Preparing for your literature review in the Social Sciences

Sarah Wilson,
Circulation and Customer Services Librarian,
Sainsbury Library, Said Business School

Kat Steiner, Assistant Librarian,
Bodleian Education Library
Plan for today

- **Part 1:** The literature review process
- **Part 2:** Searching
- **Part 3:** Search tools
- **Part 4:** Citations
- **Part 5:** Alerts
Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, you should:

- Understand the literature review process
- Be able to plan an effective and structured search on your dissertation or thesis topic
- Know where to look for different types of information
- Have evaluated different methods of searching
- Have developed search skills that can be applied across different resources
- Know where to come for future help
Part 1:
The literature review process
1. **Preliminary searching and browsing**
   - Scan abstracts and skim-read papers
   - Identify current directions of research
   - How will you contribute new knowledge?

2. **Structured searching with appropriate syntax**
   - Identify the key articles and heavily-cited papers
   - Establish key authors, organizations and sources
   - Commit to in-depth consideration and re-reading of papers

3. **Develop search**
   - Track citations to follow research connections
   - “Cast net more widely” in terms of resources searched
   - Set up alerts for new content

• Stay focused on the research question and keep a search log
Part 2: Searching

- Keywords
- Thesaurus
- Natural language
- Boolean
- Citation chaining
- Cross-searching
- Synonyms

Relevant scholarly research
Start with a clear research topic

e.g.

Bullying among boys in secondary schools
Search method 1: Natural language searching

Bullying among boys in secondary schools

The extent and nature of bullying among primary and secondary school children
MG Borg - Educational research, 1999 - Taylor & Francis
... Moreover, 30.9 per cent of bullies victimize older pupils, and 28.9 per cent victimized younger pupils... The present study also shows that 21.6 per cent of the victims reported being bullied by a... Of the three bullying groups, mixed groups of boys and girls are the least common (11.9...)

Bullying in schools: self reported anxiety, depression, and self-esteem in secondary school children
G Salmon, A James, DM Smith - BMJ, 1998 - bmj.com
... from the study are the relation between having a high lying score and being bullied and having... The male to female ratio of bullies (3:1) is lower than that previously reported (4:1... an impact on the direct bullying characteristic of boys and less on the indirect bullying more common...}

Bullying among primary school children in Athens, Greece
L Pateraki, A Houndourakis - Educational Psychology, 2001 - Taylor & Francis
... Around 9% of the students were identified as victims, while 7% were identified as bullies... of age), drawn from a sample of junior, middle and secondary schools, reported having been bullied... school children (aged 7–13) admitted that they were involved in bullying, either as...

Brief report: types of bullying among Italian school children
AC Biasioli, DP Farrington - Journal of adolescence, 1999 - Elsevier
... The main aim of this research is to investigate the prevalence of bullies and victims and the... study conducted in Sheffield by Whitney and Smith (1993) found that most of the bullying in secondary... Children were also bullied in corridors or in other parts of the schools such as in...

The experience of bullying among secondary school students
C Atlantopoulou - in the Schools, 2010 - Wiley Online Library
... researchers also confirmed gender differences regarding bullying incidents, because boys were bullied more often to do something, to say something so that the others (the bullies) will be... In the quantitative study on bullying conducted in Greek secondary education (Psaltis &...}

[HTML] Brief report: Text bullying and traditional bullying among New Zealand secondary school students
... students who bully others through text messaging were also significantly more likely to bully through other... Traditional bullying behaviour a... Text bullied a OR (95% CI): Text bullied others OR (95% CI):
Search method 1:
Google Scholar Library Links
Search method 2: Keyword searching
Search question: Main concepts

Bullying among boys in secondary schools
Search question: Main concepts

Bullying among boys in secondary schools
## Search preparation: Keywords

**Research Topic:** Bullying among boys in secondary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Concept 1: Bullying</th>
<th>Concept 2: Boys</th>
<th>Concept 3: Secondary schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search preparation: Keywords

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Topic: Bullying among boys in secondary schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Row 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Row 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 1: Search preparation
p.5 in your workbook

1. Write a short sentence about your research interest
2. Underline key concepts
3. Write down alternative words/phrases for each concept (rows 1 and 2)
4. Discuss with your neighbour
Search syntax: Boolean logic

**AND**
- Bullying **AND** boys

**OR**
- boys **OR** males

**NOT**
- secondary **NOT** primary
Further search syntax

Truncation and wildcards
  e.g. boy*, behavio?r

Search for a phrase by using quote marks
  e.g. “secondary schools”

Parentheses
  e.g. (boys OR males) AND bullying

Limit to particular fields
  e.g. title, abstract, keywords

Apply search filters
  e.g. date, format
**Example: Combine 3 searches**

Research Topic: Bullying among boys in secondary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Concept 1: Bullying</th>
<th>Concept 2: Boys</th>
<th>Concept 3: Secondary schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 2</th>
<th>Harassment</th>
<th>Young men</th>
<th>High schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victimisation</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Post-primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Adolescents</td>
<td>Private schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Teenagers</td>
<td>State schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Youths</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teasing</td>
<td>Young people</td>
<td>GCSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cyber-bullying</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>A level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aggressive behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>KS3 / Key Stage Three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Row 3 | bull* OR harass* OR victimisation OR “aggressive behaviour” OR teasing OR fighting | boy* OR “young man” OR adolescent* OR teen* OR youth* OR “young people” OR gender | “secondary school*” OR “high school*” OR “post-primary education*” OR college* |
The International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) includes over 3 million bibliographic references to journal articles and to books, reviews and selected chapters dating back to 1951. It is unique in its broad coverage of international material and incorporates over 100 languages and countries. It provides cross-disciplinary coverage across the social sciences, focused on four primary subject areas: anthropology, economics, political science and sociology.

Coverage: 1951 - current

Subject coverage
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Cultural studies
- Demography

Also part of
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) can also be searched as part of:
- Social Science Premium Collection
Exercise 2: Building a structured search
p.5 in your workbook

1. Create a structured search from your keywords (rows 3 and 4)
2. Apply the search to one of the following:
   - IBSS - [http://search.proquest.com/ibss](http://search.proquest.com/ibss)
     Or a key database in your field
3. Explore the database search functionality
4. Refine your search
Search Method 3: Database subject headings

• Use database subject headings to identify new and useful search terms

• Terms are assigned by the database editors from a controlled vocabulary (thesaurus)

• **Broader terms** – brings together synonyms and related terms under one heading

• **Narrower terms** – helps refine your search
Search method 4: Scholarly search engines

SOLO Articles / Search Everything
- Scholarly search engine
- Cross-disciplinary resource
- Some subjects are covered better than others
- Lacks specialist search options

Other ProQuest databases:
Dissertations & theses

SOLO status
Find out about new features, planned maintenance and performance issues here:
- New Sept 2018: improved single-click Sign In
- New Sept 2018: next/previous arrows for full record navigation

SOLO community
The latest feedback, discussions of our conversations with the SOLO:
- SOLO classic update
- You said...we did
- What am I searching?

Search Everything
- All libraries/collections
- Articles
- Online Resources
- Physical Resources (not Online)
- All Bodleian Libraries
- Alexander Library
- All Souls College Library
- ORA
- e-Journals A-Z
- Databases A-Z

Google Scholar

Stand on the shoulders of giants
What if it’s not available in Oxford?

• Try to obtain it on interlibrary loan
  – PDF/scanned copy of article or book chapter
  – Borrow the whole book from another library in the UK or internationally
  – Place a request at https://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/interlib
  – Cost is usually £5.00

• Recommend that one of the Bodleian Libraries buy a copy / subscription
  – https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/recommendations

• Google to see if an Open Access version is available

• Buy the individual article from the publisher (last resort)
Part 3: Search tools
Access online resources provided by the Bodleian Libraries

• SOLO
  solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk
• Databases A-Z
  libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php
• LibGuides
  ox.libguides.com
“We searched six databases (Medline, Embase, PsychINFO, CINAHL, IBSS and SSCI) systematically, along with a manual search, including key journals and subject experts. Peer-reviewed studies were included if they qualitatively explored experiences of or socio-structural contexts for injection drug use initiation. A thematic synthesis approach was used to identify descriptive and analytical themes throughout studies.”

**Exercise 3: Select databases**

1. **Ask yourself two questions:**
   - Which subjects are relevant to my topic? *(sociology, health, public policy, education...)*
   - Which formats might contain useful research? *(journal articles, working papers, books, datasets)*

2. Explore the subject menu on Databases A-Z
   [libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php](http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php)

3. Explore the LibGuides for recommended resources
   [ox.libguides.com](http://ox.libguides.com)
Part 4: Citations

Researcher 3 Cites researcher 2 Cites researcher 1

Impact
Use citations to:

• Locate current research based on earlier research
• Find out how many times, and where, a publication is being cited
• Identify who is referencing a particular paper
• Explore how a particular research topic is being used to support other research
• Analyse the impact of a publication on other research in the field
• Track the history of a research idea
• Keep track of your own research
Where can you get citation information?

• **Web of Science**
  – Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)
  – Over 3,200 titles
  – Citations from 1900-present

• **Scopus**
  – Social Sciences & Humanities subject collection
  – Over 22,000 titles; 1.4 billion citations
  – Cited references going back to 1970

• **Google Scholar**
  – “While we try to be comprehensive, it isn't possible to guarantee uninterrupted coverage of any particular source”
Identify current research based on earlier research

- Web of Science citation counts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A review of current literature on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>Foster, C; Williamson, J; AIDS Volume: 14; Supplement: 3; Pages: S275-S284; Published: 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fosterage patterns in the age of AIDS: continuity and change</td>
<td>Madhavan, S; Conference: Annual Conference of the Sociological-Association-of-South-Africa; Location: Pretoria, SOUTH AFRICA; Date: JUL 01-04, 2001; Sponsor(s): Sociol Assoc S Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A comparison of HIV/AIDS-related stigma in four countries: Negative attitudes and perceived acts of discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Genberg, Becky L.; Hlavka, Zdenek; Konda, Kelika A.; et al.; SOCIAL SCIENCE &amp; MEDICINE Volume: 68; Issue: 12; Pages: 2279-2287; Published: JUN 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 4: Citation searching
p.8 in your workbook

1. Use your structured search in Web of Science Social Science Citation Index (SSCI)
2. Sort your results by Relevance – note some titles which have been highly cited
3. Sort your results by Times Cited – note some titles which look relevant
Part 5: Alerts

- New articles matching search terms
- Tables of contents from selected journals
- New citations referencing ‘parent article’
Search Alerts

• Create and save complex searches
• Receive alerts when new publications match your search
  – Newly published material
  – Material newly added to the database
• Saves you having to re-visit databases and running your searches again manually
• Receive alerts via email
Citation Alerts
Web of Science and Scopus

• Create an alert for specific articles
• Receive alerts when new publications cites your chosen articles
  – Newly published material
  – Material newly added to the database
• Saves you having to re-visit databases and running your searches again manually
• Receive alerts via email
Journal Table of Contents Alerts

JournalTocs: www.journaltocs.ac.uk

• Subscribe to journal titles relevant to you
• Receive alerts with a table of contents when a new issue is published
• Saves you having to check when new issues of relevant journal titles are released
• Receive alerts via email
Have a go at home:

**Exercise 5:** Setting up a search alert  
  p.9 in your workbook

**Exercise 6:** Keeping up to date with journals  
  p.10 in your workbook
Thank you!

- This presentation will be available at http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/workshops/handouts

- Subject Consultants page:
  https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/subjects/librarians