SATISFACTION AND THE PERCEPTION OF USEFULNESS AMONG USERS OF BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICE IN JAPAN

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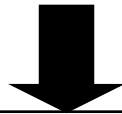Y. Kasai, Tamagawa University
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OVERALL GOALS OF THE PROJECT

First Stage
To develop a conceptual framework for
understanding effects of a library service,

Second Stage
To elaborate it with empirical data in business
information service

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(1) **What kind of goals do users have when they use the business information service ?**

(2) **What kind of service do they use in the business information service and how do they relate to the goals they have ?**

(3) **How do users search information when they use the business information service ?**

(4) **What kind of effects does the service have on users and how they perceive the usefulness of the service ?**

(5) **What kind of images do users have on public libraries and how they relate to their use ?**

OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICE IN JAPAN (1)

A series of services:
   Business book collection and databases
   Reference service
   Business consulting service
   Business seminars
   Intensive business courses for business starters

OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICE IN JAPAN (2)

A new and innovative service introduced to Japanese public libraries in the late 1990s

A series of new services:
A new way of providing the service
   (1) In accordance with the government policy
   (2) Actively cooperating with other agencies
       and organisations

METHODOLOGY (1)

Semi-structured interviews

Interviewees: users of 4 public libraries' business information service

**Interview guidelines:
critical incident technique**

METHODOLOGY (3)

Interview guidelines:
1. **The last use of the public library business information service concerned,**
2. **The goal of the use,**
3. **The process leading to the generation of the goal,**
4. **Use of other sources to meet the goal, if any,**
5. **Detailed description of the use of the business information service,**
6. **Evaluation of the service**.

METHODOLOGY (4)

Example of data and coding

PROFILES OF THE LIBRARIES AND THE INTERVIEWEES

library	no. of interviewees	sex		age				
		male	female	20s	30s	40s	50s	60-70s
A	6	6	0	1	0	3	1	1
B	6	2	4	1	1	0	2	2
C	4	2	2	0	2	2	0	0
D	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
total	18	11	7	2	3	6	4	3

Table 1: Profiles of the Interviewees

PROBLEM SOLVING (DISTAL) GOALS

1. Starting a new business,
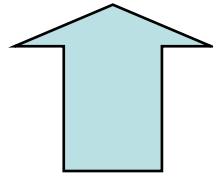2. Solving problems arising from everyday work,
3. Others
    Helping the spouse starting a new business,
    Writing a book on business statistics.

STARTING A NEW BUSINESS AND RELATED INFORMATION-SEEKING GOALS

Problem solving goal

Vague → Focused

Information-seeking subgoal

Changes in accordance with changes of the problem solving goal

Traditional services
    Collection
    Reference service

New services
    Intensive courses
    Seminar
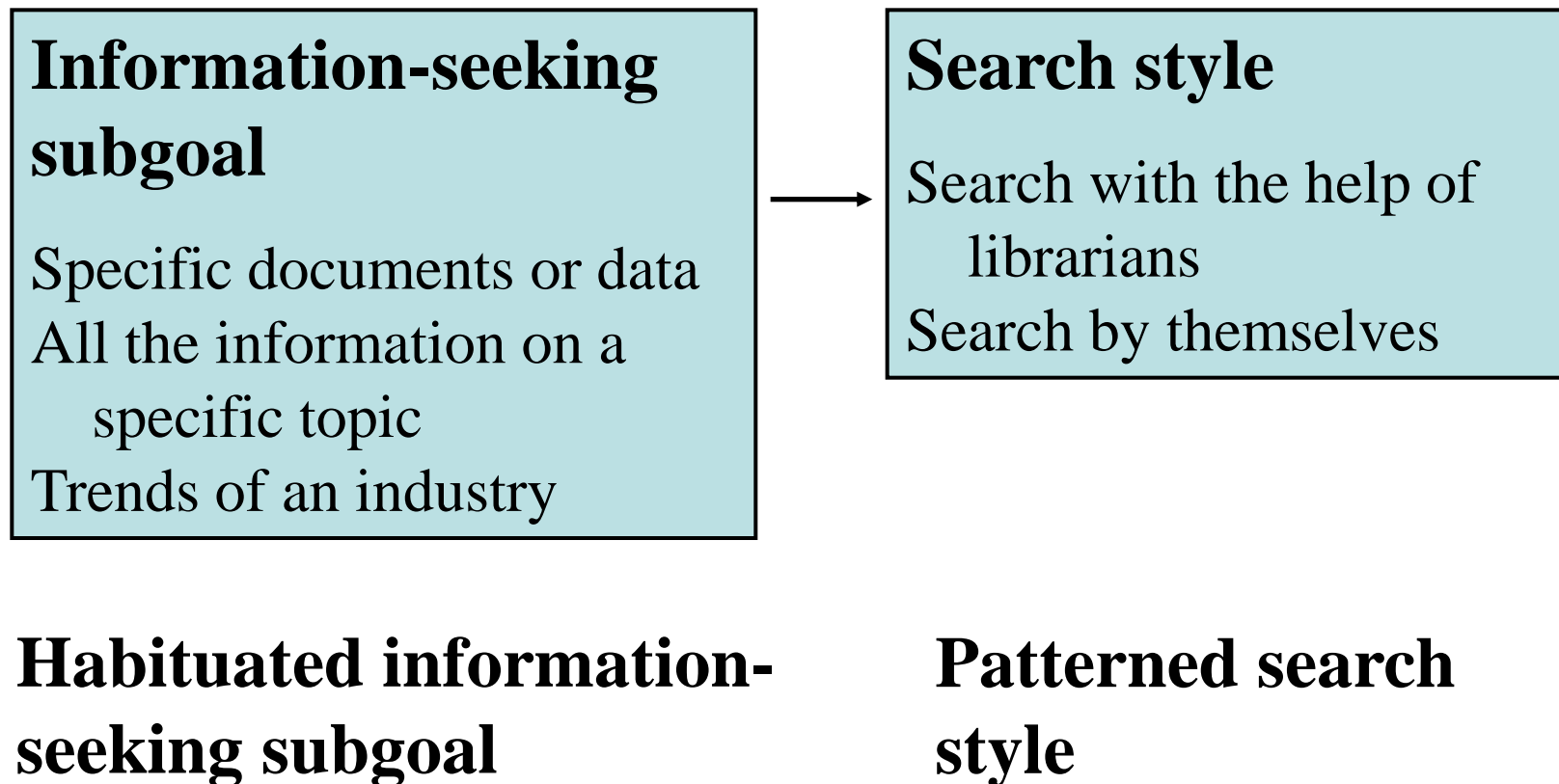   **Consulting service**

11
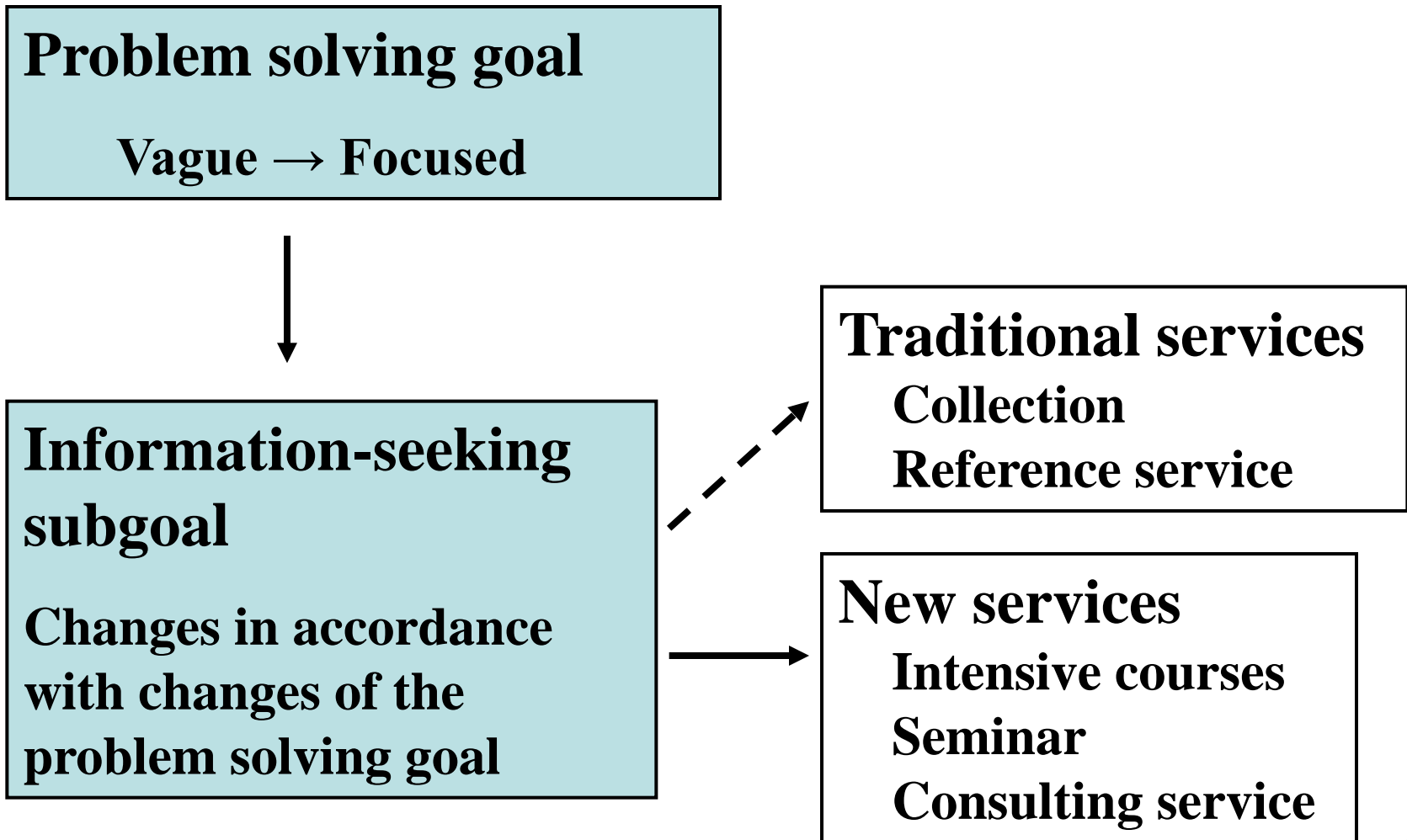
STARTING A NEW BUSINESS AND AFFECTIVE SUPPORT

Strong feeling of anxiety

Need for continuous affective support

SOLVING PROBLEMS ARISING FROM EVERYDAY WORK

Information-seeking subgoal

Specific documents or data
All the information on a specific topic
Trends of an industry

→

Search style

Search with the help of librarians
Search by themselves

Habituated information-seeking subgoal

Patterned search style

THREE EFFECTS OF LIBRARY USE

1. **Getting relevant information**

   Starting a new business: vague ⟶ specific
   Solving problems arising from everyday work: patterned needs and search styles

2. **Getting connected to relevant people and organisations**

   Starting a new business

3. **Getting an affective support**

   Starting a new business
   Using a service for the first time

SATISFACTION AND THE PERCEPTION OF USEFULNESS

They are different concepts:

1. Satisfaction

 A sense of fulfilment or contentment to the service

2. Perception of usefulness

 Formed through the accumulation of use experience

 Relative to the perception of usefulness of other available sources

 Relative to the effects of and satisfaction with the use of the service

 "Trust" in a particular librarian

GENERAL IMAGES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

1. A public library is a place where everyone is welcome

2. It is trustworthy and free of interest

3. A public library is an institution which provides books and other printed materials

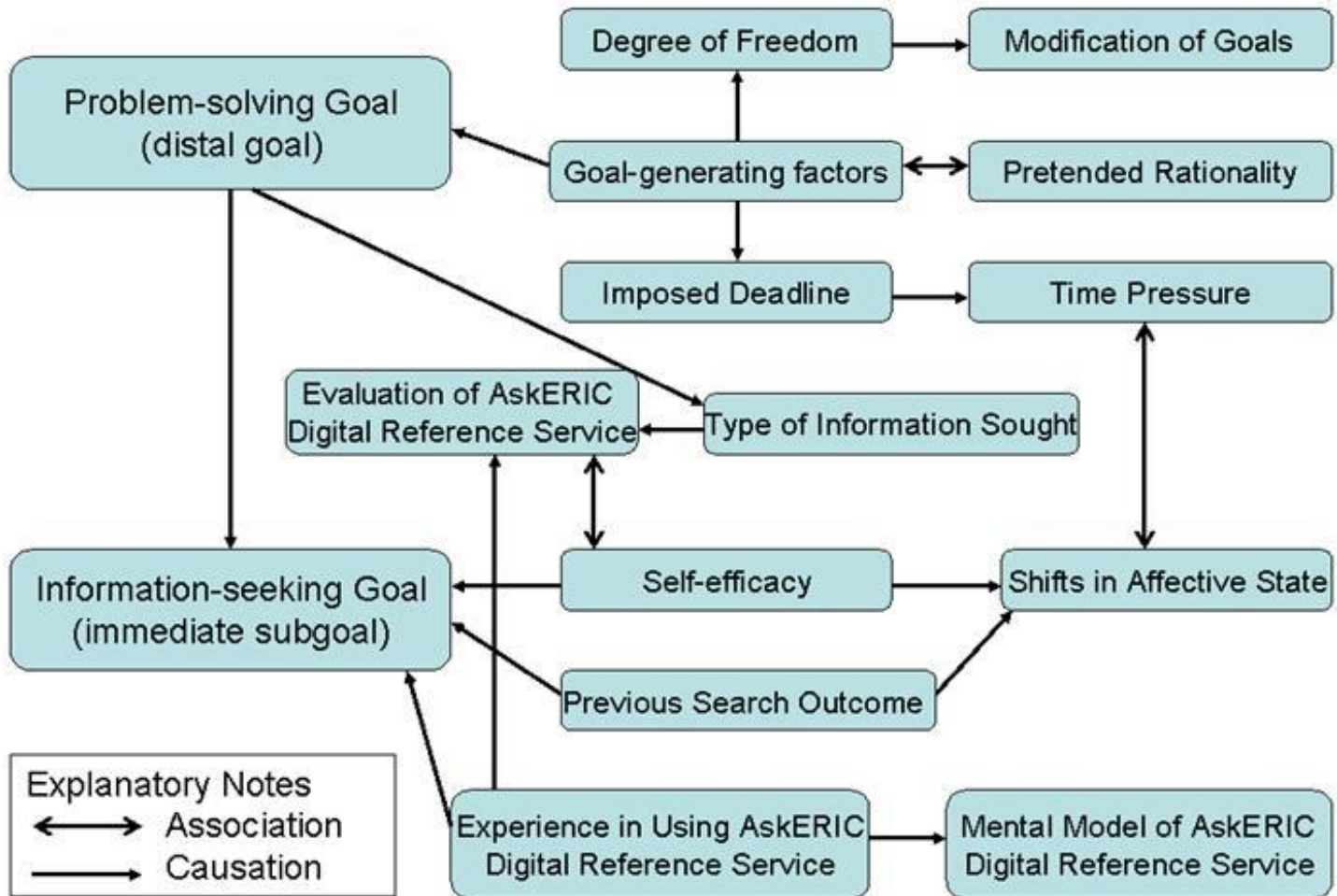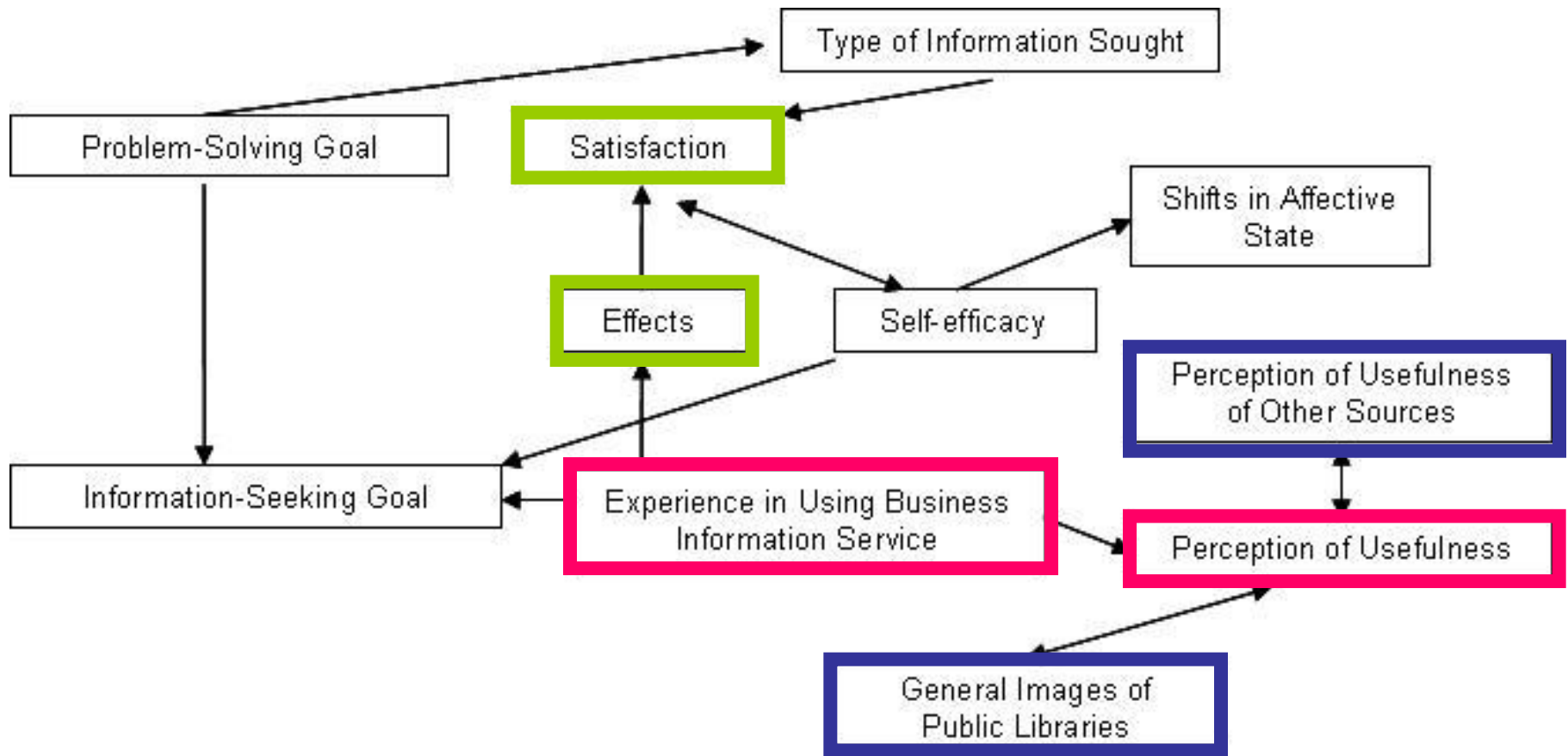**Figure 1: the IBG Model**
Source: Miwa, 2007

Figure 2: Model of the effects of the service (Modified IBG Model)

Thank you very much for your attention !