

Design researchers' information sharing

The enactment of a discipline

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This thesis is about information sharing in interdisciplinary research practices. It reports one conceptual and three empirical studies. The studies have been conducted through focusing on the field of design research, and in particular on a Nordic network of design researchers. From a practice-based perspective, the exploration of the study object oscillates between three nested and interconnected frames.

The main contribution of this thesis is that it illustrates how activities of information sharing not only contribute to, but actually play a central role in the shaping of the practice of design research. It is shown how information sharing works as a contributor to the development, maintenance and shaping of practices in 1) design research as it is conducted in the Nordic network; 2) in the field of design research; and 3) within interdisciplinary research.

Without losing sight of the empirical material, the theoretical analysis has made it possible to illuminate the connection between activities of sharing and the enactment of a discipline. Through analysis and discussion of the four studies as a whole, the reciprocal relationship between information sharing and the area of design research is elucidated. It is shown how information sharing, as it emerges in this interdisciplinary practice, functions as a unifying force towards the probable goal of establishing a discipline.

Keywords: information sharing; information practices; scholarly communication; interdisciplinary research; design research; practice theory; materiality