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Modelling the information practices of music fans living in Medellín, Colombia

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Introduction. Previous studies on music information behaviour have focused on describing all the different activities used when interacting with music. However, a general picture of this behaviour has yet to emerge. The purpose of this research is to model the information behaviour of music fans through the perspective of social practice theory.

Method. Qualitative method was employed, using in-depth interviews and the observation of participants' homes and practices. Eighteen music fans with diverse socio-demographic characteristics living in Medellín, Colombia, participated in the research.

Analysis. Qualitative deductive analysis was performed using a tree of categories extracted from a conceptual framework. Categories were assigned to the data, and then compared and contrasted.

Results. Information activities that comprise practices are presented as existing within continuums from active behaviour to passive behaviour. Factors that affect and influence practices are presented in four groups: personal benefits, social benefits, extrinsic conditions and worldview. A model for music information practices that integrates all these elements is presented as the main result from this study.

Conclusions. This research contributes to the ongoing discussion about music information behaviour, presenting a model that describes an information practice which has the potential to describe other types of information behaviour.

Introduction

The field of music information behaviour has made significant strides in the past twenty years. Even though it is a very specific subject, several studies have been conducted, increasing our understanding of the actions and activities undertaken by people regarding music information (which includes music-as-information, but also information about music). In turn, results from this research feed into the design of applications and services that ease the discovery, retrieval, use and sharing of music around the world. Music, though mainly an entertainment and leisure pursuit, is an important part of our cultural and social lives, present in all types of societies, all ages, and all classes. Therefore, music information behaviour is present all around the world, and understanding these phenomena will lead to a better understanding of information behaviour as a whole.

The behaviour of music fans is particularly interesting, as they embody the average user of a music application or service. Fans are distinct from casual listeners (e.g., a person who turns on the radio to listen to something, but doesn't particularly care what) and amateur musicians (e.g., a person who studies an instrument and performs it for a small audience, with no financial dependence on the activity). Casual listeners have only a sporadic relationship with music, hardly engaging meaningfully with the information. Amateur musicians will likely have the same behaviour and problems with music as professional musicians, and services that cater to the latter will also benefit the former. On the other hand, fans profoundly enjoy music, interact with it constantly, and do not pursue it as a professional endeavour. Therefore, a vast

section of the general population fit the category of music fans (concert attendees, music shoppers, music collectors, followers of a band or singer, etc.) and their information behaviour is unconstrained by professional practice.

Several studies have focused on music fans and their information behaviour. In very broad terms, what has been found by these researchers is the diverse array of behaviour and strategies used by fans to interact with their music. For example, when searching for new music to listen to, people can use serendipitous browsing, or monitoring or satisficing. When listening to music, people can go from random playlists to obsessively repeating one song, to listening to a whole album in its original order, or shuffling a whole playlist and skipping songs along the way. The same can be said about the collecting, organizing and sharing of music. There are different strategies and modes that music fans perform for each of these activities.

However, almost all of the studies found while reviewing the literature have only looked at a certain activity, such as searching for music or sharing it, have explored a particular setting or a specific subset of music fans, such as collectors or college students or users of a music application. But only a few studies look at behaviour as a whole, and none have been found that look at how different activities correlate with each other. Because of this, there is no consensus, model or theory that accounts for all of music information behaviour.

This paper presents a model for the information practices of music fans. This model is based on the integration of a conceptual framework and a qualitative study of eighteen music fans living in Medellín. The conceptual framework integrates three different theories: social practice, the serious leisure perspective, and the information transfer model. The study was conducted between March and July 2017, and relied on in-depth interviews and reactive observation of the music fans in their natural environment (homes, music bars, music cafes, concerts).

Conceptual framework

In order to explore and study the information behaviour of music fans, a conceptual framework was designed, based on the integration of three different theories and their underlying concepts. The theories are: 1) Schatzki's theory of social practice, 2) Stebbins' serious leisure perspective, and 3) the information transfer model proposed by Vickery and Vickery. Each of these theories puts forth a concept which was used as a building block of the conceptual framework. These concepts are, in turn: 1) the concept of social practice, 2) music fandom, and 3) information activities. These three concepts are elaborated and explained presently.

A practice '*is an open-ended, spatially-temporally dispersed nexus of doings and sayings*' ([Schatzki, 2012](#), p. 14). They are sets of activities, centred on a common theme or object, and organized by understandings, rules and normative teleologies; the author gives some examples of practices in fields such as cooking, politics, manufacturing, football, dating, and horse breeding ([Schatzki, 2010](#), p. 129). Practices are performed in community, are social by nature, and though everyone has their own practices, these intersect and merge with one another, giving rise to social life, and human coexistence.

In order to better understand a leisure or hobby activity such as music fandom, another theory was selected, dubbed the serious leisure perspective ([Stebbins, 2006](#)). In it, all leisure activities are classified according to the seriousness of the endeavour, and the qualities, benefits and characteristics of these pursuits are described. This theory also helped to define music fan as a conceptual category. A music fan is any person who enjoys music on a daily basis, has a profound emotional attachment to music and has no professional relationship to music. The music fan may share his own music or performances, but only with an inner circle of friends and close relatives, not strangers or public venues, as that is the domain of the amateur musician. Leisure activities have traditionally not been as widely studied in information science as academic or professional activities, but a few authors have engaged with these concepts and proposed leisure as a rich avenue for information scholars. In particular, Jenna Hartel has published several papers in which the domains of leisure are explained and how information is involved in each of them ([Hartel, 2003, 2005, 2011, 2014](#); [Hartel, Cox and Griffin, 2016](#)).

Information activities are described in Vickery and Vickery's model as different steps or processes that information organizations perform in order to achieve their different goals. For example, libraries perform such activities as selecting, collecting and organizing information sources. Authors and researchers undertake activities such as composing, writing and editing manuscripts ([Vickery and Vickery, 2004](#), p. 10). The activities described by this model can be readily adapted to describe the activities performed by a fan regarding the music information which they listen to and enjoy.

The intersection of any two of the concepts previously elaborated gives rise to other new concepts, which are the information activities of music fans, hobbies considered as social practices, and finally, information practices. The concept of information practice has been previously discussed in the library and information studies literature, and has mainly been proposed as an alternative to the more common and established term of information behaviour ([Olsson and Lloyd, 2017](#); [Savolainen, 2007](#); [The behaviour/practice debate: a discussion prompted by Tom Wilson's review of Reijo Savolainen's *Everyday information practices: a social phenomenological perspective*, 2009](#)). However, it has also been argued that this is not merely a terminological change, but a new perspective from which to observe and study the same

phenomenon. The practice has been proposed as a new '*interpretative lens*' ([Huizing and Cavanagh, 2011](#)) and as a way to bridge hitherto separated and opposing views, such as objectivist theories focused on overarching structures and subjectivist theories focused on the individual and its actions upon the world. Social practice sees individual action and social structure as co-constitutive of each other, and as a concept can enrich and open up new avenues of research in information science ([Huizing and Cavanagh, 2011](#)).

However, there is yet no consensus achieved within information science about the concept of information practice to be used in research studies, which practice theory to ascribe to, and whether information practice supersedes and replaces information behaviour, or if the two concepts are still valid and related to each other. Pilerot, Hammarfelt and Moring ([2017](#)) have found a diversity of approaches, both theoretical and methodological to the information science literature that have engaged with the concept. Cox ([2012](#)) proposes the use of '*information in social practice*', as all practices contain elements and activities involving information. Lloyd ([2010](#)) uses the concept and argues that information literacy is an information practice dispersed between and within other practices such as teaching, learning, reading, etc. As such, the author reframes information literacy not as a set of skills, but as activities which produce and reproduce such skills. In '*The behaviour/practice debate: a discussion prompted by Tom Wilson's review of Reijo Savolainen's Everyday information practices: a social phenomenological perspective*', ([2009](#)) various authors argue both in favour and against information practice as a valid term to conduct research with. Wilson views behaviour as a general, umbrella term, and practices as a mode of habituated and routine behaviour. Mary Cavanagh intervenes and contrasts behaviour as discrete, individualised actions, and practices as open-ended and continuous. Moreover, practices are seen as directly connected with social aspects, and as inherently social. Even though they may be performed by individuals, they are always part of the social world, and are the building blocks of social life ([Olsson and Lloyd, 2017](#); [Schatzki, 2010, 2012](#)).

In the present study, the practice theory of Schatzki was selected, and therefore an information practice is defined as a social practice, that is '*an open-ended, spatially-temporally dispersed nexus of doings and sayings*' ([Schatzki, 2012](#), p. 14), where those doings and sayings are information activities. As such, it is presently proposed that information behaviour and information practice are related but not interchangeable concepts. Information behaviour denotes all and any human action that deals with information, so it is possible to distinguish specific actions such as reading, selecting information, transferring information, analysing information, etc. Actions can then be organized into tasks, tasks into activities, activities into projects, and various projects and isolated activities are interwoven into practices. The information actions are the building blocks, but the information practice is the whole structure of activities which are organized by '*practical rules, understandings, teleoaffective structures, and general understandings*' ([Schatzki, 2012](#), p. 15). These practices are part of other professional, academic, leisure or everyday life practices. Each person will have their own information practice, composed of several information activities, which are in turn composed of specific information action.

The intersection of the three underlying concepts gives rise to the object of the study presented in this paper: the information practices of music fans. This conceptual framework is presented as a diagram in Figure 1.

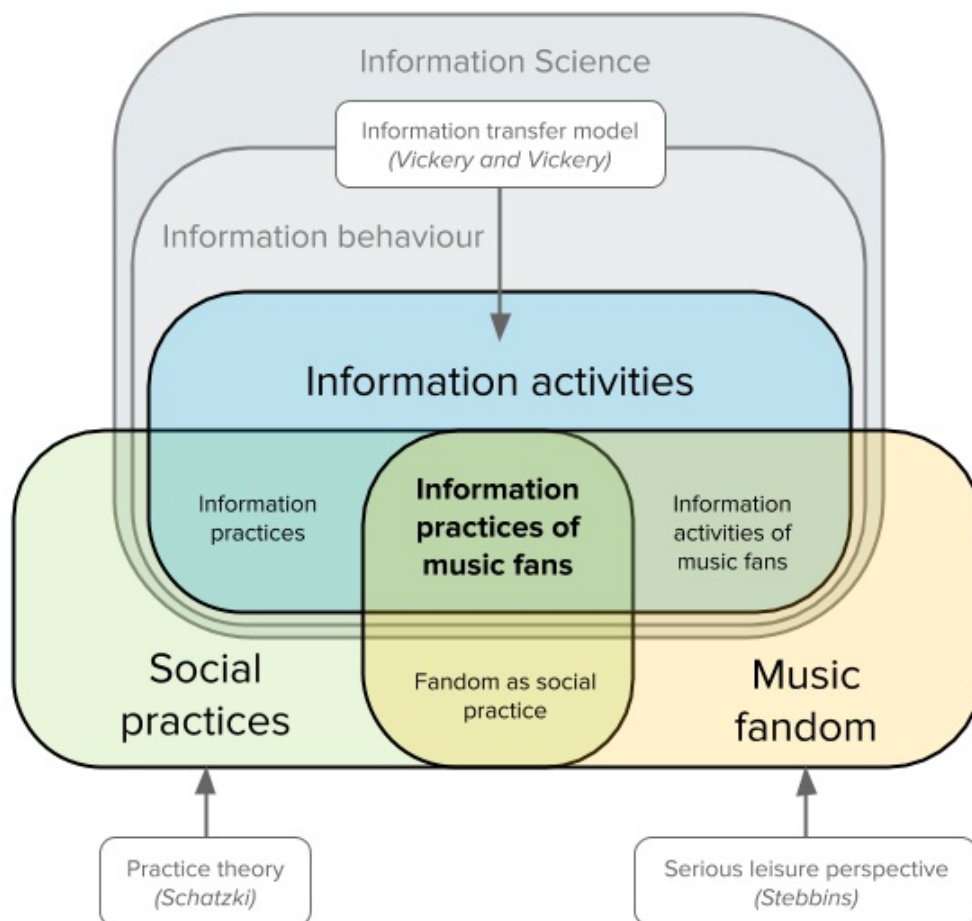


Figure 1. Conceptual framework devised for analysing the information practices of music fans.

Previous studies

A sizable number of studies have looked at the information behaviour of music fans in different settings and with different characteristics. However, only a handful of these have used a model to analyse and describe their findings.

Cruz (2008) proposed a new model based on models by previous authors, such as Wilson, Choo and Calva González. This model focuses exclusively on information needs, and sees information behaviour as a monolithic block, and the study carried out only explored how music fans solve their information needs, e.g., how they search for music to listen to. Similarly, Laplante (2008) proposed a slight variation on Wilson's 1996 model of information seeking, and with this new model in mind explored the habits and strategies used by fifteen young adults in Montreal. Margree, MacFarlane, Price and Robinson (2014) inched closer to an understanding of behaviour as practice, e.g., as a set of interlinked activities, not separate actions. This study was based on the serious leisure perspective (Stebbins, 2006), and on the theory of everyday life information seeking (Savolainen, 2005) and looked at the practices of eight record collectors in the Greater London area. However, the study focused mainly on the activities of collecting, and did not mention how different actions relate to each other. For example, if collecting extensively is also found in people who share their music widely among their friends, or if collectors tend to be more selective about their sharing patterns.

This type of analysis is the missing piece in all of the studies found during the literature review. Most of them focus on only one information aspect or one information activity. Along with Margree *et al.* (2014), many focus on collections and collectors, their motivations and organization schemes, as well the preferred formats, both digital and physical (Brinegar and Capra, 2010; Cunningham, Bainbridge and Bainbridge, 2017; Cunningham, Jones and Jones, 2004; Cunningham and Masoodian, 2007; Giles, Pietrzykowski and Clark, 2007; Greasley, Lamont and Sloboda, 2013; Kibby, 2009; Shuker, 2004, 2010; Vignoli, 2004). Related to collecting, a few studies deal with the way people acquire music, either as downloads (Kinnally, Lacayo, McClung and Sapolsky, 2008; Lenhart and Madden, 2005), or as purchasing decisions (Keown, 2016). Listening styles, moments and devices have also been studied (Bentley, Metcalf and Harboe, 2006; Boland and Murray-Smith, 2014; Cunningham, Downie and Bainbridge, 2005; Leong, Howard and Vetere, 2008; Lonsdale and North, 2011; North, Hargreaves and Hargreaves, 2004), with some focusing on the portable MP3 player (Bull, 2005; Peláez, 2010). How music is discovered, searched for and the metadata used by fans to search for a particular item is also important in the literature (Cruz, 2008; Cunningham, Bainbridge and McKay, 2007; Cunningham, Reeves and Britland, 2003; Ferwerda, Yang, Schedl and Tkalčič, 2015; Laplante, 2008; Lee, Cho and Kim, 2016; Lee, Downie and Cunningham, 2005; Taheri-Panah and MacFarlane, 2004). A few studies have looked at how music is shared, particularly how 'opinion leadership' shapes music recommendations (Laplante, 2010, 2012), the role of social media (Laplante,

[Bowman and Amar, 2017](#); [Lee, Park, Kim, Kim and Moon, 2011](#); [Lingel, 2010](#)) as well as other applications used to share music ([Amoroso, Dembla, Wang, Greiner and Liu, 2008](#); [Brown, Sellen and Geelhoed, 2001](#); [Voida, Grinter, Ducheneaut, Edwards and Newman, 2005](#)).

Some have looked into two main activities at once, for instance seeking and collecting ([Peláez, 2010](#); [Rasmussen, Neal and Conroy, 2012](#)), listening and collecting ([Kamalzadeh, Baur and Möller, 2012](#)), listening and seeking ([Legault-Venne, Laplante, Leblanc-Proulx and Forest, 2016](#)), and also creating and sharing, in a study about a community of tapers and traders of live music performances ([Nieckarz, 2005](#)).

Only a handful of studies have examined several types music information behaviour at once. Nettamo, Nirhamo and Häkkinä (2006) compared the behaviour of music fans living in New York and in Hong Kong, using a three-day photo diary kept by the participants. The authors looked at how people discover, acquire, manage and consume music. Brown, Geelhoed and Sellen (2001) interviewed three different groups: young users of physical music media, adult users of the same type of media, and a group of heavy MP3 users. Among these populations they compared several actions integrated into a concept dubbed the 'music lifecycle'. These activities included finding out about music, copying and compiling, buying, listening, choosing and organizing, and collecting music. Sease and McDonald (2009) adopted the concept of media lifecycle to their study of how twenty-four people living in households interact with their own music and the music of the people they live with. Chamberlain and Crabtree (2016) examined the activities of five households in the United Kingdom, including the discovery, acquisition, processing and cataloguing of music, and focusing on the use of metadata for each of these activities.

A summary of the different music information actions found in the studies is presented in Table 1, organized using the information transfer model ([Vickery and Vickery, 2004](#), p. 10).

Table 1. Music information actions reported in previous studies.

Information activity	Information actions
Retrieval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources: friends, relatives, music stores, libraries, music applications • Receiving and/or asking for recommendations from friends and acquaintances • Going through other people's collections • Systematic scanning in stores or libraries • Serendipitous browsing • Shuffle mode in own collection • Serendipity, accidental find • Passive attention • Monitoring • Pre-selection • Specific search: artist, title, lyric • Filtering: genre, mood • Searching for information about music • Satisficing
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood management: modification or matching • Reading information about music • Group listening: parties, reunions, cars, concerts • DJ role: controlling music in a social setting • Passive behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Skipping songs ◦ Shuffle mode ◦ Thrashing: obsessive repetition ◦ Casual and convenient listening • Active behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Undivided attention ◦ Complete album in original order ◦ Playlists ◦ Individual song selection ◦ Guilty pleasures
Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing in physical and online stores • Illegal download • Trading (Blanks and Postage)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copying and transferring • Collecting physical and digital media • Compilation of playlists • Compilation of songs on streaming services
Organization and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a catalogue or list • Systematic organization • Customized playlist • Metadata correction • Communal or shared collections • Collection image management • Simple organization • Organizing via app • Chaotic style, unorganized • Classification categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Genre ◦ Use (most played, least played) ◦ Artist ◦ Mood ◦ Situation ◦ Others: date, event, album, country
Compilation of aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a catalogue or list
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music is shared with: friends, relatives, spouse • Posting in social media • Group listening • Gifting music (original or mixtape) • Recommending music • Posting an entire collection (via iTunes) • Trading
Formal and informal transference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composing texts about music • Giving lectures • Informal conversations • Belonging to a community of fans
Creation, recording and publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of playlists and mixtapes • Amateur composition • Original research • Recording live concerts

All of the previously mentioned studies presented their findings as isolated activities, each one analysed and discussed separately. Readers are left to wonder if a particular action is related to other actions. For example, if fans who like to listen in shuffle mode also have a meticulous organizing scheme, or if searching actively for music is present only in people who collect heavily.

Promising results in this regard stem from Lee and Price (2015), who interviewed forty university students that used a music service or application. The authors classified the students according to their typical behaviour, and seven personas were drawn from the results. These personas are groups of users that exhibit similar behaviour and that have similar levels of investment in music and of sociability. These seven personas were tested in a large sample of young people, and it was determined that some overlap between personas existed (Fuller, Hubener, Kim and Lee, 2016). Both of these studies looked at several actions, such as how people discover music, how they listen to it, how they share it, and how they create playlists as an organizing and listening strategy. However, they are both limited in the sense that the studies only looked at how people behave within music services and applications. The authors did not investigate whether the music fans also engaged with music in other ways, such as collecting, purchasing, gifting it, sharing it on social media, or listening with other devices and mediums. In other words, they only investigated a subsection of the whole of the music information practice, that which deals with a music service.

The model presented in this paper aims to provide a global description of an information practice, including all possible information activities and actions, and how they can be described in each of the music fans studied.

Methods

This study relied on qualitative methods to gather the data, and had an exploratory and descriptive scope. It included elements of the ethnographic, conversational and biographical approaches, as it intended to witness the information practices as they naturally occur and change within and throughout the lives of the music fans. Between March and July 2017, in-depth personal interviews and reactive observations were conducted in the natural environments of the music fans, including music bars, cafes, concerts, and mainly the homes of the participants.

To gather the participants, it was decided to recruit only fans of either tango music or metal music. Working with two wildly different genres garners some methodological advantages. It allows for a diverse sample that mixes different characteristics such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. It facilitates conversation with the music fans, as they are eager to talk about their particular genre, and it eases the process of finding and selecting willing volunteers from an extremely large population (all music fans in a given area).

Non-probabilistic snowball sampling was used to select the participants, beginning with the author's personal contacts, who in turn contacted other music fans, and these as well led to more willing participants. A total of twenty music fans living in Medellín, Colombia, participated in the study. Of these, two were excluded from the analysis as it was determined that the information gathered from them was insufficient. The characteristics of the study participants are presented in Table 2.

Qualitative deductive analysis was performed, extracting categories from each of the three main theories (see Figure 1), assigning categories to the data (interview transcripts and observation notes), and looking for similarities, differences and common themes. For instance, each of the information activities from the information transfer model ([Vickery and Vickery, 2004](#), p. 10) was turned into a category, and each time these categories were mentioned in the texts, a marker was placed, so it was possible to read all the fragments about a given category and also about each participant. The same procedure was carried out with the concepts found in the other two theories, social practice theory ([Schatzki, 2010, 2012](#)) and serious leisure perspective ([Stebbins, 2006](#)), which became the social and personal factors explained in the Findings section.

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants. Age groups were classified as follows: Young, 20-30 years old, Adult, 30-50 years, Senior, 50 or more years old. Social strata were determined by observation of participants' homes and neighbourhoods.

Code	Music genre	Age group	Social strata	Sex
M1	Metal	Young	Lower	Male
M2	Metal	Young	Lower	Male
M3	Metal	Young	Lower	Female
M4	Metal	Young	Lower	Male
M5	Metal	Adult	Higher	Female
M6	Metal	Young	Lower	Male
M7	Metal	Young	Lower	Female
M8	Metal	Adult	Higher	Male
M9	Metal	Adult	Lower	Male
T1	Tango	Senior	Higher	Male
T2	Tango	Adult	Higher	Male
T3	Tango	Senior	Higher	Female
T4	Tango	Young	Lower	Female
T5	Tango	Senior	Higher	Female
T6	Tango	Senior	Higher	Male
T7	Tango	Senior	Lower	Female
T8	Tango	Young	Lower	Female
T9	Tango	Senior	Higher	Male

Findings

This section presents the findings from the study, and how these findings contributed to the design of the final model. These findings are divided into three sections: information activities, personal and social factors, and practices.

Information activities

Although the information transfer model ([Vickery and Vickery, 2004](#), p. 10) presents different groups of activities, it was determined that merging some of these groups together helped to better describe the behaviour of music fans. Only six main information activities were left in the final analysis: 1) information retrieval (searching and looking for music), 2) information use (listening to and enjoying music), 3) information collection (gathering and acquiring music), 4) information organization (cataloguing and sorting), 5) production (creating or composing music or music related information), and 6) distribution (sharing and transferring music).

For each of these six activities, the music fans displayed a wide and diverse array of actions, most of which have been previously described in the literature. One of the main findings of this study is that these actions can be viewed as existing on a continuum. At one end of the continuum active behaviour, and at the other end are actions that are more passive in nature. Each of these end-points is an extreme and each have been named descriptively, in order to better illustrate the complexities of behaviour. Any specific action can be placed in a position along the continuum, depending on its own features, whether it is more active or more passive. Although this dichotomy has been previously described ([Boland and Murray-Smith, 2014](#); [Hagen, 2015](#); [Leong, Howard and Vetere, 2008](#)), no other study has described all of the information actions of a person as existing within these continuums.

The six main information activities and the corresponding end-points of each of the continuums are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Information activities and the end-points for each of the continuums.

Information activity	Active end point	Passive end point
Retrieval	Discovering	Remembering
Use	Control	Freedom
Collection	Accumulating	Letting go
Organization	Order	Chaos
Production	Creating	Consuming
Distribution	Giving	Receiving

- Retrieval. A person inclined towards discovering is constantly searching for new music to listen to, such as M2, who reported that he went through his music fairly quickly and had to look for new music to download and store on his phone. New music, however, wore out its novelty just as quickly and the search had to be performed again. A person inclined towards the remembering end-point is not as preoccupied with finding new music. For example, T7, a retired tango music fan who already knew all the songs and artists that she enjoyed, simply searched on YouTube for one or another, often repeating artists on the next listening session.
- Use. A person inclined towards a controlled listening style prefers a fixed or predetermined way to enjoy music, for example listening to a complete album in its original order, a behaviour exhibited by M6 and M8. Curating a playlist or choosing song by song are also controlled activities. On the other end of the continuum, a person who prefers freedom will accept music as it comes, and often enjoy changes in mood, genre and style. M2 and M4 loaded all of their MP3 files into one folder and let the device take control and listen in the order of the filename, which resulted in a deliberate mishmash.
- Collection. A continuum with a stark contrast between its end-points. On the one hand there are intensive music collectors, who enjoy accumulating digital files, physical media, or even entries in a cloud-based service such as YouTube or Spotify. On the other, we find music fans who do not need a collection of any sort to enjoy music, such as T8 who carried only five to seven songs on her phone at any given moment, listening to those same songs for around a week, and then deleting and replacing them with another set of songs.
- Organization. Organizing information is dependent on first having or possessing information, so non-collectors do not exhibit any of the actions pertaining to this activity. Collectors, no matter the size of their collection, have to deal with how to organize or place the things which they accumulate. Chaotic styles include M2 and M4, who gathered MP3 files but did no organization whatsoever, keeping a folder with all the files, some with metadata, others without. And on the other end there are collectors who devised complex and meticulous organization schemes, such as Excel tables (T2), labelling records and keeping journals (T9), or using a metadata matching program (M8).
- Production. As the definition of music fan excludes the activities of composing and creating new music, almost all the persons interviewed stand firmly at the consuming end of the continuum. However, a few music fans edge towards amateur activities, and sometimes create works related to music. For example, T6 wrote and exhibited

poems on the topics and themes of tango music; and T3 committed herself to researching the origins and meanings behind the songs, and gave lectures of this research to other tango fans.

- **Distribution.** A person inclined towards giving likes to share music with other people. T2, for example, enjoys downloading, copying and giving away music to friends and acquaintances, and even uploads music to cloud-based services and shares the link widely. A person inclined towards receiving will sometimes believe that they do not have as much music or as much knowledge about music to share with other people, such as T4, who prefers to ask other people for music recommendations or for new music. Others will believe they have the necessary music knowledge, but will only share music with other who they have deemed worthy, such is the case of M3, who distrusts that the vast majority of people will appreciate the music she enjoys, and so abstains from sharing it.

As shown in the previous paragraphs, the study participants exhibited different actions for each of the information activities. Some of these behaviours skewed towards an end-point of a continuum, others stayed in a position in the middle. Since each activity is composed of a series of actions, the conjunction of all these actions produced a position within each activity continuum. For example, a person who collects heavily will skew towards the accumulating end-point of the Collecting continuum. But a person who sometimes gathers music on their phone, but not excessively, will be placed somewhere in the middle. A qualitative analysis was performed for each of these music fans, and a position was selected within each of the continuums, either skewing towards the active end-point, the passive end-point, or somewhere along the middle. These positions are shown in Figure 2, for all of the study participants.

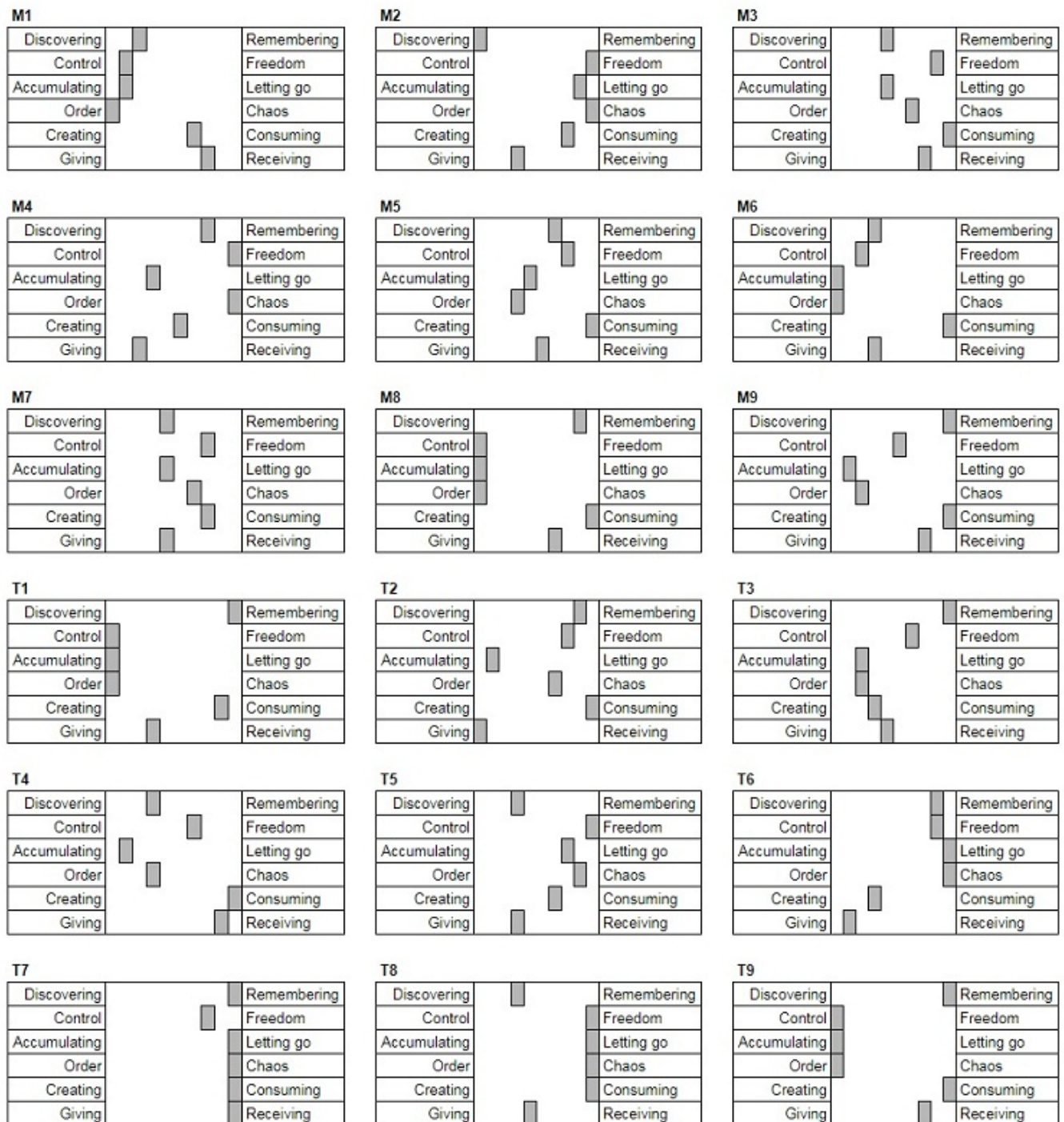


Figure 2. Positions within the continuums for the information activities found in the study participants.

Figure 2 shows that, in the small sample explored in this study, there are no two music fans that are exactly alike. Each person is unique and their information practice is a unique construction that does not follow a preset pattern or prototype. This is an interesting finding, as it leads to the question whether it is possible to find recurring patterns or typical practices in larger samples. This finding is confirmed and compounded by the next one, regarding the social and personal factors that underpin these behaviours.

Social and personal factors

These factors were derived from concepts mentioned within the theories of social practice and the serious leisure perspective. After analysing the data obtained from the music fans, the factors were grouped in four main categories. For each of the study participants it was determined which factors were present in their practices, and which ones had a driving influence, presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Social and personal factors that influence the information activities and behaviour. Factors with a normal influence are coloured in grey, factors with a major influence are coloured in red.

	Factor	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	
Personal benefits	Self-enrichment																			
	Mood management																			
	Self-actualization																			
	Accomplishment																			
	Selfishness																			
	Remembrance																			
Social benefits	Social interaction																			
	Group identity																			
	Self-expression																			
	Contribution																			
Extrinsic conditions	Self-image																			
	Organizations																			
	Work																			
	Family																			
Worldview	Life history																			
	General understandings																			
	Values																			
	Lifestyle																			

A brief definition of each of these factors is presented, and how they can affect and influence the way activities are carried out within an information practice.

- Personal benefits
 - Self-enrichment: A feeling that personal life is full of meaningful, enriching experiences. Listening to music can be a joyful and vibrant moment for most music fans.
 - Mood management: A lot of music fans describe listening to music according to their current mood, either to modify it (listening to happy songs in order to cheer yourself up, M8) or to match that mood (listening to sad songs when you're feeling sad, M1 and M2).
 - Self-actualization: The feeling of learning and increasing your own knowledge about a topic of interest. Some music fans enjoy researching and reading about the bands they listen to, the topics of their lyrics or the technical details of the compositions (M6). Some even go as far as organizing that research and presenting it to other fans, even publishing it on a few occasions (T3).
 - Accomplishment: A positive feeling associated with completing a task, reaching an objective or overcoming an obstacle. Music fans that collect heavily often mention these types of feelings when acquiring a prized item, or when they reach a milestone in their collecting endeavours (T1 and T9).
 - Selfishness: The feeling that music is an individual experience, which meets personal, individual needs and that must be protected and safeguarded from outside influences. Some music fans are reluctant to share their music with others, believing that it is a special thing, and that others won't appreciate it in the same way (M3).
 - Remembrance: Music can trigger the recall of memories from the personal life of a fan. These memories can either be positive or negative, but most people will enjoy reliving them in either case (T2 and T7). Some fans search for music using only their memory, listening to the same songs they already know, and eschewing the discovery of new music almost completely.

- Social benefits
 - Social interaction: The possibility to take part in social activities with other people aided by the presence of music. This is a powerful driving factor, as most fans enjoy listening to music in the company of others, sharing music with friends, getting recommendations from other music fans, and attending concerts, cafes and bars that cater to their music tastes.
 - Group identity: Being able to identify oneself with a wider group, and to assume that identity as part of your personality and how you present yourself to the world. Most fans of metal music that were interviewed rejected being called a metalhead, or identifying themselves only as fans of that genre, whereas most fans of tango music embraced the identity of the music more readily.
 - Self-expression: The ability to express oneself through an activity, such as creating a work of art, writing or composing something. Among the music fans interviewed for this study, this benefit was largely absent, since by definition a music fan does not perform or compose music. However, a few of the fans sometimes produced works related to music, such as poems (T6), articles (T3) or a few amateur covers (M1).
 - Contribution: A gratifying feeling obtained when a person gives back to a community, or to other people, selflessly and without expecting a reward. When sharing music, some fans believe they are performing a service by contributing to the improvement of other people's lives by giving music and sharing that which is important and beautiful to them (T2 and T6).
 - Self-image: The projection of oneself that is presented to the world, how other people perceive it, and being rewarded, praised or admired because of that image. Some collectors report this benefit when a prized item of their collection, or the collection itself, is admired or praised by other collectors. They also will choose which records to acquire and include in their collections based on their rarity, and the expectation of future admiration from their peers (T1 and T9).
- Extrinsic conditions
 - Organizations: The presence of organizations, clubs, groups or associations of like-minded music fans can sometimes influence information activities. This did not present itself among the fans of metal music, but did happen with several tango fans. These were active members of tango associations, and the activities undertaken by these associations directly shaped their own activities, as collecting, researching and listening all revolved around the meetings and the other members of the associations (T1, T3 and T9).
 - Work: How the professional activities of a person can sometimes be part of the leisure activities, either positively or negatively. A high stress job can lead someone to choose to listen to music in order to relax and unwind (M8), or to use music in order to distract yourself from menial, repetitive tasks (M7).
 - Family: Family can be a strong influence on music taste, but not necessarily on music information practices. For instance, music collectors did not have parents who collected music, and when asked about the practices of their parents most music fans reported completely different activities and strategies. More similarities were found between the fans and their significant others. However, exceptions were also present; one avid tango fan's wife did not listen to music at all, and in fact disliked loud noises of any kind (T7).
 - Life history: The different stages of life and the important events within them can shape and modify an information practice. It was found that for the music fans interviewed, a major life change correlated with a change in the information activities carried out regarding music. This is directly related to the lifestyle factor, which will be described in detail below.

Personal factors have a more important influence on practices than social factors, which confirms findings from previous studies (Bawden and Robinson, [2011](#), [2013](#); [Keown, 2016](#)). Particularly, factors in the worldview category were found to be the ones that shape the activities and actions in most of the practices studied. Worldview includes the values, general understandings and lifestyle of the participants. For example, an anti-materialistic set of values was found in a tango music fan (T8) that preferred to let go, choosing not to collect music at all, neither in digital or physical formats, and had a spontaneous style of information practice. General understandings are abstract senses of the worth, value, nature, or place of things and activities. M9, an adult metal music fan, spoke in terms of the importance of this genre in his life, and how most of the lyrics are imbued with a sense of freedom, of independence from constraints, and of breaking down barriers and choosing your own path.

Music becomes a way to assert this general understanding and integrate it within his own life; it affirms a sense of self and a way of understanding the world. This general understanding affects the information practice, as M9 ritualizes his music listening habits, every Friday is spent bar-hopping with his wife and meeting up with friends who share his taste in music. It also affects his music listening etiquette. When he is at home alone he plays metal music loud, but if he is in the company of others he respects the differing tastes and knows that metal music is often not agreeable to a lot of people. The freedom to choose is thus tempered by the freedom of others to choose as well, and it's this general understanding, along with several other factors, which configures his whole information practice.

Lifestyle was found to be the most pervasive factor that affects and configures all the practices examined in this study. A lifestyle is a certain way of carrying out everyday activities. Lifestyle can change radically through a person's life, marked by changes of occupation or of living arrangements, such as retirement, moving to another city, moving out from the family home, etc. It was found that all practices are deeply interlinked with the fans current lifestyles, and further questioning revealed that often practices change as a lifestyle changes as well. For example, all the information activities of T1, a retired mathematics teacher and collector of music records, are interwoven with his lifestyle as a retiree.

Listening to music is often done in the company of his wife, who paints while he sits down to organize his collection. After a while, they will sit down together and enjoy a glass of wine, cheese and salted meats. And so on, every one of the study participants integrates their music information practice into their lifestyle. Practice is part of a lifestyle, as the activities that make up a practice are deeply personal and finely tuned to the way each person goes about their everyday life. A person who has an organized lifestyle will have an organized information practice, a person who has a chaotic lifestyle will have a chaotic practice, etc.

A model for music information practices

Both of the previous presented findings can be synthesized and presented in a cohesive manner in the following model of information practices (Figure 3). These are composed of information activities, which are in turn groups of similar information actions. The activities are presented in a net, representing how music fans move from one activity to the next, and connect in a cyclical way. For example, in order to enjoy music by listening to it, fans have to first find music, through actions such as searching, browsing, and monitoring. The retrieval and use activities are thus connected to each other and to the other activities. Within each activity are listed various actions (searching, listening, selecting, etc.) which comprise these activities, however, these are not complete or exhaustive lists and are only presented as examples of possible actions. At the sides of each activity are the end-points for each of the continuums. This means that for each activity, the actions within it can be performed or not performed, from one end of the continuum to the other. For example, sorting, which is an organization activity, can be performed in a very orderly fashion, or in a chaotic style, or in a series of variations between these two extremes.

Information activities are undertaken in order to obtain personal and social benefits, such as mood management, self-expression or remembrance. And the activities are configured by a personal worldview, and constrained by external conditions, which include family, work, fandom organisations, and life history. The whole of the practice, the activities and factors that shape them, are encased within a particular lifestyle. Lifestyle is not merely a factor that changes or constrains a practice; lifestyle is synonym with practice. They both are inextricably linked and intertwined, one responding and adapting to the other dynamically and continuously.

This model describes the information practices of music fans, but it can potentially be extended to describe and analyse other types of information practices, such as the ones found in professional, academic and everyday contexts, as well as other leisure activities and hobbies.

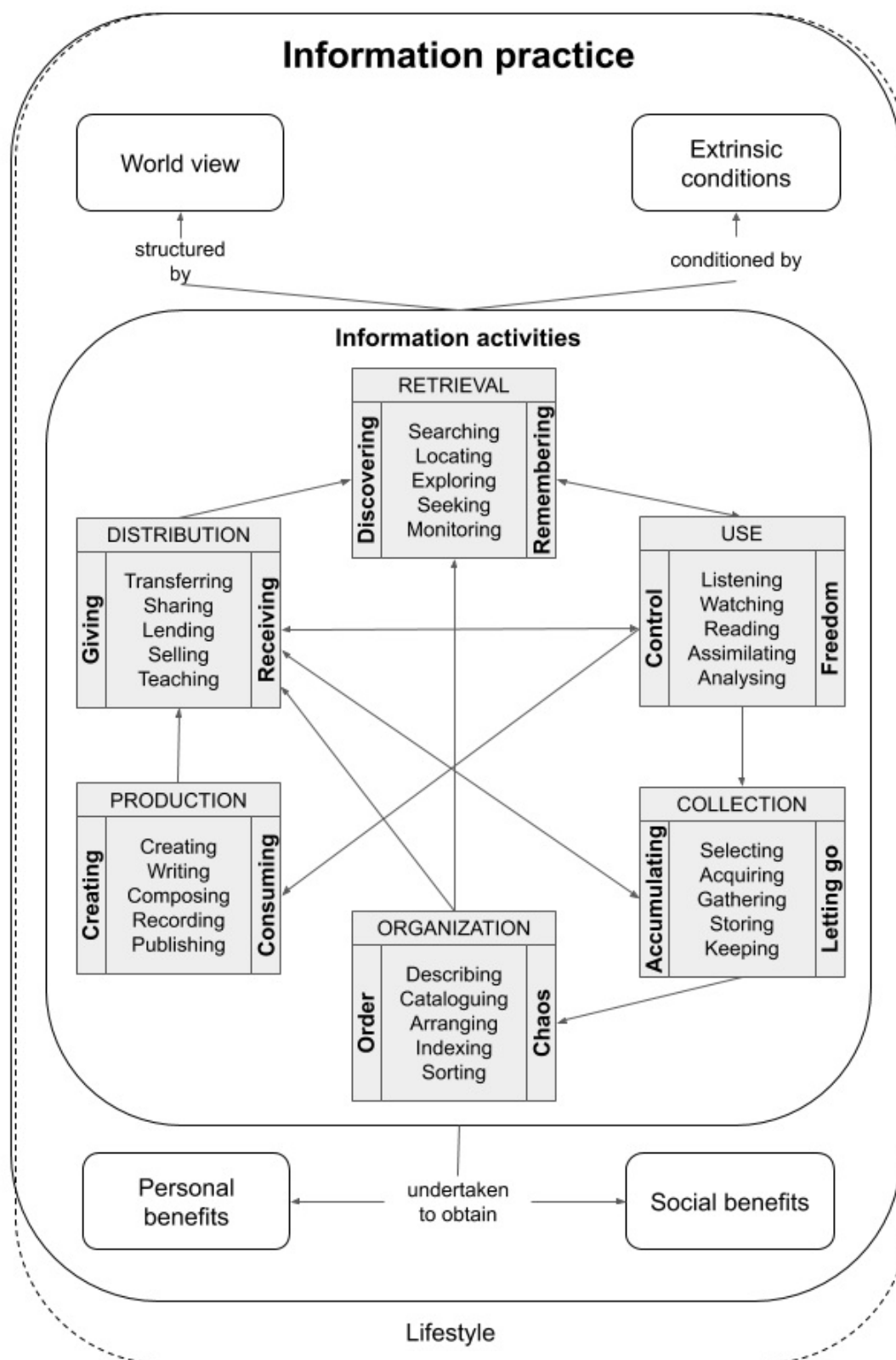


Figure 3. Model of music information practices.

Conclusions

In this study the information practices of eighteen music fans living in Medellín, Colombia were examined and analysed. An information practice is a whole set of activities related to dealing with information and documents, which are structured and integrated into the social and personal life of individuals, as it intersects, modifies and is modified as well by all other social practices.

Based on the data gathered from interviews and observations, a model for music information practices is presented. This model integrates the elements that comprise an information practice: information activities, external and internal factors, and lifestyle. Activities are understood as groups of similar actions, connected in a cyclical network. Each of these actions can be presented as existing on a continuum, from more controlled, active actions to more unrestricted, passive forms. External factors include social benefits and extrinsic conditions. Internal factors include personal benefits and worldview.

Lifestyle is the whole interlinked set of activities, settings, context, routines and habits that make up someone's life, and has a direct influence on a music information practice; the latter is part of the former.

An important finding of the study is the concept of continuums. Within each information activity a continuum from active actions to passive behaviour was found, and for each participant a position was selected within each of the six continuums. Therefore, practices can be characterized by these six positions, and by the main driving factors. Further research is needed to confirm if the continuums and the social and personal factors are found in other samples and other information practices.

However, this is a qualitative study with a small, intentional sample. Hence, these results cannot be generalized to the whole population of music fans, tango fans, metal fans, or fans living in Medellín. Rather, these results are a contribution to the understanding of information practices of music fans. This study shows that a practice is best understood as a whole, and that each activity and particular action exists in a direct relation with all other activities in that practice, within a particular lifestyle.

These results can also be used as a starting point for large-scale quantitative studies. Each of the continuums can potentially be transformed into a scale, and a series of questions could be designed to measure the position of a specific action or practice on the scale. The proposed model for music information practices is a useful tool to understand and locate all of the concepts and elements that come into play. Future research can use the model as a template to study other types of information practices in academic, professional, leisure or everyday life settings.

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