The Need for the Dissemination of Statistical Data and Information

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Abstract

There is an emphasis nowadays on knowledge, so the access to information has increased in relevance in the modern economies which have developed their competitive advantage thorough their dynamic response to the market changes. The effort for transparency has increased tremendously within the last decades which have been also influenced by the weight that the digital support has provided. The need for the dissemination of statistical data and information has met new challenges in terms of aggregating the practices that both private and public organizations use in order to ensure the optimum access to the end users. The article stresses some key questions that can be introduced which ease the process of collection and presentation of the results subject to dissemination.

Key words: statistical information, statistical data, dissemination
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1. Introduction

In terms of the increased trading speed currently registered and of the fast transmission of the resulted information, one may observe the need to preserve the stability and certainty regarding the veracity and authenticity of data and information disseminated to users. (Statistics Canada, 2009)

Currently there are numerous ways of transmitting information by both electronic and physical means, the form of communication ranging from Internet publishing to faxing, press releases, speeches or public presentations. Certainly, these are just some of the forms most used by present day society, which have a significant impact both on the business environment and among consumers or governments, the need for the dissemination of statistical data and information in real time and in a way accessible to the target users being remarkable.

2. Information – fundamental instrument for statistics

Information is considered a fundamental tool both for the wellbeing of the individual and that of the community and, therefore, access to data and statistical information is often available to the public. This view was undertaken by a significant number of institutions charged with distributing statistics and thus it led to an increased distribution of data and statistical information available online, free of charge. Although this view has encountered certain difficulties of enforcement in countries where the dissemination of statistics is kept under strict and rigid control, everywhere a mentality of online presentation, of at least the titles or determinant trends in the economy, has taken root.

The dissemination policy is constantly changing and adapting. The last relevant debate, which is still of actuality, was meant to aggregate and centralize information in order to serve governments and international organizations. The Administrative Committee for Coordination, under the aegis of the United Nations, comprises the most relevant twenty-three international organizations dealing with statistics, which are actively represented. These were assessed in terms of dissemination of relevant statistical data and information via the Internet. (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002).

Their results are divided according to the access to information. Although many continue to offer free access, it is difficult to quantify the quantitative and / or qualitative value thus offered. Among those which follow a basic policy of distributing statistical data on the Internet should be mentioned (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002): The International Labor Organization, the World Bank, UNESCO, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Commission for Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Their role in promoting globalization is of immeasurable importance, tracking the geographical and occupational mobility of the factors of production, the main objective being represented by the workforce. All these appear on the background of an increase in wealth inequality between those with low incomes and those with high incomes. Twenty-five years ago, the average income available for those with a high income was seven times higher than for those having a low income (the report follows the 10% extremes at both ends). However, at present, this disparity has increased, reaching a 9.5 multiplication factor. (Keeley, December 2015). This leads to a series of stimulation and cooperation policies aimed at promoting the sustainable economic development of the parties involved.

Other institutions which stimulate the free access to information, although mostly limited to categories offered in specific locations, are Eurostat, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Organization for Food and Agriculture sponsored by the United Nations (FAO). In addition, it may be noticed that a significant amount of free information is provided by UNICEF or the United Nations Statistics Division. Many, however, try to promote a payment system in order to gain access to a targeted segment of information. By paying a subscription for a limited period of time, one gains access to the databases specific to a field of interest, to institutions such as Eurostat, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Tourism Organization, etc.

The reviewed studies and the reports of those meetings having a global impact indicate a general trend towards the promotion of the open access to information and they underline its relevance for regional and worldwide development. The dissemination of statistics via the Internet is quickly becoming a common policy for all economies in an effort to promote the most advanced techniques for an improved access to statistical data and information, as well as making the transmission of information more efficient. These policies of worldwide information dissemination have a direct impact on the national statistics institutes. They will be involved in joint actions of dissemination of statistics at regional and international level, the presence of the experts originating from each country granting the research a valuable relevance.

3. Transparency and confidentiality

In general, the market tends to present a natural tension between transparency and confidentiality. However, the role of public institutions is to provide the stability and confidence with the objective of ensuring the efficient long-term economic development. The most common problems encountered in markets concerning this conflict of interests are reflected by the excessive reporting of some segments as opposed to the oscillating, uneven distribution of others. At global level, a form of "well chosen" abstraction is encouraged and this may serve as a significant public service if properly disseminated. (Flood, Katz & Ong, 2013)

Currently, there are computational tools which accurately formulate the confidentiality requirements, as well as the implementation technology, while also providing access to the necessary information. Thus, the tension between transparency and privacy may be reduced through practices which have a major impact in the markets. (Flood, Katz & Ong, 2013) Certainly, these are currently limited in terms of prerogatives and functions, but the extension of their application and their optimization so that they may be easily used in multiple markets is currently pursued. The difficulty to implement them is related to their adjustment in order to maximize transparency, as a feature of the public interest, but also, at the same time, minimizing the potential negative impact generated by the financial activity, protecting the innovation and research for the purpose undertaken. It is difficult to generate conclusions generally applicable in the market, but the common idea resides in the existence of the extremes generated by excessive confidentiality or exaggerated transparency, whichever resulting in data and information wrongly disseminated in the market, losing their own meaning by the time they reach the end user.

Another relevant study (Fung, Graham, & Weil, 2008) reflects the importance of the proper implementation of transparency policies. Data and information management largely focuses on determining the amount of information that may become available and identifying the levels of access for various users. However, a new question in data collection is formulated concerning the means of data collection and presentation which may often influence the final outcome.

4. Conclusions

Current research aims to identify new processes and technologies in order to reduce the asymmetry of information in the organizational process of the business environment. It identifies the importance of implementing a mandatory periodic presentation of the evolution of companies which may influence both the behavior of the consumers and of the producers in the market. It is believed that this access is essential for boosting industrial competitiveness, although sometimes the individual companies are at a disadvantage since they are required to disclose their acquired competitive advantage acquired in the market. Although universally enforceable regulations cannot be set into place, some key questions that have proven useful in improving the results obtained during the process of collection and presentation of the undertaken effort may be introduced:

- Who are the participants involved in the dissemination process?
- Are the limitations of the data and information to be shared in the market clearly determined?
- What data and information should be protected during the project implementation?

In the process of analyzing transparency in public institutions, it should be mentioned that these will vary from aiming to achieve a higher confidentiality of data and information processing to rendering the process available up to the point of making it vulnerable to misinterpretation or vulnerable to speculation (Bergman 2014). Thus, every initiative aimed at increasing transparency must be evaluated since it does not automatically result in an increase in well-being and, as such, a determining factor in the analysis should be for whom the access to information and data is increased and, certainly, under what conditions.

5. References

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