Preparing for your literature review in the Social Sciences

Sarah Wilson,
Collections & Instructional Materials Manager,
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
Developing your literature search

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
- Synonyms
- Cross-searching

Relevant scholarly research
Start with a clear research question

e.g.

What is being done to help prevent AIDS in Zimbabwe?
Search method 1:
Natural language searching

Google Scholar

What is being done to help prevent AIDS in Zimbabwe?

About 47,000 results (0.63 sec)

Articles

Women and AIDS in developing countries: The XIXth international conference on the social sciences and medicine
M De Bruyn - Social Science & Medicine, 1992 - Elsevier
... Moreover, most clinical research was done in the West among men. What over their reasons, studies have shown that informing women of their serostatus and counseling them on... of the AIDS epidemic in some regions means that the family-care system is being undermined...

HIV-related stigmatization and discrimination: Its forms and contexts
A Malcolm, P Angenstein, M Bronfman, J Galvao... - Critical Public... 1998 - Taylor & Francis
... done there is still much that we need to understand about the forms and contexts... How people perceive HIV as stigmatizing appears to be anchored in what they understand to... 22% of those surveyed acknowledged that HIV screening of employees was being undertaken, either...

An impact evaluation of student teacher training in HIV/AIDS education in Zimbabwe
T Chikunya, H Banoy, B Mukibi - Evaluation and Program Planning, 2002 - Elsevier
... They felt that condoms should be advertised for family planning purposes, and should be done in such a... to have a relationship without having sex, and that there is more to being in love... The students discussed what qualifies a teacher should have in order to be able to teach...

Home-based care for people living with AIDS in Zimbabwe: voluntary caregivers' motivations and concerns
... Caring for a terminally ill patient at home and being supported by others translated into... From what volunteers told me during interviews, I concluded that some gesture of recognition from... The portion of the research done in 2009 indicated that some concerns and issues facing...

AIDS and cultural practices in Africa: the case of the Tonga (Zambia)
SJ Maseke - Social Science & Medicine, 2001 - Elsevier
... Today, one of the challenges faced by anthropologists is to stop being exclusively cultural relativistic and to study sexuality in its universal... allows them to discuss collectively the topics that they judge important in order to reach a consensus about what should be done...

Crisis communications: A casebook approach
K Feam-Banks - 2016 - taylorfrancis.com
... The ship had state-of-the-art communications equipment, if help was needed, personnel could radio other ships... In fact, a fire out of control on a ship could have been a worse disaster. A crisis management plan would have detailed what would be done in the event of fire...
Search method 1: Google Scholar Library Links
Search method 2: Keyword searching
Search question: Main concepts

What is being done to help prevent AIDS in Zimbabwe?
### Research Question: What is being done to help prevent AIDS in Zimbabwe?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Concept 1: Help prevent</th>
<th>Concept 2: AIDS</th>
<th>Concept 3: Zimbabwe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td>Prevent(ion)</td>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educat(ion)</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
<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**  AIDS and Zimbabwe  \[\text{NARROWS SEARCH}\]

**OR**  HIV or AIDS  \[\text{BROADENS SEARCH}\]

**NOT**  prevention not treatment  \[\text{NARROWS SEARCH}\]
Further search syntax

Truncation and wildcards
  e.g. feminis*, wom?n

Search for a phrase by using quote marks
  e.g. “graduate students”

Parentheses
  e.g. (academic OR educational) AND achievement

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

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

Research Question: What is being done to help prevent AIDS in Zimbabwe?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Help prevent</th>
<th>AIDS</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td>Prevent(ion)</td>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educat(ion)</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 3</td>
<td>prevent* OR interven* OR aware* OR educat*</td>
<td>aids OR “acquired immune deficiency syndrome” OR hiv OR “human immunodeficiency virus”</td>
<td>Zimbabwe OR “Southern Africa” OR “Sub-Saharan Africa”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

Google Scholar
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

- Internet search engines
- Abstracting and indexing services
- Full-text databases
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

3. Explore the LibGuides for recommended resources
   ox.libguides.com
Part 4: 
Citations

- Researcher 3 cites researcher 2
- 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

2. A review of current literature on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in sub-Saharan Africa
   By: Foster, C; Williamson, J
   AIDS Volume: 14 Supplement: 3 Pages: S275-S284 Published: 2000

3. Fosterage patterns in the age of AIDS: continuity and change
   By: 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
   SOCIAL SCIENCE & MEDICINE Volume: 58 Issue: 7 Pages: 1443-1454 Published: APR 2004

4. A comparison of HIV/AIDS-related stigma in four countries: Negative attitudes and perceived acts of discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS
   By: Genberg, Becky L.; Hlavka, Zdenek; Konda, Kelika A.; et al.
   SOCIAL SCIENCE & MEDICINE Volume: 68 Issue: 12 Pages: 2279-2287 Published: JUN 2009

Times Cited:
- 142
- 139
- 136

Usage Count
-
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