Resources for Social Work

Lightner Library Website: https://www.keuka.edu/library

Reference & Support Services

- Email
  - ahiggins@keuka.edu
  - refhelp@keuka.edu
  - Ask a Librarian link on Lightner Library website
- Chat
  - Window on bottom-right corner of Lightner Library website
- Library Phone
  - (315) 279-5473, Reference Desk
  - (315) 279-5632, Circulation Desk
- Libguides (aka Library Guides: made by the librarians for you!) - including tutorial videos
  - Click onUsing the Library
    - Information Resources for AOE Students libguide
  - Click on Social Work
    - Social Work Resources libguide
- Writing Center
  - asapwritinghelp@keuka.edu

Understanding Qualitative, Quantitative, Primary, and Secondary Research

Research is generally characterized as qualitative or quantitative, and primary or secondary. These can be mixed and matched. For instance, you could conduct a qualitative primary study, or a quantitative secondary study, and vice-versa.

Quantitative Research
Collects objective, quantitative data (numbers & statistics) based on precise measurements using structured & validated data-collection instruments. Good search terms to try: quantitative, statistic*, correlat*

Qualitative Research
Collects subjective, qualitative data (words, images, or objects) such as open-ended responses, interviews, participant observations, field notes, or reflections. Good search terms to try: qualitative, phenomen*

Primary Research
A research study where data is collected by the investigators conducting the research. This can include carrying out a survey, coding specific behavior or doing an experiment. Use specific types of studies as search terms (see examples below).

Secondary Research
A research study based on data which other investigators have collected. Use specific types of studies as search terms (see examples on the other side).

Examples of Primary Research

Randomized Controlled Trial
Randomized controlled trials are carefully planned experiments that introduce an intervention to study its effect on real people.

Case Study
Case studies report on the experiences of an individual person or a small group of people.

See also: Cohort Study & Case-Control Study
Examples of Secondary Research

Systematic Review
Provides a high-level overview of primary research on a focused question. Methodically identifies, selects, synthesizes, and appraises all high quality research evidence relevant to that question.

Meta Analysis
Summarizes evidence on a topic by combining the results and conclusions of multiple primary studies in order to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention.

Literature Review
Qualitatively summarizes evidence on a topic using informal or subjective methods to collect and interpret studies. Good for providing historical background or an overview of a topic.

Meta Synthesis
Summarizes (usually qualitative) evidence in order to formulate a new theory or a new direction for research.

Databases for Social Work Articles & Interlibrary Loan
Go to Databases by Subject and select “Article Databases” under “Database Types.” Then, select “Social Work” under “Subjects” to get the best bets.

Article Databases
- Nexis Uni
- Proquest
- Diversity Studies Collection
- Gender Studies Collection
- Opposing Viewpoints in Context

EBSCOhost Databases (for Articles)
- Academic Search Premier
- PsycARTICLES
- SocINDEX

Can’t find the article you need in full-text? Click on the “Full Text Search” button or search for the journal title in the “Find a Journal Title” search to see if any of our other databases carry the same journal. Then, try searching for the article title in Google Scholar. If those both fail, request it on Interlibrary Loan.

Click “Interlibrary Loan”, then log in or click “First Time Users.” Click on “Article” under “New Request”, fill out the form and submit. (Our databases also have a link to Interlibrary loan which will automatically fill out the request form for you.) Allow 2-3 business days for it to arrive electronically by email.

Databases for Social Work Reference
Reference database are most useful for finding encyclopedia articles and reports. To find these, go to Databases by Subject and select “Reference Databases” under “Database Types.” Then, select “Social Work” under “Subjects” to get the best bets.

CQ Researcher
Provides in-depth, balanced reports on a variety of topics, especially those related to the following topics: health, international affairs, education, public policy, environment, technology, U.S. economy, political science, social issues, and more.

Gale Virtual Reference Library (Infotrac)
Click on “View All” next to the “Law” and “Social Science” encyclopedias.

Nexis Uni (aka LexisNexis)
Provides financial filings and reports, legal proceedings, law reviews, legal cases and codes, news transcripts, company profiles, and more.