economic production
 - All other resources depend on information and knowledge for their evaluation and utilization
 - Oil
 - Gold
- In politics:
 - Used to influence behaviour of citizens in their voting choices
 - To shape public opinion on national issues
 - To inform and support public policy decisions

Political Structure of a Nation

- Key elements in establishing and maintaining political powerbase
- Relationships among nations:
 - Unions, Eg EU,AU,G8 etc.

Information for Entertainment

- Information plays a huge role in the sphere of entertainment;
 - Sporting events
 - Films
 - Music

Rapidity of Information Dissemination

- Loss of 'time cushion' between the occurrence of an event or a problem and information diffusion. Eg:
 - The loss of Malaysian airlines flight MH30
 - In Ghana, the death of President J.E.A. Mills and Mr. P.V. Obeng

Summary

- The level of information diffusion in the entertainment sphere has been raising fears in many countries about their culture being overwhelmed by foreign cultures.

References

- Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. (2006). “Technology, Media & Telecommunications.” TMT trends: Predictions, 2006, A Focus on the Technology Sector. London: Deloitte & Touche. Available: [www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us_tmt_techpredictions2006_020206\(1\).pdf](http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us_tmt_techpredictions2006_020206(1).pdf).
- Lyman, P and Varari, H.R. (2003). ‘Executive summary’. How much information? Berkeley: University of California. School of Information Management and Systems. Available at www.suins.merkeley.edu/refrence/profile/how-much.info-2003/execsum.
- US Census Bureau, (2006:737) No.1116. Media usage and consumer spending; 2000-2008. No.1117. Utilization of selected media:1980-2003; No.1265.Advertising Estimated Expenditure1990-2004. Washington DC. Department of Commerce. Available at www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/obstatab/infocomm.pdf
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2006) OECD Broadband Statistics to June 2006. Available at www.oecd.org/document/9/0,2340,en-2649-34223-37529673-1-1

References

- Madden, M. (2006:4). Internet penetration and impact. Washington DC: pew internet and American Life Project: Available at www.pewinternet.org/pdf/r/182/report_display.asp
- McLtale, J (1976: 18) the changing Information Environment Boulder, C O: Westview Press.
- US Department of Commerce 2004 ; 4 economics and statistics administration and national telecommunications and administration. A Nation Online: entering the broad band age . Washington DC : Department of Commerce Available at: www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/an/nationOnlinebroadband
-