

COLLABORATIVE INFORMATION SEEKING (CIS)

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Introduction

- Information workers engage in collaborations with others for almost every aspect of their working lives.
- Prior to the ready presence of the internet, collaborations took place over extended periods.
- Collaborations were based on
 - face-to- face collaboration,
 - publishing and indexing cycles,
 - communicating via telephone, and
 - delivery via the postal mail.

Introduction

- With new technology, researchers now collaborate online through
 - Almost instant communication with other professionals,
 - Skype, Facebook, and by email.
 - Collaborative sites, such as wikis

SHORT OVERVIEW



2.1 Collaboration among Researchers/Professionals

- Collaborative activity occurs when two or more researchers work together in an area of interest to reach a common goal.
- Several Key components facilitate successful collaboration for researchers and educators including:
 - **partnerships,**
 - The first component is to establishing a trusting relationship between two or more professionals from different disciplines or professions
 - Relations building. This process is done by attending several meetings and voicing legitimate concerns prior to the collaborative effort.
 - Once the relationship is established, the researchers should attempt to provide each other with access to every aspect of the research.

2.1 Collaboration among Researchers/Professionals

▣ **bilateral communication,**

- As every discipline has its own “language”; explicit communication is a key for successful collaboration.
- Effective communication is critical to keeping all of the collaborators informed about the research progress and any new developments.
- Communication includes providing information about to the other collaborators as well as about the research:
 - processes,
 - procedures, and
 - documentation.

2.1 Collaboration among Researchers/Professionals

▣ **nonhierarchical collaborations,**

- Helps to ensure that no one researcher is viewed to have more power or authority than the others.
- This can be achieved by making each person a co-investigator in the project proposal.

2.1 Collaboration among Researchers/Professionals

- ❑ **appropriate dissemination of outcomes.**
 - Dissemination provides the collaborators with feedback and can result potentially in new research, data or publications.
 - Public dissemination/collaboration serves to keep everyone informed and ensures that everyone's input is acknowledged and appreciated.

2.2 Collaboration Case Study - Teachers

- Collaboration allows academics researchers and co-investigators' (teachers) to brainstorm and bring their experience, interest, and diverse ideas together to work towards a common goal.
- This collaboration can help the group meets requirements of expectations of the grant providing body.

Four benefits of collaboration and to teacher research

- First, collaboration acknowledges the active contribution of teachers in the research process and protects them from exploitation.
- Second, collaboration ensures that teachers' views and knowledge are represented in the literature.
- Third, collaborative research facilitates publication for teachers, who would have much less access to research tools, journals, conferences, and research networks.
- Lastly, collaboration can create alliances or coalitions, with several other disciplines or academic organizations, which can influence policymakers and shape educational legislation.

Collaborative Case Study 2, *Learning among Students of Higher Students*

- The use of collaborative learning is increasing in higher education as a means to promote discussion and student peer learning.
- As the use of collaboration methods increases, students' academic motivation and their overall feeling of success increases as well.
- The ability to collaborate helps students develop in a relatively safe setting where they can enhance their ability to work in larger groups.

Computer- Mediated Conferencing vs. Fishbowl Technique

- Miller and Benz structured a study to compare the over success of collaboration learning through
 - computer-mediated conferencing (online threaded discussion) and
 - the fishbowl technique. The fishbowl method divided the students into two groups, one that carried out the task, and the other that provided advice.
- The students were asked to complete a questionnaire about their experience and to report how effective the collaborative interaction was in helping them to reach their goal.
- It was noted that both collaboration techniques had a positive effect on student collaboration and students viewed both techniques positively.

Research

- It is important that this development be supported by research and research that is grounded in collaborative practices.
- The author has been engaged in a series of research studies over a period of years that have looked at the collaborative effort in numerous setting including
 - the dissemination of health-based information,
 - information sharing in industrial settings, and
 - information sharing by and amongst academics.
- Most recently, individuals with acknowledged disabilities engage the author in a project that seeks to address inequalities in access to programs in higher education.

Research Methodologies

- The methodologies include:
 - ▣ Q Methodology,
 - ▣ Actively Theory, and
 - ▣ importantly, combinations of both.
- The research has been conducted internationally and the contributors include researchers from Australia, China, USA, Korea, Canada, Japan, and Denmark.
- In addition to the article publications, the results have been disseminated to conferences internationally.

Unanswered Research Questions

- The impact of collaboration on publication
- The impact of collaboration on work practices
- The impact of collaboration on scholarship

Where will CIS be in 5 years?

- CIS will be in every form of activity

Conclusion

- It is important that developments in collaborative research include all of us and that we continue to study the nature of collaboration itself. Collaborative activity studies need to be holistic to include the participants, the community, the tools & resources, social rules, and most importantly the purpose of the activity.