

Information systems

Technology



Information Systems Article Review Malmsjo (2006) has researched the most appropriate methodology for designing of supportive information systems. In general use, there are two kinds of information systems, supportive and operative. The paper examines the difference in the two systems and their elements. A different phase of the methodology that was used in the design of the support system has been discussed and the conditions for designing both supportive and operative systems have been discussed.

Malmsjo (p. 881-882) first speaks of hard and soft information systems view and while a hard view approach takes an objective view of the world with a formalized reasoning process, the soft view gives importance to the individual and subjective views of the world. The author further clarifies that information is a definition of the specification of information and should have qualities such as pertinence, evidence, consistency, and exhortations.

Malmsjo further defines information system as " a system where the units and components are information entities or processes that are involved in information processes" (Malmsjo, p. 883).

Coming to the main area of the paper, the author brings up the operative and supportive information systems. Operative information can best be illustrated by using the case of a travel agency. The system cannot function unless it is fed with information and data about the customer and the mode of transport. Examples of operative data and information include passenger names, departure routes and times, places and destination, transport mode and so on. It would be seen that operative information is specific to a transaction and cannot be found elsewhere (Malmsjo, p. 884).

Supportive information systems can help the user in the effort to obtain more information and may be used to make a further decision. The purpose

of the user's information need would be to solve a certain problem or to obtain knowledge about a specific area. In the previous example of the travel agency, supportive information would come when information about which routes, time and schedules are more preferred, where the agency makes profits, which are the poorly functioning units and so on. So, the purpose and intent of supportive information are not very evident and clear and it is used more as a diagnostic tool that would help in strategic planning. The operative information would, on the other hand, give information for day to day transactions (Malmsjo, p. 884-885).

Coming to designing the methodology for the supportive information systems (Malmsjo, p. 888-897) says that there are a number of aspects that have to be considered and one of them is the nature of reality that would be attacked by a designer or problem solver and how the reality would be understood. A hard and soft approach can be used and the characterization is done with ontological and epistemological considerations. Further progress is done by considering a meta-modelling process where the process of design is carried out at the meta-level and is used to define the modeling process. Epistemological models of Leibniz, Locke, Kant, Hegel, and Singer have been analyzed based on Churchman's work and used as inputs to a discussion where relevant epistemological aspects of a sketch of a methodology have been specified. The following phases of a sketch of a methodology for designing supportive information systems have been identified: identification phase, specification phase, design phase and implementation phase.

The paper has proposed that the selection and formulation of the methodology by using theoretical constructs is very important in designing

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research.

References

Malmsjo Anders. 2006. A sketch of a methodology for designing supportive information systems. *Kybernetes*, 35(6), pp. 880-898.