



# An investigation into individuals' happy information seeking behaviour in online environment

Alexia Athanasopoulou

This dissertation was submitted in part fulfilment of requirements for the degree of  
MSc Information Management

Dept. of Computer and Information Sciences

University of Strathclyde

2014

## DECLARATION

This dissertation is submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MSc of the University of Strathclyde.

I declare that this dissertation embodies the results of my own work and that it has been composed by myself. Following normal academic conventions, I have made due acknowledgement to the work of others.

I declare that I have sought, and received, ethics approval via the Departmental Ethics Committee as appropriate to my research.

I give permission to the University of Strathclyde, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, to provide copies of the dissertation, at cost, to those who may in the future request a copy of the dissertation for private study or research.

I give permission to the University of Strathclyde, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, to place a copy of the dissertation in a publicly available archive.

(Please tick) Yes [ ]    No [ ]

I declare that the word count for this dissertation (excluding title page, declaration, abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, list of illustrations, references and appendices is 21500.

I confirm that I wish this to be assessed as a Type 1 2 3 4 5

Dissertation (please circle)

Signature:

Date:

## ABSTRACT

Within the literature, researchers usually focus on individuals' information seeking behaviour within working or academic environments. Even when studies focus on leisure environments, they mainly concern information seeking that answers a specific topic or task. The emotions aspects of information within casual leisure have been less studied in the past. The purpose of the present study is to explore the information objects that people use in order to change their mood or feelings within a casual leisure. Moreover, this research aims to investigate the types of information, the mediums, the time frequency and other factors that concern individuals' seeking behaviours.

For the purposes of this study, fifteen (15) semi-structured interviews were conducted. The findings identified various types of happy information that people seek, while music videos and pictures were considered as the most appropriate ones for that purpose. Finally, YouTube and Google were found to be the mediums that people use almost in a daily basis to increase their numerous positive emotions.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to my supervisor Prof. Ian Ruthven for his help and guidance throughout this study.

Many thanks to my family, my parents for their unconditional emotional and financial support throughout my studies, and my sisters Adamantia and Katerina for their love and guidance.

Many thanks to my friends that were by my side.

Finally many thanks to the volunteers who took place on this study.

## Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	2
ABSTRACT .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
Table of Figures .....	8
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	9
1.1 Chapter Overview .....	9
1.2 Research Context.....	9
1.3 Definitions.....	10
1.3.1 Information Seeking Behaviour .....	10
1.3.2 Online environment .....	10
1.3.3 Happy Information .....	11
1.4 Research Questions .....	11
1.5 Chapter Summary .....	12
Chapter 2: Literature review.....	13
2.1 Chapter Overview .....	13
2.2 Background Review .....	13
2.3 Research Approaches and Methods.....	15
2.4 Affective dimensions of information seeking.....	17
2.5 Chapter Summary .....	19
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	20
3.1 Chapter Overview .....	20
3.2 Step 1: Literature Reviewing.....	21
3.3 Step 2: Interviews design and development.....	22
3.3.1 Interview questions as the chosen methodology .....	22
3.3.2 Design of the Interview questions .....	23
3.3.3 Participants' examples presentation .....	25
3.4 Step 3: Participants .....	26
3.4.1 Participant recruitment .....	26
3.4.2 Number of Participants .....	27
3.5 Step 4: Data Collection .....	28
3.5.1 Information sheet and concern form .....	28
3.5.2 Trial interviews .....	29

3.5.3 Supporting software .....	29
3.5.4 Interviews .....	30
3.6 Step 5: Data analysis .....	31
3.7 Chapter Summary .....	32
<b>Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings.....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1 Chapter Overview .....	33
4.2 Explanations about the findings .....	33
4.3 Participants sampling.....	34
4.4. Use of the online environment for happy information seeking behaviour .....	38
4.5 Time Frequency.....	40
4.6 Types of Information participants seek .....	41
4.6.1 Overview .....	41
4.6.2 Pictures as the primary type of happy information seeking behaviour .....	43
4.6.3 Music as an important type of happy information seeking behaviour .....	45
4.6.4 Discussion.....	45
4.7 Personal Information objects seeking behaviour .....	45
4.8 Mediums for seeking happy information .....	47
4.8.1 Mediums overview .....	47
4.8.2 YouTube as the primary medium for happy information seeking .....	48
4.8.3 Google as medium for happy information seeking.....	50
4.8.4 Mediums people use in order to fulfil their personal needs .....	52
4.9 Emotions during happy information seeking behaviour .....	54
4.9.1 Overview .....	54
4.9.2 The need to feel happy and relaxed .....	56
4.9.3 The need to feel Energetic and Dynamic.....	57
4.9.4 Other positive emotions that people feel while seeking happy information .....	59
4.9.5 Discussion.....	60
4.10 The concept of relevance .....	60
4.11 Origins of the happy information and possible recommendations .....	61
4.12 Summarized answers of the research topics .....	63
4.13 Chapter Conclusion.....	65
<b>Chapter 5: Limitations, Recommendations, Reflections and Conclusion .....</b>	<b>66</b>
5.1 Chapter Overview .....	66
5.2 Limitations.....	66

5.3 Recommendations for future research .....	67
5.4 Personal reflections on researching and writing the dissertation .....	68
5.5 Conclusion .....	70
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Appendix A: Advert for participant's recruitment .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Appendix B: Participants information sheet .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Appendix C: Consent form as it was e-mailed to the participants.....</b>	<b>82</b>

## **Table of Figures**

Figure 1: Participants Sex .....	35
Figure 2: Participants' age .....	35
Figure 3: Participants' Occupations .....	36
Figure 4: Participants' highest degree .....	36
Figure 5: Participants' Nationality .....	37
Figure 6: Participants' current location .....	37
Figure 7: Time Frequency .....	40
Figure 8: Types of happy Information participants seek in order to change their mood .....	42
Figure 9: Types of happy information grouped bases on relevance.....	43
Figure 10: Pictures' subjects.....	44
Figure 11: Percentages of seeking and not seeking personal objects information .....	46
Figure 12: Types of personal information objects that participants seek.....	47
Figure 13: Mediums participants seek for happy information .....	48
Figure 14: Content of the YouTube videos .....	49
Figure 15: Participants' answers on why they prefer YouTube while they seek for happy information	49
Figure 16: Mediums/Platforms participants use in order to fulfil their personal needs.....	52
Figure 17: Emotions that expressed by participants while they seek happy information .....	55
Figure 18: Emotions participants feel while they seek happy information grouped based on relevance .....	56
Figure 19: Who recommended the happy information.....	62
Figure 20: Participants' possible receivers of happy information.....	62



## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

The purpose of the present dissertation is to investigate the information seeking behaviour of individuals in order to make themselves happy. At the first place participants are interviewed, and then the data obtained by those interviews is subsequently analysed and presented in the present paper.

The introduction chapter focuses on the research context which leads to the research questions and finally outlines basic definitions of the main terms. To continue with, the Literature review chapter presents previous studies on emotion in various scientific fields, information seeking behaviour and finally the need for further investigation. Furthermore, the methodology chapter offers a detailed description on the way the present dissertation is written. Moreover, Data analysis is presented using interesting data obtained from the interviews. The final chapter presents the limitations of the dissertation, recommendations for further analysis of the topic in the future followed with a brief conclusion.

### **1.2 Research Context**

The fast-paced development of the World Wide Web, the incredible rise of online content and the easiness in access an individual can have, make individuals to turn to the Internet to satisfy their informational needs. People use the Internet not only to research on information for working, studying or other purposes but also in order to keep track with the news around the world and to communicate through social media with other individuals. However, within Information and computer science little is known about how exactly people use online information objects to change their mood or emotions within a casual leisure environment.

Due to the economic and social crisis in many countries around the world, the levels of people suffering from psychiatric conditions have risen. Suicides increased the last year with, only in Europe and North America, 10.000 of them to be related with the crisis (New statesman, 2014, BBC, 2014). Moreover, about 350 million people around the world suffer from depression; only in United Kingdom, 1 to 6 adults take antidepressant pills on a daily basis (The Boston Globe, 2013). At the same time, the topic on what can make people happy is into consideration on scientific and not domains (e.g. TV shows, blogs, sites). World statistics have been constructed (OECD, 2014) in order to determinate the factors that lead in better well-being, and happiness has been rated higher among others like becoming rich or finding the meaning of life. The imperative need for happy information

has led the United Nations to launch 'the Day of Happiness'<sup>1</sup> in which anyone can get involved and share their personal information objects that make them happy.

As a result, there is a need for further research on understanding what kind of information people seek in order to increase their happiness. A study on this can classify patterns that most people follow in order to build information retrieval systems that are useful and relevant.

### **1.3 Definitions**

The following paragraphs present definitions of the key terms that are going to be presented and analysed in the next chapters. Definitions on Information seeking behaviour as well an explanation on what exactly the author of the paper means with the terms digital environment and happy information are given.

#### **1.3.1 Information Seeking Behaviour**

In the World history people always had the need to search for information, from practical objects like food and raw materials for their tools to conceptual 'objects' like definitions of democracy or knowledge (Marchionini, 1995). "Information seeking" is the procedure in which there is '*a conscious effort*' (Case, 2008, p. 8) to retrieve information needed to fill '*a gap of knowledge*' (Case, 2008, p. 8). In other words, as Saracevic (2011, p.XXXI) points out, information seeking '*[...]referring to [...] processes [...]employed by people in their quest for [...] information*' or as Wilson (2000, p.49) argues '*[...] is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal*' using various types of systems from books to the Internet.

#### **1.3.2 Online environment**

Before the growth of the Internet, people used to change their mood with various ways from a walk on the park to a visit to a museum. Moreover, since the nineteenth century, doctors and therapists have been using Bibliotherapy- '*the use of reading to produce affective change and to promote personality growth and development*' (Lenkowsky, 1987) - as a common practise to help their patients overcome their diseases and change their mood by reading a literature book or poetry. Nowadays, the same results can also be achieved with the help of the technology. The Internet is characterised by an impressive number of accessible information, some of which can be labelled as entertainment content (e.g. videos, music, chatting, news, etc.). This study mainly focuses on the individual's seeking behaviour within the online environment based on the belief expressed by Moshfeghi (2012) whom

---

<sup>1</sup> Day of Happiness site: <http://www.dayofhappiness.net/#context>

points out, '[...] *Information Behaviour & Seeking* [...] *has an entertainment aspect*'. As a result, this particular aspect of Information Seeking behaviour needs to be further studied, in order to fill the gap of the research on what information object individuals look for in order to feel happier.

### 1.3.3 Happy Information

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate individuals' information seeking behaviour of information that leads to the increase of personal happiness. For reasons of practicality and convenience, this information will be referred in the present study as happy information.

As a term, information is considered important to every information oriented science (e.g. computer science, LIS etc.) and for that reason we can find various definitions of it. (Bates, 2010a). According to Buckland (1991), information can have many meanings, from '*Information-as-process*' to '*information-as-knowledge*' and finally '*information-as-thing*', which includes objects like data, text, photos, video etc. that can be considered as information. Bates (2010b) continues and describes a general concept in which the term is used in information behaviour science. In this description, information can be any object that an individual interacts with within his environment and '[...] *leaves some impression on them. These impressions can include the emotional changes that result from reading a novel, [...]*' (Bates, 2010b) watching a movie, browsing the Internet and many more. This study focuses on the information seeking behaviour of individuals in order to change their emotions and especially to make themselves happier. For that reason the researcher focuses on the information within a non –working environment or -as Stebbins (1997) describes it – within a '*casual leisure*' environment. It should be noted that in this study the participants will be treated as '*knowledgeable informants on their life situations*' (Dervin and 3 Reinhard, 2007, p.53), which means that participants will introduce the information that changes their emotion statement without affecting by interviewer's foregone types of information.

## 1.4 Research Questions

The purpose of the proposed dissertation is to conduct a study on the behaviours individuals have and how they use information in order to make themselves happy within a casual leisure environment. Because of the poor prior investigation on this topic within the information and computer science field, this study aims to determinate factors and interesting seeking behaviours that may appear.

The main question that this study poses and aims to address is:

- What information objects people use to change their mood and to feel happier?

More specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of these information objects?
- What media? What type? Which methods people choose in order to find this information?
- Do they return to the same objects again and again?
- Is it possible patterns to be found in the information seeking behaviour of happy information?
- Which factors are influential in determining individual's seeking behaviour?

### **1.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented a brief introduction of the dissertation and the research content based on which is needed further investigation on the topic Moreover, the research questions that are going to be answered on the following chapter are presented. Finally, brief descriptions of the terms information seeking, digital environment and happy information are presented.

## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

### **2.1 Chapter Overview**

The Literature review chapter provides an overview of the current state of knowledge in the research area; research gaps that generate the research problem and finally approaches and methodologies that have been used in the past concerning the information seeking of happy information.

### **2.2 Background Review**

Information- related fields have attracted the interest of the scientific community since the first decades of the twentieth century, from statisticians and librarians to psychologists and computer scientists (Saracevic, 2011). Information seeking is part of individuals' everyday life. People seek for information while they are at work or in order to fulfil their academic requirements. Moreover, people seek information on their serious leisure time searching information about their hobbies, or information about a summer vacation or in general anything that can change their current emotion status referring to their

Traditionally, in most of the information disciplines the research is mainly focused on information seeking within a working or academic content. Some of these studies focus on specific occupation or/and professions– e.g. engineers and aerospace scientists (Kwasitsu, 2003; Andersona, Glassmana, McAfee, Pinellib, 2001), general surgeons (Shelstad and Clevenger 1996), dental hygienists (Covington and Craig, 1998), academic lawyers Makri, Blandford and Cox (2008) nurses (Wahoush and Banfield 2014) teachers (Stokes and Lewin, 2004), students (Malliari, Korobili, Zapanidou, 2011; Bronstein, 2014; Brindesi, Monopoli, Kapidakis, 2013)- while others examine information seeking within a wider scope presenting approaches, frameworks and models ( Cheuk Wai-yi, 1998; Tabak, Willson, 2012). Other aspects that have been also investigated is medical Information seeking which has gain a lot of attention in the scientific world from Kilicarlan-Toruner and Akgun-Citak (2013) who investigate the information seeking behaviour of parents with children that have cancer or Sadasivam et al. (2013) who contract a study on the belief that individuals seek information not only for themselves but also as 'surrogates' for others to even more sensitive and controversial subjects like online seeking for organ donation (Costello and Murillo, 2014).

However, research on Information seeking within a non –working environment is characterised by the lack of references (Schaller, Harvey, Elswailer, 2012b), even though it is noted that there are differences on seeking information within a leisure environment that would be interesting to investigate (Schaller, Harvey and Elswailer, 2012a) as leisure has a great impact not only on

individuals' everyday life but also in society in general (Fulton and Vondracek, 2009). Moreover, Argyle (1996, p.6) argues that leisure is an important area of life as it *'is a source of joy, happiness and physical health'*. As Fulton and Vondracek (2009, p. 611) argue, *'leisure continues to grow [...] While researchers have explored the work context and everyday life contexts, the area of leisure in our information worlds has only recently attracted the interest [...]'*. Furthermore, Stebbins with his sociology perspective distinguish the *'serious'* - The systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity (1992, p. 3) - from the *'casual leisure'* activities which are *'intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable, [...] requiring little or no special training to enjoy it.'* (1997, p. 18).

Even though the research focusing on serious leisure has been grown (Chang, 2009; Hartel et al., 2006; Ross, 1999), there is a lack of references concerning the casual leisure because it is perceived as unimportant, insignificant or common (Stebbins, 2009, pp.618-619) even though Stebbins (1997, p.18) previously aptly put it that *'many more people participate in it than in serious leisure'*. According to (Elsweiler, Wilson, and Kirkegaard Lunn, 2011), *'casual-leisure [information behaviours] are typically motivated by hedonistic needs [...] where people [...] searching [...] for pleasure rather than to find information'*. Stebbins (2007) agrees with that option and describes casual leisure activities as hedonic which increase the feelings of enjoyment and pleasure. Furthermore, Marshall, Bly (2004, p.226) and Ross (1999) hold the belief that there is the need of further study on information behaviour of non- goal orientated and focusing on the affective/ emotional dimension of information seeking behaviour.

To continue with, emotion can be defined as a spontaneous complex psycho-physiological feeling (or mental state) an individual can face. (Meyers, 2004). Prior to this perspective, Scherer (2001) defined emotions as *'an episode of [...] changes in [...] organismic subsystems in response [...] to an external or internal stimulus event'*. Emotion as a topic has been studied for many decades with the most recent study to be in science fields such as clinical psychology (Carl et al. 2013), tourist management (Lin et al., 2014), cognitive science (Oatley and Johnson-Laird, 2014), food science (Jiang, King and Prinyawiwatukul, 2014), music (Juslin and Sloboda, 2013) and many more.

Information can have emotional aspects, like in the case of a happy song or a sad movie. The emotion impact of information objects has been extendedly investigated in many science fields. Individuals seek information to fulfil their needs both in working or education environment and for social purposes like entertainment, dating, gaming etc. On the other hand Fulton (2009, p.247) points out that emotions of pleasure, even though they have been previously investigated, the primary focus of the researchers were associated with a *'product of an activity'* instead of focusing on it. Previous research in Information disciplines was carried out by many researchers like Kuhlthau (1993), who

investigated what the influence of emotions in information seeking is, presenting a six stages model (Initiation, Selection, Exploration, Formulation, Collection, Presentation, Assessment) and the feelings (Affective, Cognitive, Physical) common to each of these stages, Shaikh Prenderg and Ishizuka, (2009) who developed models which are capable to extract emotion from texts and by Winoto and Tang (2010) who investigated user's mood in order to improve recommendations on movies. As stated above, emotions play a significant role in many science fields like psychology, sociology etc. Despite the fact that emotion '*is a central motivation behind all IR&S behaviour*' (Moshfeghi, 2012), little is known in computer science about how exactly people use information objects to change their mood and especially to make themselves feel happy in a casual leisure environment.

Looking through the literature review it can be noted that there is the need for further investigation into the field of information seeking in a non-working (Stebbins, 2009), casual leisure (Schaller, Harvey, Elswiler, 2012b) environment focusing on the actual information (Fulton, 2009) and the positive impact in the field of the information behaviour.

### **2.3 Research Approaches and Methods**

This chapter presents the approaches, designs, methodologies and techniques that are commonly being used in the past. The research methods that can be found in the literature vary according to the aims, nature and in general the purpose of each study. Among the information behaviour field many researchers contributed with their studies, Belkin (1993) in his work presents general models of information retrieval focused on information seeking behaviour. In this study Belkin suggested Information retrieval behaviour models on how people use when search for information. A different approach on the information seeking is being followed by Cheuk Wai-yi (1998) who investigates the information seeking on a working environment using a constructivist approach in which information is not something objective but can have different meaning in each individual. As it can be seen constructing an investigation can be based on many of different methodologies according to the subject and the nature of it.

Previous studies on the information seeking are based on different methods. Pinelli, Barclay and Kennedy (1993) presented a literature review of engineers' information seeking behaviour on a working environment while Talja and Hansen (2006) not only reviewed the past literature studied on the collaborative information behaviour but also include social practice as an ideal approach on this topic, while on a study conducted by Wicks (1999) on the information seeking behaviour of pastors the method of posted survey was chosen. The same year Savolainen used a combination of qualitative (national survey's data) and quantitative (interviews) data in order to investigate the role of the

internet on both job-related and non-working information seeking while Sadasivam et al. (2013) present interesting results combining data from two surveys.

Quantitative approaches can be found in many studies in order to investigate information seeking behaviours like Mokhtari (2014) who used software package for statistical analysis for his study on undergraduate students' epistemic beliefs (EBs) on their information seeking behaviour. In academic environment also focused Chowdhury, Forbes and Landoni (2011) who collected data through online questionnaire for a quantitative analysis. As far as the non-working and leisure environment is concerned, quantitative methods also can be found. Hockenfull and Sotomayor (2013) focus on information seeking behaviour of –leisure- horse owners analyzing the statistical data with SPSS.

This study focuses on the information seeking behaviour of individual in order to feel emotions of happiness. As it was previously noted further research on this topic is needed. As a field, individuals' behavior is considered '*complex and subjective*' and (Laplane and Downie, 2011, p. 202) and for that reason a qualitative approach is considered as more appropriate. Laplane and Downie (2011) points out that with the progressive transition from an information systems oriented studies to humans oriented ones there was the need for qualitative methods to be used. As Wilson (2003) argues, qualitative methods provides a '*deep analysis of what the information seeker believes s/he is doing, of what the intention is in the acts employed to discover information, and in what the information found means to the information user*'.

Furthermore, structured survey questionnaires were used to study the engineers' information seeking behaviour within their working environment (Kwasitsu, 2003) while Rioux (2004), investigated the information behaviour (particularly the information sharing behaviour) in the online environment and produced a conceptual framework important for the research on Information behaviour. Many qualitative studies have been conducted in the field of information seeking behaviour. Case (2008) presents a survey on information need and seeking behaviour while previously, Covington, and Craig (1998) focus on specific professionals (dentists) and Malliaris, Korobili, and Zapanidou, (2011) who focused on graduate students.

A qualitative approach that is extensively being used is interviews. Researchers use interviews as research method as there are more personal –as they are completely based on the responses of the interviewees- According to Kvale (1996) '*interview seek to describe and the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects*'. Moreover, Beck and Manuel (2008, p.82) argue that interviews are a good practice when the researcher wants to '*explore finely shaded human issues [...] best answered in prose rather than with numbers and [...] want to explore a trend or an experience*



*looking for themes*'. Considering this opinion, it is quite common in information behaviour studies to use interviews as a methodology. Kilicarslan-Toruner and Akgun-Citak, (2013) examined through interviews the information seeking behaviour of parents with children battling with cancer while Costello and Murillo (2014) analyzed the answers of online kidney donor seekers. Moreover interviews is a common data gathering method in the information seeking within a working environment as it is used by Makri, Blandford, Cox (2008) paper about the information-seeking behaviour of academic lawyers. Most recently Wahoush and Banfield (2014) focused on new graduates and the information seeking approaches putting in practice their knowledge. As far as the non-working environment is concerned interviews have been used as research methodology. Chang (2009) investigated the information seeking behaviour of backpackers', while Fulton (2009) contracted a study about amateur genealogist's information behaviour and Ross (1999) present facts about the pleasure of reading in public libraries.

The aim of the proposed study is to examine the people's information seeking behaviour of information in order to feel happier. Based on Kvale (1996) and Beck and Manuel (2008) papers it is considered that a qualitative approach on the topic will lead to better results as the focus of the research is on behaviour that people have. Interviews with the participation of volunteers took place for the data collection.

## **2.4 Affective dimensions of information seeking**

As it has been noted above, many studies can be found on the literature focusing on information seeking, such as studies on the information seeking behaviour of specific groups, ages, occupations, within an academic, working or not-working environment, seeking of specific information to fill gaps of knowledge or specific information needs and many more. The following paragraph focuses on the literature about the affective dimension of Information seeking.

To begin with, Nahl (2007) argues that, even though little attention has been paid to information science about affect, many researchers focus on *'affect, emotion, feeling, mood [...] with respect to information seeking [...]'* (p. xviii). Lopatovska and Arapakis (2011) agree with that option as in their study –focusing on human-computer interaction (HCI) - users searching for information for their own interest eventually increase positive emotions with feeling like satisfaction and happiness. Furthermore, Savolainen (2012) agrees and points out that many studies investigate and present motivations and factors leading to information seeking. In general, factors that motivate individuals' behaviours have been noted by many theories and models. To continue with, Savolainen (2014) points out that *'In information seeking studies so far, affective factors have occupied a residual role'* (p. 59).

Studies that took place the previous decades agree confirm that affective factors can be the motivators for humans information seeking. Wilson (1981), as one of the first focusing on this topic, on his information seeking behaviour model acknowledges the important role of the emotions on individual's seeking behaviour. Kuhlthau (2004) on her Information Search Process model includes various feelings (both positive and negative) throughout the process, but, these feelings are not presented as motivators factors in contrast with Savolainen's (1995) everyday's information seeking framework who points out the notable aspect of emotions. Moreover, Nahl (2004) presents the effective dimensions that are considered most important: self-efficacy, optimism, uncertainly, expected effort task completion motivation etc. On the other hand, according to Savolainen (2012), *'since the early 1990s, the conceptual analysis of the motivators for information seeking has remained an under-researched topic'* even though it is considered an important issue in order to understand the information seeking process of humans or in a more general framework, *'emotion can be considered as a primary factor that explains why searchers engage in an IR&S process'* (Moshfeghi, 2012, p. 34). Furthermore, Savolainen (2014) supports that the majority of the studies focus on the affective impact of negative emotions like anxiety or fear while the relation between information seeking and positive emotions have not been investigated in depth and especially the human information seeking for the increase of personal happiness. Many of these studies investigate the relation between emotion and information seeking behaviour. The methods and theories vary according to the purpose of the research. Lopatovska and Arapakis (2011) agree and present on their paper the various studies of the literature. Some of these analyze the facial expression in order to investigate the online search environment like in the research of Arapakis et al. (2009) who study the user affective behaviour in order to develop models of topic relevance of videos or in Lopatovska's study (2009) who investigate the users' emotions during Google search with surprise to be the most common, while Lopatovska and Cool (2008) argue that digital libraries' users can have more positive emotion when they are in the same room with an assistant. What is more, researchers analyze verbal communications which lead to the development of theories and models (Brunwik; Pantic and Rothkrantz, 2003). Chan et al. (2005), Hanjalic and Xu (2005) are examples of studies that used audio data to review the emotions that may occur.

To close with, it has to be noted that affective factors in information seeking are considered of high interest on the information seeking research. As a result, an investigation on individuals' seeking behaviour of happy information is incumbent.

## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

The literature review chapter focuses on three areas: a brief presentation of the existing research and the current research gaps that occur and need further investigation in order to be answered; approaches and methodologies that have already applied within the information behaviour and finally a discussion about the affective factors upon information seeking within various contexts. Looking through the literature review it can be seen that there is a gap of knowledge concerning the information seeking within a leisure environment with the purpose of the increase of positive emotions in order to feel happier.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Chapter Overview

As it was made clear by the previous chapters the purpose of the present dissertation is to have a clearer view on the topic of humans' information seeking behaviour of happy information. This chapter presents the methodology that has been designed and developed in order to gain a better understanding on this topic. Information seeking behaviour has been extensively discussed on the literature in the past as it is considered an interesting field. In the previous chapter –Literature review- some of the studies focusing on information seeking were presented. While searching the Literature it became clear that, even though the emotions' effect on information seeking have been extensively addressed, most of these studies focus on behaviour humans have while working or studying. Even when the study focuses in leisure, the information seeking is often associated with an activity or a task and does not focus on the information itself. For that reason, further investigation on the topic seemed quite interesting.

While people seek for information within their working or academic environment, this information mostly answers an information need related to their tasks. On the other hand, it is considered common sense that individuals' seeking behaviour of '*happy information*' within a non-working environment is a more frequent activity. People within leisure usually seek for information about their hobbies or anything that could potentially increase their positive emotions and for that reason it was felt more appropriate not to focus on work task seeking behaviour of happy information in the present study. Furthermore, the author/researcher of the present study focuses in behaviours within a casual leisure environment –as mentioned above- as in that case individuals usually does not seek happy information that is associated or 'answers' a specific need. On the other hand, people within casual leisure simply interact with information that makes them feel happier with not obligation.

To continue with, within the literature one can find few studies about information seeking within a casual leisure environment, that focus on emotion and especially on happy information. The researcher tries to combine these aspects within one study and what is more, she does not focus on specific views or individuals' target group like age, sex, nationality or occupation. The purpose of this research is to examine the affective dimensions, factors and types of happy information that people seek within their casual leisure environment in order to increase their positive emotions. Moreover, the research focuses on behaviours that seemed more interesting after the analysis of the interviews.

Fifteen (15) volunteers took part in semi-structured interviews that were conducted face-to-face or via Skype during a period of 16 days in July 2014. The methodology that was followed by the researcher as a four steps process in order to carry out this study is presented on this chapter.

### **3.2 Step 1: Literature Reviewing**

As it was presented in the previous chapter, the first step in order to conduct this study was to review the existing literature concerning the happy information seeking behaviours within a casual leisure environment and the affective role of information and emotions in information seeking. Moreover, apart from information related science fields (e.g. computer science, information science, LIS) the researcher look for relative information from other scientific sectors (e.g. psychology, education, medicine) for an overall view. This was considered important for a better understanding of the topic. Furthermore, due to the researcher's engineering background some definitions were unfamiliar and thus she felt the need to search on a wider spectrum of sources in order to clarify some concepts.

Firstly, the researcher begun searching for specific words and phrases like 'information seeking behaviour', 'information', 'happiness', 'emotion' on specific search engines and databases. The University of Strathclyde's library was the initial source of information. The researcher spent quality time on the library searching for information in books and academic papers in order to have a good understanding on the topic. Moreover, the Library's website which provides access to various databases provided her with the unique opportunity to access various academic papers through her personal laptop. While the researcher started to become familiar with the topic, even more search engines and sites were used. Google scholar, Science Direct and Emerald were databases and search engines which were primary used throughout the study period. These databases combined with other digital and printed sources were initially used in order to gain some knowledge on the topic. Accordingly, while searching on the literature, the researcher retrieved many common studies and cited authors. When this happened she also started to research using the authors' names. This method was really useful as studies tend to focus on specific topics and fields and by following their studies, a potential researcher can have a better perspective on a similar topic. Moreover, the well-known snowball effect was used; the research that started from an initial source steadily built upon itself and expanded to other sources. More specifically, the bibliography section of each academic paper was very useful for the researcher to retrieve other papers and studies that have been written previously. What is more, the 'opposite' technique of citation of useful articles was used in order to find more recent papers. Moreover, while the researcher was writing the Literature review chapter even more texts were reviewed for a more comprehensive approach.

To continue with, studying the literature helped the researcher to identify the existing gaps and she came to strongly believe that further investigation on the topic would be quite interesting. Moreover, while studying the existing literature the research methods that were more commonly used were identified. The researcher focused on studies that describe which of these techniques are more suitable for a study that investigates humans' behaviours. While searching on the literature, a qualitative approach was deemed more suitable as it is commonly used in studies about information seeking behaviour. Accordingly, it was decided to investigate the topic by using semi-structured interviews. The final part of this step was to design the research questions that will answer the existing gaps on the literature. It should be noted at this point that the topic of seeking information in order to change one's emotion and mood has not been extensively investigated from a computer and information perspective and the identification of the most appropriate research questions has been a long process that sometimes changed during the period of the study.

Finally, the researcher would like to clarify that this study took place during the summer months of 2014 and the literature review may –unintentionally- left out some studies as it was not possible to retrieve every academic paper that exists on the topic.

### **3.3 Step 2: Interviews design and development**

#### **3.3.1 Interview questions as the chosen methodology**

The literature review made clear that qualitative approaches are commonly used on studies focusing on information seeking behaviours. Ellis (1993) argues that a qualitative research -opposite to quantitative methods- provides a *'more authentic picture of researchers' perceptions of their information environments and more integrated accounts of their information seeking activities'* (p. 469). Moreover, according to Gorman and Clayton (2005, p.3) qualitative methodologies are better in order to study and understand individuals' behaviours from their point of view. As it has been extensively presented in previous chapters, the purpose of this study is to examine human behaviours focusing on the information seeking of happy information. As a result, there was the need to design a method that will allow the individuals to express their opinions, behaviours and experiences without predefined answers as in the cases of e.g. surveys or questionnaires.

The chapter focused on the literature review above presented various methodologies and techniques that have been used in the past focusing on information seeking behaviours. At the first steps of this study the researcher had the belief that a survey may be more convenient and that it would give more data to analyse. Moreover, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches was considered as this can provide better results (Gorman and Clayton, 2005), but due to the time

constraints and the inexperience of the researcher it was decided to focus only in one type of research method. Other approaches were also considered like the diary documentation of individuals' information seeking behaviour as it can be seen in the study conducted by Wilson, Alhodaithi, Hurst (2011) who through diaries studied the Information needs in casual leisure focusing on reading activities. Again this method was rejected as it was considered time consuming because of the amount of time needed the participant to write the diary and then the researcher to analyze them. Another method that it was considered to be used in this study were to analyze logs like in study conducted by Schaller, Harvey and Elsweller (2012) but for the same reasons it was decided not to follow this approach. According to Bates (2004) interviews are extremely useful while studying human's information seeking behaviours. Gorman and Clayton (2005, p.10) argues that information [retrieved by interviews] is *"data-rich, and this richness is best teased out by the descriptive use of language"*. As a result the use of interviews seemed as the most appropriate methodology to be followed. Finally, a semi-structure approach helped to have a wider perspective on the happy information being retrieved and in general the human behaviours because the participants could express their behaviours analytically in contrast with surveys in which the answers are predefined.

### **3.3.2 Design of the Interview questions**

As the use of semi-structured interviews was decided to be the tool in order to investigate the topic of happy information seeking behaviour, the next step on the process was to design the interview questions and specifically ones that could potentially answer the research questions. While the researcher was gaining more knowledge on the topic by reading studies from the past literature, the research questions changed many times from the ones that were originally proposed. As the topic of this study has slightly been investigated on other studies within the information science field, the exact research question was not always clear to identify. Through the interviews, the research focused on finding answers on topics like which information objects people use to make themselves feel differently, if they return on the same objects again and again and what are the characteristics that make that information objects suitable to change individual's emotions. During the literature review, the research questions slightly changed. At some point, the researcher tried to widen the spectrum of findings that she could possibly find through the data analysis but this could possibly lead to a study with not a specific focus on, so she decided to keep the research as limited as necessary in order to have the desired results. Finally, the research questions were:

- What information objects people use to change their mood and to feel happier?
- What are the characteristics of these information objects? What to choose or not to choose?

- What media? What type? Which methods people choose in order to find this information?
- Do they return to the same objects again and again?
- Is it possible patterns to be found in the information seeking behaviour of happy information?
- Which factors are influential in determining individual's seeking behaviour?

By contracting the interviews, the researcher aimed to collect data that 'answer' the research questions. At first, the researcher developed some initial questions based on her own experiences in order to design questions that they were both interesting and easy for the interviewees to express their examples on information objects.

Furthermore, by studying the literature and focusing on the research methods that are commonly in use, the researcher came up with the decision that semi-structured interviews would lead to more data and hopefully to more interesting findings, due to the fact that each of the interviews would be unique as the researcher would ask questions according to the behaviours and examples each participant would express. Even though each interview would be different, there was the need to develop some key themes that the researcher would cover during the interview period in order to answer the initial research questions. As mentioned above, the researcher firstly developed some questions based on her own experiences. Then, during the trial interviews, she asked those questions hoping that the interviewees will express and present various behaviours which could define more interesting topics to be discussed

The same happened during the interviews the data of which are included into the study. As a result the researcher instead of introducing specific questions she decided to follow a pattern of six key themes and enrich them with other questions depending on the individual's examples and behaviours. The key themes that the interviewer followed on the interviews were:

- Happy information seeking behaviour within an online environment
- Information objects that individuals use to experience positive emotions
- Media from which individuals seek information
- Emotions
- Time frequency
- Origins of the information and possible recommendations
- Concept of relevance



- Personal information objects that individuals use in order to change their emotions

The researcher focused on these themes introduced questions that could potentially answer the research questions on the topic of happy information seeking behaviour. The findings of the interviews that followed can be found on the next chapter.

### **3.3.3 Participants' examples presentation**

As it was previously said, every time an individual expressed his/her interest to take part on the present study, the researcher would sent him/her an information sheet to inform him/her about the purpose of the study. Moreover, the information sheet was designed not only to prepare the participants for what to expect during the interviews but also to describe the information and behaviours that the researcher aimed to study. Due to the limited time of the interviews, the researcher decided to invite the participants to think about three examples in order to collect more data to analyse in the time provided. For that reason, the participants were more than welcome to think and prepare examples about situations in which they search for happy information. Furthermore, for a better perspective on the topic the researcher told the participants to feel comfortable to log-in in their e-mails, social media profiles, sites and in anything else in order to provide examples during the interview. The researcher felt that 'real time' examples of participants' behaviour would lead to a better data analysis and better understanding of the information which makes them happy.

To continue with, on the information sheet the researcher provided an example of the information that this study presents and that the participants could log in their personal accounts. At first, the researcher invited all the participants to present their examples in a verbal way. Initially, the researcher thought that some of the participants may feel more comfortable to describe the examples insted of presenting them and for that reason it was decided that the study could not focus only on these types of examples. What is more, the researcher worried about the internet connection and the technical problems that may occur during the interviews that would be contracted via Skype. More specifically, the researcher was not feeling comfortable with the various windows and sites that could be open during the Skype interviews as this could slow down the internet connection and lead to a bad quality audio recording. Accordingly, the researcher was worried that in the case an interviewee wants to log-in on many sites in order to express happier information experiences, the amount of time spent on this interview would surpass the desired time limit and this could potentially lead to various problems on the flow of the interviews, as the interview structure would change.

Having these concerns in mind, the researcher came up to the conclusion to have trial interviews at first, in order to check the possibility to implement the examples that the interviewees would provide by logging-in into sites. After the trial interviews, it was decided that only in cases that the interviewees feel that showing or log-in into the platforms the researcher would clarify their examples. From the total 15 interviews 3 of them provide their examples by logging-in in sites and their personal profiles on social media.

### **3.4 Step 3: Participants**

#### **3.4.1 Participant recruitment**

As it was previously said, every time an individual expressed his/her interest to take part on the present study, the researcher would sent him/her an information sheet to inform him/her about the purpose of the study. Moreover, the information sheet was designed not only to prepare the participants for what to expect during the interviews but also to describe the information and behaviours that the researcher aimed to study. Due to the limited time of the interviews, the researcher decided to invite the participants to think about three examples in order to collect more data to analyse in the time provided. For that reason, the participants were more than welcome to think and prepare examples about situations in which they search for happy information. Furthermore, for a better perspective on the topic the researcher told the participants to feel comfortable to log-in in their e-mails, social media profiles, sites or any other platforms to provide examples during the interview. The researcher felt that 'real time' examples of participants' behaviour would lead to a better data analysis and better understanding of the information which makes them happy.

To continue with, on the information sheet the researcher provided an example of the information that this study presents and that the participants could log in their personal accounts. At first, the researcher invited all the participants to present their examples in a verbal. Initially, the researcher thought that some of the participants may feel more comfortable to describe the examples instead of presenting them and for that reason it was decided that the study could not focus only on these types of examples. What is more, the researcher worried about the internet connection and the technical problems that may occur during the interviews that would be contracted via Skype. More specifically, the researcher was not feeling comfortable with the various windows and sites that could be open during the Skype interviews as this could slow down the internet connection and lead to a bad quality audio recording. Accordingly, the researcher was worried that in the case an interviewee wants to log-in on many sites in order to express more 'happy information' experiences, the amount of time

spent on this interview would surpass the desired time limit and this could potentially lead to various problems on the flow of the interviews, as the interview structure would change.

Having these concerns in mind, the researcher came up to the conclusion to have trial interviews at first, in order to check the possibility to implement the examples that the interviewees would provide by logging-in into sites. From the total 15 interviews 4 of them provide their examples by logging-in in sites and their personal profiles on social media.

### **3.4.2 Number of Participants**

A challenging aspect of this study for the researcher it was to identify the ideal number of participants that would provide and reach data in order to present useful data that answers the research question. For that reason the researcher review the related literature to decide for the best numbers of participants. Even though the researcher during the study was based in Glasgow the use of Skype did not limited the geographic area that the participants could be. Moreover, interviewees were from different countries around the World. Patton (2002, .p232) argues that the number of participants is influenced by the sampling that is followed, but as this study does not focus on a specific target group this also did not provide an answers on the initial question of the number of the participants. The term of 'theoretical saturation' was introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 61) in order to clarify the problem with them collecting data until the saturation of each field and then to move on the data collection of the next field. Bertaux (1981, p.37) focused on '*saturation of knowledge*' in which the researcher gains an understanding on the data by the first interviews and according to Bertaux by the fifteenth the researcher is able to recognise some patterns from the participant's answers and the coming interviewees just confirm these patterns. More recently Guest et al. (2006) argued that the maximum number of participants that a study need is twelve. Guest et al. (2006) continued and describe the factors that a researcher should have in mind in order to decide the ideal interviewees' number. Some of them where the participants sample based on which more interviews needed if the sample group is heterogeneous, or the complexity of the interviews questions and many more.

Having this in mind the researcher of this study firstly published the advert on her Facebook profile and introduced among her relatives and friends in order to collect requests from volunteers. The researcher contracted the first interviews and on the same time more volunteers accepted to participate on her study. When the researcher contracted the twelfth (12) interview she noted some patterns between the participant's data. Then, the researcher decided to contract three more interviews in order to have fifteen (15) interviews based on Bertaux (1981).

### **3.5 Step 4: Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1 Information sheet and concern form**

While the participation of human beings in a research is inevitable, the protection of their rights is vital. Therefore, ethics must be taken into consideration in any research study. As it has already been mentioned above, in this study the methodology that is going to be followed is the qualitative research and specifically the conduct of semi-structured interviews. The aim of the qualitative research is to investigate behaviours of individuals in their natural environment in order for the researcher to come up with some conclusions (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2000). According to Janesick (1994), the main disadvantage of a qualitative research is that ethical issues are involved in the process, due to the interaction of the researcher with other individuals. In general, the main point of the ethical consideration is that anyone involved in the process must be informed for and that permission must be obtained from third parties by the researcher.

In the process of the research study, every time an individual replied to the advert, willing to take part on the study, the researcher would send him/her an information sheet (see Appendix B). This sheet includes a summary and the purpose of the study, the ethical issues that should be considered, the content of the interviews as well as information about the data security and disposal. Furthermore, the information sheet includes clarifications about the information that the study focuses on. There is also an example describing what type of information the researcher aims to examine. This example describes that the types of information this study focuses on is not the information that answers a specific task, but information within a casual leisure environment that humans search in order to increase their personal happiness. The information sheet was sent in order for volunteers to have a good understanding on the purpose of the study. In the case that some of them asked for more information or more examples, the researcher would provide it to them, but before the interview period. In general, the researcher encouraged the participants to ask for explanations whenever they needed to.

To continue with, initially, the researcher thought to give a printed copy of the consent form (see Appendix C) to the participants in order to sign their agreement to take part on this study. Due to time constraints and for the participants' convenience the researcher decided to send the consent form to the participants' e-mail and the reply with an '*I agree*' statement. By signing the consent form, the participants would agree that they had understood the purpose of the study and what the researcher would expect from them. Moreover, the participants agreed that they will participate entirely voluntarily and that they have the right to leave whenever they feel to during the period of the study. Finally, by signing the concern form the participants would also state that they know that

the interview will be recorded and that their data will be both anonymously and safely kept during the study and that they will be permanently deleted when the study is completed.

### **3.5.2 Trial interviews**

Conducting the interviews was a process unfamiliar to the researcher. For that reason it was decided, prior to the official interviews, that two interviews with the same structure are going to be held, with the official ones with the role of interviewee researcher's friends. The data from these interviews are not integrated into the analysis of the study but it was an important and mandatory step for the successful completion of the study. The interviews helped the researcher not only to test the designed structure of the interview but also to make a first assessment of the quantity and the quality of the data that she could gather. Moreover, the trial interviews were important in order to estimate the time that each interviewee would need to complete the interview. Eventually, two (2) trial interviews took place. The first one was conducted in the interviewee's house face-to face while the second one was held via Skype. The first trial interview helped the researcher to check –apart from the above- the quality of the audio-recorder program. The second trial interview (via Skype), was able to be conducted from home, due to a high speed Internet connection. Moreover, from this interview the researcher was able to assess the quality of the Skype calls as well the quality of the recordings. From these two trial interviews the researcher was eventually able to identify some drawbacks on the methodology followed and to change it for the coming interviews. On a more general note, the trial interviews help the researchers to feel more confident with the procedure, alter the interviews for better results and to identify the appropriate time length for each interview.

### **3.5.3 Supporting software**

15 interviews took place during a period of 16 days investigating the happy information seeking behaviour of humans' in order to change their emotion stage. Due to the amount of the retrieved data by the participants as well to the inexperience of the researcher with that process, software and hardware programs were vital to the normal process of the study as well as to the examination and final presentation of it. As it was the first time for the researcher not only to do a quantitative study with the participation of volunteers but also to interview them, she had to fully focus on them. For that reason, a recording device was needed. It was felt that a free downloaded program on the researcher's personal laptop it would be more practical than any recording device mostly for the amount of recordings that can be saved with them. These programs were used for the face to face interviews. For the interviews that were based outside Glasgow, Skype<sup>2</sup> was used. Due to its high

---

<sup>2</sup>Skype official site: <http://www.skype.com/en/>

popularity, Skype was considered the best practice for interviewing participants currently living outside Glasgow. Prior to the interviews period, the researcher asked the participants if they use Skype and if they are convenient using it. As all of them said that they already use it, all the alternatives solutions that the researcher had thought about, were not used. Moreover, one more software program that was used was Evaer<sup>3</sup>, which is a supporting program for recording Skype video calls.

At first, the interviewer was planning to keep hand notes during the interviews. Due to her inexperience about the process, she decided to focus on the questions and leave the record to the supporting software. Moreover, prior to the interviews the researcher considered about using programs that convert audio to text. Using these types of programs would require less time for the transcription of the interviews, something that was desired due to the limited amount of time the researcher had to complete this study. The researcher found program with that purpose but after the trial interviews she found out that not every word of the interviews was transcript correctly. For that reason, it was decided for the coming interviews not to use this program but instead to write down the recordings immediately after the completion of each interview.

Finally, it should be noted that in 2 interviews there were some technical problems due to bad internet connection or to high background noise. However, despite those difficulties, the interviewees were quite patient and the researcher would like to thank them once more for their participation on her study.

#### **3.5.4 Interviews**

After the trial interviews, fifteen (15) interviews took place on a period of 16 during July 2014. Three (3) of them took place on each participant's house, while one (1) of them took place in the University of Strathclyde library as this interviewer spent a lot of their time there. Moreover, the library was a place that was considered appropriate because it is a place without distractions and therefore the interviews could be conducted unhindered. To continue with, three (3) of the interviews took place on the researcher's personal space, as the researcher felt more comfortable to interview her personal friends and people that she knew for a long time at her house. Finally, the rest of the interviews took place via Skype. The researcher was located on her current house in Glasgow while she was gently requested from the participants to be in a place without noise and distractions and with a good internet connection.

---

<sup>3</sup> Evaer official site: <http://www.evaer.com/>

To continue with, most of the interviews took approximately twenty (20) minutes to complete. Two of them were slightly longer in time. This was due to the fact that some of the interviewees had many examples to present or because in some cases participants needed some time to think about their answers or they faced similar difficulties on how to explain and express their thoughts. In such cases, the researcher would encourage the participants to have as much time as they needed. This eventually led to even more examples of information and behaviours that are presented on the next chapter.

As it has already been mentioned above, the research method that this study follows is the conduct of semi-structured interviews which are considered to be a quantitative method. On the other hand, some 'qualitative data' were required for a better perspective and understanding of the participants' group. At first, the researcher asked for personal data which by no means are capable of identifying a specific person. Those data, which was presented and illustrated previously in the study, were their age group, their occupation, their nationality and their current location. After the collection of those data, the researcher then asked the participants to describe by examples situations in which they search for information in order to change their mood. She also asked them where they usually seek for that information and when this happens. From the examples that the participants provided, the researcher started asking questions based on individuals' experiences. Even though each interview was –as it was expected– based on each interviewee and hers/his experiences, the questions were based on one similar 'model' that is presented shortly after. The researcher was willing, in each one of the interviews, to explore all the themes of the 'model'. Due to the fact that the interviews were designed on a semi-structure way, the questions were asked differently but always with respect to the model that it was presented previously.

### **3.6 Step 5: Data analysis**

During the period that the interviews took place, the researcher also focused on the transcription of the recordings. It was decided that it was better to do so as soon as possible after the interviews. This was considered more practical, it was easier that way for the researcher not only to transcript them but also to imprint by memory emotions that could be useful for the study. In addition, in case that a technical problem may occur, it would be easier for the researcher to transcript it by memory. The interviews took place on the most suitable date and time most for the interviewees, considering the time constraints. For that reason, some days the researcher had to organize and conduct many interviews. In some of these days, it was not convenient for the researcher to do the transcription but she still managed to do it as soon as possible. All the interviews were transcript prior to the period that the data analysis started.

When the data analysis started, the researcher was planning first to divide and then to present the data according to the key topics that were to be followed initially. While the interviews took place, the key topics and the focus changed depending on the interviewees' responses and experiences and the researcher encouraged the participants to express their behaviours in order to have various examples for analysis. For that reason, the researcher decided to firstly transcript the interviews in order to have them in a readable format and then to organise the responses according to the asked questions.

Firstly, the researcher organized the 'qualitative' data (e.g. sex, age, occupation, nationality, current location) in Excel sheet in order to make graphs about the participants' sampling. After that, she summarized the examples that the interviewees gave about the information seeking behaviour of information that make them happy. Moreover, an organization about where, how and why they seek this information, was made. What is more, anything that the researcher thought that would be interesting, was 'highlighted' and organized according to relevance as it was considered interesting and quite important to include anything that the researcher has not found on the literature or in general in any source and was considered important in order for the research question to be answered. Based on the organization, the researcher then started to prepare and edit the chapter about the data analysis. As it can be seen in the next chapter, the analysis is presented in subsections based on relevance. The researcher hopes and believes that in that way the data analysis is presented in a logical, easily understandable and convenient way to present the findings from the interviews. The data were divided and presented as it was preceded on previous paragraph.

Moreover, the findings, which are presented in tables for a better understanding of them, are related to the key topics that have been discussed in the interviews. Finally, in comparison with the findings a discussion is made.

### **3.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter focused on the methodology that was developed in order to fill the research gap on individuals' seeking behaviour of happy information. The methodology chapter described in detail all the factors of the methodology, by presenting them as steps that the researcher followed. Firstly, it is presented how the researcher searched on the relevant literature to identify the gaps, as well as the printed and digital media that were used. Then, a brief description about the participants' numbering and recruitment was made. Furthermore, the design of the semi-structure interviews and questions is presented with the trial interviews and the description of the data analysis follows. In general, this chapter focused on the steps and the details that helped the researcher to develop the design and implement the study in order to answer the research questions on the topic of happy information seeking behaviour and to answer the research questions.



## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings**

### **4.1 Chapter Overview**

The previous chapters presented the studies within the past literature that were focused on the humans' information seeking behaviours, within different environments (working, leisure etc.), the affective emotions of information object and other studies in order to have a better understanding on the subject of this study. The present study led to the identification of gaps within the existing literature concerning the information seeking behaviour of information that can change people's emotions. Furthermore, the used methodology on this study was presented in a form of steps starting from the literature review, then the participants, and finally the design of the semi-structured interviews which was the research method used within the whole study. Focusing on the individuals' information seeking behaviour, the researcher interviewed fifteen (15) volunteers within a 16-days period. As it has already presented above, each one of the participants provided three (3) examples of information objects that they seek within an online environment. The researcher audio-recorded these interviews, the interesting findings of which are presented in this chapter. At first, some clarifications and explanations on the presentation of the retrieved data are made and then the findings are presented. The researcher tried to extract useful data from the interviews in order to present findings that could answer the research questions and fill the gaps in the existing literature.

### **4.2 Explanations about the findings**

This study is interesting on human's happy information seeking behaviour. This chapter will present interesting data that were retrieved from the interviews. Moreover, the chapter also focuses on behaviours that were commonly met within the participants. The conducted interviews provide many interesting findings. The researcher mainly focuses on findings that she considers the most appropriate ones in order to answer the research questions. As the interviews provided many findings, the researcher decided to present them with the use of tables, while the most significant ones are further analysed. Furthermore, in some cases the data analysis presents findings from the interviews combined with relative literature.

The interviews were based on the key themes –as presented in the previous chapter- that the researcher aimed to answer by asking specific questions to the participants of the study. Based on the examples provided by the participants, the researcher asked further, more relevant to each participant questions. Some questions were not asked to some interviewees, as either they did not express any interest on specific aspects or they had already provided findings that addressed these questions.

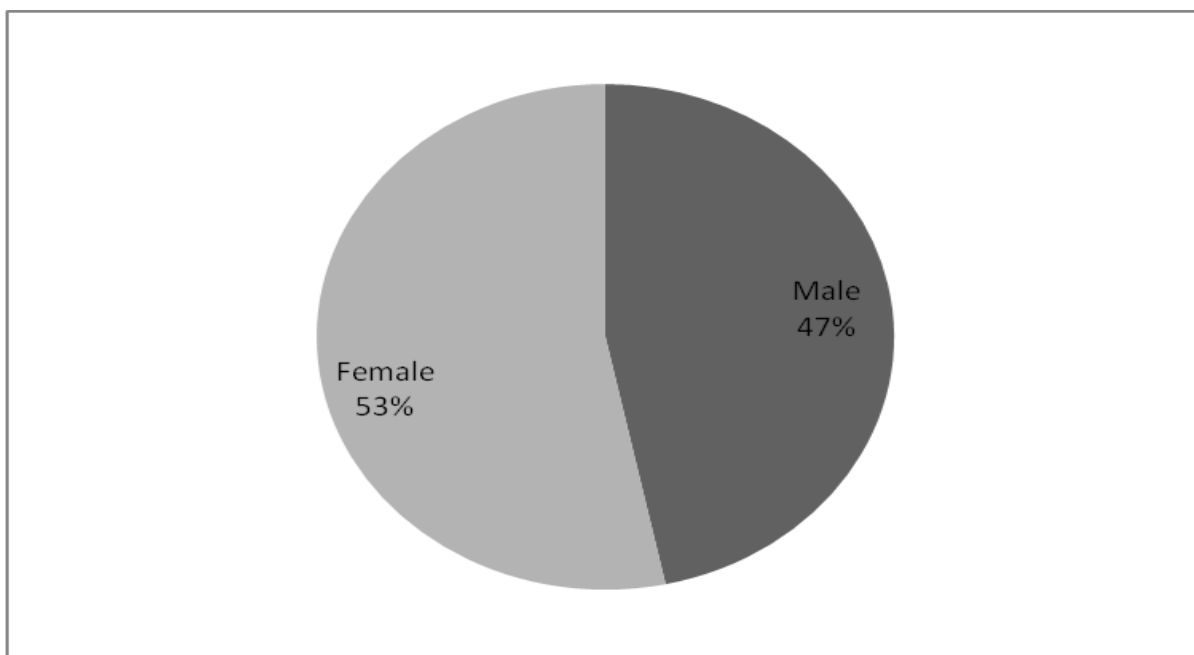
The researcher felt that in some cases it was better to present parts of the interviews in order to explain some factors or to present some of the examples. Moreover, it was more convenient to present some findings using the actual words expressed from the transcripts. These quotes are presented with a different format, in which [R] prior a phrase stands for quotes told by the researcher, while the [P] stands for the participant's quotations. The transcript quotes use larger spaces from the page's boards while the symbol [...] denotes omitted text.

To continue with, charts and tables are used on the present study, as they were considered more appropriate for the presentation of the findings. As it has already been mentioned, each participant provided three examples of information seeking behaviours, due to the researcher's desire to have many different examples in order to extract interesting findings. On most of the tables, the figures are presented combined with the number of examples mentioned by the interviewees. On the others, an explanation is provided. In general, every table is combined with explanations and in some cases with interesting quotes in order to present interesting findings. Due to the variety of the data provided by the participants, the findings have been merged into groups based on relevance for the convenience of the study.

Finally, when the researcher refers to a specific participant, she is using a name found in the Greek mythology, both for reasons of anonymity and for convenience, as it was thought that it was easier for the researcher and the readers to understand the study that way, instead of referring to the participants by numbers.

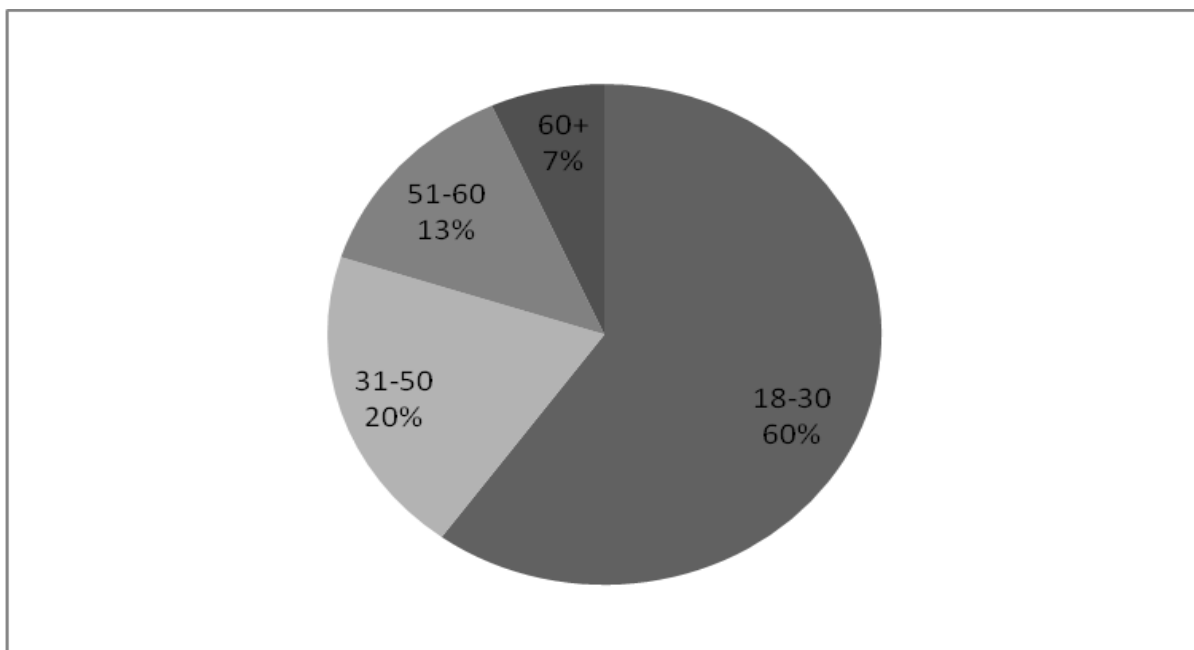
### **4.3 Participants sampling**

During the period that the study was conducted, the researcher lived in Glasgow, but many of the participants were allocated outside Glasgow area. Skype helped the researcher to recruit and then interview people based on different countries. Furthermore, six (6) of the participants had the same nationality with the researcher (Greek). This is due to the fact that it was more convenient to recruit them among her friends and relatives. It should be note that three (3) of the interviews were contracted in Greek due to the fact that these participants –two (2) Greek and one Cypriot (1)- felt convenient to express their behaviours on their mother tongue. After that the researcher translated their transcripts in English. Apart from them, seven (7) of other nationalities were interviewed which were researcher's friends relatives or colleagues from the University of Strathclyde. Furthermore, the 'snowball effect' led to the recruit of two (2) other volunteers. Finally, the researcher was willing to obtain fifteen (15) participants. Due to the publication and repost of the advert, the use of Skype and the snowball effect this number was easily obtained.



**Figure 1: Participants Sex**

From the 15 participants, eight (8) (or 53 %) were female and seven (7) were male (47%). As far as the age of the participants is concerned, nine (9) volunteers were between the ages 19 to 30 (60 %), three (3) of them aged between 31-34 (20%), two (2) aged between 50-64 (13 %), and one (1) participant aged over 60+. As it can be seen from the numbers and the pie chart the researcher tried to interview individuals from every target group for a more accurate views on the topic.



**Figure 2: Participants' age**

Participants hold different occupations. Five (5) of them were students, including one (1) undergraduate and 4 postgraduate students in a variety of subjects; two (2) were lawyers; two (2) were engineers; one (1) sociologist; one (1) was a retired teacher; one (1) private sector employee; one (1) public sector employee and one (1) was a chemist.

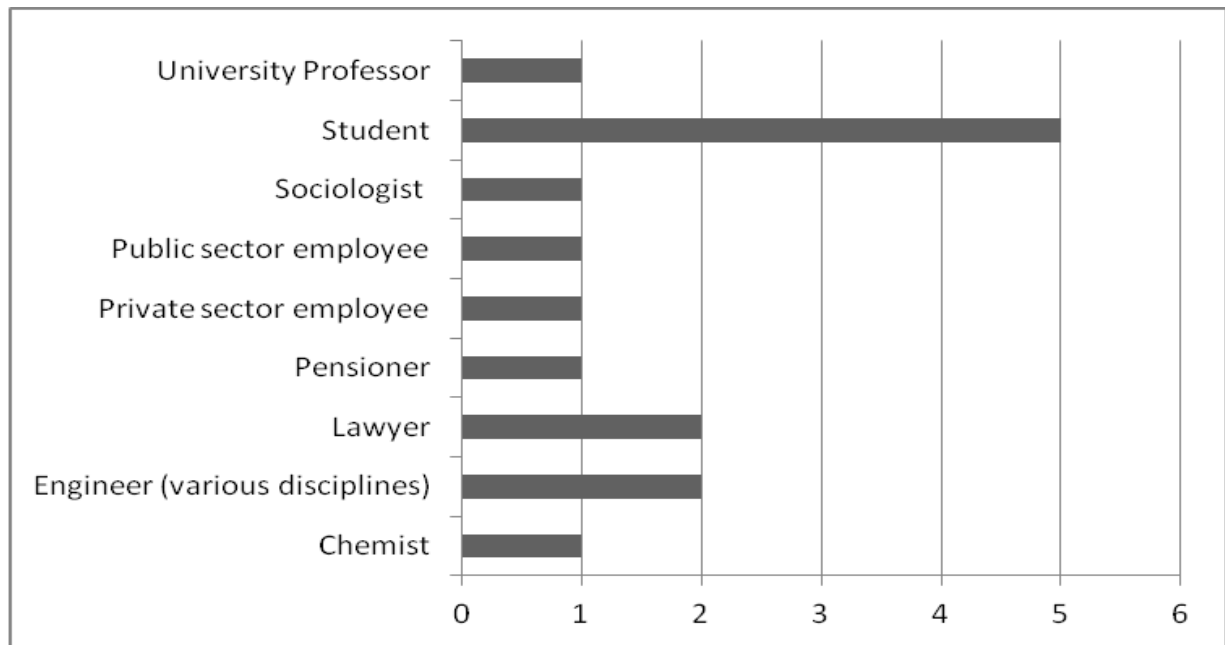


Figure 3: Participants' Occupations

As far as the participants' highest degree is concerned, two (2) of the participants have an Phd, six (6) have a Master's and six (6) hold a Bachelor's degree, currently studying for their masters, while one (1) is an undergraduate student holding his secondary diploma.

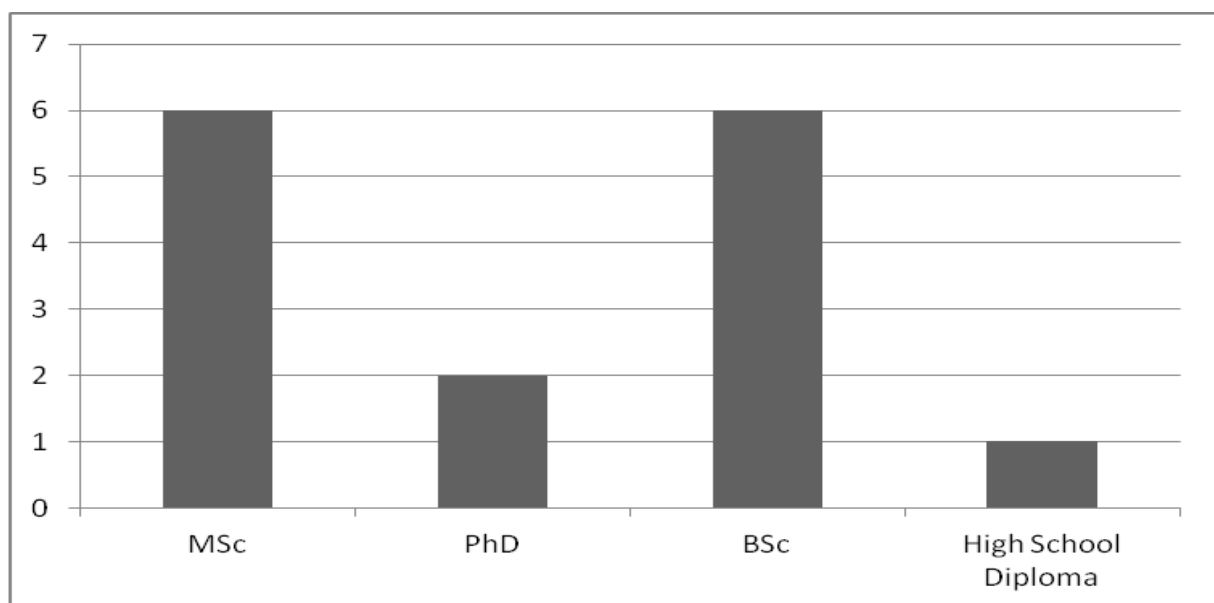


Figure 4: Participants' highest degree

Six (6) participants were from Greece; Two (2) from Italy; one (1) from USA; Two (2) from Portugal; one (1) from Cyprus; one (1) from Germany; one (1) from Switzerland; one (1) from Spain.

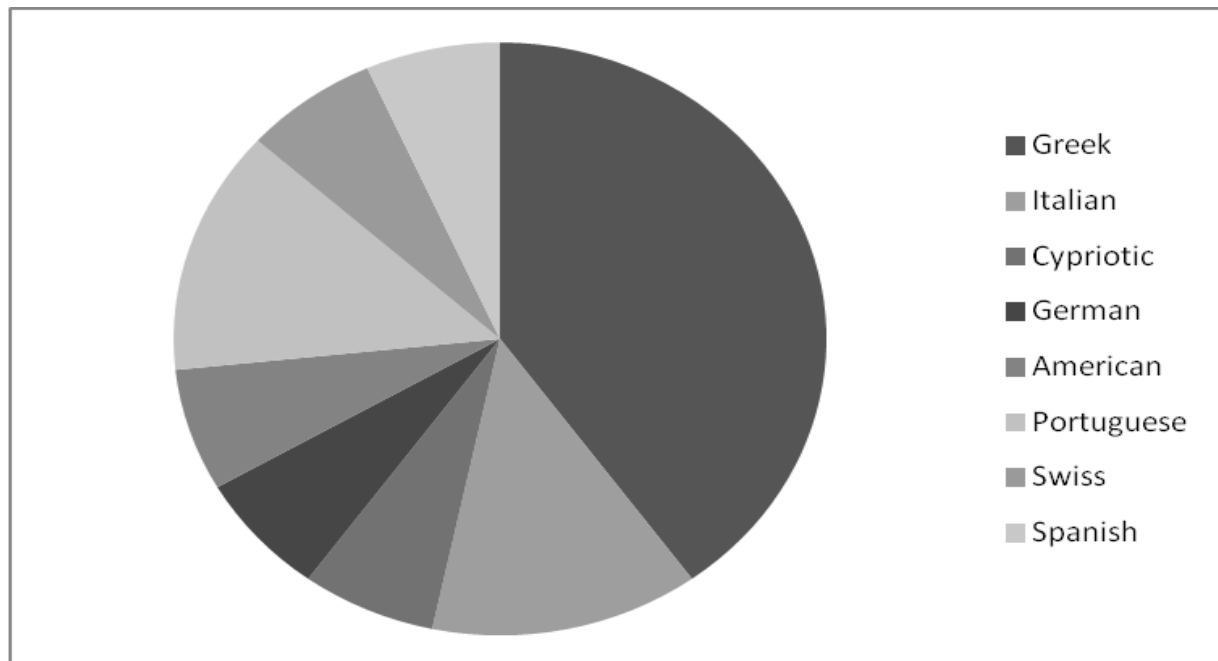


Figure 5: Participants' Nationality

From these participants, five (5) people live in Scotland; five (5) people in Greece; two (2) in Italy; two (2) in the Netherlands and one (1) in Switzerland.

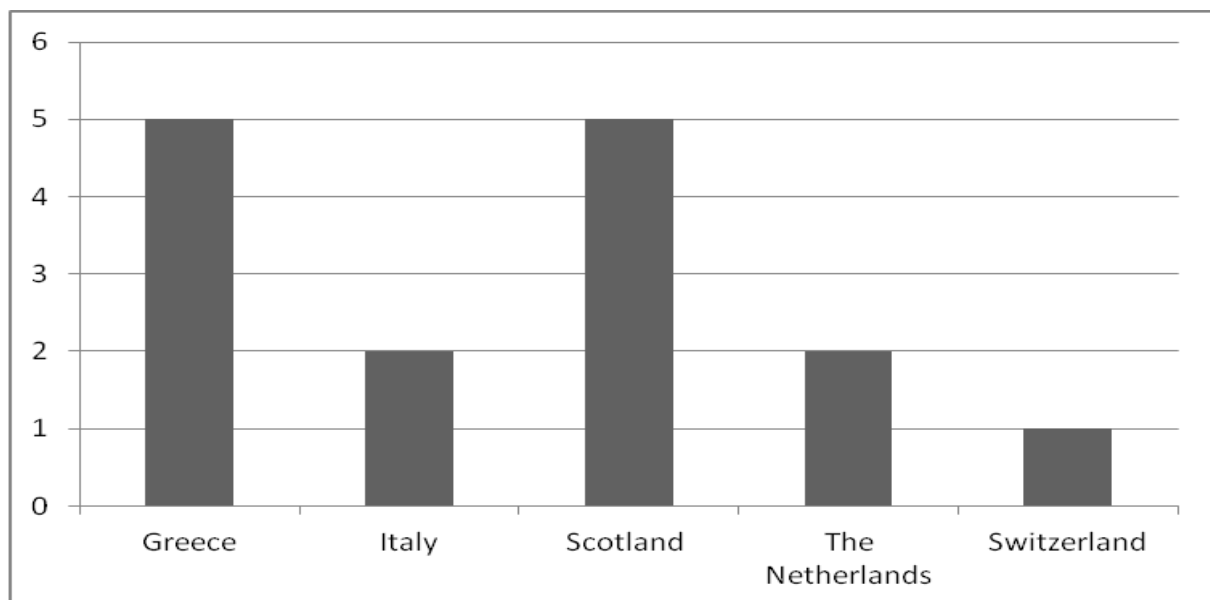


Figure 6: Participants' current location

#### **4.4. Use of the online environment for happy information seeking behaviour**

After the researcher asked the participants some personal information (e.g. age, nationality etc.) she then asked them if they generally use the online environment in order to change their emotions. It should be noted that on the Advert that the researcher posted on her Facebook account, she solicited participants that are regular internet users. With that in mind, the researcher was expecting that all the participants would have some previous experiences with information seeking within an online environment. Furthermore, the researcher decided to ask the participants if they generally seek for happy information online firstly because she wanted to be sure that the participants have fully understood the purpose of the study but also because it was considered quite useful to have a first comment of the participants on the use of online environment as a way to change their mood. Two (2) of the participants argued that are not frequent users of online environment for that specific reason, but that they still use it in some cases to change their mood, while the rest thirteen (13) stated that are systematically users of the online environment in general and especially as a means to change their emotions. The answer given by Iris is quite interesting from that aspect:

[P] [...] and in general I am addicted to the internet. I feel that I need to be online everyday as much as I can. So as a matter of fact I use it to change my emotions all the time.

On the other hand Asclepius when asked the same question answered that:

[P] Yes. I would say yes. I am not a frequent [...] user for this reason but when I have free time I would like to do this. As I told you I am a professor at University and I use the Internet every single day for academic reason or in order to communicate with my family when I am abroad for work. And even though I learn how to use it in an old age I find it really convenient but still I am not an experienced user. Actually I started using the internet for non-working-oriented reasons when I bought a Smartphone. From this point I started seeking information when I wanted to answer my questions and then the need to seek information in order to change my emotions occurred. [...] Of course I still don't do it on a regular basis but I really like it! It's so easy!

To continue with, Thalia, a 61 years old pensioner said that she uses the online environment on a regular basis as a way to change her emotions. From these answers one can tell that people use the online environment either if they are frequent users or not. Apollo agrees with that opinion and points out that:

[P] In general [...] quite often actually, because I believe [...] that we need, if not on a daily basis, at least on a weekly basis to have some moments of joy and relaxation in order to make ourselves feel better and keep going with our daily life.

Ariande, when asked if she generally uses the online environment to seek information in order to change her emotions, provided an interesting answer:

[P] Because I think [...] first of all it's always available and I can find anything I want there. Yes, for me it is very easy to use it.

According to Thalia, the use of the online environment in order to change her emotions is based on practical reasons, like the easy use of it, as well that she can find anything in the web. The same belief is also preceded by Aphrodite, a chemical engineer who stated that:

[P] Yes. I do actually; I think I do this every day. You know –how can I say it- we live within an online environment; especially the Internet is everywhere; in my personal laptop, my Smartphone, or in my tablet. Actually everywhere! I meet my friends for lunch and still we check the internet connection. Even now that it's summer I am on my vacations in my beautiful country and still, I can't leave without all these devices. So yes, no matter what, the online environment is always the place to check specific information in order to change my emotions. It is everywhere and it has everything; I mean, every single thing I want to seek I can find it in there! Even if I have only my Smartphone with me, I can access my books, my music and also with a wi-fi connection I can just spent time watching funny videos on YouTube that will make me feel better.

A similar opinion is expressed by Kekropas, a Greek undergraduate student currently living in Glasgow, who said that seeking information is part of his everyday life and especially information that can change his feelings in a positive way. Kekropas said that:

[P] I think is part of my life. You know, I am a student living far away from home and I have a lot of things to do; I have to study, to prepare assignments, to prepare myself for exams. For that reason, I have the need to change my emotions. I have familiarized myself since I was really young with computers and the Internet and now it's part of my life. As a result, I spent most of my everyday life online, either to find information for a course or to communicate with family and friends back home and of course to entertain myself. Internet provides me with the unique opportunity to find anything I need and not only what I am going to present to you but many more. So yes, I seek information in order to increase my positive emotions!

Studying the above quotations of different participants, who vary on their personal data like age or current occupation, one can note that people have the need to seek happy information no matter if they are infrequent users or they have familiarized themselves since childhood. Moreover, the convenience that the online environment provides makes them regular users of it in order to change their emotions in a positive way.

#### 4.5 Time Frequency

The researcher asked them about the time frequency that they seek happy information. Social and Economy reasons make people to look for information that can make the feel better. While the researcher was studying the literature she developed the belief that participants will frequent will have the need to seek happy information. The majority of the participants -10/15 or 66.6%- said that they need to seek happy information that on a daily basis. The figure 7 presents the answer given by the participants when asked how often they see happy information.

<u>How often do you seek happy information?</u>	<u>No of Participants</u>
Daily	10
Weekly	2
Monthly	2
Infrequently	1

**Figure 7: Time Frequency**

When Erato said that he seeks beautiful pictures of landscapes every day, the researcher asked him why he has the need to do this so often. Erato replied:

[P] You know, routine is not easy! I have to wake up every day at 6:30 for my work. I am always stuck on traffic and then all day at work, and the environment is not nice at all; my office is really old and then I am again on traffic and I get angry because I want to go back home to relax, to forget everything and you know, [...] I really like to just open my laptop and see beautiful pictures of amazing places around the world! It is so easy, I just google a word, for example beaches, and immediately I have hundreds of beaches to see! I imagine myself being in one of these places. I have the need to do something every single day that will change my emotions! Of course, there are days that I will go for a walk or a coffee with a friend of mine but unfortunately this can be done on a daily basis but internet is always there; so yes, I see these photos and instantly my mood is changed! Every single time!



According to Erato, the tension of the routine makes him to seek happy information every day. Proteus agrees with the above view, but she also gives her aspect on the need of the everyday happy information seeking behaviour:

[P] When I get home after work, I always go on the computer and check Facebook. I don't have a lot of things to do on a daily basis, as I live in a small village and it is not easy to do other activities apart from being at home. So yes, every day I log in Facebook and start playing games and checking my friend's status updates and photos! This is the primary reason that I do not have a lot of things to do outside my house. Just something to spend my time!

Based on the figures, the routine of everyday life is the primary reason why people have the need to seek happy information on a daily basis.

## **4.6 Types of Information participants seek**

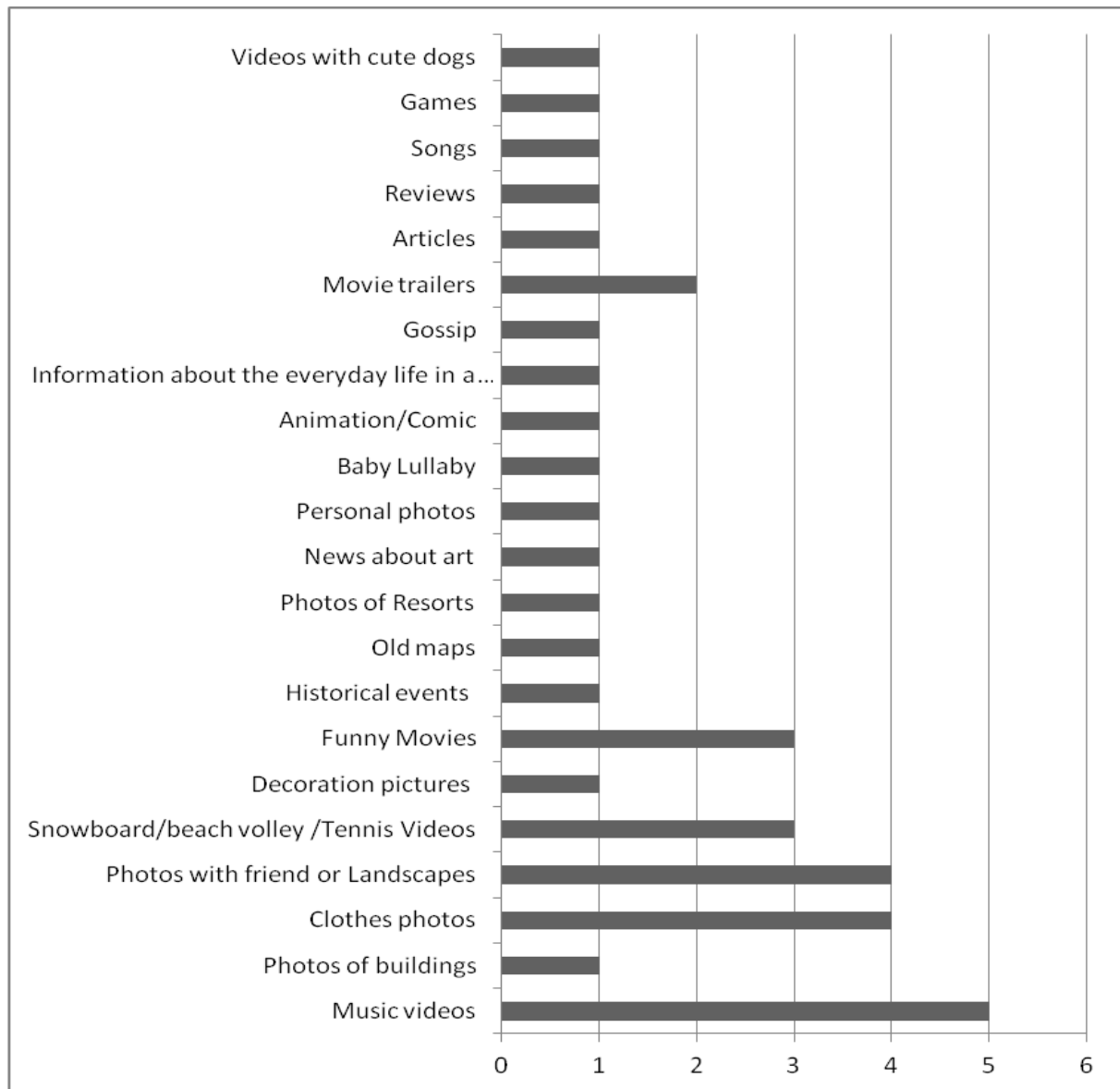
### **4.6.1 Overview**

The participants were asked to describe three examples or experiences of times that they seek specific information in order to change their emotions in a positive way. In total, twenty two (22) different types of information were expressed. Due to the amount of examples and the wide spectrum of the participants' sample characteristics, there are many different findings. As it was mentioned on the previous chapters, this dissertation focuses on information based on the meaning given by Bucklands's 'information-as-thing', in which:

*"Knowledge, belief, and opinion are personal, subjective and conceptual. Therefore, to communicate them, they have to be expressed, described, or represented in some physical way, as a signal, text, or communication. Any such expression, description, or representation would be "information-as-thing" (Buckland, 1991, p.351).*

Based on this definition, the researcher encouraged the participants to express any type of information (text, audio, video, events etc.) that they seek in order to change their emotion statement on a positive way. In some cases, especially with participants of an older age, they enquired the researcher to provide them with more explanations on what information could be, because they did not want to give a 'wrong' example. The researcher provided them with more explanations on what information-as-thing can '*be expressed, described, or represented in some physical way, as a signal, text or communication*' (Buckland, 1991). In figure 8, all the information provided by the participants is presented.

From the conducted interviews, the researcher collected the examples and identified the types of information that the participants stated that they use in order to change their mood. As many of these examples were represented in a same way (e.g. videos), the researcher decided to categorise them by relevance. A further presentation of them can be found in figure 9.



**Figure 8: Types of happy Information participants seek in order to change their mood**

Considering the graph below twelve (12) of the answers given by the participants have to do with photos with various subjects while nine (9) of these examples were about music videos. Four (4) participants said that they seek videos about sports and five (5) replied that they seek text. Apart from that participants expressed more personal preferences like gossip news, videos with animals or commix-type jokes. The coming paragraphs focus on the types of information interviewees most seek

when they have the need to change their emotions as it is considered of interest to investigate these types of information.

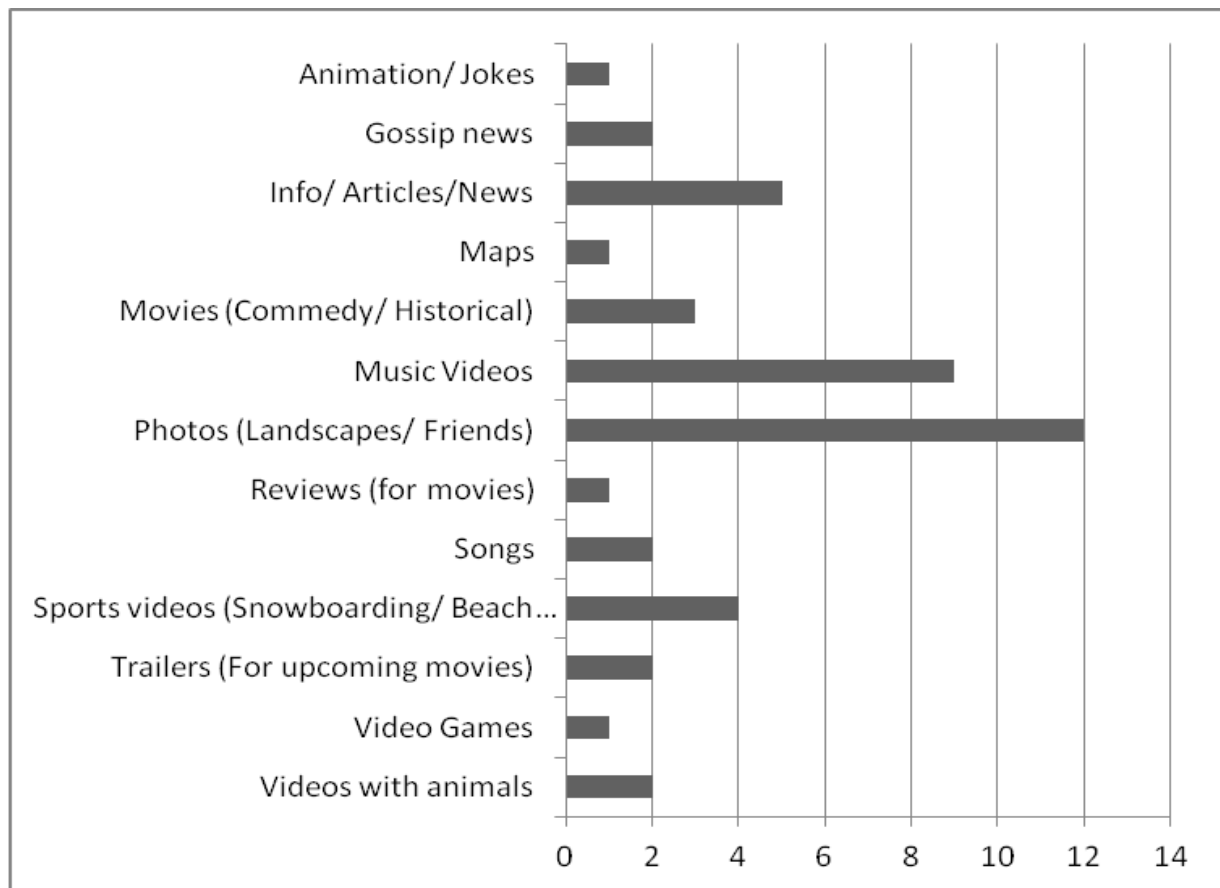


Figure 9: Types of happy information grouped bases on relevance

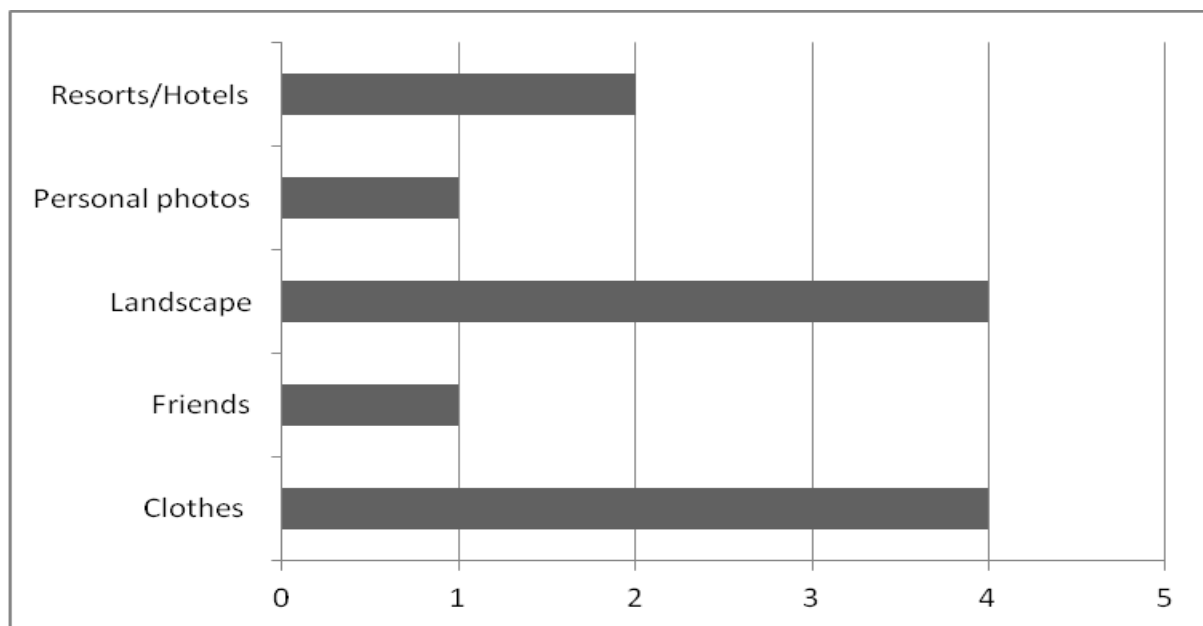
#### 4.6.2 Pictures as the primary type of happy information seeking behaviour

As it can be seen by the figures extracted by the participants' data, pictures with various subjects are extensively used by individuals in order to change their emotions in a positive way. Participants argue that they seek pictures with various subjects, as it can be seen on the figure 10.

Participants mostly describe their experiences in which they seek pictures of places around the world or landscapes. From the first interview, this type of information was introduced:

[P] Yes, the third type of information that I seek online are pictures from around the world; I go to Google and then I start watching beautiful places that I would like to go and I really like it [...] and it changes my emotions and my mood immediately. It travels me away.

To continue with, Iris points out that as her financial situation does not let her travel as often as she would like, she really enjoys seeking pictures of beautiful places like beaches and resorts, because as she said: *'it's like making my dreams come true!'*.



**Figure 10: Pictures' subjects**

Antigone, a 33 years –old civil engineer who was born in the United States and who currently lives in Italy, described her example about the times she seeks pictures in order to feel positive emotions:

[P] I log in my personal account on Facebook and I go to my friends photos and I catch up with their lives. You know, not really with what my friends are up to but mostly with photos I like to see.

[R] So you like to seek photos. What do these photos present?

[P] My friends' photos, but not about stuff they did last night, but mostly about their travels and beautiful landscapes.

The researcher then asked her why she likes to do this and Antigone replied that because she travels a lot and changes places of residence quite often, she misses her friends, so this is an easy way to catch up with their lives. From the 10 examples that focus on images, three women and one man seek photos with clothes and anything that has to do with styling. Interesting answers were given by these participants about the motivations and the emotions that these behaviours included that are going to be presented on the coming paragraphs. From the fifteen (15) participants in total, only one -a 61 years old pensioner and recent grandmother- described times that she seeks personal photos –more specifically photos of her granddaughter- in order to change her emotions. The examples that focus on personal objects will be presented shortly after.

#### **4.6.3 Music as an important type of happy information seeking behaviour**

According to Sloboda and O'Neil (2011), music is considered a type of information that evokes both positive and negative emotions and is also able to change the emotion state of the listener. What is more, according to Budd (1985), researchers study the strong relationship between music and emotions since ancient Greece. Furthermore, Juslin and Sloboda (2013) questioned how emotion affects individuals and the reason why they listen to music. With that in mind, music is without doubt information that people seek in order to change their emotions. Nine participants (9) – seven (7) through YouTube and two (2) on Spotify- reply that they listen to music when they have the need to change their emotions

#### **4.6.4 Discussion**

From the answers provided by the participants, the types of information that are most commonly used in order to change peoples' emotions in a positive way are images and songs. Even though the content of pictures (from landscapes to clothes), the types of music and the mediums used (mainly YouTube and Spotify) may vary, people use them in order to change their emotions. Accordingly, while reviewing on other examples of information that participants seek in order to change their emotions like movies -either when watching them or watching trailers and reading reviews- and articles about artistic events, one can conclude that different types of art can make people feel happier or change their emotional statement in a positive way.

#### **4.7 Personal Information objects seeking behaviour**

Initially, the researcher, according to her personal experiences, believed that the participants, apart from the types of information that they described above, they also expected examples about more personal information like photos on Facebook, messages on Skype or other types of personal information. Against this belief, only one (1) out of 15 participants -a 61 years old pensioner- expressed an example of seeking personal objects and especially her new-born granddaughter's photos in order to change her feelings. More specifically, the retired physics teacher said:

[P] The first example [...] has to do with photos of my granddaughter who has recently been born. My daughter, who lives in another city sends to me photos of the baby to see, almost every day.

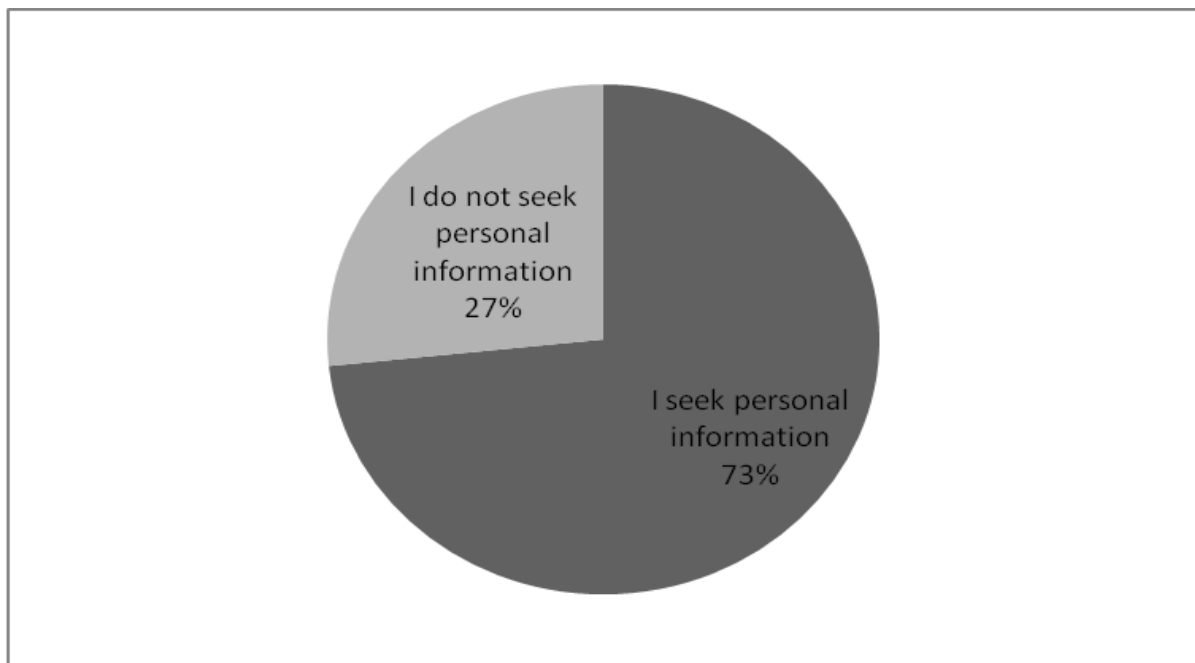
[R] So there are photos of your grandchild.

[P] Yes, she sends me photos of the baby on Dropbox and you know, [...] they live in another city and I can't be with her all the time. So when I want to feel that I am by her side, I go on Dropbox on my tablet and spend my time looking photos of the baby! These are photos of a

cute little baby. How could I not like them? And especially these ones, which are of my daughter's daughter. It is the first thing I do when I feel sad or when I want to feel that I am by her side.

Due to the fact that the participants did not expressed examples of personal information seeking behaviours, the researcher decided after the first interviews to ask specifically for these, after they have described their own examples. In general, the researcher asked if they need to seek personal information objects in order to change their emotions. On this question, Apollo answered that:

[P] Yeah, of course I do. For example, I like to look at pictures from past summer vacations and good times that I had with my friends and I instantly change my mood. Especially when I feel melancholic, I like to watch images of me and my friends.



**Figure 11: Percentages of seeking and not seeking personal objects information**

On the other hand, Erextheos replied:

[P] No, I don't chat so much. I hate photos; I don't know why, so I don't think that are more personal things that I am doing in order to feel ok. When I want to feel better, I do the above at least in an online environment!

An interesting comment was stated by Ares. When asked about personal information seeking behaviour, Ares said:

[P] It depends on my emotions; when I feel bad or down it is a good way, but it can be dangerous as it can make me melancholic, but in general when I feel down I recall them.

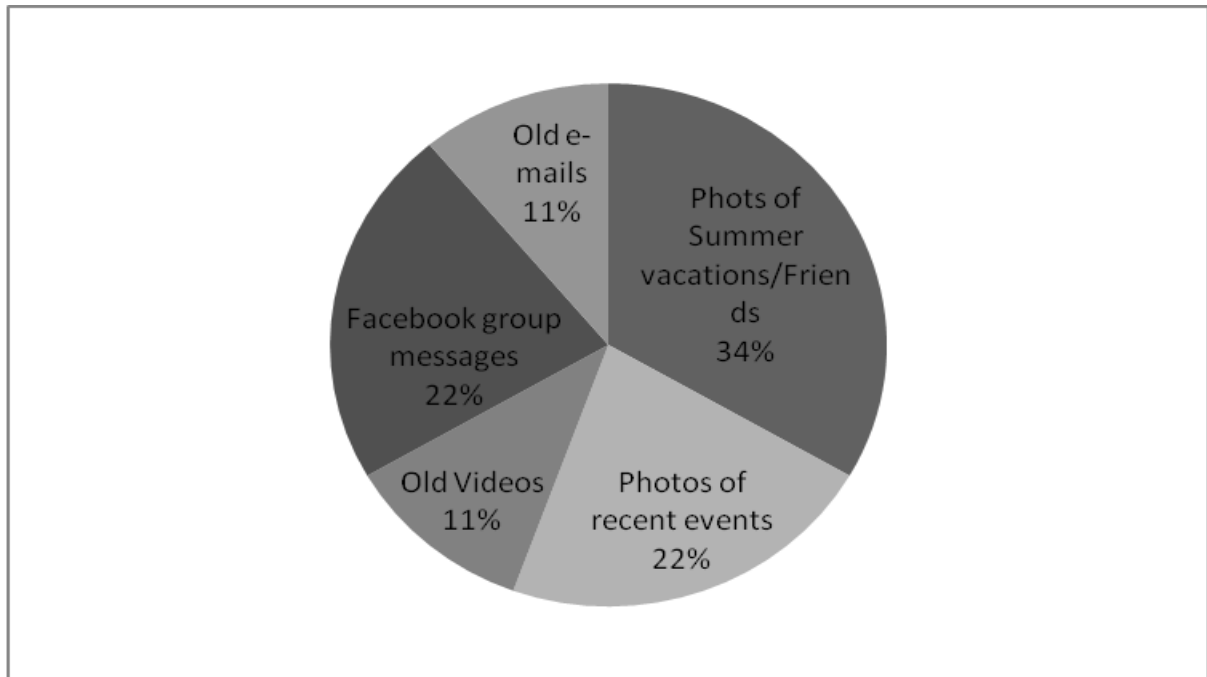


Figure 12: Types of personal information objects that participants seek

Figures 11 and 12 show the percentage of participants who seek and those who do not seek personal information in order to change their emotions. Accordingly, the types and the contents of these objects are presented.

## 4.8 Mediums for seeking happy information

### 4.8.1 Mediums overview

While the participants presented their examples of information seeking behaviour, the researcher was quite interested to learn which medium they use in order to seek for each information object. Figure 13 presents the mediums categorised by relevance.

Fifteen (15) different mediums were presented during the interviews by the participants. Five (5) of these mediums were mentioned only by one participant each time. On the other hand two (2) of mediums were presented by the majority of the participants. More than ten (10) participants point out that they use YouTube as a medium to seek information in order to change their emotions. Moreover, participants expressed six (6) examples for which they seek happy information through Google and not from a specific site or other means of communication. Figure 13 presents the mediums as they were presented by the participants.

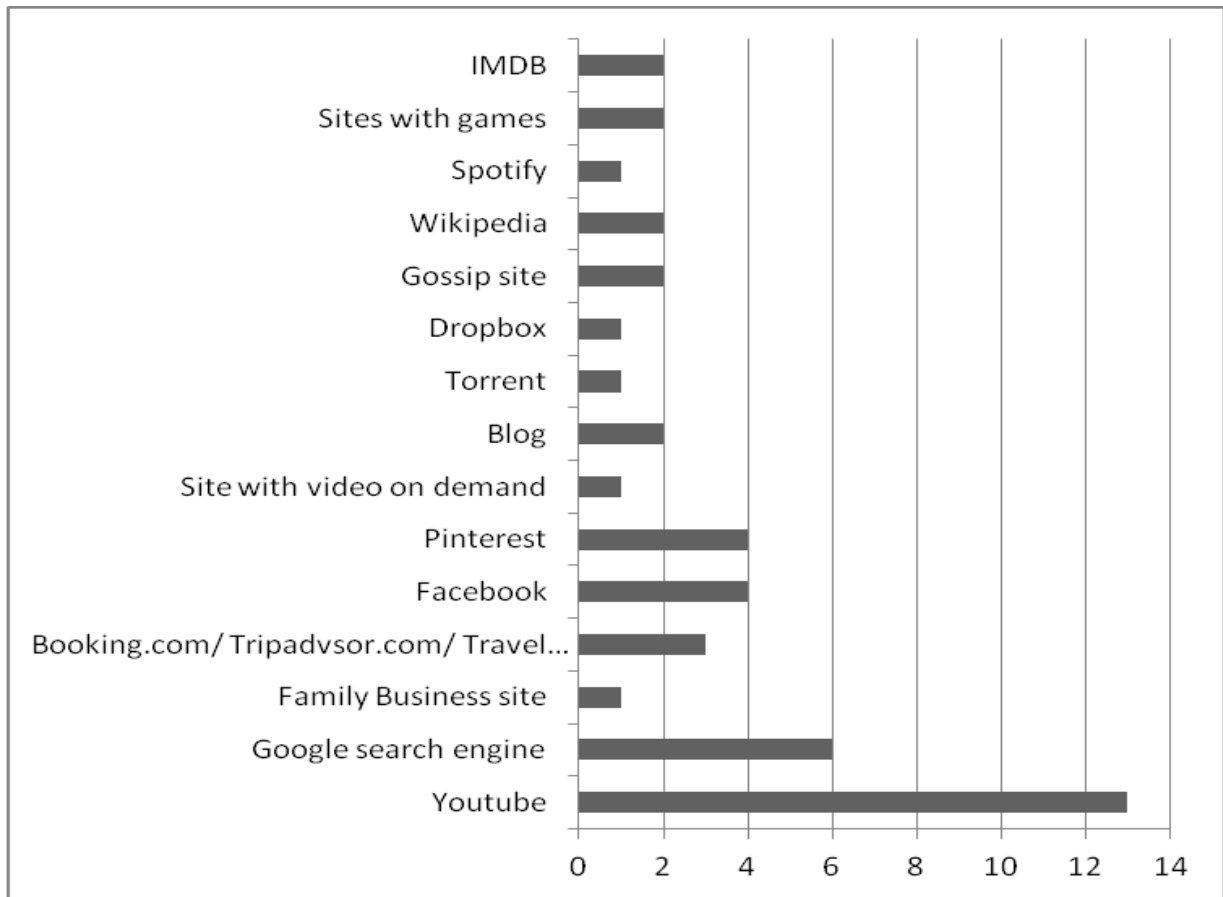


Figure 13: Mediums participants seek for happy information

#### 4.8.2 YouTube as the primary medium for happy information seeking

From the fifteen (15) interviewees, ten (10) of them provided an example about a YouTube video. This high number makes it the primary means of communication that interviewees presented. Figure 14 presents the content of these videos.

The researcher, early on the process of the interviews, identified that the majority of the participants provided examples about YouTube. At the first steps of this study, the researcher apart from the content of these YouTube videos asked the participants why they use YouTube when they need to change their emotions. The chart below presents their answers.



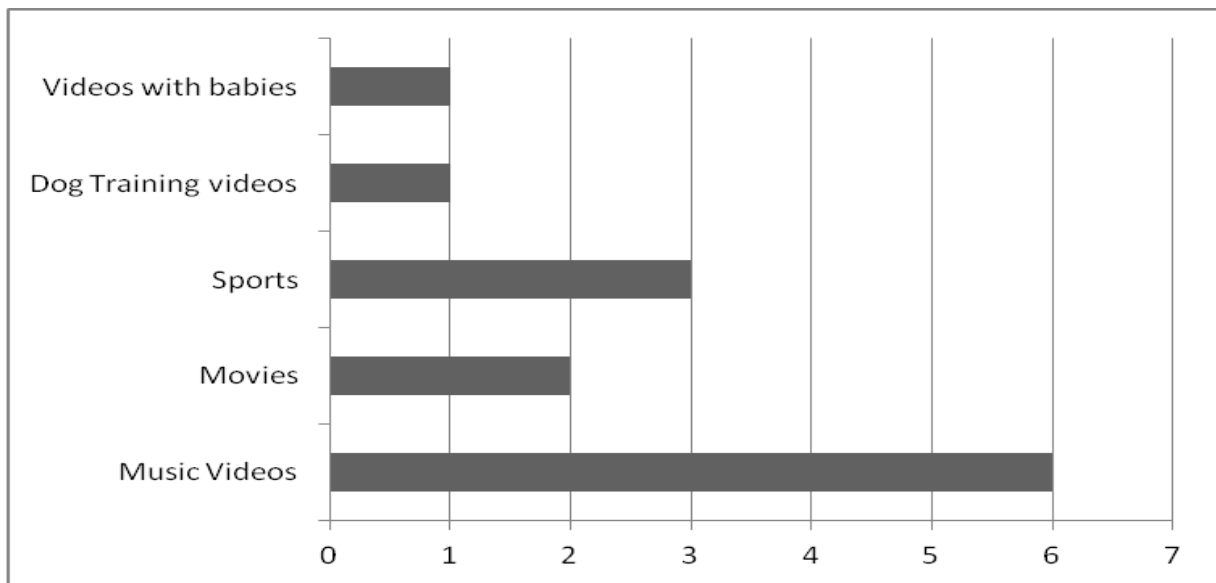


Figure 14: Content of the YouTube videos

Three (3) participants extensively described what they like on YouTube and why they use it in order to change their emotions. Erato argued that:

[P] YouTube is like Google but only with videos! You insert a word or a phrase and in seconds you have results. I use YouTube on a daily basis because it's practical and I can find whatever I want, mostly music and videos about beauty tricks. You can find millions of videos with girls from around the world that show how they do their makeup and their hair and for me this is a great way to forget everything. I really like YouTube, primary for the convenience that it provides and the number of results that one can retrieve.

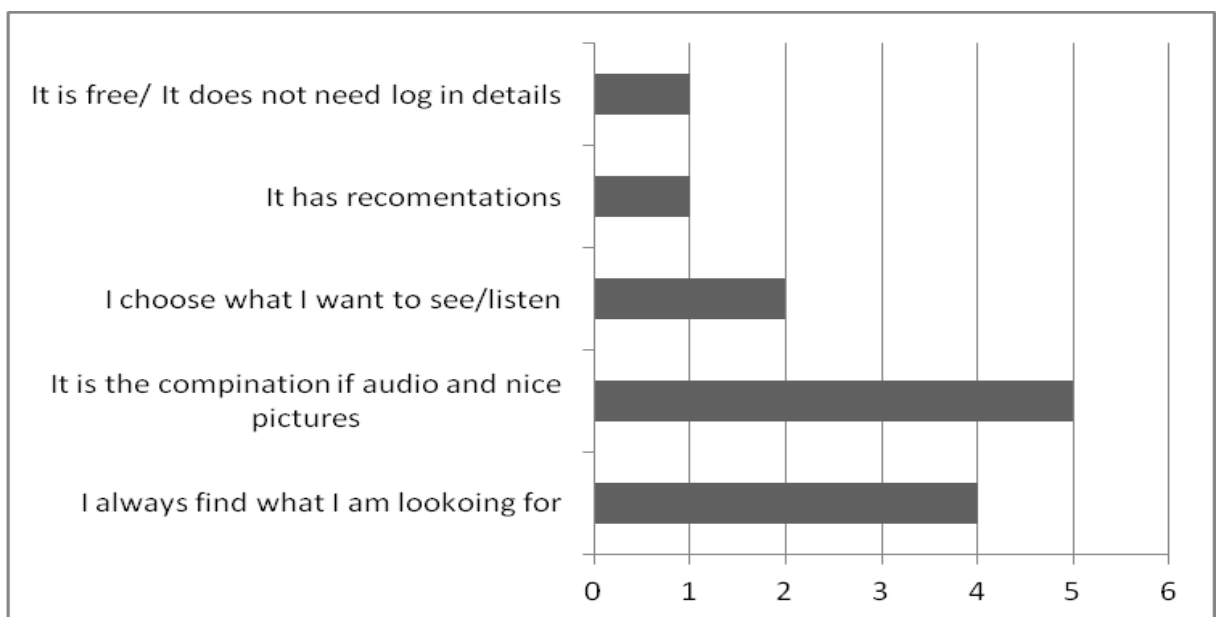


Figure 15: Participants' answers on why they prefer YouTube while they seek for happy information

Proteus describing why he prefers YouTube said that:

[P] I used to be a music type of person since I was a child and I was always a frequent purchaser of new records and the radio was always on. But YouTube is something even better. I open my laptop, I type "YouTube.com" and I instantly have any song that was ever written. And not only this, most of them are combined with the original music videos with the artists. I personally prefer the ones made by other users with beautiful pictures. It 'travels' me away while I watch these videos. So for me, it is the best thing that I can do to change my emotions.

The combination of music and images is also described by Apollo who said:

[P] [...] The reason why I watch this video and not only the song because [...] actually is a combination of nice pictures of people -the band actually- having fun laughing, combined with a nice song makes me feel very relax and very happy and my emotions and my feelings I believe is the result of the combination of the images and the audio.

According to Apollo, Proteus and Erato the reasons why they prefer YouTube in order to change their emotions are primary who easily they can access it and the combination of audio and pictures are a way to change their emotions.

#### **4.8.3 Google as medium for happy information seeking**

Nowadays, search engines are considered to be the main retrieval mediums of any kind of information (Rangaswamy, Giles and Seres, 2009). Even though many search engines can be found, Google, with a percentage of 72.59%, is considered to be not only the most visited search engine but the most visited site globally as well (Alexa, 2014).

As it was mentioned above, six (6) examples were presented by the participants –in which they seek information in order to change their emotions through Google. This was of interest for the researcher, as after she had conducted the first interviews she noticed that interviewees extensively use Google as a medium to feel positive emotions. At first, the researcher was worried that the findings from the data could not answer the research questions but she came up with the conclusion that people use Google in order to find specific types of information that it can change their emotion.

When Asclepius said that he uses Google in order to seek information –and especially old maps-, the researcher was interested in why he prefers to search on the Google instead of going directly to a specific site. Asclepius gave the following answer:

[R] Ok. And I forgot to ask, do you seek this information on a specific place?

[P] [...] No. Because I am not [...] a systematic person, I don't remember where to find things, so every time I have to go on Google and search by using a specific word like 'old maps' or 'maps of Europe' for anything that I want to find.

According to Asclepius, a personal characteristic is the reason why he prefers using Google instead of going directly to a specific medium. To the same question, Ariande replied:

[R] So you told me that you search about places, flats, cars [...]. Is there a specific site that you seek for that?

[P] No. Because every country has its own sites for that purposes, I just go to Google and I search.

Erato, when answered why he prefers to use Google in order to change his emotions, said:

[P] In fact, I prefer Google that any other platform. Especially for information that I already search, Google is so practical. I just go to Google news, I 'google' gossip news and I start reading whatever I find interesting -in a gossip way of course-! Also --and I do this really often- I go directly to the first results that have been retrieved and in most of the cases there are sites that I have already visited the previous days ,so I know that I will find something 'silly' to spent my time and relax!

[R] And why don't you go to these sites from the beginning?

[P] Because by going to Google, I will not miss out any new gossip. And also I will not lose my time checking each one of these sites. On the other hand, on Google I will find the most interesting news on the top of the results. Ok, wanting to relax by reading gossip news probably seems weird, I know, but on the same time I do not want to spend so much time on this activity!

[R] So it is a way to relax and also a way not to spend so much time.

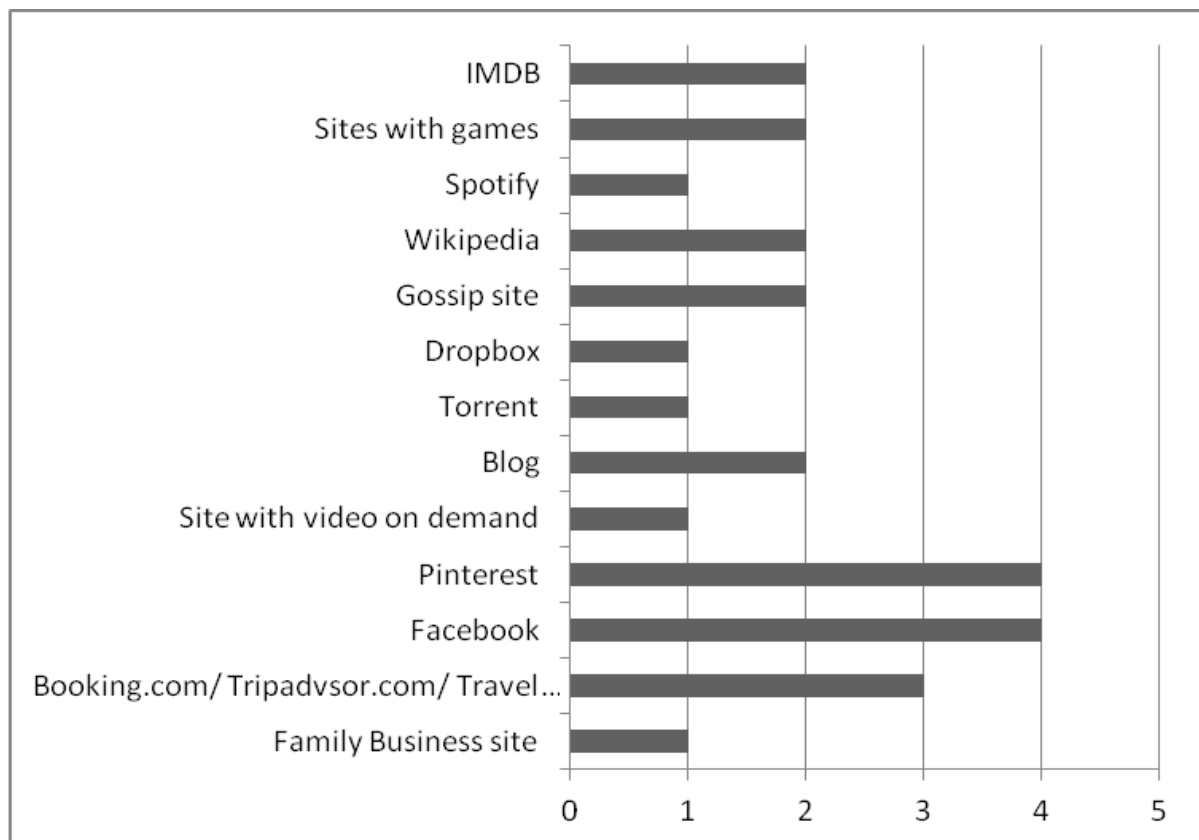
[P] Yeah, exactly!

According to Apollo, the easy structure of a search engine like Google makes him to prefer it instead of going directly to a specific site. While Apollo use it due to the fact that he defines himself as a non-organized person, Ariandi use it because she wants to find information that cannot be found on the same sites. In general, the need to find more and different information -in most of the cases the

interviewees were seeking photos from beautiful places around the world-in order to change their emotions is the reason why Google is extensively in use.

#### 4.8.4 Mediums people use in order to fulfil their personal needs

As it was described above, based on the data collected by the interviews, people in most of the cases tend to use YouTube and Google as mediums in order to seek information that it makes them happy. Below (figure 16) are presented all the platforms that the interviewees presented –apart from YouTube and Google- for the above process.



**Figure 16: Mediums/Platforms participants use in order to fulfil their personal needs**

An interesting finding of the study was that people use sites about travelling and booking hotels and anything that is useful for them in an uncontroversial way. At first, the researcher was sceptical about these examples as they could be considered as a task oriented seeking behaviour, something that was not on the scope of this study. But when the researcher asked the interviewees to describe more about their behaviour, Iris said that:

[P] Yes, [...] Because I am working really hard during the year, I really like to log in into a specific site, namely the Booking.com, start watching beautiful resorts and hotels and imagine myself being there. This does not mean that I can't go, book or afford these luxuries, but I like

watching these amazing places. This activity provides me with really pleasure emotions. And actually, I am doing this 2-3 times per week.

[R] So you told me that you focus on photos of resorts and hotels.

[P] Yes, I imagine a place that must be nice and then I log in to Booking.com and start looking the photos and even I can afford to go to these places I imagine myself to be there.

While Ariande said:

[P] Well, yes, it is about searching for trips around the world and I go online either to sites or forums like tripadvisor.com and I try to discover new places.

[R] So this is information about different places around the world, and you told me that you seek it on tripadvisor.com.

[P] Yeah.

[R] And why do you use TripAdvisor.com? Why do you use travel forums in order to change your emotions?

[P] In general, I am a curious person, I love travelling and I really like to change my place of living on a regular basis, but because I can't actually do that, I just go online and imagine myself being there. It is a really easy way to change my emotions in a few minutes! Of course, in some cases I use it to book my summer vacation but not as often as just to relax.

Another interesting finding of the present study is the example provided by Thalia who uses a site representing past contracting projects of her family business as a source of information that can change her emotions. More specifically, she argues:

[P] Yes, yes. So, the last one is related to my family and our family business. We have a construction company and we own a web site. I go there and see the uploaded photos. I like to see the photos that we have uploaded and actually, every time I see photos of our new buildings, I feel very proud.

Considering the participants' answers, the use of platforms for a different purpose than their original one is quite common and it seems that people in some cases prefer them in order to change their emotions in a positive way, even if these sites-platforms are designed for working or serious leisure purposes. Focusing on the different uses of platforms in order to suite the individuals' personal needs, it would be considered both interesting and important.

Furthermore, another interesting finding of the study is that many participants, in order to access information capable to change their emotions, use sites and platforms which are susceptible to copyright infringement. However, it seems that participants are aware of that; Apollo points out:

[P] I seek this movie online, not on YouTube but in a website that you can watch movies in live streaming; ok, not actually in live streaming, but instantly, you don't have to download it; you just write the movie that you want to see and you watch it immediately. If you are interested in the link, I'm writing it down [...] Ok, that's the link. [URL] It constitutes a copyright infringement but... [...]

While Iris said that she uses Torrent in order to download a TV series, she argues:

[P] I download it on my laptop and when I feel the need to relax, I lie down and watch it. For me it's an entertainment that pleasures me, usually before I go to sleep if I don't choose to read a book. Actually, I prefer the series because they are free, while I have to buy the books something that I can afford to do.

The use of content that is susceptible to copyright infringement in order to change one's emotions is of high interest, both because it makes people happier and because it violates the law and thus evokes financial and ethical problems and questions.

#### **4.8.5 Discussion**

Based on the interviews conducted for the purposes of this dissertation, the majority of the participants answered that when they are in a need to change their emotions, they use YouTube and Google in order to seek specific happy information. Moreover, participants presented examples in which they seek information from various platforms within an online environment. From their answers, it can be referred that the convenience and the easy usage of specific platforms make them to prefer YouTube and Google instead of others, while personal circumstances lead them to use others for seeking happy information. The need to focus on platforms that are extensively in use and to become better and more convenient for the users seems to be of high demand.

### **4.9 Emotions during happy information seeking behaviour**

#### **4.9.1 Overview**

As this study focuses on behaviours that humans have while they are in an online environment, the researcher aimed to identify the emotions that are evoked while individuals interact with the various information that was previously presented. From the retrieved data, interesting findings concerning

the emotions that participants feel were identified. On the chart below, all the emotions that participants provided during the interview period are presented.

Figure 17 presents all the answers given by the participants, while in figure 18 the researcher groups the most common answers among the participants, in order for the analysis and understanding to be easier. Due to the fact that the participants in many cases expressed the same feeling using synonyms or relative expressions, it was considered that a categorisation would be more appropriate and it would present the emotions in a better way.

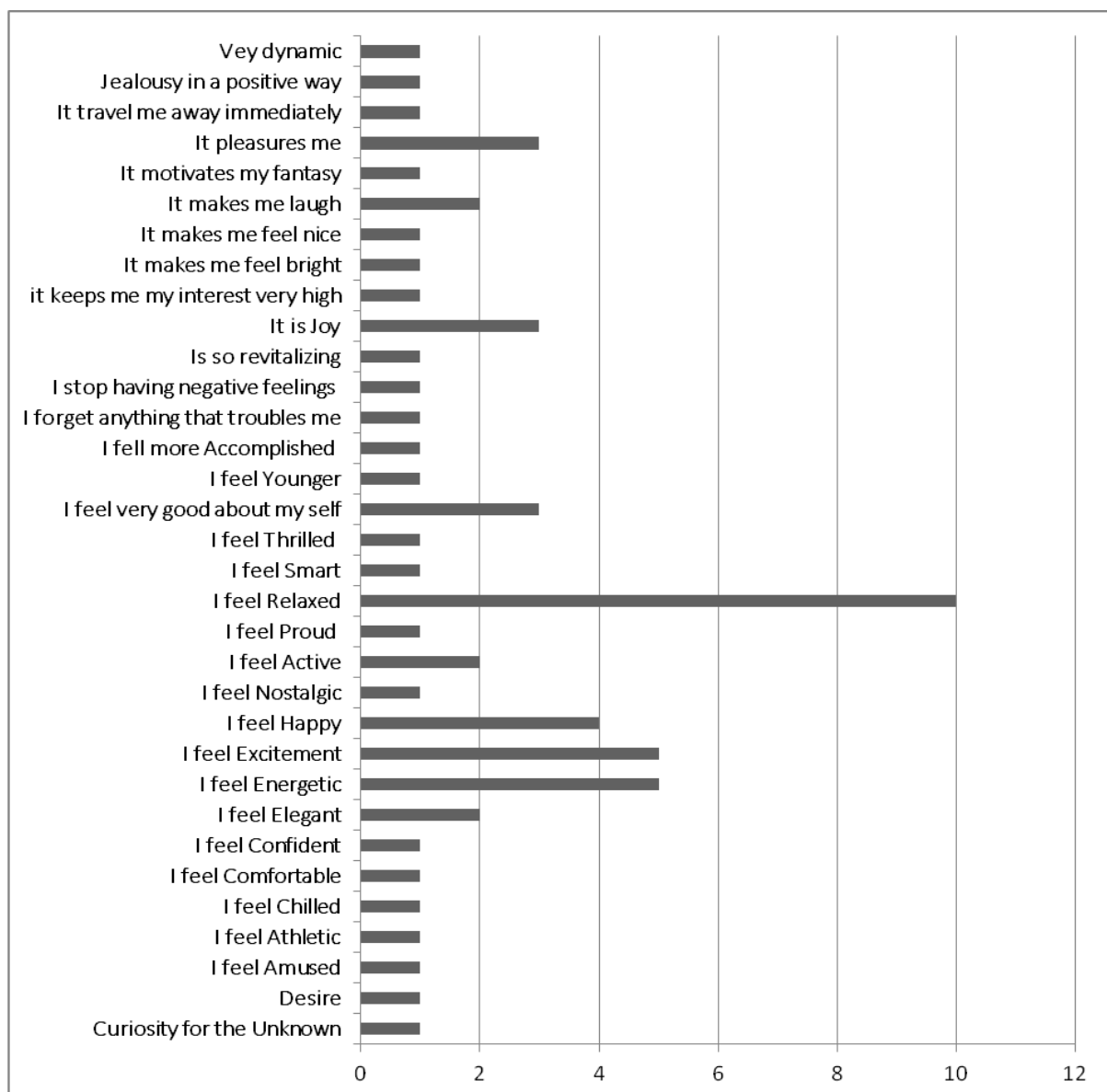
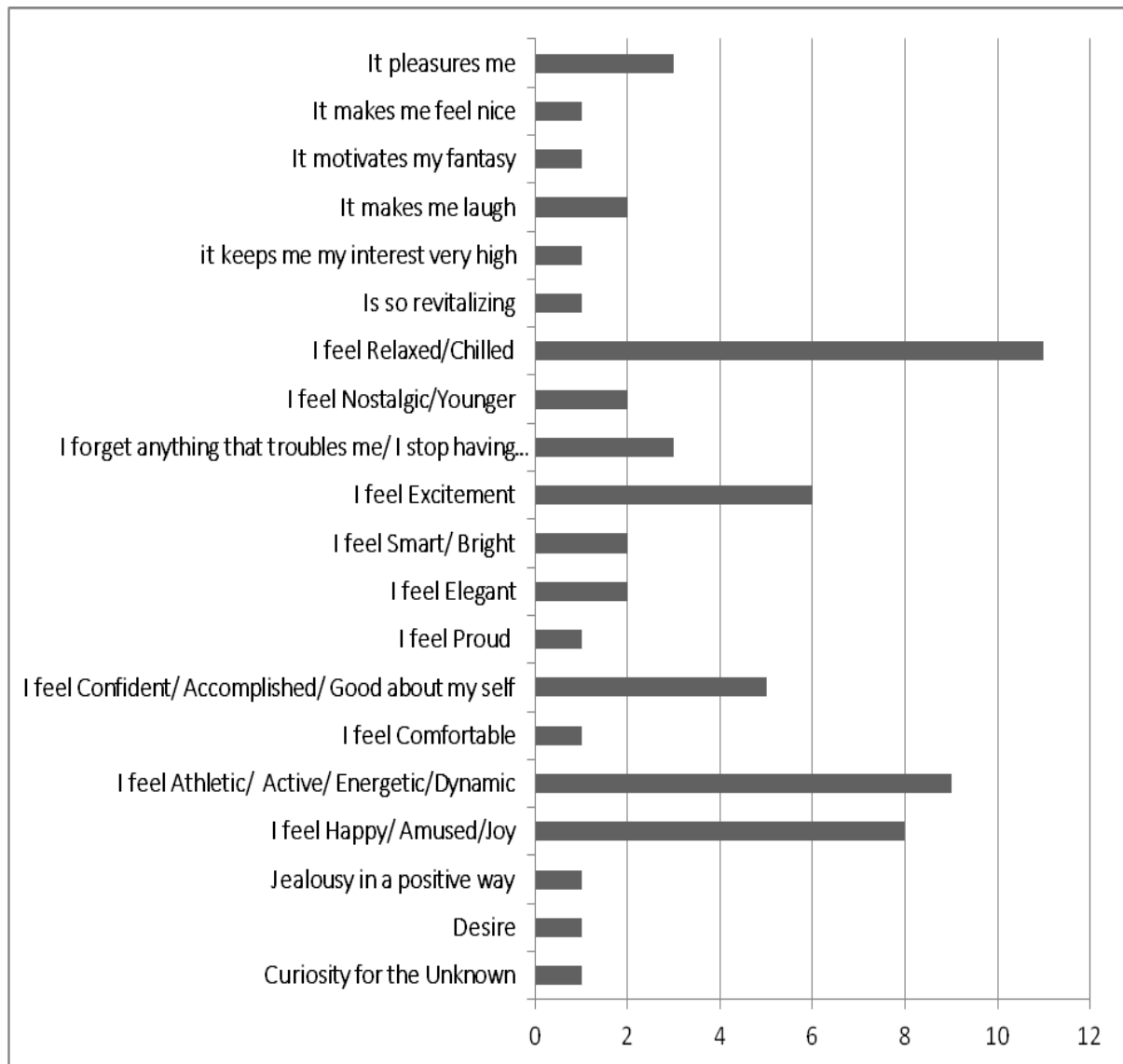


Figure 17: Emotions that expressed by participants while they seek happy information

It should be noted the participants primary answered the questions *'And what are the emotions?'* or *'What does this information make you feel?'*, so the answers they provided where either emotions or

statements of their feelings. The variety of possitive emotions that participants feel while they seek nformation, is of a high interest.



**Figure 18: Emotions participants feel while they seek happy information grouped based on relevance**

Some emotions like relaxation, energy, happiness and excitment are commonly felt among the participants while others like pride, desire or curiosity are expressed less frequently. The emotions that individuals feel while they seek information is of a high interest and it is going to be discusseed extensively below.

#### **4.9.2 The need to feel happy and relaxed**

The primary positive emotion that the participants expressed was relaxation and happiness. What is interesting is that among the interviewees, the feeling of relaxation and happiness was alnost in every case the first to be expresed. When the researcher asked if in general the participants feel the



need to seek information in an online environment in order to change their emotions, the need to feel relaxed and happy were also the primary answer given by the participants. Individuals said that they choose to seek information that make them feel relaxed. For an example, Apollo, after giving his example of seeking music videos from YouTube, said:

[P] Yes [...] every time I watch this music video I feel relaxed. I forget everything that troubles me. I stop having negative feelings after listening and watching this video, I feel more positive and energetic.

An interesting finding of the study is the type of information that individuals seek in order to feel relaxed. From the eleven examples that the participants provided, six (6) of them were about music. Aphrodite said that:

[P] I feel relaxed! Especially in the evening, listening to music after work takes the tension away, helps me relax and takes everything away from my mind.

Moreover, Ariande, a master's student, agreed with that opinion by referring to her academic obligations:

[P] I feel happy because I am smiling when I see something that I like and I also feel very relaxed because I forget everything; my degree, my assignments, my dissertation. After spending many hours in front of an Excel data sheet, I just want to listen to relaxing music. Nothing else!

Based on the above, it can be considered a fact that individuals need to feel relaxed after a difficult day at work or their academic obligations. Moreover, it can be occurred that the feeling of relaxation leads to the increase of happiness.

#### **4.9.3 The need to feel Energetic and Dynamic**

An interesting finding that was extracted by the interviews was the seeking behaviour of the interviewees in order to feel dynamic or energetic. More specifically, nine (9) examples were presented, in which these emotions were the purpose of the information seeking. These emotions most commonly concerned behaviours in which interviewees interact with a type of information related to sports and more specifically –as they mentioned- their favourite sports. Antigone, who described moments of her life in which she seeks YouTube videos of snowboarding competitions, she mentioned:

[R] What are the emotions that you are feeling while watching these videos?

[P] I feel very dynamic because we talking about sports It makes me feel nice if I see something that I can do, so when I feel depressed, [...] ok, not actually depressed, but when I feel down and see a snowboarding video, it changes my mood. Actually, I have the need to see that I am good at the sport that I am practicing to.

Erextheos, who also mentioned his example of watching snowboarding videos, said that:

[P] First of all, it comes in my mind is that when after a day at work with a lot of pressure, I return home and the only thing I need is to sit comfortably in my couch, just me and my laptop, and watch snowboarding videos. I mostly prefer extreme videos, I don't know why, but for me this is the most convenient way to get rid of all this pressure. It makes me feel relieved from the work tension. I am also a snowboarder, although not at a professional level, apparently I cannot make all this new moves, therefore I am watching the videos to feel more active, stronger and more athletic, than I already am!

Aphrodite described the same emotions while watching YouTube videos of –as she mentioned- favourite sport, Tennis. More specifically, she said that:

[P] [...] I feel excited [...] I feel happy because on the one hand I see the result of the tournament and on the other hand I learn new things. I feel energetic.

The above examples presented the feel of excitement that people feel while watching videos of sports competitions. An interesting finding is the one concerning the same emotions but with other types of information. More specifically, Dionysus described his excitement while he reads reviews on travelling forums:

[P] I also like reading the travel reviews of people that they have visited a specific place and I try to imagine myself being there. As this activity requires a lot of time, I do it when I have time, mainly on the weekends.

[R] And what are the emotions that you feel while you are doing this?

[P] The main emotion is excitement because I wish I could visit these places, something that I will probably never do, but excitement and desire grows inside me while I am doing this.

The above examples show the information seeking behaviours that humans have in order to feel positive emotions and especially the emotion of excitement that they experience while they interact with specific information in an online environment.

#### 4.9.4 Other positive emotions that people feel while seeking happy information

The previous paragraphs presented the emotions that were mostly felt by the interviewees according to their experiences. Further emotions of high interest were described. Asclepius a 57-years old university professor who described examples of seeking old movies on YouTube describes his feelings:

[R] Yes. The last example is about movies and especially old movies and with famous comedians from the past. And [...] usually they were black and white. And [...] it has to do with my younger years and I feel very good. I used to watch these movies with my friends on weekends at cinema and talk about them and laughing. And [...] I believe it has to do with the era when I was young. When I am watching these movies I feel younger.

Asclepius continued and described that he seeks articles about historical events and more specifically articles about important personalities of the past that contributed on the world history. Moreover, he said that *'[...] I feel younger and in some cases that I am somebody else, someone stronger, someone important, someone powerful.'*

While Asclepius says that he feels younger when he seeks specific information in order to change his emotions, Antigone describes her emotions on seeking photos on Pinterest:

[R] So, which are the emotions that you feel while you are doing this?

[P] Very relaxed, very happy, very elegant when I see something that I like. If I see a picture of something that I already have it I feel very good about myself and my choices of clothes. I feel elegant when I see photos of clothes' combinations relevant to the ones I have. I feel like so elegant that it changes my feelings; I forget that I can't afford to buy new clothes because I already own what is on fashion.

Antigone said that she feels elegant when she finds photos that present clothes that she already has. Dionysus describes his example of happy information seeking:

[P] [...] I also seek information about actors if they are going to do other movies, interviews of actors about their future plants and interviews and information about their everyday life about their relationships they have in a gossip way.

And he continues by describing his emotions:

[P] Jealous in a positive way it's like [...] that I want to be on their shoes, I always want to have a chance to be on a movie so I find myself to be on a situation so it is excitement and jealous. Jealous because I would like to be rich and famous and have all this glamorous life.

Finally an interesting finding was described by Ariande, who described times of her life when she accesses the site of her family business site in order to change her emotions. More specifically:

[P] So, the last one is related to my family and, our family business. We have a construction company and we own a web site. I go there and search if they have uploaded something new. I like to see the photos of our new buildings, I feel very proud of them.

Ariande felt proud of her family because as she lately said she is the only non-engineer in her family and she feels really proud when she is watching photos on the site from their innovative projects.

#### **4.9.5 Discussion**

This paragraph focused on the emotions people feel while they seek happy information. Various emotions were introduced, from the emotion of joy and happiness and the feeling of relax to the emotion of energetic, excitement and jealousy. Most of the participants described the need to relax while seeking specific information objects after a demanding day. It seems that people if not in daily basis but quite often need to seek enjoyable information to relax. As is extensively been said people choose the online environment because of the convenience and the wide spectrum of information that it provides. It would be interesting, future studies to focus on the emotions individuals feel while they seek happy information within the information and computer sciences.

#### **4.10 The concept of relevance**

An interesting factor that it was willing to examine it was the concept of relevance. More specific the researcher was interesting to see if there is any connection between the personalities of the participants with the information they interact in order to change their emotions. It should be note that due to the fact that the researcher does not have the knowledge the research on this topic it was only exploratory and by no means in high depth. From the first interview a connection between the participant's personality and the information that he seeks it was made. More specific Apollo, a 26-year old Lawyer from Greece when asked about any type of connection between his personality and the examples he provide he said:

[P] I see what you mean. Yes actually I believe that it works better for me to seek a type of information that has something to do with me and has a link with my personality. For example, I look up for a music video because I know that music it's probably one of the few things that makes me happy, because I am a musician and I know that music speaks to me and it has the possibility to make me feel happy instantly. [...] Furthermore, I admire beautiful pictures, actually one of my dreams was to became a photographer I like taking pictures actually but a became a musical and a lawyer and that this is the second option to change my

mood because I believe that [...] so I believe that there is a connection between the information objects and my inner world.

His occupation as a musician is according to him the motivator to seek music videos while his desire to become a photographer motivates him to see for specific photos. A relative answer was given by Asclepius:

[P] Since I was young I wanted to become an actor. But everything has to do [...] with [...] my nostalgia for old things probably. I watch movies because it reminds me my childish dream.

Iris an Architect said that it's her priority to seek articles concerning art while Thalia describing her example about seeking funny commixes said:

[P] Yes it has to do with my personality in general I try to be a positive person and minions (the animation) make me laugh and make me to feel positive.

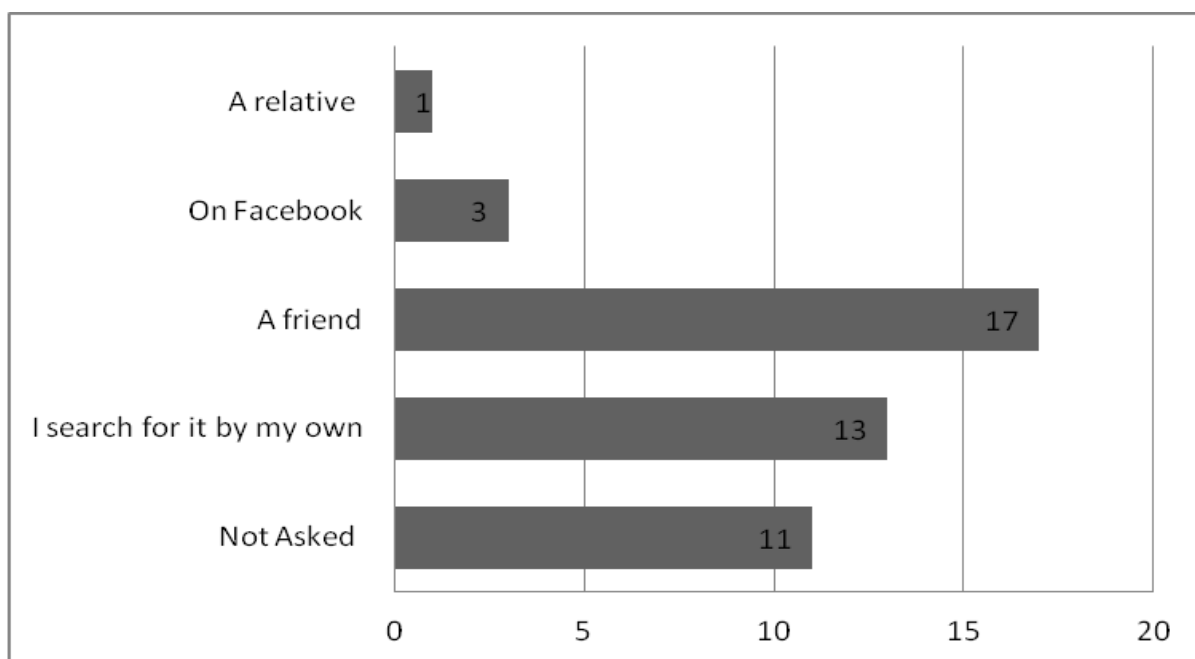
On the other hand, Eretheos described behaviours that according to his worlds come in contrast with his everyday life more specific he said:

[P] I know that somehow there is a contradiction between sports and fashion, but fashion sites releases a more artistic aspect of my personality which I think is a little bit compressed because of my work. I am a police lieutenant and my work demands an austere profile, as a result I feel more accomplished spending time with something completely different from what I am doing every day.

To summarize with, in general participants expressed their need to connect their happy information seeking behaviour with their personality and in some cases even with parts of their personality that are in contrast with their everyday life.

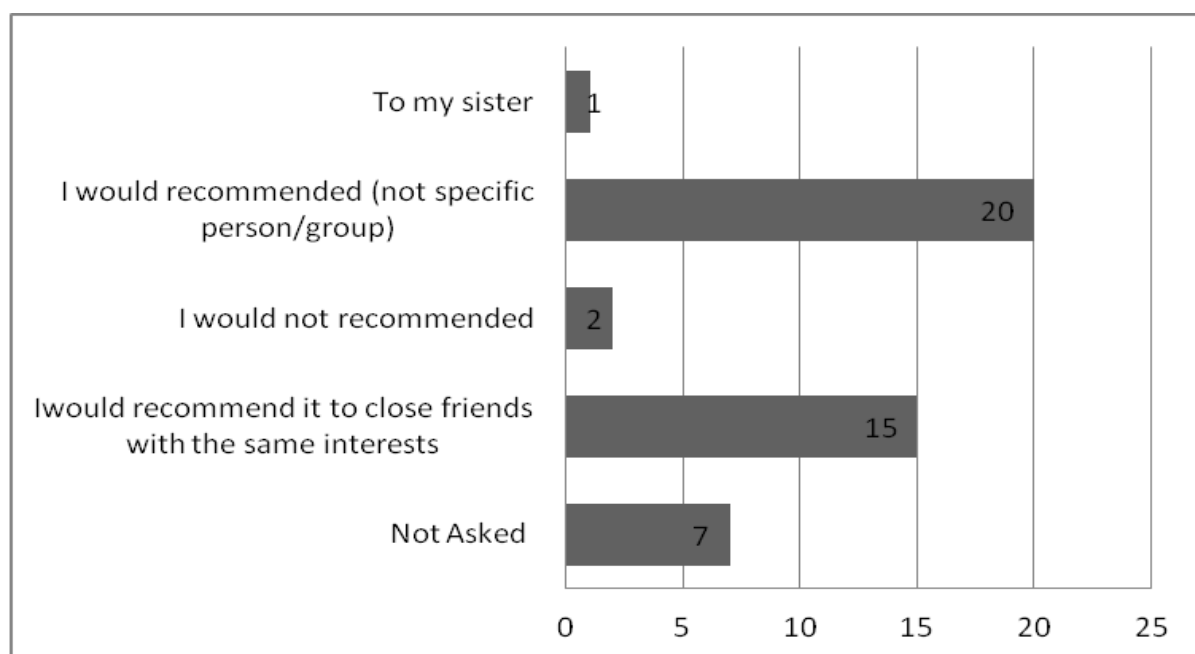
#### **4.11 Origins of the happy information and possible recommendations**

The researcher was interesting on finding how people came up with this information and if they would recommend the happy information to somebody else order to change their feelings. The answers that the participants provided were not of high detail and since this study does not focus on the recommendation or the sharing of happy information the researcher did not ask for more explanatory answers. Even though there were not plenty of data to be analysed some interesting factors were identified. Forty-five (45) examples were described by the fifteen (15) participants. The figure 19 presents how the participants came up with its example.



**Figure 19: Who recommended the happy information**

From the figure 19 it can be seen that most of the examples were introduced to the participants by friends. As far as if the participants would recommend the happy information is concerned, participants said that twenty (20) examples would recommend then to somebody else. Thirteen said that would recommend happy information to a relative or a friend.



**Figure 20: Participants' possible receivers of happy information**

As a final note is interesting what Apollo said describing which happy information would recommend and which not:

[P] I would not recommend the second one because I know that every person has a different type of humour maybe someone else would not like these types of comedies. But I would for certainly recommend the music video because as I told you is a pop-rock song and pop melody are usually people want to listen pop music because make them happier and, also I would recommend the images because I know beautiful images can change people emotions. Actually if you combine sound and image are my two options. Sound and image affect people emotions so I believe it's the best options to change someone emotion.

#### **4.12 Summarized answers of the research topics**

This paragraph briefly presents and summarizes the main answers on the research questions as they were extracted by interviewing the fifteen (15) participants.

##### Online environment and information seeking

The findings identified that individuals use the online environment in order to change their feelings in a positive way. More specific participants said that they use the online environment on a regular basis due to the convenience that it provides. Moreover, the amount of information that can be found is considered an important reason to use online environment to seek happy information.

##### Information objects that participants seek in order to change their fillings

Analysing the data from the interviews, common characteristics about the information that people seek in order to increase their positive emotions where identified. Videos and photos are mostly used by individuals for this reason. More specific music videos and pictures of landscapes and places around the world was the information that was mostly introduced by the participants.

##### Personal information objects that participants seek in order to change their fillings

The findings concerning the seeking of personal information were considered of high interest. Contrary to researcher's belief, that individuals use personal objects to change their feelings, only one participants said that seeks personal photos to feel happier. The rest of the participants –when asked about personal objects- said that they seek for them but not as often as they seek information through the Internet.

### Media from which participants seek happy information

Youtube and Google were the platforms from which people use to seek happy information. In both cases, participants focus on how easy they can access the information and the amount of information that they can find. Moreover, participants pointed out that these platforms give them the opportunity to seek happy information with no extra cost from the convenience of their personal space.

### Time frequency

Participants expressed their need to seek happy information on a regular basis. More specifically, most of the participants on their examples described that they seek information that it will change their emotions every day. Their everyday routine and the pressure that they feel from their working or academic environment are the primary reasons why they need to seek for information that it will change their emotions.

### Positive emotions

Many positive emotions were described during the fifteen interviews (15). Relaxed, happy and dynamic were the most common between the participants. As it was previously described, participants described the need to feel relaxed after their everyday obligations. Relaxed and energetic were the feelings that participants were mostly described.

### The concept of relevance

The relevance between the individuals' personality, hobbies or inner world was identified. More specifically, when participants asked about any relevance between their personality and the happy information that they seek, interesting connections were presented. More specifically, participants described relations between their occupation and the information that they seek, or aspects of their personality, on the other hand, some participants described their need to seek an information different of their working 'profile'.

### Origins of the happy information and possible recommendations of it

In most cases, the participants were introduced to each of the happy information by a close friend. Accordingly, participants described examples in which they search by themselves for specific information. Furthermore, the participants said that they would recommend specific happy information to other people and more specifically to their friends and relatives, while only a minor percentage said that they would not recommend some types of happy information because they believe that is not suitable for everyone.



#### **4.13 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the findings as they are extracted by the 15 interviews. Firstly, clarifications on the presentation of the data it was made. The use of online environment as a platform to seek information that changes individuals' emotions in a positive way was next. The types of information that humans seek were presented next with music videos and photos of landscapes to be the most commonly used among the participants. YouTube and Google were the mediums that participants seek happy information. Many more mediums and platforms were introduced by the interviewees. Finally the positive emotions that the feel, and the connection between individuals' personality and their behaviours were presented.

## **Chapter 5: Limitations, Recommendations, Reflections and Conclusion**

### **5.1 Chapter Overview**

The final chapter of this study focuses on the conclusion and the recommendations for further research on this topic. Moreover, the limitations that the researcher faced or defined during the study are also presented. Furthermore, additional reflections on the project are introduced, describing the knowledge the researcher gained as well as the experiences she faced during the research period. The recommendations section focuses on interesting factors that future studies could focus on. The final section offers a conclusion on this research.

### **5.2 Limitations**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the individuals' information seeking behaviour of information that makes them feel positive emotions. The researcher, based on the data extracted by the conducted interviews, attempted to investigate this behaviour in a wider scope, including the various types of information that people seek, the time frequency of these behaviours, the mediums and platforms that people use for that purpose, the motivators that trigger the need for seeking happy information, the different positive emotions that people feel while they are doing this. Some of the findings were met among many participants –and in some cases almost among the majority of them- while other data were met among a limited number of interviewees and in some cases even by one. Furthermore, there were findings that were introduced early during the interviews while others have only been introduced in the last interviewees. Even though, the researcher interviewed 15 people based on the qualitative analysis saturation perspective, more interviews might have offered more findings.

Designing semi-structured interviews for a study was a research approach new to the researcher. Due to the fact that this method was unfamiliar to her, the results are by no means absolute and further research on the topic would be really useful. Furthermore, from the fifteen (15) participants only the two (2) had participated in a relative process, while some of them had troubles distinguishing the semi-structured interviews methodology from other approaches, like questioners and surveys. The combination of a qualitative and a quantitative methodology for the purposes of this study might have provided more findings in a quantitative way. Moreover, using a combination of interviews and surveys could possibly generate more participants that would eventually lead to larger samplings. On the other hand, due to the time constraints this approach was considered of high risk and the researcher decided to follow the approach that is presented on the methodology chapter.

To continue with, this study focused specifically on the information seeking behaviour of happy information within a casual leisure environment and even though some of the findings are presented on the literature, those in most cases are within a working/academic environment, or within serious leisure and in most of the cases are dedicated to task oriented information seeking. What is more, due to the fact that the participant sampling does not follow specific requirements, the findings represent individuals and not specific target groups like specific age, occupation or nationality and for that reason should not be considered reprehensive for specific target groups.

To summarize with, the researcher would like to point out that this study is by no means exhaustive and it should not be considered as such. The amount of time that the researcher had in order to investigate this topic was limited due to time constraints and only a qualitative approach was used. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods might had provided more findings. Moreover, more participants might have provided even more findings, even though patterns have already been identified. Finally, the focus on the casual leisure excludes much behaviour that humans might have.

### **5.3 Recommendations for future research**

Studying the background literature, no specific research focusing on the individuals' seeking behaviour of happy information was identified. As no prior studies were found on this project, the study had a exploring and investigating nature. Moreover, as it is considered a topic of high interest, more studies could be conducted in the future:

- This study did not focus on a specific target group like specific ages, occupations or locations, even though the findings identify trends about behaviours of specific groups. For an example, it was found that individuals living in countries that face financial problems have the need to seek almost on daily basis information in an online environment that can change their emotions, due to the fact that it is free and easily accessible. Future research focusing on specific groups could be conducted, or research comparing the information seeking behaviours of different groups based on the same specific characteristics.
- As this study focused on happy information seeking behaviours within a casual leisure environment, a relative study investigating the same factors within a different environment e.g. serious leisure would be of high interest. The researcher strongly believes that a comparison between these environments would be quite interesting.
- Furthermore, the researcher is of the opinion that studies in an 'offline environment' would also quite interesting, and as mentioned above compassions between the two different environments could lead to interesting findings.

- To continue with, an impressive percentage of the participants to this study described the need to seek happy information and especially music videos on YouTube. Comments on why individuals seek these videos on this platform included the convenience and the recommendations list that it provides. Studies focusing on more convenient information retrieval and seeking systems could take place in the future.

- As mentioned in the limitations chapter above, a study in which more interviews would be conducted might be useful, as in that case not only more findings could be presented but also trends that have already been identified could be confirmed. Moreover, a combination of the quantitative and qualitative methods could also extract more findings.

- It would also be interesting to investigate in more depth the impact of personal information objects on the individuals' emotions.

- Two participants described examples of seeking information from platforms that are against the copyright law. It would be interesting future studies to focus on the reasons why people use these mediums for information seeking.

The recommendations above reflect the researcher's personal beliefs. More studies can be conducted that could help and contribute on the topic of information seeking of happy information that increases positive emotions.

#### **5.4 Personal reflections on researching and writing the dissertation**

This study was conducted partly to fulfil the necessary requirements in order the researcher to archive her master's degree in Information Management. The researcher wrote the present dissertation during the summer of 2014. Prior this time, the researcher had to prepare a research proposal that presented the scope, a brief literature review, the research questions and the methodology that it would be followed. The research proposal helped the researcher to acquire a first understanding on the topic. As far as the dissertation is concerned, the researcher firstly presented an introduction about the reasons that motivated her to do this study, focusing on the need that individuals have nowadays to seek information that will make them happy and to feel positive emotions. While the existing literature mostly focuses on the information seeking within an academic and working environment or serious leisure and in most cases is in relation to task oriented information seeking, studies about happy information seeking within casual leisure are infrequent. After the background reading was done, the researcher was able to identify that this study could fill gaps within the information seeking and retrieval behaviour.

A challenging part of this study was the identification of the best methodology that could provide answer to the research questions. Due to the inexperience of the researcher on this topic and the past methodologies that have been followed, the use of semi-structured interviews was chosen as the most preferable approach. As a result, the recruitment of volunteers was mandatory. At the same time, the researcher developed the interview questions that could lead to interesting findings and help the researcher to collect useful data. Two trial interviews—which are not included on this study—followed by 15 interviews, were conducted during a period of 16 days.

The process of interviewing was quite challenging, as the researcher had to multitask, to ask questions, to listen and prepare the next questions. Nevertheless, the interviews were generally conducted in a normal pace and the researcher with each interview was gaining more knowledge and confidence. Moreover, she believes that the findings she extracted from the semi-structured interviews are useful and answer the research questions. Furthermore, the researcher strongly believes that semi-structured interviews can provide data which solid interviews or other approaches could not. At first, the researcher was not sure if an appropriate amount of participants would respond due to the interviews. Shortly after though, she changed her mind as individuals found the topic of the study to be very interesting and they were willing to participate and express their behaviours. The researcher is satisfied that the participants expressed their behaviours without feeling embarrassment or shame, even when participants provided examples of information seeking behaviours from mediums that are against the law. This is an interesting finding for the researcher.

Moreover, as it was previously mentioned, the use of qualitative methods was unfamiliar to the researcher. With that in mind, the researcher developed the data analysis the way seemed more logical to her. When possible, the findings were presented by charts and in many cases the extracted quotation from the interviews were mentioned. Groupings of relative data were made when possible as well, in order to present the findings in a logical order for the readers.

The process of this research provided the researcher with many advantages. First of all, while studying the literature from a wide scope of disciplines, she gained knowledge on topics that previously was unfamiliar with. Moreover, she put in practice what she learned from the relevant course about research methods and. Furthermore, the chosen methodology of the semi-structured interviews made her design interview questions and to conduct the interviews in a procedure that she never had followed before. Finally, due to the researcher's technical background, the data analysis of a quantitative study was challenging but also very interesting.

## 5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the information seeking behaviour of individuals in order to change their emotions in a positive way. Moreover, this study focused on non-working or academic environment as well as in non-task oriented information seeking behaviours within a casual leisure. Furthermore, the study focused on the types of information that individuals' seek in order to feel happier when they are in an online environment, the time frequency of this need, the mediums and platforms they use for that purpose as well as the positive emotions that people feel. Additionally, the study investigated separately and individually the use of information objects that are publically accessible as well as private information objects; the relevance between individuals personality and the information that s/he seeks.

To continue with, the present study investigated and preceded findings from a wide and interesting spectrum of information seeking behaviour. In general, useful data were extracted from the 15 conducted interviews and the findings were presented. Many different types of information (based on information-as-thing perspective) were introduced as well as various emotions that participants feel when they seek for it. Patterns on the types, mediums and motivators were also identified. The researcher presents the different types of happy information that individuals focus on, like music and pictures, which are the information most commonly used by the participants for a positive emotion change. Finally, a list of all the positive emotions that participants feel while they interact with happy information was presented.

Moreover, it is interesting that while the researcher collected various answers some, of them were given by many participants while others were not. It was identified that art and sports oriented information is on high use among participants while jokes, games and articles were on the opposite scale.

An interesting factor was that participants -apart from one- did not referred to personal information prior the researchers question about personal information objects. Furthermore it was identified that people primary use YouTube and Google to seek happy information with primary reasons for that the convenience that these mediums provide on how easy humans seek information on them.

As a final note, the researcher strongly believes that Computer and Information Sciences need to focus more on information that is able to change individuals' emotions in a positive way and that further studies on this topic –both on a technical and a theoretical basis- is warranted, especially nowadays, when various social and financial factors affect humans' emotions state in a negative way.

## **Bibliography**

Al, K. Kiyoshi, F. Kentaro, K. Kazuo O. (2013). Sad Music Induces Pleasant Emotion. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Volume 4, Front. Psychol., June. Available at: <http://journal.frontiersin.org/Journal/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00311/abstract> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Alexa site (2014). *How popular is google.com?* Available at: <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/google.com> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Andersona, C. Glassmana, M. McAfee R, Pinellib, T. (2001). An investigation of factors affecting how engineers and scientists seek information. *Journal of Engineering and Technology Management*, Volume 18, Issue 2, June, pp. 131-155.

Arapakis, I. Moshfeghi, Y. Joho, H. Ren, R. Hannah, D. Jose, J. M. (2009). Enriching user profiling with affective features for the improvement of a multimodal recommender system. In *Proceeding of the ACM International Conference on Image and Video Retrieval*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, pp. 1–8.

Argyle, M. (1996). *The social psychology of leisure*. New York: Penguin Books.

Bates, M. (2010). Information. *Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Sciences*, 3rd Ed.; Bates, Marcia J. Maack, Mary Niles, Eds. New York: CRC Press, vol. 3, pp. 2347-2360.

Bates, M. (2010b) Information Behavior, *Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Sciences*, 3rd Ed. M. J. Bates and M. N. Maack, Eds. New York: CRC Press, vol. 3, pp. 2381-2391.

Beck, S. E. Manuel, K. (2008). *Practical research methods for librarians and information professionals*. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman.

Bertaux, D. (1981). *From the Life-History Approach to the Transformation of Sociological Practice*, in: *Biography and Society: The Life History Approaches in the Social Sciences*, D. Bertaux (ed.). Beverly Hills, CA, USA: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 29–45.

Bronstein, J. (2014). The Role of Perceived Self-Efficacy in the Information Seeking Behavior of Library and Information Science Students. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, Volume 40, Issue 2, March, pp. 101-106.

Buckland, M. (1991). Information as thing. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 42(5), pp.351-360. [Online] Available at: <http://people.ischool.berkeley.edu/~buckland/thing.html> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Carl, J. Soskin, D. Kerns, C. Barlow, D. (2013) Positive emotion regulation in emotional disorders: A theoretical review, *Clinical Psychology Review*, Volume 33, Issue 3, April 2013, pp 343-360.

Case, D. O. (2008). *Looking for information: A survey of research on information seeking, needs, and behavior*, Emerald.2nd ed. Bingley: UK.

Chang, S.L., 2009. Information Research in Leisure: Implications from an Empirical Study of backpackers. *Library Trends*, 57(4), pp.711-728. [Online] Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/lib.0.0062> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Chan, C.H. Jones, G.J.F. *Affect-based indexing and retrieval of films Proceedings of the 13th annual ACM international conference on multimedia*, ACM, New York, NY, USA (2005), pp. 427–430.

Cheuk Wai-yi, B. (1998). An information seeking and using process model in the workplace: a constructivist approach. *Asian Libraries*, Vol. 7 No. 12, 1998, pp. 375-390.

Chowdhury, S. Gibbs F. Landoni, M. (2011). Uncertainty in information seeking and retrieval: A study in an academic environment. *Information Processing & Management*, Volume 47, Issue 2, March 2011, pp. 157–175.

Costello, K.L. Murillo, A.P. (2014). “I want your kidney!” Information seeking, sharing, and disclosure when soliciting a kidney donor online. *Patient Education and Counselling*, Volume 94, Issue 3, March 2014, pp 423-426.

Covington, P., Craig B.J. (1998) Survey of the information seeking patterns of dental hygienists. *Journal of Dental Education* Aug, 62(8), pp. 573-7.

Dervin, B. and Reinhard, C.D., 2007. How Emotional Dimensions of Situated Information Seeking Relate to User Evaluations of Help from Sources: An Exemplar Study Informed by Sense-Making Methodology. In: D. Nahl and D. Bilal, eds. 2007. *Information and Emotion: The Emergent Affective Paradigm in Information Behavior Research and Theory*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc., pp.51-84.

Ellis, D. (1993) Modelling the Information-Seeking Patterns of Academic Researchers: A Grounded Theory Approach. *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, Vol. 63, No. 4, Symposium on Qualitative Research: Theory, Methods, and Applications, pp. 469-486

Elsweiler, D. Wilson, M. Kirkegaard Lunn, B. (2011). Chapter 9 Understanding Casual-Leisure Information Behaviour, in Amanda Spink, Jannica Heinström (ed.) *New Directions in Information*



*Behaviour (Library and Information Science, Volume 1)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp.211-241.

Fulton, C. (2009). The pleasure principle: the power of positive affect in information seeking. *Aslib Proceedings*, 61(3), pp.245-261. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00012530910959808> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Fulton, C. Vondracek, R. (2009) Introduction: Pleasurable Pursuits: Leisure and LIS Research. *Library Trends* 57.4: 611-617. *Project MUSE*. [Online] Available at: <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/lib/summary/v057/57.4.fulton.html> [Last accessed 14 June. 2014].

Gallagher, J. (2014). *Recession led to 10,000 suicides*. BBC News site [online]. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-27796628> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Glaser, B.G. Strauss, A.I. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York, NY, USA: Aldine Publishing Company.

Gorman, G.E. Clayton, P (2005). *Qualitative research for the Information Professional. A Practical Handbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Facet Publishing: London

Hanjalic, A. Xu L.-Q. *Affective video content representation and modelling Multimedia*, IEEE Transactions on, 7 (1) (2005), pp. 143–154.

Hartel, J., Stebbins, R. A., Fulton, C., Chang, S.J. and Case, D.O. (2006). Taking leisure seriously: Information realities in leisure time. *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 43(1), pp.1-7. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/meet.1450430140> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Hockenhull, J. Sotomayor, E. (2013). A brief note on the information-seeking behavior of UK leisure horse owners. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Application and Research*, Volume 8, Issue 2, March-April 2013, pp 106-110.

Jiang, Y. King, J.M. Prinyawiwatukul, W. (2014) A review of measurement and relationships between food, eating behaviour and emotion, *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, Volume 36, Issue 1, March 2014, pp. 15-28.

Juslin, P. and Sloboda, J. (2013) Music and Emotion. *The Psychology of Music* (Third Edition), edited by Diana Deutsch, Academic Press, pp. 583-645.

Kilicarslan-Toruner, E. Akgun-Citak, E. (2013) Information-seeking behaviours and decision-making process of parents of children with cancer, *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, Volume 17, Issue 2, April 2013, pp. 176-183.

Kuhlthau, C. (1993). A principle of uncertainty for information seeking. *Journal of documentation*, 49 (4), pp. 339-355.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Sage Publications.

Kwasitsu, L. (2003) Information-seeking behavior of design, process, and manufacturing engineers. *Library & Information Science Research*, Volume 25, Issue 4, winter 2003, pp. 459-476.

Laplante, A and Downie, J (2011). The utilitarian and hedonic outcomes of music information-seeking in everyday life. *Library & Information Science Research*. Volume 33, Issue 3, July 2011, pp. 202-210.

Lenkowsky, R. (1987) Bibliotherapy: A Review and Analysis of the Literature. *The Journal of Special Education Summer*, 1987 vol. 21, pp. 123-132.

Lopatovska, I. and Arapakis, I. (2011) Theories, methods and current research on emotions in library and information science, information retrieval and human-computer interaction. *Information Processing and Management* 47, pp. 572-592.

Lopatovska, I. Cool, C. (2008). *Online search: Uncovering affective characteristics of information retrieval experience*. Presented at the 2008 ALISE annual conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Makri, S. Blandford, A. Cox, A. (2008) Investigating the information-seeking behaviour of academic lawyers: From Ellis's model to design, *Information Processing & Management*, Volume 44, Issue 2, March 2008, pp. 613-634.

Malliari, A. Korobili, S. Zapanidou, S. (2011) Exploring the information seeking behavior of Greek graduate students: A case study set in the University of Macedonia. *The International Information & Library Review*, Volume 43, Issue 2, June 2011, pp. 79-91.

Marchionini, G. (1995). *Information Seeking in Electronic Environments*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: UK.

Marsh, I. (2014) *Suicide: The hidden cost of the financial crisis*. New Statesman site [online] Available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2014/08/suicide-hidden-cost-financial-crisis> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Marshall, C.C. and Bly, S., 2004. Sharing Encountered Information: Digital Libraries Get a Social Life. *Proceedings of the 2004 Joint ACM/IEEE Conference on Digital Libraries (JCDL'04)*, pp.218-227. Available at: <http://research.microsoft.com/pubs/72883/p038-marshall.pdf> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Meyers, D. (2004) *Emotion in psychology*, Worth Publishers: New York.

Mokhtari, H. (2014) A Quantitative Survey on the Influence of Students' Epistemic Beliefs on Their General Information Seeking Behavior. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* (In Press) Available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0099133314000421#> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Moshfeghi, Y. (2012) *Role of emotion in Information Retrieval*, PhD, University of Glasgow: UK.

Nahl, D. (2007) The Centrality of the Affective in Information Behavior. In: D. Nahl and D. Bilal, eds. 2007. *Information and Emotion: The Emergent Affective Paradigm in Information Behavior Research and Theory*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc., pp.51-84.

Oatley, K. Johnson-Laird, P.N. (2014) Cognitive approaches to emotions, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Volume 18, Issue 3, March 2014, pp. 134-140.

Orb, A. Eisenhauer, L., Wynaden, P. (2000). Ethics in Qualitative Research. *Journal of nursing scholarship*, 33:1, pp.93-99.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014 *OECD Better Life* [Online] Available at: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Patton, M.Q. ( 2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA, USA: Sage Publications.

Pinelli, T.E. Barclay, A.P. Kennedy J.M.) (1993). The information-seeking behavior of engineers *Encyclopedia of Library & Information Science*, 52 Suppl. 15, pp. 161–201.

Rangaswamy, A. Giles, C.L. Seres, S. (2009) A strategic perspective on search engines: Thought candies for practitioners and researchers. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 23, pp. 49–60.

Rioux, K. S., 2004. Information Acquiring-and-sharing in Internet-based Environments: An Exploratory Study of Individual User Behaviors. Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin. Available at: <http://www.library.utexas.edu/etd/d/2004/riouxks042/riouxks042.pdf> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Ross, C.S. (1999). Finding without seeking: the information encounter in the context of reading for pleasure. *Information Processing & Management*, 35(6), pp.783-799. Available at: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0306-4573\(99\)00026-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0306-4573(99)00026-6) [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Sadasivam, R. Kinney, R. Lemon, S. Shimada, S. Allison, J. and Houston, T. (2013) Internet health information seeking is a team sport: Analysis of the Pew Internet Survey, *International Journal of Medical Informatics*, Volume 82, Issue 3, March 2013, pp. 193-200.

Saracevic, T., (2011). Foreword. In: I. Ruthven and D. Kelly, eds. 2011. *Interactive Information Seeking, Behaviour and Retrieval*. London: Facet Publishing, pp. XXV-XXXII.

Savolainen, R. (2014). Emotions as motivators for information seeking: A conceptual analysis. *Library & Information Science Research*, 36 (2014), p. 59–65. Available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0740818814000085#> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Savolainen, R. (2012). Elaborating the motivational attributes of information need and uncertainty. *Information research*, vol., no. 2, June 2012, [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.informationr.net/ir/17-2/paper516.html> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Savolainen, R. (1999). The role of the internet in information seeking. Putting the networked services in context. *Information Processing & Management*, Volume 35, Issue 6, November 1, pp. 765–782.

Savolainen, R. (1995). Everyday Life Information Seeking: Approaching Information Seeking in the Context of “Way of Life”. *LISR*, 17, pp. 259-294. Available at: <http://bogliolo.eci.ufmg.br/downloads/SAVOLAINEN%201995.pdf> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Schaller, R. Harvey, M. and Elswailer, D. (2012). *Out and About on Museums Night: Investigating Mobile Search Behaviour for Leisure Events*. Searching4Fun Workshop, ECIR2012, 1. - 5. April 2012, Barcelona.

Scherer, K.R. (2001). *Appraisal considered as a process of multi-level sequential checking* .R. Scherer, A. Schorr, T. Johnstone (Eds.), *Appraisal process in emotion: Theory, methods, research*, Oxford University Press, New York pp. 92–120.

Shelstad, K. R., Clevenger, F.W. (1996) Information retrieval patterns and need among practicing general surgeons: a state-wide experience. *Bull Med Libr Assoc* (Now published as *Journal of the Medical Library Association*). 1996 October, 84(4): 490–497.

Sloboda, J.A. O'Neill, S.A. (2001), Emotions in everyday listening to music P.N. Juslin, J.A. Sloboda (Eds.), *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research*, Oxford University Press pp. 415–429.

Stebbins, R.A. (2009). Leisure and Its Relationship to Library and Information Science: Bridging the Gap. *Library Trends*, 57(4), pp.618-631. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/lib.0.0064> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious leisure*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Stebbins, R. A. (1997) Casual leisure: a conceptual statement. *Leisure Studies*. 16:1, pp. 17-25 Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/026143697375485> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Stebbins, R. A. (1992). Amateurs, professionals and serious leisure. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Stokes, P. Lewin, D. (2004) Information-seeking behaviour of nurse teachers in a school of health studies: a soft systems analysis. *Nurse Education Today*, Volume 24, Issue 1, January, pp. 47–54.

The Boston Globe. (2013). *When doctors prescribe books to heal the mind*, The Boston Globe site [online] Available at: <http://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2013/12/22/when-doctors-prescribe-books-heal-mind/H2mbhLnTJ3Gy96BS8TUgil/story.html> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Tabak, E. Willson, M. (2012). A non-linear model of information sharing practices in academic communities. *Library & Information Science Research*, Volume 34, Issue 2, April 2012, pp. 110-116.

Talja, S. and Hansen, P. (2006). Information sharing. In: A. Spink and C. Cole eds. 2006. *New Directions in Human Information Behavior*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp.113-134.

Wahoush, O. and Banfield, L. (2014) Information literacy during entry to practice: Information-seeking behaviors in student nurses and recent nurse graduates, *Nurse Education Today*, Volume 34, Issue 2, February 2014, pp. 208-213.

Wilson, T.D. (2003). Philosophical foundations and research relevance: Issues for information research. *Journal of Information Science*, 29 pp. 445–452.

Wilson, T. D. (2000). Human information behaviour. *Informing Science*, Vol3 (2). Available at: <http://inform.nu/Articles/Vol3/v3n2p49-56.pdf> [Last accessed 20 August 2014].

Wilson, T.D. (1981). On User Studies and Information Needs. *Journal of Documentation*, 37 (1981), pp. 3–15.

Wilson, M. Alhodaithi, B. Hurst, M. (2012). *A Diary Study of Information Needs Produced in Casual-Leisure Reading Situations*. Searching4FUN, Workshop of the 34rd European Conference on Information Retrieval, Barcelona: Spain.

## Appendix A: Advert for participant's recruitment

### SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR STUDY

Hi all!

I'm conducting a study for my Masters dissertation, focusing on individuals' seeking behaviour of information that makes themselves happy. The questions will focus on information seeking behaviour of humans' in order to increase their personal happiness. Participants must be adults (**over 18**) and regular internet users. The study will involve a 20-25 minutes interview in July, either in person or via Skype –whatever is more convenient-. If you are interested in participating please contact me via e-mail [[athanasopoulou.alexia@gmail.com](mailto:athanasopoulou.alexia@gmail.com)] or via a private message on Facebook [[alexia.athanasopoulou](#)]. If you are interesting an Information sheet will be sent answering your questions!

Please feel free to share this advert with anyone you know who may be interested in participating.

Many Thanks!

Alexia

## Appendix B: Participants information sheet

### PARTICIPANTS INFORMETION SHEET

<b>Title of the Study :</b>	An investigation into individuals' happy information seeking behaviour in online environment
<b>Researcher's Name:</b>	Alexia Athanasopoulou
<b>Researcher's email:</b>	athanasopoulou.alexia@gmail.com
<b>Supervisor:</b>	Prof. Ian Ruthven
<b>Supervisor's email:</b>	ian.ruthven@strath.ac.uk

#### Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate the type of information that people use to make themselves happy in an online environment. This research **does not** focus on information seeking behaviour within working or academic environment. Moreover, the study focus on information seeking within a leisure environment, but not on information answering specific information needs.

For instance, *booking aeroplane tickets for summer vacations* may lead to the increase of personal happiness **but** this study will not cover this type of information as it answers a specific information need. On the other hand the below example is within the interest of this study

'I feel sad and want a funny YouTube video to cheer me up'

#### What the study will involve

People who accept to take part on the study will be expected to be interviewed by the researcher. For Glasgow based participants, the interviews will be conducted by person while for participants located in others areas the interviews will be conducted via Skype. Each interviewer is expected to spend around 25 minutes. The researcher kindly asks the participants to think **three examples of information that they seek in order to feel positive emotions.**

The researcher will record the interview with the use of an audio- recording computer program. Volunteers will be asked about their information seeking behaviour (mainly focus on online environment) habits. What is more, interviewees are more than welcome –if they feel comfortable-



during the interview to log in their e-mails, sites, social networks etc in order to show their seeking behaviour.

After the interview period a transcript of the data will be used for analysis. Some factors will be visualized as graphs or tables for a better understanding-organisation. The data from the interviews will be integrated with other information from the literature review in the final report.

Prior to the interview, the participants will be e-mailed a consent form with information about the protection of their personal data, what they should expect to be questioned about, and the purpose of the study. This consent form should be signed prior to the start of the interview. For the interviews that will take place via Skype, the participants will be sent a reply message with an “I agree” statement in order to take part on the study.

Please note that the participation is voluntarily and participants have the right **not** to answer any question that makes them feel uncomfortable. Moreover, participants have the right to request the disposal of their data anytime during the research. Finally the name of participants will be change for their convenient.

### **Data Management**

The interviews will be transcribed and some quotes will be presented in the dissertation. These data will be securely and anonymously stored in the researcher’s personal computer in protected files (with passwords). Apart from the researcher no one will have the right to access the computer and the files for the period of the study. For personal data protection reasons, in the final draft the interviewer’s real names will be changed with others. Furthermore, other easily identifiable data will be removed. The printed (hardcopy) data will be kept in a locked folder accessible only by the researcher for a limited period as it is going to be described below.

### **Data Disposal**

After the final submission of the dissertation, the data will remain stored as it is described above. It is expected the researcher receives the final mark for the dissertation around September 2014. The data will be kept for a small period of time afterwards in case of publication of the findings. After that period all the data will be permanently deleted from researcher personal laptop, make them unable to retrieve them ever again.

### **Ethics Approval**

This dissertation gain ethics approval by the Departmental and University Ethics Committees. For any queries related to ethics participants can refer t the researcher.

### Appendix C: Concern form as it was e-mailed to the participants.

Title of the Study :	An investigation into individuals' happy information seeking behaviour in online environment
Researcher's Name:	Alexia Athanasopoulou
Researcher's email:	athanasopoulou.alexia@gmail.com
Supervisor:	Ian Ruthven
Supervisor's email:	ian.ruthven@strath.ac.uk

I CONCERN THAT:

I agree to take part on this study

I have read the information sheet and I understand what as a participant should I do.

- My participation is entirely voluntary and I keep the right to step out from this study at any point of this study and that all my personal data will immediately deleted.
- I understand that all my personal data will not be reviled on the dissertation and my identification will be no possible by no means
- The researcher answered any questions that I had prior the interview
- I understand and I agree that the interviews will be audio-record
- My data and the transcript of the interview I participate can be storage as long as is useful for this study

I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ THE ABOVE SENTENCIES AND CONCERN TO PARTICIPATE ON THIS STUDY.

Name of participant:	
Date	