

USER STUDY AND INFORMATION MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

Based on a literature review on the theoretical foundations of information marketing and user studies were selected two master dissertations of a Postgraduate Program in Information Science that addressed user studies as a methodological procedure to understand the relationship between supply and demand. The objective of reporting the results of the two master dissertations was to highlight the alternative approach for these studies focusing on users' perception as a methodological procedure to study the management of information supply and demand in a digital library and a management information system in an information marketing perspective. Despite the different objectives of the dissertations selected, it is inferred that alternative approach of users studies as a methodological procedure to study the users' perception about information supply and demand is possible. This theoretical and methodological approach to integrate the concepts and principles of information marketing in user studies in the context of management of information supply and demand is significant as a contribution to the knowledge on the subject studied.

Keywords: Information Supply; Information Demand; Information Marketing; User Studies; Digital Library; Information System.

1 INTRODUCTION

Studies and researches carried out in the area of Information Science, more specifically about information management in the perspective of information marketing and users studies, has been establishing a collaborative partnership for sharing knowledge and experiences between the Research Group in Information Marketing at the *Universidade de Brasília* (UnB) in Brazil and the Research Group of Information Users of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) in Mexico.

The concepts covered, objectives and surveys conducted in these two research groups are converging to appoint that responsible for information supply must to understand the information needs, behaviors and satisfaction of individuals or groups of individuals who use or should use the information offered.

In an article on marketing research and user studies, Rozados and Piffer (2009, p.179) also argue that there are many similarities between marketing research and user studies, because "[...] the focus is the search for satisfaction customer/user, through knowledge of their habits, preferences, behavior, needs and demands". Rozados and Piffer (2009, p.170) understand that in the context of information units, user studies assume the same role that marketing research assumes in relation to other markets.

Amaral (2011) agree with Rozados and Piffer (2009, p.170), but she ensures that, besides the application of marketing research techniques, it is necessary to increase the use of information marketing approach within the Information Science because:

[...] the development of studies and researches on information marketing in the area of Information Science can contribute improving the performance of information services toward the care and relationship with many publics of libraries and other kind of information units (AMARAL, 2011, p.97).

Understand and interpret customer needs is a fundamental principle in marketing practice. By transferring this principle for information environment, it is possible to assume the significant contribution from marketing, if professionals learn how to do user studies focused in users, adopting marketing techniques as well as consumer analysis, marketing research and market segmentation. This is because, "[...] when services are based on the provider's interest in knowing information needs, behavior, and satisfaction of their users to whom information products and services supply is intended" (AMARAL, 1996a, p.208), it increases possibilities for the provider to satisfy users' interest to use information products and services offered.

By your turn, Calva Gonzales (2004a) presents the model NEIN for conducting user studies from the conception of the phenomenon of information

needs as a cycle of three phases: the emergence of needs, user information behavior and information user satisfaction to meet his information needs. In the first phase of the model NEIN, Calva González (2004b, p.27) refers to the emergence of information needs, which is stimulated by internal or external factors in the context of the information environment studied. The second phase relates to user information behavior in order to be informed as a consequence of the first phase. The last phase of the model is about information user satisfaction, which may or may not occur in accordance with factors relate to information pertinence, relevance, accuracy and recompiling.

According the partnership proposal between Brazilian and Mexican research groups nominated, the model NEIN was used by Flud (2006, p.21) to study information business needs and use by managers of supermarket sector in Campo Grande, MS, Brazil. It was demonstrated the validity of this users study developed to research in a marketing perspective at Master level in Information Science at University of Brasilia, Brazil.

Considering this context, knowledge and research sharing has been developed integrating the concepts and principles on user studies and information marketing. So, the objective of this research is to highlight the alternative approach of user's studies focusing on information user's perspective as a methodological procedure to study information supply and demand management.

Two concluded master dissertations from Post Graduated Program in Information Science of UnB, Brazil were selected following the criterion to adopt users study as a methodological procedure to study information supply and demand, one about a digital library (BARBOSA, 2012) and the other one about an information management system (SANTOS, 2012), both from the viewpoint of information marketing.

Based on theoretical foundations of the two themes (user studies and marketing information) are presented comments on selected master dissertations analysis followed by concluding remarks of researches developed.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS ON USER STUDIES

In Information Science, user studies could be seen as planning tools in the context of information management in organizational environments, and these kinds of studies can assist information managers responsible for information products and services supply to all kind of information users in their organizational environment.

User studies can be performed from the traditional or alternative approach. In the traditional approach, the concern is how much and how an information product, service or system is used, and what are the difficulties and satisfaction with its use. This approach examines only group and demographic characteristics of users (SILVA; FERREIRA; BORGES, 2002).

The traditional approach directs its focus to the information product, service or system, which are evaluated almost disregarding the one to whom it is addressed, being an individual or a collective user. According to Ferreira (1997), the alternative approach is also known as "[...] user-centered approach or user' perception approach". On the characteristics and perspectives of individual user, Ferreira (1997) defends the foundations of this approach as described and presented by Chen and Hernon (1982):

(a) the process of seeking understanding of what is "information need" must be analyzed from the perspective of the individuality of the subject to be searched; (b) the necessary information and the efforts made for their access, must be contextualized in the real situation where it emerged; (c) the use of information must be given and determined by the individual himself.

In the context of Information Science, Carol Kuhlthau (1991) defended the process as constructivist alternative approach (Constructive Process Approach) to conduct user studies. Robert Taylor (1986) had already proposed a value-added approach (User-Values and Value-Added), and before him, Belkin (1980) proposed the approach of the state of knowledge anonymous (Anomalous States-of-Knowledge).

Ferreira (1995) defended the sense-making approach, proposed by Brenda Dervin (1983), understanding that alternative studies treat individual characteristics and perspectives of the user and thus "[...] when positioning information as something constructed by humans viewing the individual in a constant process of construction, free to create whatever he want with the systems or situations".

It is easy to see that the alternative approach shows potential for performing user studies from methodologies that direct the focus to users' point of view.

Costa, Silva and Ramalho (2009) analyzed literature reviews on user studies and found that the number of studies about information needs, behavior and use had increased since the first revision issues of the Annual Review of Information Science Technology (ARIST) from 1966 until the publication of such revisions in the first decade of 2000. They also noted that different aspects of this theme have marked the tendency of user studies, using qualitative approaches.

Among other studies presented and commented by Costa, Silva and Ramalho (2009), they emphasized the model proposed by Choo (2003) that highlights three properties of information use summarized below: the use of information is established based on the meaning that the individual requires it; in light of their emotional and cognitive structures, is situational, because the individual is part of a social or professional environment that affects, directly their choices, and; is dynamic, because prior to use, when an individual search for information, his interaction with the cognitive, emotional and situational environmental change his perception according his criteria for information judging.

Costa, Silva and Ramalho (2009) also emphasize the importance of usability studies to "[...] measure/analyze the extent to which an information product or system are usable". These studies contribute to understand user interaction with automated systems and can detect user satisfaction when performing tasks imposed by the system.

Nascimento and Amaral (2010, p.47) point to the need to conduct usability studies, which enable to identify needed improvements to the systems, and to "[...] determine a balance between the objectives of an interactive system and their users' needs, by identifying usability problems".

Araújo (1974, p.176) notes that it is important to analyze users' information needs before planning information services, because

[...] although numerous users studies have been made by libraries and information services, most of them failed because did not addressed users as the most important factor considering them as a

mere numerical data in the system "performance", instead of the fundamental reason of the system.

According to Araújo (1974, p.185)

[...] an information system is not, or should not be, something spectacular just to have, or to show for important visitors. It must be part of the life of the organization, just as the information itself is an integral part of an individual's life.

However, even in times of high technology, still wonders what leads users to so much dissatisfaction. Concerned with this situation, Bio (2008, p.58) emphasizes that planning information systems requires to organize a team of executives and experts in systems. However, they must take care that the coaches do not become the 'owner of the system', to 'make decisions which must be taken by information system user'.

Pinheiro (1982, p.1) highlights the importance of users studies to know scientific and technical information flow, its demand, and users satisfaction, the results or effects of information about the knowledge, use, improvement, relations and distribution of information systems resources and many other aspects that directly or indirectly are related with information.

Guinchat and Menou (1994, p.481) agree with Araújo (1974, p.176) by claiming that "[...] the user is a key element of all information systems". Therefore, the design of these systems must be defined based on their users, considering their characteristics, attitudes, needs and demands.

According to Calva González (2004b, p.35), information demand, search for information, information requirements, and information desire reflect the existence of information needs in a person.

Lancaster (1979) lists some important factors that influence the need and demand for an information service:

- a) growth of literature in the area covered;
- b) cost of literature in the area covered;
- c) size of the population to be served;
- d) educational level of the population to be served;
- e) physical accessibility, intellectual and psychological information service;
- f) cost of information service;
- g) use facilities of the service, i.e. time involved;

- h) user experience with the service;
- i) speed of the service;
- j) amount of solution to an information problem;
- k) probability that a solution exists in the literature.

The context where users are in also influences the choice and the whole behavior process, whether in enterprise or academic environment. This dynamism is maximized in interactive environment of the digital library to analyze information behavior and use by users in this new environment of digital information.

Hewins (1990, p.145) reports the refinement conceptual absence of the various contributions about the users studies performed. According to the author, these studies do not contribute to create new knowledge, new methods or theories and model building, and many others can be better described as studies of a specific location, specific system or service. Most of them cannot be reapplied in other situations, using similar instruments, because the research procedures and approaches are inadequate, and results are generally applicable only to specific environment of the study itself.

Wilson (1981) notes that:

[...] an user model should begin with the model of organization in which he works and with the understanding of how it affects the information behavior of an individual search. The structure, tasks, technology and people are considered in a constant interrelation (changing one factor are altered the others).

Baptista and Cunha (2007, p.173) recognize that user studies in the 1980s were influenced by "[...] optical theories imported from various knowledge areas, such as marketing".

Indeed, authors such as Cronin (1982), Weingand (1995), Baptista (1985), Silveira (1989), and Amaral (1990), to name a few of them, support the idea applying marketing techniques in order to enhancing the image of information services and librarians, breaking barriers in communication between the library and their users, aiming to better meet their needs.

So, researcher can assume that user studies are tool for planning and management considering Amaral (1996a) recommendation to study the vision of the user to whom the information is intended as an information consumer identifying their

information needs, information behavior and satisfaction as the main focus of the analysis of the relationship between information supply and demand.

According to Pinheiro (1982, p.14), Taube's study were one of the first review articles about users that referred to the term consumer. The review covers 12 documents included in the International Conference on Scientific Information held in Washington in 1958. In this review, the author distinguishes between consumer services and professional services, seeking the reasons for the failures and questions and the validity of such pioneering works as a guide for improvement of information services.

Pinheiro (1982, p.34) also reports that in 1977 was presented by Allen¹ a study about information consumption patterns for research projects.

Reports of Pinheiro (1982) perhaps could be indicating that there are more time than we think, the marketing approach could be related to user studies.

On the other hand, the reflection of the growing information consumer on web requirements by informational value added can be verified in the analysis of evolutionary stage of web pages.

Furquim (1999/2000) proposes the information marketing approach as an alternative to study information consumer on the web, from the study of the website, viewed as an information product/service. First, because the differentiation between information product and service is a controversial topic. Secondly, to see the web only as a resource, technology, or information system is a myopic view of the phenomenon. In marketing approach, a product or service, must be considered in all its relevant aspects and must be predicted all the ways that it can be viewed by any consumer. Thus, in a marketing view the web should be considered with all its relevant aspects, and studied and presented from the perspective of a mass information system, implemented by information technology to be used as an information resource.

In this sense, the management of the organizations responsible for the provision of information products and services in traditional environment and in the informational environment of web must be attentive to the information that is offered to their users.

In this perspective the study of theoretical foundations of information marketing can contribute to user's studies as an alternative approach centered on user perception as an information consumer, considering that the offer must be viewed from the perspective of who represents the information demand in order to achieve the goals of the information provider.

3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS ON INFORMATION MARKETING

Information marketing assumes the interest in understanding information needs, perceptions, preferences, and behavior patterns of the target audience, in order to offer information products and services adequate to users' information demand. Moreover, the commitment with supply requires concern, and interest in user satisfaction, in care, in the appropriateness of messages, of media, of costs and technological facilities of communication to establish and maintain two-way relationship between information demand (users) and information supply (information services provider). This innovative form of management can contribute for a greater visibility of the activities developed by the information unit in the business information market that fits its maintainer organization. Thus, the information marketing could be an innovative approach to management information supply and demand to highlight the value of information units and their professionals for the development of society as a whole.

The organizations responsible for the provision of information products and services should be concerned about maintaining a relationship in two ways with their audiences, especially with their users, considered as information consumers to better know their interest profiles for information products and services offered.

The development of information marketing studies and researches on Information Science can contribute to improve the performance of information services toward the care and relationships with different publics of the libraries and another kinds of information units. These organizations must use the full potential of the infrastructure of the new technologies of information and communication in order to achieve the recognition of the value of information and knowledge into

organizational processes of their maintainer. This is because in the point of view of information marketing it is necessary to seek the best possible performance by understanding the speed of the changes that occur in the information market. More than that, it's always good to remember that the term marketing means market in action always moving.

Amaral (2008, p.32) states that:

Information Science is an interdisciplinary science related, among other fields, with the management. As marketing is an approach to the management process, its study is therefore related to Information Science with regard to information and knowledge management. This association of Information Science with the marketing makes it possible to consider the information marketing (AMARAL, 2008, p.32).

According to Amaral (2011, p.85), marketing is an innovative approach to managing information and knowledge in information units, "[...] based on the understanding of information market in the business area where their maintainer organization operates although they are inserted in the profit sector or not".

It is also important to highlight some basic concepts such as demand, supply, exchange, and marketing mix.

Demand is defined as the "[...] desire for specific products backed by an ability to pay for them" or to give something in return (KOTLER, 2005, p.34). Kotler (2005, p.28) classifies demand into eight types:

- (1) negative demand: when a portion of the market "does not like a product or avoids";
- (2) nonexistent demand: when consumers target "unaware or not interested" in a product;
- (3) latent demand: "many consumers may share a strong need that no product on the market is capable to meet";
- (4) decline in demand: when demand is reduced;
- (5) irregular demand: when it presents "seasonal variations, daily or even hourly, alternating idleness and overhead";
- (6) full demand: when companies are "satisfied with their turnover";
- (7) excessive demand: when companies have a level of demand "more than they can or wish to bear";
- (8) demand unwelcome: when the product is harmful and seeks to "discourage their consumption".

Powers (1995, p.485) emphasized that meet the demand of the product is essential to its success. Already supply is all that is offered to meet the need.

According McCarthy (1978, p.85), the marketing mix is formed by a set of controlled variables that influence how consumers respond to market. In marketing literature, other authors have also proposed variations of the 4Ps. Lauterborn (1990), presented by Schultz, Tannenbaun and Lauterborn (1994, p.14), suggests that the Cs could be replaced by Ps. Instead of product are studied consumer (or client) desires; to replace price, they propose the analysis of the cost for consumers to satisfy their needs; instead of point of distribution / place indicates that convenience is verified to acquire or use the product, and finally, promotion should be exchanged for communication (SANTOS, 2012).

Lauterborn (1994, p.14), considering the consumer for replace the product, warns that "[...] you cannot sell all you can produce, can only sell what someone specifically wants to acquire", paving the way to focus and to meet consumption demands.

Santos (2012) warns that it is necessary to recall the recommendation of Amaral (1996b, p.333) that must be made conceptual transfer from marketing profit sector for the non-profit sector, especially in the information business. According to Santos (2012), if the organizational environment considered is in the non-profit sector, "[...] the Cs proposed by Lauterborn may make more sense than the Ps proposed by McCarthy, because generally, the information services are not charged for employees of a company, for example".

In the context of Information Science, Rowley (2006, p.7) agrees with the definition of marketing mix proposed by McCarthy, but she proposes to addition 3Ps for the 4Ps of McCarthy, stating that for the services sector should be included: people, processes and physical evidence.

For Rowley (2006, p.7), the product can be anything that is received by the consumer in exchange. They may be ideas, goods, services, experiences, organizations, people or places, or combination of two or more of these concepts.

Rowley (2006, p.8) points out that price represents a role as psychological as economic. Under the economic outlook is more associated with costs and profits and under psychological perspective, the price can be used as an indicator of quality. The approach of 4Cs by Lauterborn (1990), presented by Schultz, Tannenbaun, and

Lauterborn (1994, p.14) merges the economic and psychological perspectives, considering the cost of use instead of the price. To Lauterborn, price became irrelevant as the consumer starts to consider other costs of consumption such as: value to go to the point of sale, the ecological cost for producing the good, the wear and tear for the use of a service among other factors.

McCarthy (1978, p.563) notes that "[...] a product can be the best in the world, but it will be little useful for the consumer, if it is not where he wants, when he wants". Thus, it is necessary to offer products through channels that can reach consumers and satisfy their demands. Similarly, Rowley (2006, p.9) says that this concept is related to both points of service delivery to the consumer, such as libraries or outlets, as to the distribution network as a guarantee that the product follow the path from producer to consumer. For Rowley (2006, p.9), distribution, in order to offer the right service at the right time and convenient place is particularly essential in the case of services, because the value is considered temporary.

Rowley (2006, p.9) defends that promotion can be either disseminate new or existing products to an organization's publics, or educate consumers about the product's features, or maintain public awareness about existing products. For her, promotion involves advertising, public relations, personal selling, direct marketing and online communications.

As the nature of the information market is continually evolving, all organizations responsible for the provision of information products and services need to form new strategic alliances, identify new market segments, develop new products and new relationships with their audiences, employing a full arsenal of strategies, tactics, techniques and marketing tools to succeed in this environment of changing paradigms in society (ROWLEY, 2006, p.xiii).

The main administration task of a marketing oriented organization, whatever that organization, including a library or an information unit, is to determine the information needs and desires of their target market to satisfy them with proper design, communication and distribution, and a bid price competitively viable.

Rowley (2006, p.3) highlights the marketing for organizations that offer information products and services as a process by which the information and

knowledge needs of their users are met through appropriate exchange by information resources and services of these organizations. This involves:

- a) research and understand users' information needs and other market factors;
- b) select and define users or customers groups that information services will meet;
- c) determine the offer in terms of products and associated elements of marketing mix and do this as a reference to the potential value that information supply can provide for user;
- d) offer products and services aligned with users expectations and interests;
- e) ensure communication and engagement with the user community;
- f) establish the strategic direction and plan to support and to continue the engagement with user community.

From this perspective, manager's role in the information and knowledge age acquires an important perspective on the adoption of information marketing. His managerial capacity assumes a prominent position because his performance influences the team under his responsibility. The manager will pass on staff the need of each one commitment in their task. Thus, marketing concept or mindset adopted as a philosophy of information unit performance, probably acquire their importance in proportion as it is assumed by the manager, reflecting on the philosophy adopted by the organization.

The following are comments on the analysis of selected master dissertations.

4 COMMENTS ON THE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED MASTER DISSERTATIONS

Comments are submitted in accordance with the objectives, methodological procedures for collecting data and results obtained in the two master dissertations developed by researches of descriptive nature.

The research of Barbosa (2012) aimed to describe the provision of information in the Virtual Library Bioethics and Health Diplomacy in relation to the demand for this information by the researcher's community at the Center for the Study of Bioethics and Health Diplomacy (NETHIS). The research objective of Santos (2012) was to evaluate the information provision from Sisproweb, the information management system of the Public Prosecutor of the Federal District and

Territories, by the members of the Board opinions who require information to perform their professional activities in adjudication to society. To achieve the objectives of master dissertations, user's studies developed by both dissertations the supply was investigated from the point of view of their users who demand information offered, but in one dissertation (BARBOSA, 2012) users of the digital library also were investigated about their information demand opinion.

Both dissertations developed user's studies in an alternative approach, but adopting different methodological procedures regarding the collection of data on supply and demand, according to the different objectives of each one.

The research of Barbosa (2012), both supply and demand were analyzed from the perspective of NETHIS researchers. The users study adopted the principles of NEIN model (CALVA GONZÁLEZ, 2004), which allowed the analysis of user's information needs, information behavior and information satisfaction regarding access and use of information offered by the digital library. Complementing the study, information offered by VHL was also described through observation of their website and document analysis on that library. The responsible provider for the offer was not asked to report on this aspect.

In the research of Santos (2012) on the Sisproweb, (information management system) of the Public Prosecutor of the Federal District and Territories (MPDFT), the information system was analyzed from the perspective of the user, as representative of the target population the system is intended, although supply has also been described from the perspective of responsible system through documental analysis.

The first phase of data collection was conducted through documental analysis to describe the provision of information system from its history and scope, methodology of its development, its purpose, its products, its charging, of the intended audience and ways to promote its use. Internal documents from the MPDFT were consulted.

The opinion of the public of Sisproweb was collected in the second phase of the research, when an users study was developed through a questionnaire distributed by e-mail. In the third phase were compared the results obtained in the

first two phases of collection to understand the relationship between information supply available on Sisproweb and information demand by MPDFT members.

As “[...] to identify information demand for to satisfy it” (AMARAL, 2011) is one of the basic information marketing principles, it was understood that users’ studies as conducted in an alternative approach in users’ perception and presented as a methodological procedure adopted in both master dissertations were valid to study information supply and demand. As the theoretical and methodological basis of the studies about supply and demand find its foundations on information marketing, it is easy to understand that users’ studies in alternative approach in users’ perception could be useful as a methodological procedure to be adopted on information marketing researches, especially in information supply and demand studies.

The fact that this approach does not show up if the responsible for offering adopt or not the techniques and principles of marketing does not invalidate the possibility of realization of users studies as a methodological procedure to study the management of supply and demand in the perspective of information marketing. User studies can investigate both: supply and demand on the user perception in accordance with the objectives established in the research design. Therefore, the choice of alternative user-centric approach can be considered valid to study the management of information supply and demand.

According to Amaral (2011, p.95), the role of the information professional is crucial in adjusting information supply and demand, since they must understand users’ information needs to manage the offering with a focus on identified these needs. Thus, she emphasizes

[...] the importance of the user as an information consumer in order adequacy of products and services to supply the interests and needs of the user search. Customers are increasingly demanding products and will consider the information services offered on the basis of added value they can offer (AMARAL, 2011, p.95).

By transferring the theoretical foundation for information consumption, Amaral (1996a) proposed the adoption of marketing techniques to conduct user studies. From these foundations, the comments about results of the analyzed master dissertations are presented below.

The guiding questions of marketing research presented by Samara and Barros (1997, p.25) were applied to the area of Information Science to describe the population of the digital library (BARBOSA, 2012). In the perspective of information marketing, it was considered the possibility of information consumption following these questions with the emphasis on the information use: Who uses it? What kind of information is used? Regarding it is used? How to use? Where to use? When to use? Why it is used?

These questions were adapted to the context of the information market in Bioethics and Health Diplomacy, to allow an user study of one scientific community that demand this information to perform their professional and academic activities.

From this theoretical framework, it was possible to identify and characterize the group of researchers from NETHIS, as users in this group of specialized information that used the VHL, which manifested itself about information supply in VHL, as well as about the information demand provided.

A search of Santos (2012) had as reasons to adopt techniques of information marketing, specifically, understanding users as consumers of information offered by System (AMARAL, 1996a). The instrument was structured in 10 open and closed questions, according to the questioning of studied variables, representing the concepts of marketing mix to support the marketing analysis of the system, considered as a product, its promotion, its convenience of use and cost of its use, based on McCarthy (1978), Rowley (2006) and Schultz, Tannenbaun and Lauterborn (1994).

However, analysis of the results of the two dissertations showed that although the information available in the digital library and in the information system has been evaluated by their users, the frequency of use was low. Despite the impossibility of present a reason to explain this reality, it is clear that the offer was not adequate to the demand, and certainly the dissemination of the digital library and of the management information system could help to stimulate the use of both.

The highlight for the alternative approach of user studies in the management of information supply and demand allows us to test the validity of this methodological procedure to increase knowledge about the perspective of the user who information

supply is intended. However, the offer study in the perspective of the person responsible for it complements this type of study as a methodological procedure to meet the conditions of the context of this offer. This procedure was adopted in the two master dissertations analyzed.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective of this research was achieved by highlighting the validity of the alternative approach of user studies focusing on the perspective of the users as a methodological procedure to study the management of information supply and demand of a digital library and of an information management system.

From the comments on the analysis of two dissertations in relation to the management of information supply and demand, it appears that you can better and more detailed understanding and knowledge of this phenomenon from the perspective of information user when conducting user studies in an alternative approach

Consequently, the survey results also contribute to consolidate the theoretical concept of information marketing and the develop of user studies in an alternative approach as a methodological procedure to study information supply and demand management. In general, studies of information management are not aimed at examining the relationship between information supply and demand. Moreover, the users' perspective is not usually taken into account, since the user studies are scarce, because of the numerous difficulties faced by those responsible for the information provision to justify such shortage. In this sense, teachings from marketing area could be useful to user's studies.

Therefore, it is recommended that information supply and demand studies consider the user studies in an alternative approach, appropriating of marketing research guidelines, which by their scope and focus on information habits, needs, behaviors and demands of clients/ consumers, as well as in the environment that surrounds it, have approached the research interests in the field of Information Science.

In this sense, the collaborative partnership between the Brazilian research groups on information marketing and Mexican research group on user studies have been intensified. Together they are proposing to use the NEIN model to develop users study in the context of information marketing, in particular adopting the alternative approach in its implementation to consider users perspective in information supply and demand studies.

It is expected that the integration of the concepts and principles of information marketing and users studies in the context of information supply and demand management can contribute to enhance the knowledge of the professionals involved in the management of supply and demand of information products, services and systems.

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NOTES

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