2.1 SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

A document in any form can be a source of information. For quite some time now the printed page has remained the most useful and reliable source of information. The Printed page in the form of books, periodicals, reports, etc., is to be seen everywhere. Along with the printed page, some other forms of documents have also appeared on the scene asking for more and more attention. These are various audiovisual materials, such as, films, filmstrips, various forms of phono records etc., which have been accepted as source of information and are acquired in a modern library.

2.2 SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOURCES:

Among all the forms of documents mentioned above one essential common link runs through. They are not only records of human observations and thought but in the creation of such records, direct human intervention is necessary. In contrast to this we have now records where observations are directly recorded in some form through instruments.

In many cases a particular record in a form may be just a converted form of another already existing record.
Thus a book in printed form may be converted into another form, such as microfilm or magnetic tape, etc.,
The wind tunnel data can be similarly converted into a printed page for ease of handling and distribution or for any other reasons.

2.3 TYPES OF DOCUMENTS:

As a modern library or a documentation centre has to deal with various types of documents attempts have been made to group them into convenient categories or classes. These groupings or categories have naturally been according to characteristics considered useful.

2.3.1 ATTEMPTS TO CATEGORIES DOCUMENTS:

S.R. Ranganathan had shown a number of possible divisions of the universe of documents on the basis of different characteristics (1). Documents can be divided on the basis of their physical form, nature of presentation, publication characteristics, purpose, information content, level of treatment, etc., from a documentalist's point of view, a more useful division should be on the basis of the nature of content and form of presentation in documents. One opinion is that all documents, on this basis, can be conveniently divided into two clear-cut groups primary and secondary publications (or documents).
A notable advocate of this two-category division has been CW. Hanson (2). According to this division, an encyclopaedia article on a subject would be counted as a primary document. The line of argument is that the article may not contain any new information on the subject, other than what is already available in other forms of primary publications, but it presents the information in the particular form for the first time. The article concerned is not a condensation or rewriting in any way of any existing documents but has been written specifically for the encyclopaedia.

2.3.2 PRIMARY SOURCES:

2.3.2.1 PERIODICAL:

Among the primary sources, the periodical is said to have assumed the most important place. Results of research are usually first reported in periodicals. A periodical contains mostly original contributions. To make the latest information on a subject available for further work and study the periodical is the most effective scientist-to-scientist medium. So far as information characteristic is concerned, it should be noted that there is now a wide range of varieties. There are the highly specialised research periodicals, technical journals, trade...
journals, popular journals, house journals. Each one of these types has different information content, different audience, and different purpose.

The periodical has assumed such importance in most of the sciences that one is often inclined to define science as a field of study having at least one periodical. Growth of new disciplines and intensification of studies in some areas of old disciplines have invariably been accompanied by new periodicals. In spite of this there has always been a gap between the interest and curiosity of a worker in a discipline and the coverage of a periodical. Existence of the this gap was very effectively described by SC Bradford through his Law of Scattering (3).

2.3.3 SECONDARY DOCUMENTS:

Secondary documents are based on primary documents. They usually contain the information of primary documents in a condensed form, as in an abstracting periodical or digest, or presented in a narrative form, as in a review of progress, or presented in the form of a broad outline, as in an encyclopedia article, and so on.
ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING PERIODICALS:

They are the most important secondary publications. Processing of primary information and production of secondary publications have become almost an industry. In subject fields where there is a considerable volume of primary literature and they are scattered over different sources, secondary publications serve as important signposts or guides, without them a considerable part of the primary literature may remain unknown and unused.

2.3.4 TERTIARY DOCUMENTS:

Under the category of tertiary publications, the main types, as listed earlier are various types of guides, directories, bibliographies, and lists of research in progress, all of which will lead to other sources of information.

GUIDES:

Various types of guides are available of which the most important variety is the guide to the literature of a subject.

LIST OF RESEARCH-IN-PROGRESS:

A list or directory of research in progress is a new type of publication which is needed very much, for
planning of research, avoidance of duplication and above all in the anticipation of information. Such a list may cover the research activities of a single institution or laboratory, a group of institutions, e.g. Universities, or research in progress within a specified subject.

2.3.6 INTER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIOUS SOURCES AND ITS EFFECT ON SEARCH FOR INFORMATION:-

In the preceding paragraphs we have brought out the information characteristics of various types of information sources within the three broad categories, and also their objectives, organisation and coverage. Some idea about the inter-relationship of these sources have also been given. For a documentalist it is very much necessary to grasp the pattern of this inter relationship for the full exploitation of the sources. As we have seen already, the sources themselves are organised from primary to secondary and then to tertiary. But the search for information, especially by a documentalist, has to start from tertiary sources and come down to primary sources. The organisation of the information sources may be shown by way of the diagram in Figure 1.

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Fig. 1. Diagram showing the Organisation of the sources of information.
It has often been complained that documentalists had for a long time neglected one of the most important component of an information system, namely, the user. They were more concerned with the documents and their bibliographical organisation and control. It is true this organisation was ultimately meant to satisfy the information need of user.

It is only in recent years that systematic studies of the user community and the information behaviour of various groups within it have started. It should be obvious that the ultimate objective of all such studies is to improve the information system.

**TYPES OF USERS STUDIES:**

Users' studies and surveys that have been carried out so far are of various types. To compare the results and utilize the data gathered through such surveys, some side studies to group the surveys into well defined categories, analyse further the findings and find out compatibility between them, are going on Professor Herbert Menzel has grouped them all into three main categories. Surveys which are conducted to find out the pattern of overall interaction of the users community with the
communication system, without reference to any specific information receiving event, are called communication behaviour studies. In the second category are placed surveys which are conducted to find out the use of any communication medium, such as a primary periodical, a secondary periodical etc., and are called use studies. The third category includes surveys which are conducted to find out the pattern of flow of information in the communication system. They are studies in the flow of information.
Review Publication

Inclusion in Abstracting Service

Paper published this month

Distribution of Conference papers

Technical Report

Sent to Journal

Report Stage

Oral Report (Local)

Work Started
REFERENCES:


(2) Hanson, CW.(1971), Introduction to Science information work London, Aslib, Pt.3.