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# Strengthening the search for information for homemakers in situations of information overload

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Information retrieval in a vital information retrieval system process learned by homemakers. Especially information relating to households. The service method implemented uses strengthening information retrieval based on interview results. The results of the interviews illustrate that the retrieval system is a series of system processes in carrying out information retrieval activities until documents or information are found based on queries so that they can meet user needs and satisfy requests for information from users. The steps in carrying out information search activities, namely: starting, chaining, browsing, differentiating, monitoring, extracting, verifying, and ending. Then, to become a community information, the community must be able to make changes. For example, there is progress in information, one of which is in the field of education. Strengthening is done by strengthening people's behavior towards information-seeking ways to avoid hoaxing information during an information overload.

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#### **ABSTRAK**

Penelusuran informasi pada proses sistem temu kembali informasi penting dipelajari oleh ibu rumah tangga (IRT). Terutama informasi informasi yang berkaitan dengan kerumahtanggaan. Metode pengabdian yang dilaksanakan yaitu menggunakan penguatan penelusuran informasi berdasarkan hasil wawancara. Hasil wawancara menggambarkan bahwa sistem temu kembali merupakan sebuah rangkaian proses sistem dalam melakukan kegiatan penelusuran informasi hingga ditemukannya dokumen atau informasi hasil penelusuran berdasarkan query sehingga dapat memenuhi kebutuhan pengguna dan memberikan kepuasan terhadap permintaan informasi dari pengguna. Langkah-langkah dalam melakukan kegiatan penelusuran informasi, yaitu: starting, chaining, browsing, differentiating, monitoring, extracting, verifying, ending. Kemudian untuk dapat menjadi masyarakat informasi, masyarakat harus dapat melakukan perubahan seperti misalnya terdapat informasi kemajuan salah satunya pada bidang pendidikan. Penguatan dilakukan yaitu dengan penguatan perilaku masyarakat terhadap pencarian informasi hingga cara-cara agar dapat terhindar dari informasi hoaks pada masa keberlimpahan informasi.

Kata Kunci: Ibu rumah tangga; informasi; informasi hoaks; masyarakat informasi; penelusuran informasi; sistem temu kembali informasi

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### INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the times demands that everyone adapt to these changes. The field of information and communication technology, an integral part of life and a necessity that must be met by everyone today, has led us to become highly dependent on it. The widespread and rapid dissemination of information has become a daily habit for everyone. Therefore, basic skills in managing information are essential to cope with information overload, which makes it difficult to find relevant information (Fatmawati, 2016). Furthermore, it cannot be denied that many people can fall victim to hoax information due to a tendency to accept information at face value. The widespread dissemination of information about societal issues can trigger the emergence of misinformation or hoax information. One of the topics currently being widely discussed is COVID-19, which has prompted the public to become concerned and seek related information promptly.

The information-seeking behavior of individuals must vary depending on their knowledge and abilities. Gordon (2020) states that this information-seeking behavior refers to how individuals perceive their need for information, pursue it, and utilize it. Furthermore, Hayes et al. (2021) add that this information-seeking behavior, as a social behavior, occurs when an individual recognizes the need to obtain contextual information and deliberately takes action to fulfill that need. These actions may include various strategies, such as consulting with colleagues, searching specialized databases on specific subjects, and exploring the Internet until the need is met. Similarly, research conducted by Hadiapurwa in a thesis titled "Pengaruh Penerapan Software Otomasi Perpustakaan Terhadap Perilaku Pencarian Informasi Siswa" indicates that the implementation of library automation affects students' information-seeking behavior in school libraries.

The behavior of information-seeking can influence individuals' perceptions of their information needs. The nature of this information can be said to spread very quickly, especially with the support of media as a tool for disseminating that information. Just like society, which can be said to coexist with one another, the nature of humans is inherently social. Reflecting on the past when tools for disseminating information were still limited, or could even be said to be nonexistent, the primary means of communication was word of mouth or forms of communication conveyed through a language understood by all parties.

Information-seeking behavior can illustrate how individuals can easily access information, depending mainly on their habitual practices. In the current era, society is often referred to as an "information society." According to Damanik (2012), the term "information society" is commonly used to describe a group of people within a community that coexist with the demands of an economy that relies on information and communication technologies. This concept suggests that an information society is one in which individuals have the freedom to choose a better quality of life, possess the potential for social transformation, and are capable of building an economy that depends on the advancement and utilization of information.

Housewives today face various challenges and issues amid the phenomenon of information overload. Although access to information can make life easier for housewives, it also creates new problems as they often feel overwhelmed by the quantity and variety of available information. The first concern is the rapid spread of information and the multitude of platforms, which makes it difficult for housewives to filter and distinguish reliable and relevant information from the vast data available. This can lead to confusion and amount of uncertainty as they try to make decisions based on accurate information regarding various aspects of daily life. Additionally, the pressure to keep up with the constant flow of information adds to their already substantial responsibilities, potentially resulting in stress and anxiety. Furthermore, housewives also face challenges in dealing with misinformation and fake news. The presence of fake news has the potential to seriously impact societal issues (Zhang & Ghorbani, 2019).

These challenges can significantly influence their choices and actions. The ability of housewives to distinguish between accurate and misleading information has become a critical task. Another concern is the pervasive influence of social media, which can exacerbate feelings of insecurity and social comparison, as housewives are frequently exposed to carefully curated portrayals of domestic happiness, leading to unrealistic expectations. In navigating this information overload, housewives require support and resources to develop critical thinking skills, enhance media literacy, and effectively manage digital challenges and issues.

Through this discussion, the researcher aims to explore how the information society, particularly among housewives who are often busy with household activities, can also meet their information needs. One way to achieve this is by conducting information searches to satisfy their own needs and assist their children's requirements. The researcher aims to investigate how far housewives understand information and information retrieval activities, which include the dissemination of information during the information retrieval process, particularly in determining keywords during information searches.

#### **Literature Review**

# **Information Retrieval System**

A system can be defined into two groups, namely procedures and components or elements. Here, a system is a network of interconnected procedures that come together to carry out an activity or achieve a specific goal. Meanwhile, information is data that is processed into various forms or media so that it can be useful and beneficial for users. Therefore, information can be considered high quality if it is accurate, timely, and relevant. It can be concluded that, according to Yusrawati (2017), retrieval is a service medium for users to obtain the information or sources of information they need.

Ajjronisa, in his book titled "Sistem Temu Balik Informasi menggunakan Google Scholar," mentions the components of an information retrieval system, which include: User, query, documents, document index, and matcher function. In the process, the information retrieval system involves collecting document data (crawling), inputting document data (corpus), inputting dictionary data, inputting stopword data, translating, removing punctuation, removing stopwords, weighting, term indexing, query processing, and ranking. These components will be interconnected, forming what is called a logical process information retrieval system.

Furthermore, there is the effectiveness of the information retrieval system, which refers to the system's ability to retrieve relevant documents from a database in response to user requests. To measure the capability or effectiveness of the information retrieval system, there are two important factors are considered: recall and precision. According to Sulistyo-Basuki, as cited by Yusrawati (2017), "recall is the ratio of relevant documents in the system, while precision is the ratio of relevant documents to the total number of documents retrieved in the search." Martin & Nilawati (2019) emphasize that the values of recall and precision are greatly influenced by the relevance of the keywords used by the user and the keywords available in the information retrieval system.

# **Information Searching**

According to Surachman, as cited by Weston et al. (2019), information searching is a part of the information retrieval process conducted to meet users' needs for required information, with the assistance of various search tools and information retrieval systems provided by institutions or information units. The public can conduct independent information searches, which naturally requires the skills and knowledge of the

individuals themselves to perform the searches and utilize the information. In the context of search skills when accessing information, Fatmawati (2016) explains that the primary step in conducting information searches is to "determine the appropriate command according to the topic being searched." Thus, once we understand the information needs we are looking for, the next steps can be easily performed according to the search engine's flow or system, which can automatically find the required information with ease.

This relates to the information society and information retrieval activities, where techniques are used by society as users to address their information needs through information retrieval systems. Before delving into the discussion of information retrieval systems, it is important to note that the existence of this system is closely related to information-seeking behavior. Mason et al. (2021) state that information-seeking behavior is the effort to search for information with a specific purpose due to a need that must be fulfilled. In this endeavor, an individual may interact with various information systems, whether they are physical information sources, such as newspapers and magazines, or libraries, or computer-based systems. This is further supported by Rohmiyati (2018), who notes that current models of information-seeking behavior focus heavily on the use of computer-based technology through searching, selecting, evaluating, sharing, reposting, evaluating, and responding. This behavior must also take ethics into account; Noverista et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of having good ethics to provide quality service, especially in information-seeking behavior. Ekstrand et al. (2022) noted that an information retrieval system is a valuable tool that assists users in searching for information, aiming to provide ease in fulfilling their information needs. Another definition of an information retrieval system is presented by Zahara and Fadhli (2022), which states that it is a process for identifying and locating a document within a collection. Another perspective defines information retrieval systems as processes related to representation, storage, retrieval, and calling relevant information that meets the user's desired information needs. Lastly, Prastiwi and Jumino (2018) state that information retrieval systems focus on procedures related to representation, including storage media, search actions, and finding related information based on user preferences. Through these definitions, an information retrieval system can be understood as a tool or process that assists individuals in finding and accessing the information they require. This process involves searching and storing documents in a database and then retrieving them based on user requests, designed to help users quickly and conveniently find relevant information.

In the realm of information retrieval, the use of tools for retrieving information is a common practice. For example, Latiar (2019) once used the Digital Archive 2.0 software to facilitate the information retrieval process. In more complex cases, an individual can even design their own information retrieval system tailored to their needs and the desired level of accuracy. This was also done by Arifa et al. (2021), who designed and implemented an information retrieval system for exam questions using a vector space model in their lesson plan.

# **METHODS**

The method used in this community service activity is mentoring through interviews to identify the challenges and issues faced, utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach. Mezmir (2020) states that qualitative research is descriptive in nature and tends to use an inductive approach in its analysis. This is done to ensure that the research focus aligns with the facts occurring in the field. Additionally, the theoretical foundation is useful for providing background information and as material for discussing the results. Meanwhile, interviews are a form of communication between two or more parties that can be conducted face-to-face, where one party acts as the interviewer and the other party acts as the interviewee (Lamour, 2021). This interview method was chosen to understand the information needs of housewives through their information-seeking activities, aiming to meet their informational needs and support their

children's needs. To present a comprehensive analysis, a literature review method is employed to discuss the results.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## **Information Searching**

In today's digital society, it is essential to have the ability to search for information, particularly in online information retrieval. This search capability is influenced by the user's conditions and understanding of the information retrieval tools used (Zillinger, 2019). In the basic concept of information retrieval, search engines are depicted as the initial gateway to the web world, and their existence is crucial as a starting point for conducting information searches (Gao & Shah, 2020). The search results generated by search engines need to be considered, as not all displayed information is relevant and accurate.

**E (37 years old)** does not know how to conduct information searches and only receives information from social media.

"suka dapet informasi Facebook sama WhatsApp, Cuma suka mengikuti aja kalo ada informasi"

I (42 years old) have never intentionally conducted direct information searches, preferring to obtain information solely from social media dissemination. It can be said that I is merely an information recipient. "pertama mah suka dapet informasi dari TV, trus WhatsApp, kada suka di sebar luaskan kalo dapet informasi berdasarkan lingkungan"

**M** (47 years old) is similar to the previous two participants; however, M has never conducted any information searches and is primarily an information recipient through social media platforms such as WhatsApp.

"dari TV, radio, chattingan grup WhatsApp, paling memanfaatkan jualan produk di WhatsApp melalui update status, paling buat searching mah ga pernah suka minta tolong sama anak."

From the statements of the participants, it can be seen that not everyone engages in deliberate information-seeking steps. In fact, some of them only receive information.

**SW** (36 years old) in the information search conducted through Google is generally aware of how to search for information; however, they are hindered when the information retrieval process does not yield relevant information, leading to the cessation of the search activity.

"suka pake kata kunci misalkan penyebab corona teh apa, dari Google suka menemukan informasi yang tidak sesuai trus udah weh teu dicari deui neng daa kalo dicari deui malah jadi kitu ari Google kadang Google mah tidak sesuai geningan neng, kadang aya nu pasti, kadang aya nu aneh-aneh di Google mah, jadi susah weh"

In this case, during the search, several techniques or methods referred to as Boolean Search techniques are employed. Dwiyantoro (2017) states that in logic theory, the terms AND, OR, and NOT are used, which are commonly known as operators. The data search conducted during the retrieval system process involves matching the query or keywords with documents stored in a database, where the data collection is stored in a huge capacity.

**E (25 years old).** In information retrieval techniques, there are two stages: the pre-retrieval interview and the retrieval process. In the pre-retrieval interview stage, communication occurs between the intermediary and the user. Then, in the retrieval process stage, the user takes control of the information needs being searched for, such as determining keywords (queries), selecting the database during the search, employing techniques or strategies during the search, and repeating these activities until relevant information is found among the numerous items retrieved.

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"paling Facebook sama WhatsApp udah itu aja, kadang kana Google, kadang pas searching suka meleset trus udah weh diantepin"

In contrast, a participant **RN (24 years old)** conducts information retrieval differently, as they are already familiar with the techniques for conducting searches. In the information retrieval process, they consistently obtain relevant information with the keywords they seek.

"kalo mendapatkan informasi dari berbagai media kaya Google, YouTube, Instagram suka percaya, karena suka muncul di berita"

**D** (30 years old), the primary source for conducting information retrieval, always uses Google. The information retrieval process they undertake can be considered accurate, and they understand the flow of information searching with the necessary queries.

"suka mendapatkan informasi dari Google sama YouTube, sengaja mencari informasi, trus juga suka langsung pake kata kunci yang diperlukan trus dapet informasi nu sesuai"

I (37 years old) am overall aware of the entire flow of activities in information retrieval.

"paling banyaknya dari berita TV atau engga dari Google, paling sama WhatsApp, trus pas searching kadang gasesuai sama yang dibutuhin tindakannya paling keluar matiin data trus mulai lagi dari awal, buat nyari informasi paling nyari judul kata kuncinya misal kaya detik.com".

Through the responses provided by these informants, it can be concluded that they have a solid understanding of the concept of information retrieval. This understanding is evident in the informants' knowledge of information retrieval techniques, information retrieval tools, and the flow of search activities. These abilities imply that they are experienced and can be categorized as expected users in the concept of information retrieval systems. According to Lazonder et al. (2000), the level of expertise and experience users have in using the World Wide Web (WWW) plays a crucial role in enhancing their ability to explore and obtain information effectively. These experienced information users are capable of prioritizing their search tasks well, recognizing the complexity of tasks, and completing simpler tasks before moving on to more complex ones. This underscores the importance of experience and skill development in optimizing efficiency and effectiveness in utilizing the resources provided by the WWW. A similar point is made by Syafitri et al. (2020), who state that the use of a tool becomes part of the information retrieval system, driven by users' information-seeking activities influenced by their specific information needs. The users' ability when using information retrieval tools is one of the factors determining the accuracy of the information obtained.

Information seekers commonly experience barriers in searching for information. The vast and diverse information that is increasingly accessible often confuses them in determining which information is most suitable for their needs. Therefore, to address these obstacles, it is necessary to have adequate knowledge and experience related to information retrieval techniques. Mutiarani and Rahmah (2018) also stated that there are six techniques involved in information retrieval, namely using keywords, employing Boolean logic, utilizing word fragments, applying proximity, using fields or meta tags, and implementing restrictions. By applying these techniques in information retrieval, the results will be more accurate and obtained in a shorter timeframe.

# **Information Society**

The primary mission of the information society is to create a community that recognizes the significance of information, knowledge, and technology, and to establish an integrated information service that is coordinated, documented, and disseminated promptly, accurately, and beneficially to the broader public.

Additionally, the rapid flow of information through new media has led society into the era of the information society (Habibah & Irwansyah, 2021).

The characteristics of the information society, as explained by Damanik (2012), include a high level of information intensity in various aspects of life, which can be referred to as information overload, the use of information technology in various activities, the ability to process data digitally, a society that is aware of its information needs, treating information as an economically valuable asset, accessing information at high speeds, distributing information across various printed media, the transition from manual services to electronic services (e-service), shifts in income within the economic sector, a change from goods to service-oriented offerings, and increasingly global and competitive competencies. Given that information components are critically important in this information society era, it is not surprising that the role of information literacy is regarded as a skill that everyone must possess to compete in today's world (Almah, 2019).

In conducting information searches, there are several behaviors mentioned according to Wilson in his work titled "Exploring Information Behaviour: An Introduction," which fall within specific behavioral boundaries, namely (1) information discovery behavior, which refers to the efforts to find information as a result of the need to fulfill certain objectives. The second (2) behavior of information seeking is the micro-level behavior, which involves the act of searching for information as demonstrated when interacting with information systems. The third (3) behavior is that of information users, which consists of both physical and non-physical actions taken when combining the information found with previously held foundational knowledge.

Based on the behaviors described by the housewives who participated, significant efforts are needed to enhance their ability to search for information using information retrieval systems. Intensive guidance can be provided to enhance these skills, enabling existing information retrieval systems to be fully utilized to meet their information needs. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Septian et al. (2021), which suggests that the presence of technology in the information retrieval system also influences information-seeking behavior patterns.

# **Overcoming Hoaxes During Search**

When acquiring information, attention must be paid to the accuracy of that information. One necessary skill is the ability to respond to the information received. This can be observed from the socialization that took place at SMPN 30 Jakarta Utara, where a person's ability to respond to information became a form of media literacy competence in facing hoaxes (Hamzah & Putri, 2020). In addition, Tchakounté et al. (2022) also mention that the ability to categorize the characteristics and origin of a message can help prevent the spread of hoaxes.

**SW** (36 years old), in the information search conducted after receiving information, prefers to follow the existing information, as there is sometimes a sense of dissatisfaction with the information obtained after the search.

"masih mendingan pake logika, kalo ga pake logika teh buku dicari gitu, daa kalo Google mah suka jadi salah jadi tidak terlalu percaya, banyak hoaks, yaa jadi cuma mengikuti saja yang emang udah real trus akurat yang diliat dari kenyataan sama sama anu dina berita di TV, dibandingkan antar media gitu, suka bingung kalo informasi dari sosmed mah banyak ceritana jadi suka dilebih-lebihi jadi suka ke berita aja liputan6."

An RN (24 years old) conducts an information search and then obtains the sought information. The subsequent attitude or action is to act as a distributor or spreader of information that is still considered relevant for discussion.

"kalo ada topik yang sedang hangat diperbincangkan suka ikut menyebarluaskan informasi yang didapatkan dalam lingkup media via grup WA dan sering memanfaatkan media informasi untuk promosi."

**E (37 years old)**, the attitude of this participant after receiving information from social media dissemination is not to immediately trust the information they receive.

"kadang suka dipercaya kadang engga, karena ada bukti dari informasi tersebut"

I (42 years old), a participant, prefer to seek the truth of the information obtained and utilize social media such as WhatsApp to increase their income (economically).

"kalo misal informasi teh banyak diperbincangkan di masyarakat trus dari grup WhatsApp sama kaya di berita baru percaya, terus suka dipake buat jualan kalo ada gas di rumah, paginya update status WhatsApp dulu"

D (30 years old) can be described as participants who are passive information users; after conducting an information search, they only retain the knowledge for their own use.

"jarang juga di sebar luaskan cuma buat konsumsi pribadi saja, kalo misal dapet informasi suka ga percaya 100% sih, kadang percaya, kadang tidak, tergantung sama informasi yang kita cari, truskan selain buka Google suka nonton TV jadi suka crosscheck antar media bener atau tidaknya"

E (25 years old) unlike the previous participants, is an active information user, but they do not know whether the information being spread is a hoax or not.

"terus kalo dapet informasi selalu disebar luaskan digrup Whatsapp"

T (25 years old) is similar to the previous participants, being an active information user who spreads information while also utilizing it for their own purposes.

"kadang dipake buat jualan makanan di WhatsApp, terus kalo dapet informasi suka langsung disebar luaskan ke grup WhatsApp, kalo Facebook mah gapernah, jadi cuma orang-orang terdekat, tanpa tau itu hoaks atau bukan "

I (37 years old) after conducting a search activity that participants felt was sufficient, as information users, they utilize it for business purposes (economics) and are more cautious in disseminating information

"kadang juga dimanfaatin informasi buat posting-posting hasil dagangan lewat WhatsApp, dulu pernah lewat Gmail kaya pasang iklan masakan samasama jualan masker tapi sekarang udah engga, saya mah gapernah menyebarluaskan informasi paling buat konsumsi pribadi"

S (33 years old) after conducting information search activities, participants assess the situation regarding the development of certain information

"kadang kalo umpamanya masih terbaru informasinya suka disebar, kalo orang blom pada tau, kalo udah pada tau ya diem"

M (47 years old) participants are more selective about information in terms of its usefulness for themselves and others

"tergantung informasinya perlu di informasikan ke orang lain atau tidak, dilihat isi dan kebermanfaatannya"

In practice, from the user's perspective, Tchakounté et al. (2022) emphasize an individual's ability to use information retrieval systems to meet their information needs. The habits of processing information received daily can lead to an increase or decrease in the ability to use such systems. This greatly depends on how the environment and the individual utilize information retrieval systems to gather relevant information and prevent the spread of hoaxes. Furthermore, Park & Rim (2020) also stated that individuals with low knowledge but high engagement tend to be more susceptible to believing hoaxes on social media,

which leads them to engage in active communication that involves problem-solving and behavior change when mediated.

### CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the results obtained from the discussions and interviews indicate that housewives, as part of the information society, can adapt to the changing times, as seen through their information-seeking activities and the information retrieval processes that can take place. For more significant improvements, additional efforts are needed for housewives to enhance their skills and knowledge so that they can become a healthy information society in facing the phenomenon of information overload.

## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

The author states that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The author emphasizes that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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