

The impact of scatter of literature and interdisciplinarity on the information-seeking behaviour of physicists and astronomers

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Abstract: The article aims to investigate the information-seeking behaviour of physicists and astronomers from an intradisciplinary perspective. It also aims to find out any relation between the scatter of literature of a field, its interdisciplinarity and the information seeking behaviour of the scientists working in that field. A survey of PhD students and staff at the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University College London was carried out with 114 respondents. The findings showed that the areas that are more interdisciplinary or have more scattered literature are more likely to use general search facilities for finding their information. The study also shows that cross-disciplinary use of literature is not necessarily an indication of the scatter of literature.

Keywords: information-seeking behaviour; interdisciplinarity; scatter of literature; physics; astronomy.