

EMPL4005

INFORMATION, DATA AND ANALYSIS

Secondary Data Sources

Secondary Data Sources

- Advantages

- Can be a better use of resources
- Many datasets come from large, well-designed surveys that an individual or small company could not have done independently

- Disadvantages

- Can be difficult to find appropriate data
- May not have exactly what you want
- You may have to pay for access

Validity of Information

There are several factors which may affect the reliability of the data:

1. Readability vs. Accuracy

Media outlets tend to prefer attention grabbing headlines and readable articles over collections of accurate facts and figures that may be difficult to understand

Validity of Information

- Bias

Government commissioned reports are less likely to disagree with Government policy than independent research:

This is especially noticeable with vested interests - for example Tobacco Company funded research is more likely to conclude that smoking is not harmful than research commissioned by the Department of Health – (see also FOREST vs. ASH)

Validity of Information

- Trust

Reputable sources are known through experience to not manipulate the raw data in order to achieve certain results

Trusted Sources

- MINTEL –market information and analysis
- National Statistics – official source of UK population and economic statistics
- Ipsos MORI – specialises in researching advertising, loyalty, marketing, media and public affairs
- ISER – longitudinal data (over time) on life events, employment conditions, behaviour and values
- Business Source Complete via www.openathens.net and your TSD Athens password

Laws about Data and Information

UK Freedom of Information Act 2000

- What is the FOI?

The Freedom of Information Act provides public access to information held by public authorities.

- What does it do?

Public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities;

Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

- Is it effective?

The MPs Expenses Claims abuses in 2009 were only brought to light by an initial FOI request for this information to be published.

Laws about Data and Information

UK Data Protection Act 1998

- The 1998 Data Protection Act was passed by Parliament to control the way information is handled and to give legal rights to people who have information stored about them. Other European Union countries have passed similar laws as often information is held in more than one country.
- **What does the Data Protection Act mean online?**
When it comes to surfing the internet, the Data Protection Act is your friend. It is there to protect you from misuse and abuse of your online data. This short guide from BBC WebWise explains what you need to know about the DPA.

Summary of Module

What have we learned about **Data Handling**?

- We have examined how initial '*raw data*' (letters and numbers with no specific meaning) are transformed into **Information**
- We have learned how possession of certain **Information** can bring us **Knowledge** - and ultimately - **Wisdom**
- We know we can act upon that **Knowledge** to effect *change* if we so wish

Summary of Module

- We have explored several methods of collecting **Data** using both *primary* and *secondary* sources
- We have learned about *Inferential and Descriptive Statistics* and have a basic understanding of *Central Tendency (Mean, Median and Mode)* and *Dispersion (Standard Deviation and Variance)*
- We know how to use these statistics to produce graphs and charts to illustrate our data meaningfully

Summary of Module

- We know how to interrogate the **Data** in an article or report to extract only the **Information** *relevant to our enquiry* from the article - We can be **Discerning**
- We know how and where to seek out statistical or graphical evidence which will back up our claims - or refute them - depending on the point of view of the question
- We can now draw all of these strands together to produce a report arguing both sides of a question and provide evidence for each point of view.