

Build Your Collection of Sources

PO311F: Food Insecurity in Africa

Now that we've discussed preliminary research techniques, and how to expand your search for additional articles, let's discuss one more technique to help you build your collection of sources.

This technique is known as following the citation trail, or sometimes citation chaining.

It allows you to start with one publication and find research that refers to it.

The first way to do this is to look for citations in articles you've already found.

Peer-reviewed articles generally discuss previous research they've relied on for the context of their research.

This discussion happens explicitly, in a Literature Review section.

Or, often a literature review is found in the Introductory paragraphs of the article and listed in full in the article's list of References.

By skimming these sections, you can find earlier research that might be similar to yours.

The second place to look is in Omni.

In your list of results look for the two up arrows icon above an article's title.

This icon shows sources that cite your article of interest in Omni.

Clicking this icon takes you to that list.

There may be other articles similar to your topic in the list of citing articles.

Other databases have a similar feature.

Web of Science allows you to follow "Cited Sources" which is the same functionality as available in Omni.

Clicking the "Citations" link next to an article of interest brings you to all the articles in the Web of Science database citing your article of interest.

The advantage Web of Science has is that these citations are from peer-reviewed, reputable sources.

The third technique you can use to build your collection of sources is to look for review articles.

Review articles are articles that review the scholarly literature on a topic.

They are sometimes known by different terms: systematic literature review, scoping review, or review of the literature are a few of the names.

You can filter to Review Articles in Omni by checking the Review Articles filter in the Filters section at the left side of your search results.

Web of Science also offers this option; check the filter box, then click Refine.

Review articles that meet or are similar to your research question and topic can lead you to other articles and areas of literature that you might not have considered.