

Personal information management practices in the Kuwaiti corporate sector

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ABSTRACT

This study reviewed information management practices of corporate sector professionals in Kuwait through a questionnaire survey, focusing on finding and re-finding of information, management of e-documents, communications and contacts; and use of tools and social media for managing information. Results show that knowledge workers in the private sector relied heavily on company sources, social media, and websites for information gathering. They saved information for future use in electronic folders, added favourites and bookmarks in their Internet browsers, and saved URLs of websites in other personal records. Knowledge workers organized digital documents using different work-related categories and regularly updated these folders. The most frequently used means to re-find information included searching by file names and accessing information through bookmarks. They considered the following means important with regard to information literacy at work: personal information management (PIM) tools, e-mail organizers, and personal networks. This study provides initial insight into an enhanced understanding of the factors influencing information management behaviour of corporate professionals, to suggest ways to refine these skills in order to take full advantage of the availability of digital information.

Keywords: Information literacy; Personal information management; Information finding; Information re-finding; Information management behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

The information landscape is changing considerably with the continued explosion of digital information made available by websites, repositories, and social media. To take advantage of this unprecedented availability of information, professionals need to be equipped with skills for effective information finding and re-finding. Professionals in private and public sector institutions are in dire need of improvements in methods of handling documents, communications, and other vital information resources. It is important to investigate what practices they currently use to find and manage information, and what factors affect their choices to adopt different strategies, before suggesting specific information management behaviours to assist in finding and re-finding information more effectively. This study investigates the information management practices of corporate sector professionals in Kuwait, and seeks to develop an understanding of approaches for finding and re-finding information. The results of the study will provide useful information to recommend improvements in information management practices. We are confident that enhanced information management capabilities of professionals will help strengthen their information literacy at work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chang et al. (2010) pointed out that with the growth and the increasing complexity of digital resources, individuals must use different approaches to organize and retrieve information needed to carry out personal and professional tasks. The authors stressed that effective management (e.g., storage and organization) is essential for information re-finding and re-use due to the overwhelming amount of information in the current digital environment. Trying to re-find information from a web source can be challenging, as specific web pages, entire websites, and even small pieces of semi-structured information can be difficult to re-locate. Deng and Feng (2011) described that while most search tools provide help in initially finding information, they do not provide support when people aim to re-find information.

Employees in private sector organizations spend a great deal of resources on managing contacts and keeping them up to date. In addition, social media and networking platforms enable the expansion of employee connections; for example, conversing with people on *Twitter*, seeing people on *Flickr*, and sharing resources on *Delicious*. These provide a multi-faceted picture of individuals and an entirely different experience of interaction. Email communication has also become an important source for identification of personal contacts (O'Hara 2009; Schawbel 2010). E-mail systems support identification of relevant contacts and help build and manage personal contacts to improve information literacy at work.

Barth (2004) suggested that the most effective strategy in managing personal information and knowledge in the digital environment is to develop self-organization competencies. Khoo et al. (2007) suggested that regularly purging out dated electronic files and categorizing information resources into appropriate folders would be helpful in overcoming a sense of information overload. There is a widespread concern that problems with Personal Information Management (PIM) impact work productivity and user experience (Jones and Teevan 2007).

Capra, Pinny and Pérez-quiñones (2005) highlighted that finding and re-finding are two important tasks in personal information management. Most popular web and intranet search engines do a remarkable job of finding relevant materials using a variety of content, links, and popularity cues; however, they do not support integrating and re-using information found previously. More efficient information management practices are required to enhance finding and re-finding of information in the digital environment. Elswailer, Baillie and Ruthven (2011) asserted that information re-finding is a key PIM activity and addressed strategies that people should employ to manage their information effectively.

There is a general impression that the younger generations are more comfortable and familiar with electronic information systems; however, the so-called 'Google Generation' relies heavily on search engines and tends to skim or view rather than read. The majority does not possess critical and analytical skills in effectively assessing their retrieval results. In addition, the ubiquitous presence of new tools and technologies has not necessarily resulted in improved information finding. Rowlands et al. (2008), for example, remind us that there is a need to improve information literacy among professionals, highlighting that a fundamental shift in the way people seek and read information has already occurred. The information providers and educators need to understand the impact of this shift.

In the digital information environment, not only documents, but also identification of relevant contacts has become an important aspect of the information literacy process. Contacts not only allow professionals to obtain information, but also push information to professionals from trusted sources (Jarcho 2012). Various e-mail clients provide extensive features to capture information about contacts and turn them into personal networks. As one's network grows, it becomes difficult to remember everything about everyone, particularly if contact information is stored across multiple devices, files, sticky notes, and drawers. Online social networks such as *LinkedIn*, *Facebook*, and *Twitter* allow users to maintain contacts and converse within the network.

Brogan (2010) stressed the importance of keeping abreast of news of people in personal networks through *Facebook*, *LinkedIn*, and *Twitter*. Connecting with one's contacts on these platforms after attending seminars, meetings, or other in-person events helps deepen relationships. Flood (2012) declared that building a powerful personal network is the key to success for any professional and advised diversification of personal networks and immersion in learning to use related tools most effectively. Spiglanin (2012) stated that various social platforms provide short-form blogging, threaded discussions, link sharing, and a number of other social media services. These social platforms offer different types of relationships (e.g., 'friends' on *Facebook*, 'followers' on *Twitter*, 'connections' on *LinkedIn*) that may serve as nodes on several social and workplace networks.

Some studies have discussed the connections between information literacy and knowledge management (Schreiber and Harbo 2004; Zhang, Majid and Foo 2010; Pauleen and Gorman 2011). In the digital environment, patterns of information finding have changed, as information is not only retrieved through delegated search services such as online bibliographic systems, but also through more qualitative searching by professionals themselves. In addition, information is 'pushed' to them from other sources. In this framework, finding is less important than organizing and managing what is 'found' in order to reduce information overload and save time through efficient re-finding. It is important to understand what practices and strategies are effective in getting back to the information already found. There is also a need for comprehensive guidelines for better handling of e-documents, archives, records, and other vital information resources. Tools and technologies can assist in organizing and managing digital assets if professionals are equipped with the right competencies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study looked at information behaviour aiming to uncover common steps in re-finding information already found. Personal information management (PIM) is important in this process. The term 'personal information' is used in the sense that professionals own the documents and are under their direct control (Boardman and Sasse 2004), not that they necessarily contain information about the professional. Similarly, the term 'management' in this study refers to activities carried out to make sense of information for possible work-related applications. PIM refers to the practice and study of activities people perform in order to acquire, organize, maintain, retrieve, and use information items such as paper-based and digital documents, and e-mail messages for everyday use so as to complete work-related and other tasks (Lansdale 1988).

The terms 'professionals' and 'knowledge workers' are used interchangeably throughout to refer to the professionals in the companies surveyed. Knowledge workers generally refer to professionals who hold at least a bachelor's degree in their respective area of activity and whose work is knowledge-intensive. As stated earlier, PIM is an umbrella term used to describe the collection, storage, organization, and retrieval of items (Lansdale 1988). Bergman et al. (2008) compared PIM with general information management, in which a professional — such as a librarian — manages information for other people. In contrast, with PIM, the onus is on an individual to manage his/her own information.

This study surveyed how information is gathered (i.e., collected and received) from different sources and how it is kept for future use (i.e., a focus on information literacy in a wider context). It also reviewed the approaches used to organize and manage e-content, contacts, and personal networks (i.e., communication and relationships) among professionals in Kuwait's corporate sector. These elements were not included in earlier information literacy and information seeking studies. The theoretical framework for information management practices depicted in Figure 1 provided theoretical underpinning to this study.

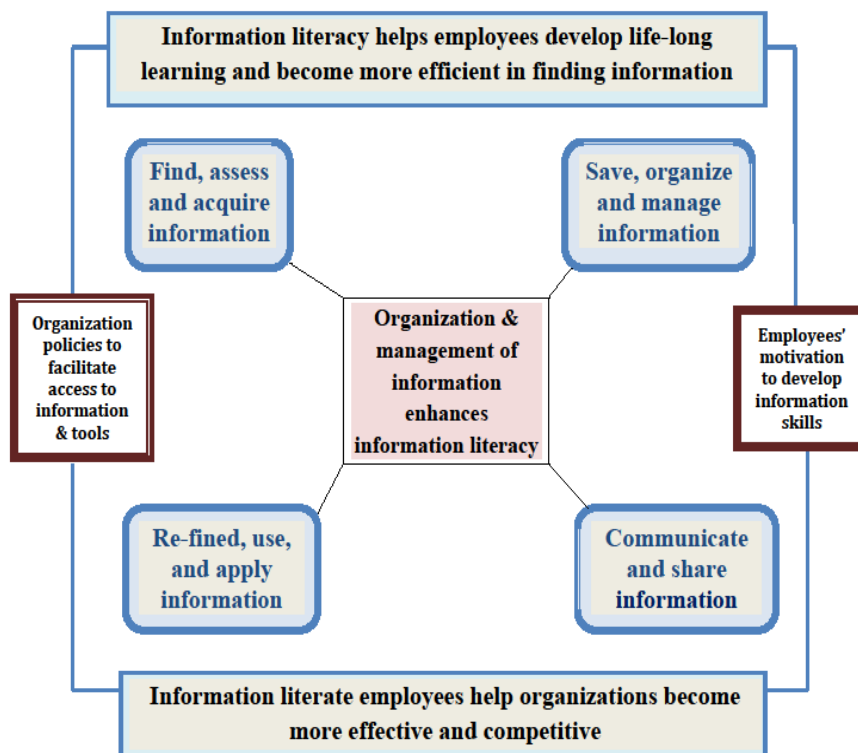


Figure 1: Information Management Practices Framework

The framework includes re-finding information as an important element of information management, and considers organizing (e.g., tagging, categorizing, and storing information in folders) and maintenance of personal collections (e.g., deleting, adding, and updating through regular review) as important elements specific to information literacy at work. These activities are important in PIM and ultimately provide a basis to strengthen information literacy at work.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

The study aimed at reviewing personal information management practices of professional in the Kuwaiti corporate sector. It focused on the following research questions:

- a) What sources are corporate sector employees using to gather information?
- b) What approaches are professionals in the corporate sector deploying to re-find information from their personal collections?
- c) What techniques are professionals in the corporate sector applying to organize and manage digital information resources?
- d) How do professionals in the corporate sector manage their communications and relationships (e.g., e-mail and contacts)?
- e) What tools and social media are the professionals in the corporate sector using to support personal information management?

For this study, companies were identified from the following directories:

- a) *Kuwait Companies: List of Top Companies in Kuwait*
(www.marcopolis.net/kuwait-companies.htm)
- b) *List of Companies of Kuwait: Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_companies)
- c) *Listed Companies: Kuwait Stock Exchange*
(www.kuwaitse.com/Stock/Companies.aspx).

We picked the top 10 companies listed in each of the above directories, and after deleting duplicate entries, invited 20 companies to participate in this study, with 17 agreeing to participate. None of the directories listed the names and contact details of professional staff in companies. We requested that the companies forward our request to relevant staff through an internal communication and encourage them to complete the online questionnaire and provide information. We provided a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) and hotlink to the questionnaire in our introductory letter.

This study employed a survey method, using questionnaire as the data collection technique, as previous relevant studies have indicated that this is an appropriate method to reach a consensus on the most frequently adopted practices and tools (Lopez-Nicolas and Merono-Cerda 2011; Rašula, Vukšić and Štemberger 2012; Chaudhry 2013). Part 1 of the questionnaire contained multiple select question type (or select all that apply). Part 2 contained open-ended questions for which participants could provide information without being restricted to listed options. This structure was useful in gaining deeper insights and seeking rich information to aid in the discussion of results and to put the findings into a proper context.

We requested the companies to distribute the questionnaire (Appendix) to all employees who held a minimum educational qualification of a bachelor's degree and were involved in professional work relating to their area of specialization. The initial response to our request was not very encouraging, so we sent reminders to potential respondents via the appropriate departments of the companies (e.g., corporate planning, human resources). Some staff members asked for printed copies of the questionnaire, as they preferred to fill-in their responses on a hard copy. With repeated reminders and by sending printed copies, we managed to collect 100 completed questionnaires, out of which only 83 were usable, due to 17 questionnaires containing incomplete answers. Using the data analysis feature in

Survey Monkey, data were exported into IBM's SPSS statistical software and frequencies, percentages, and other basic statistics were computed to tabulate information. Quantitative data are presented here in seven tables, while answers to open questions were used to provide explanation and discussion on different aspects.

The majority of the professionals who responded to the questionnaire were females (60%); 36% were under the age of 30; 52 per cent hold a bachelor's degree and have less than five years of work experience. These participants were from 17 companies from the following sectors: Furniture and Household (28), Telecommunications (20), Information Technology (10), Banking and Insurance (7), Oil (1), Law (1), and miscellaneous businesses (7). Specific position titles of the respondents included lawyers, architects, financial managers, CEO, sales officers, design engineers, security supervisors, public relations officers, bank supervisors, interior designers, group leaders, accountants, brand executives, financial analysts, editors, managers, coordinators, hardware specialists, network administrators, IT specialists, training supervisors, security engineers, and logistic planners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information Finding and Re-finding

Professionals from the corporate sector in Kuwait reported that they collected and received information from a variety of sources including portals, intranets, websites, and databases. As expected, they consider company sources as the most preferred and trusted sources of information, followed by social media, and external websites. The following features of company websites were considered particularly important: *about us, search box, contact us, organizational feedback, and help.*

The open questions asked participants to indicate what sources they trusted the most. Frequencies indicated by responses are as follows: External websites (41), Company websites (7), Wikis and blogs (4), Academics, experts, and senior colleagues (3). Two participants mentioned Wikipedia, e-mails, and Ask.com each. In addition, the following sources were reported as most reliable: Company sites/sources (10), Websites (17), Vendors and manufacturers (6), YouTube (3), and Wikipedia (2).

Results show that company sources are considered very valuable for knowledge workers, as these are listed as reliable and trusted by most respondents, and indicated as the second highest frequently used.

We also asked the participants what sources they considered important for getting information needed urgently. They listed the following sources: Company e-mail (34), Google (17), General websites (6), General e-mail (6), Document drives (3), and Information Technology Section of the company (2). It is important to note that e-mail ranks as two of the top of sources used to obtain information needed to meet urgent information needs, revealing a need to pay special attention to the management of e-mail communication as part of companies' information management efforts.

Information re-finding is a more directed and targeted search task than initial information finding. Finding information is an exploratory activity that involves recognition, while re-finding information is a focused task that involves both recognition and recall (Jones, Whittaker and Anderson 2012). Participants reported several approaches for re-finding information, as listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Approaches used for Re-finding Information (N=82)

No	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1	Search by keywords	31	37.80
2	Browse through folder structure (by names of folders and files)	16	19.51
3	Access through bookmarks	13	15.85
4	Search file names by remembering tags or labels	11	13.41
5	Prefer to use my memory	7	8.53
6	Scan the desktop screen	4	4.87

We also asked an open question about the methods considered most appropriate to retrieve saved information. Analysis of responses to open-ended questions showed that folders are the most frequently used means for both saving and re-finding information. Folders were popular for saving information in various studies (Khoo et al. 2007; Chaudhry 2013). Majid et al. (2010; Majid et al. 2013) pointed that proper naming and files and folders can also help overcome information fragmentation if different location and devices are not used.

Organization and Management of Information

While information elicited from the top sources listed in the previous section was used for current tasks, part of this information was also saved for potential use in the future. There are some important considerations in making decisions around what to save for re-use. We asked the participants to indicate the methods they used to save information for future use. Their responses indicated that the most favoured method is bookmarks in internet browsers, followed by saving information in folders or drives.

Companies lose considerable financial resources because of knowledge workers not being able to find information in their own folders. It has been stated that finding information is difficult the first time, but even more difficult the second time. Efficient information management behaviour has been suggested as an effective strategy to overcome this problem. A list of methods frequently used for keeping information is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Methods Used to Keep Information (N=82)

No.	Method	Frequency	Percentage
1	Bookmark website or add a favourite	39	47.56
2	Save on desktop, personal folders, or share drives	15	18.29
3	E-mail to yourself	14	17.07
4	Store via external services	4	4.87
5	Paste the web address (URL) into a document	4	4.87
6	Save the web page	3	3.65
7	Print the page	3	3.65

It was interesting to note that the choice of methods for saving and keeping information by knowledge workers in the private sector is different from that of their counterparts in the public sector, as an earlier study reported that knowledge workers in the public sector in Kuwait were not effectively utilizing bookmarks or favourites for saving information (Chaudhry 2013).

Barth (2004) suggested that the most effective strategy in managing personal information and knowledge in the digital environment is to develop self-organization competencies among knowledge workers. The need for regular purging of outdated electronic files and

categorizing information resources into appropriate folders has also been stressed (Khoo et al. 2007; Zhang and Twidale 2012). It is desirable that organizational systems or schemes are deployed to organize personally held files and folders that contain information.

When asked to report the methods they used to organize files and folders, participants stated that organization structure (e.g., department, functions) was the most frequently used category to organize their folders. Other types of methods used by corporate sector employees are as in Table 3.

Table 3: Categories of Method Used to Organize Information in Folders (N=82)

No	Category of Method	Frequency	Percentage
1	Organization structure	19	23.17
2	Document type	18	21.95
3	File format	15	18.29
4	Geographic region	9	10.97
5	Subject/topic	7	8.53
6	Project	6	7.31
7	Status/version	4	4.87
8	Others	3	3.65

We also asked the participants about their information management behaviour. About 25 per cent of the respondents reported they cleaned their files and folders ‘as and when needed’ while another 25 per cent indicated that they did so when individual documents were no longer needed. Only 15 per cent reported that they clean their desktop and other devices on a regular basis. Categories used are consistent with earlier studies (Khoo et al. 2007; Chaudhry 2013).

Management of Communication and Contacts

As participants listed e-mail as an important source of information and the most-used source for obtaining urgently needed information, it is therefore important that knowledge workers adopt efficient practices for managing their e-mail. We asked the participants what actions they took to manage their e-mails effectively. A summary of their responses are as in Table 4.

Table 4: E-mail Management Practices (N=83)

No	Action/Practice	Frequency	Percentage
1	I leave all mails in the inbox.	18	21.68
2	I use a structure of folders to organize messages.	17	20.48
3	I review my e-mail periodically to delete unnecessary messages.	17	20.48
4	I convert messages into actions (e.g., tasks and calendars).	12	14.45
5	I choose messages to delete, delegate, or defer for quick disposal.	11	13.25
6	I categorize my e-mail for quick future retrieval.	6	7.23
7	I tag and flag e-mail messages.	1	1.20
8	Other	1	1.20

While 21.68 per cent of participants reported that they generally leave everything in the inbox, 20.48 per cent reported that they used folders to structure archived messages. Another 20.48 per cent reported that they periodically review message to delete unnecessary communications. In a subsequent open-ended question, participants were also asked what features were important in an e-mail system. They listed the following

features: Folders (12), Archiving (5), Categorization (3), Search (2), Task and Calendars (2), Address and Signature (2), and Mail Forwarding (1). It is important that e-mail systems used in organizations have easy-to-use mechanisms for all of these features. Whittaker and Sidner (2009) highlighted that e-mail overload can be overcome by using appropriate personal information tools.

For knowledge workers, who they know is just as important as what they know. As such, they spend a considerable amount of time managing contacts and keeping them up to date. The participants were asked how they identify people with whom to interact. They were presented with 10 statements developed by reviewing relevant studies as possible choices. Their responses are as in Table 5.

Table 5: Building and Managing Personal Contacts (N=80)

No	Action/Practice	Frequency	Percentage
1	I use e-mail to identify personal contacts and networks.	17	21.25
2	I maintain an updated list of contacts using e-mail features with relevant details.	16	20.00
3	I share information on social networking sites like LinkedIn and Facebook.	10	12.5
4	I try to access the networks of my contacts.	9	11.25
5	I keep business cards of people I meet at seminars and conferences.	9	11.25
6	I look for people with similar interests at conferences.	6	7.5
7	I record the location of important contacts.	6	7.5
8	I follow and re-tweet my contacts on Twitter.	3	3.75
9	I review the frequency of interaction of my contacts.	3	3.75
10	I respond to others' comments on blogs or wikis.	2	2.5

As shown in Table 5, employees in private companies in Kuwait appeared to be aware of the need to identify personal contacts in an effort to build and maintain personal contacts. Their preferred method for building contacts includes use of e-mail and related virtual systems. They are active on social networks and try their best to leverage these forums to build their personal networks and strengthen their personal information management competencies. Relevant studies highlight that building a powerful personal network is the key to success for any professional and advised diversification of personal networks and immersion in learning (Flood 2012; Jarcho 2012). Identifying contacts from relevant sources and following them on personal networks allow knowledge workers to have access to trusted sources of information (Chaudhry 2014).

Use of Tools and Social Media

Technologies and tools help professionals spend less time on labour-intensive and error-prone personal information management activities. Use of smart technologies enables knowledge workers to make creative and intelligent use of the information at hand. Since there are plenty of tools currently available as part of enterprise portals and information systems, we asked the participants to list the types of tools they frequently used. We asked them to mention specific tools only as examples. Their use of different types of tools is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Tools Used for Personal Information Management (N=82)

No	Types of Tools	Frequency	Percentage
1	Personal Information Management tools that help organize personal documents	39	47.5
2	Searching tools that help search local and networked drives	35	42.68
3	E-mail Management tools that help overcome problems of message overload or contact management	12	14.63
4	Concept and Mind Mapping tools that help organize and connect information	2	24.39

The following specific tools were listed by participants: *Calendars, tasks, schedules,; iSpace; Enfish; 7sDoc; Copernic, Google Desktop, LesTec, Mybase, Xboni, and Liaise.*

Social media is listed among the top information sources for collecting and receiving information in an earlier question (i.e., information sources used). In the open-ended questions, we asked participants to list specific social media and social software they use frequently in the course of their work. Table 7 summarizes their responses.

Table 7: Social Media Used (N=82)

No	Social Media	Frequency	Percentage
1	LinkedIn	17	20.48
2	Twitter	15	18.07
3	Facebook	12	14.45
4	Instagram	6	7.22
5	WhatsApp	5	6.02
6	Blogs	2	2.40
7	Viber	2	2.40
8	Twoo	1	1.20

As revealed, *LinkedIn* was the most frequently used social networking forum by knowledge workers in the Kuwaiti private sector. It is interesting to note that in an earlier study of media use in Kuwait's public sector, it was the least frequently used networking tool (Chaudhry 2013). Social media has become crucial in exploiting personal information. In addition to keeping contacts and networking with professional colleagues, social networking sites also serve as major sources of information. As reported in the section on information finding, social media and social software were among the top information sources preferred by participants.

In response to an open-ended question, participants reported use of the following applications of social media within their companies: Marketing (3), Notifications and Announcements (3), Getting Connected (3), and Feedback from Customers (2). Table 6 above shows that concept and mind mapping tools that help organize and connect different pieces of information were not among the most frequently used tools of participants in this study. Professional literature suggests that to realise their real potential, deep immersion in social media is necessary (Pisani 2009; Jarcho 2012). We feel that with the widespread popularity of social media, it can become one of the most powerful relationship building tools in private sector organisations. However, information literacy training will be helpful in preparing knowledge workers to take full advantage of the potential of social media networks and tools.

CONCLUSIONS

Employees in Kuwaiti corporate sector companies collect and receive information from a variety of sources. Review of information management strategies indicated that they rely heavily on information collected through company sources, social media, and external websites. They save information on desktops and hard drives, add favourites and bookmarks, and save URLs of websites in order to re-find and reuse information in the future. They organize information in folders using different work-related categories such as organization structure, file format, and document types. Most employees regularly clean and update their files and folders, but there is a need to create awareness about the importance of schemes such as personal taxonomies and 'tree' structures to facilitate locating e-documents in personal collections. As employees consider company sources as the most trusted, it will be helpful to take steps to promote the effective use of the features of organizational resources such as company websites, intranets, portals, and institutional repositories.

Most employees who participated in the study manage their e-mail communications quite well, using folders to structure archived messages and periodically reviewing messages to delete unnecessary or out dated communications. They considered folders, archiving, categorization, and search as important features of an e-mail system. They appeared to be well aware of the need for identification of personal contacts in an effort to build and maintain a personal network. Their preferred methods for building contacts include use of e-mail and related systems. They are active in social networks and try their best to leverage these forums to build their personal networks. Most frequently used tools for managing information included PIM tools, e-mail management tools, and search tools; however, concept and mind mapping tools are not frequently used. Social media and networks are used for marketing, announcements, and feedback from customers, while blogs and wikis were not as frequently used.

This study shows that there is a need for training programs to enhance information literacy at work. This training should also include enhancement of personal information management skills of knowledge workers. The private sector employees will benefit from training in personal taxonomies, knowledge organization techniques, and strategies to overcome information fragmentation. Majid et al. (2013) have rightly suggested integration of IL and PIM in such training.

This exploratory study yielded useful, initial data on information management practices; however, further research is desirable in order to enhance the understanding of and developing insight into the factors influencing information management behaviour. This follow up research may provide richer data, particularly if qualitative methods such as interviews and focus group discussions are included. It is also desirable that the sample size in future studies include participants from other corporate sector organizations. Further research may also focus on assessing information literacy to suggest ways and means for enhancing these skills to take full advantage of the availability of digital information.

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Part 1: Select (✓) all that apply.

1. Which information sources and social networks you use for gathering personal information?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Company sources: portal, intranet, website, databases, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Downloadable e-content from outside the company
<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail messages and attachments with them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Instant messages (Windows, Yahoo, Google, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Websites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blogs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wikis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facebook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Twitter
<input type="checkbox"/>	LinkedIn
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

2. How do you keep (save) digital information or e-content for future use?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Bookmark or add a Favorite on your desktop
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bookmark on social network sites (e.g., delicious)
<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail to yourself
<input type="checkbox"/>	Print the web page
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paste the web address (URL) into a document
<input type="checkbox"/>	Save the web page as a file
<input type="checkbox"/>	Add a hyperlink to a personal web page
<input type="checkbox"/>	Store on outside services, e.g., Dropbox, GoogleDocs, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Save on desktop, personal folders or share drives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Save in note tools, e.g., Evernote, OneNote
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

3. What categories do you use to save information in folders?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational Structure: Department, Function, Task, Operations, Events, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document Type: Report, Form, Manual, Plan, Bill, Presentation, Article, Guidelines, Policy, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	File format: GIF, PPT, PDF
<input type="checkbox"/>	Geographic region: Country, City, Area, Location, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Status/Version: Draft, Pre-final, Final, Approved, Version no.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time: Year, Date, Month, Monthly, Annual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project: Client (e.g. person name, organization name), Others
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal: Entertainment, Games, Music, Private & confidential
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subject/Topic: Courses, Products, Customers, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

4. How do you manage your files and folders?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I regularly clean up my desktop (e.g., once a week).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I only clean up my desktop when something goes wrong.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I clean up my desktop when the work or project is completed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I delete the files/folders when I find they have no use anymore.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I file documents into folders immediately.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I clean up file documents into folders periodically.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I clean up my files and folders when I have time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel happy after a clean-up exercise because it makes files easier to find in future.
<input type="checkbox"/>	It is a waste of time to do cleaning of files as I have better things to do.

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	I feel it a sense of accomplishment upon completing the task of cleaning e-mail, contact lists, document folders.
	Other (please specify)

5. What approaches do you use to find information already saved/stored?

	Access through bookmarks
	Searching by keywords
	Browsing through folder structure (main folder, sub-folder, files/documents)
	Scan the desktop screen
	Prefer to use my memory
	Search the file names remembering tags or labels
	Other (please specify)

6. How do you manage your e-mail messages?

	I leave everything in the inbox.
	I choose message to delete, delegate, or defer for quick disposal.
	I convert messages into actions (tasks and calendars).
	I categorize my e-mail for quick future retrieval.
	I use a structure of folders to organize e-mail messages.
	I review my e-mail periodically to delete unnecessary mail.
	I tag and flag e-mail messages.
	Other (please specify)

7. How do you maintain information about your contacts?

	I share information on social network sites like LinkedIn and Facebook.
	I respond to others' comments on blogs or wikis.
	I follow and re-tweet my contacts on Twitter.
	I try to access the networks of my contacts.
	I look for people with similar interests in conferences.
	I record the location of important contacts (office, building, organization, etc.).
	I review the frequency of interaction of my contacts to update my information.
	I maintain an updated list of contacts with relevant details.
	I use e-mail to identify personal contacts and networks.
	I keep business cards of people I meet at seminars and conferences.
	I identify people with common interest from online discussion groups.
	Other (please specify)

8. Which tools you use to manage personal information? (You can tick all choices that apply for this question).

	Searching tools that help search local and networked drives, e.g., iSpace; Enfish; 7sDoc; Copernic, Google Desktop.
	Personal Information Management tools that help organize calendars, tasks, schedules, etc.
	Concept and Mind Mapping tools that help organize and connect information, e.g., Mind Manager; PersonalBrain; IMapping, etc.
	E-Mail Management tools that help overcome problems of message overload or contact management, e.g., LesTec; Mybase; Xboni; Liaise; Siri.
	Other (please specify)

Part 2: Please indicate your preferences for obtaining information with brief answers to the following questions:

9. Which information source you trust the most for solving problems?

.....
.....

10. Whom you consider to be the most reliable for providing information on expensive gadgets?

.....
.....

11. Which information source is most prompt for urgent information from your company?

.....
.....

12. What is the best way to get back information you have used earlier, and is needed now?

.....
.....

13. Which feature is the best in getting your needed information in the company's web site?

.....
.....

14. Which social media source do you find more helpful in conducting your professional work?

.....
.....

15. Which is the most important task where social media tools are helpful for getting information for your job?

.....
.....

16. Which of the e-mail features is most helpful in keeping information about your job?

.....
.....

17. Please provide following information about yourself:

Name:	
Age Group:	
Gender:	
Company:	
Work Experience (No. of Years):	
Educational Qualifications:	
Job Title:	
Country:	
E-mail Address: (optional)	
Phone Number: (optional)	