## Approaches to the collection, formatting, storage and dissemination of information and knowledge

### “Methods of Data and Information Collection”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>The first-hand knowledge avoids a response bias. An accuracy of observation will decide the response. It is dependent on the observer and is influenced by the bias.</td>
<td>Visit to the customer for assessing the customer complaints. A visit to assess the accidental damage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>The information on a specific parameter can be obtained through a control over variables. The quality of information depends on the design of the experiments.</td>
<td>Assembly the yield of a new fertilizer by a design of the control experiment. Assessing the market response to a new packaging through test marketing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>One time. Enables to cover the interested population on specific aspects. The quality of questionnaire will decide the quality of information.</td>
<td>Market survey, opinion polls, and census.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Estimation</td>
<td>In the absence of all the three above, the expert options may be called to collect the information.</td>
<td>Data pertaining to future like the alternate sources of energy, the life style in the 21st century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transaction Processing</td>
<td>The data exists but needs a processing and integration for reporting.</td>
<td>Ledgers, payroll, stock statements, sales report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchased from outside</td>
<td>Easily available at a price. May be expensive and many have a bias depending on the source.</td>
<td>Databases on the specific subject, research studies. Market and technology studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>Low cost but may project or emphasize one view or the other. Information may be lopsided.</td>
<td>The government publications, the industry publications, the institutional publications such as NCAER, NCL, BANKS, UNO the various public forums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agencies</td>
<td>Available but may not be directly useful not knowing the details of collection analysis is usually not the latest.</td>
<td>The Reverse Bank of India publications. The Tax publications, the reports and findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The term “dissemination” has become a familiar part of our vocabulary within higher education and it is easy, therefore, to talk about doing it without having a real grasp of what it means, “to disseminate” or what it is you are trying to achieve by doing it. It is helpful to think about dissemination in three different ways:

1. **Dissemination for Awareness**

It can be assumed that, at the very least, you wish people to be aware of the work of your project. This may be useful for those target audiences that do not require a detailed knowledge of your work but it is helpful for them to be aware of your activities and outcomes. Creating such an awareness of your project’s work will help the “word of mouth” type dissemination and help you build an identity and profile within your community.

2. **Dissemination for Understanding**

There will be a number of groups/audiences that you will need to target directly with your dissemination. This will be because you believe that they can benefit from what your project has to offer. It will be important, therefore, that these groups/audiences have a deeper understanding of your project’s work.

3. **Dissemination for Action**

“Action” refers to a change of practice resulting from the adoption of products, materials or approaches offered by your project. These groups/audiences will be those people that are in a position to “influence” and “bring about change” within their organizations. These are the groups/audiences that will need to be equipped with the right skills, knowledge and understanding of your work in order to achieve real change.
Models of Information Dissemination

Searching Indexed

This model is more suited for collecting content-oriented information. Here we capture information from indexed information resources such as multidisciplinary and specialized databases, library catalogues, repositories, digital libraries, web resources.

Information captured from such resources is first stored in the database created for the purpose before it goes to the target audience. The indexed information resources useful for searching content-oriented information are of the following types:

- Electronic databases and Online bibliographic services
- Local library catalogues
- Digital libraries and repositories on the Internet
- Web resources

Non-Indexed Sources

This model is more suitable for meeting needs for problem centered information. It entails browsing non-indexed sources of information for capturing and storing the relevant data first in the databank created for the purpose and later applying it for problem solving, educating, training and enlarging the choices of target users.

You can categorize non-indexed information resources in the following heads:

- Grey Literature
- Reference sources such as product directories
- Capturing data about intellectual assets of the local community

Grey Literature can be referred to as non-conventional literature. It comprises documents, not published commercially such as census, statistics, government reports, legislations, patents, conference proceedings, theses, preprints, research reports, newsletters, pamphlets, annual reports, and technical reports. Grey literature also comprises newspapers even though they are produced commercially, such documents are often original and comprehensive sources of information and provide access to the latest research in a particular area.

Establishing Public Platforms for Reaching Out to Community Members

This is an innovative model for establishing communication links with the community for education, learning, and addressing issues of importance to the local community such as right to information, product marketing, health, job opportunities, etc. The basis of this model is on the philosophy of community-based participation, wherein the people from within the locality come together at designated venue for discussion and exchange information.
Effective dissemination can be defined as that which engages the recipient in a process whether it is one of increased awareness, understanding or commitment and action. There are a number of broad issues for consideration as follows:

- Most audiences are interested in understanding how particular pieces of work fit into a particular context and the extent to which adopting new approaches/methods/materials might have other implications, for example, on future policy, on infrastructure, on staffing, funding, quality assurance etc.

- Different target audiences/groups can be easily overwhelmed by dissemination that they may not be necessarily interested in, for example, the head of an institution is unlikely to be interested in receiving continuous mailings about workshops aimed at departmental staff.

- When development projects are undertaking academic research, it is important to explain to your audience how this piece of work relates to previous work carried out in this field. Academics will rightly expect to see evidence that what you are doing builds on existing knowledge and expertise.

- Think about quality dissemination as opposed to just quantity - before sending out yet another mailing think objectively about exactly what you are trying to achieve and whether this is the most appropriate method of achieving it. Be selective in order to achieve greatest impact.

- Where several projects are working in similar areas there is always a danger of overlapping or conflicting activities. It is useful to make contact with other projects and think about how you might maximize resources, for example, one national conference on a theme is a much better use of staff time and resources. It can also avoid confusing your audience and overloading them with an unmanageable number of events, whilst providing "strength in numbers".

- Some dissemination can be very quick and in an informal setting. Have in mind a short (2 sentence) statement about the project which can be your introduction for example when asked by a senior manager "how's it going?" whilst travelling in the lift. Put well this could be just enough to gain increased interest but at least awareness. You will need to adopt a multi-strand approach to dissemination to ensure your efforts are effective. Experience has shown that disseminating using just one vehicle or method is unlikely to be successful.
http://www.openlearningworld.com/books/Fundamentals%20of%20MIS/INFORMATION%20CONCEPTS/Value%20of%20Information.html