Study Unit 1

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Information science concentrates mainly on 3 variables:
- Human Beings
- Information
- Communication

Human:
- Information generator
- Cannot exist without information and communication
- Technology is not the goal but merely the support to the goal

Information:
- Legally information is indefinable
- Dictionaries define information as:
    o That which reduces uncertainty
    o The facts or material required to solve a problem
    o Facts derived from a material object or entity
- Wellish cite 39 definitions
- Machlup has different meanings of information:
    o Something one did not know before
    o Something that affects what one already knows
    o Something used in decision making

Communication:
- Method in which information is transferred
- Number of ways in which information can be transferred
- Saracevic (1999) defines "Information Science as a science and as a profession, is defined by the problems it addresses and the methods it has used for their solutions over time"
- A.Spink defines "Information Science seeks to understand the complex process that involves and requires a number of information- related activities"

Humans depend on information for:
- Leisure
- Task Completion
- Decision making
- Problem solving

Information is gained from 4 sources:
- Human memory
- Direct communication
- Indirect communication
- Reality

Problems emerge related to indirect communication such as:
- Too much info
- Irrelevant info
- Obsolete info
- Duplication of info
- Language problems

These problems mean that information cannot be effectively communicated

The task of an information scientist is to address and solve problems in a scientific manner to provide users with information
Access to the correct information at the right time in the right packaging for the right person so the best decision can be made

Correct information however doesn't always mean the correct decision

Etymological development:
- Information comes from the latin word *Forma*
- The noun is *Informatio* The verb is *Informo*
- Information serves to give form or to place the recipient in a new state

Data:
- Unprocessed raw facts
- Carries no meaning, stands loose from man itself

Information:
- Data processed to create meaning
- Peter Drucker "data endowned with relevance and purpose"
- Information exists in the eye of the beholder the same data can be nonsense to one person and gold to another

Knowledge:
- The raw material of knowledge is information
- Includes logic and understanding
- Vizcaya Alonso "process of virtue by which reality is reflected and produced in human thought"

Wisdom:
- The application of knowledge
- Segundo "Wisdom is knowing how to look for something

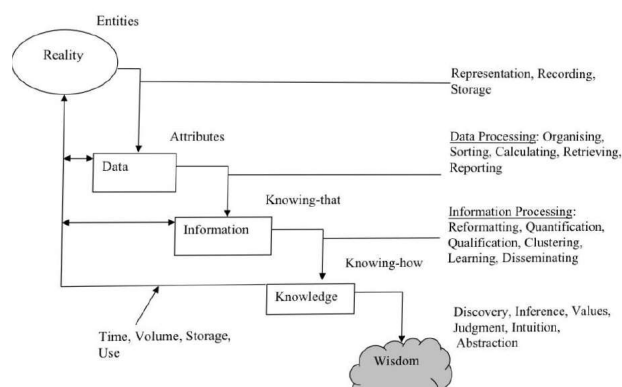The relationship between Data, Information, Knowledge and wisdom:
Data

↓

Information

↓

Knowledge

↓

Wisdom

Various contexts in which information can be used:
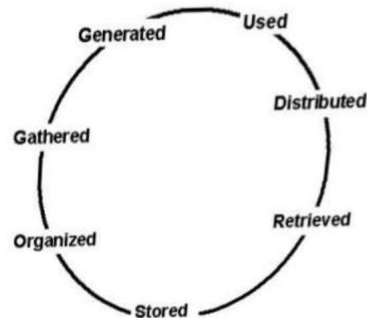1. Information as a commodity

Something in a book, in your head, In business files
Information can have control over people
2. Information as energy
Quantifiable physical entity
3. Information as communication
Being informed is a result in the communication process
4. Information as facts
You are aware of facts but if they aren't put in context it remains facts and
nothing else
5. Information as data
It is data however no meaning has been attached to it
6. Information as knowledge
A persons intellectual capability to draw conclusions

⭐ Information use according to Kari

Various scientific perspectives of information :
1. Anti-definition approach
No definition exists for the concept of information
Fairthorne - information is only a term used without real meaning
2. Ideological approach
Ideological connected words are used to describe information
3. User-approach
Usability and application of information
4. Process approach
Information is regarded as not only part of a process but actually as being a
process itself
2 ways of describing the cycle:
    o Information life-cycle

    o Cognitive processes
        ▪ When information becomes knowledge when it may lead to
           meaningful action
5. Content approach:
Regards information as content that's communicated
Faibrissof and Ely - May be used as a symbol or a set of symbols which has
the potential meaning associated with it
6. Knowledge approach
Information is regarded as the building blocks of knowledge
The real knowledge is not with the receiver but with the generator, because the
generator knows what the original thoughts was from which he communicated
content originated

Various Characteristics of Information:
1. Information is always embodied in a life cycle
Cannot be seen separate from human beings

Human beings are primary characters
Information is distributed by its secondary carrier
2. Reality-related characteristics
Inexhaustibility - Always relevant to reality
Indestructibility - Physically destroying an object does not implicate that all the information about that object is destroyed
Independent- Destruction of an object does not mean the information about that object is destroyed
3. Carrier-Related Characteristics
As a representation of reality - Does not stand separate from the carrier
Abolishment of time and spatial limitations of reality - Different carriers can represent the same information about the same object simultaneously
2 ways = Information can still exist in another carrier or make a new representation
Access and exclusion to information - People can be excluded from information because of their carrier related characteristics
Communication disturbances - aging of information, duplication etc
4. Human Related Characteristics - Information can be observed
Humans can give meaning to information in context
New information can be produced
Humans serve as a carrier of information

1. Human related information is not always true to reality
Humans only have a fragmented view of reality
Information as input to humans does not represent the whole truth
2. Information as an affect on man
   a. No or little affect
   b. Little affect
   c. Confirming affect
   d. Complete change
3. Human related information is value related information
Value is added to information depending on a humans potential to sensibly observe information and converting it to meaning
Value adding 2 ways - Observe the object or get additional information by consulting sources about the object
4. Human-related information as an instrument of power
Humans depend on information to make decisions