

Information seeking and use behaviour of economists and analysts

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The aim of this research paper is to deal with the information seeking and use problem in a professional context and understand how activity can influence practices, by taking as examples, economic studies. We analyse the relationship between the situational approach, described by Cheuk, work environment complexity (with social, technological and personal aspects), and the information seeking and use strategies, which relied on Ellis's and Wilson's models, with Bates' comments. We have interviewed eight economists, with a questionnaire and the SICIA (Situation, Complexity and Information Activity) method. The SICAI method is a qualitative approach, which underlines the relationship between situations, professional contexts and strategies. Both methods allow to better understand how investors find out what they need for their job. We can clarify their information sources and practices of information seeking, which are very particular due to their activities. We complete our analysis by interviewing analysts from financial institutions. We find similarity in information seeking and use strategies used by these two groups and environmental levels meet in most situations. But some differences can be also found, explained by the activity frameworks and goals. Thus, this study demonstrates that the activity and also the professional context (here the financial context) can directly influence practices.

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