

Labor Economics with STATA

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Research Tip Doing Scientific Literature Search

- 1 Purposes of a Literature Review
- 2 Starting a Literature Review: The Basic First Steps
- 3 Structuring and Writing Up of a Literature Review
- 4 How (where) to find the relevant literature?

What is the purpose of a literature review?

Before any research planning or data collection it is imperative to review the literature relevant to your research question.

The main reasons why you need to do this can be summarized as:

- To gain a full and in-depth understanding of a subject.
- To see if your intended research subject has been done before and avoid duplication.
- To avoid any errors made in similar research.
- To enable you to place your study within its context (i.e., so that you can show how your research will add to the existing sum of knowledge).
- To provide you with ideas to help you define or amend your own research topic.
- To provide you with information with which to compare and contrast your findings.

What is (is not) a literature review?

What a literature review **is**:

- An overview of what we know and of what we do not know about a given topic
- Not necessarily exhaustive, but up-to-date and includes all major work on the topic
- Intellectual context for your original research
- Motivation for your original research

What is (is not) a literature review?

What a literature review **is not**:

- A “laundry list” of everything written on a topic, where each source gets its summary paragraph
 - Lacks organization guided by thesis or research questions
 - Lacks synthesis of literature
 - Lacks critical evaluation of literature
- An annotated bibliography
- A literary or book review

What is (is not) a literature review?

What a literature review **is not**:

- “Popular” publications should not be included e.g. Newspapers, news magazines, or industry or popular publications.
- Even well respected publications, such as the Wall Street Journal, or The Economist are not appropriate sources for a literature review.
(However, these sources may be useful to the researcher as background information during problem formulation)

Starting a Literature Review

The necessary first step:

- Select a topic and formulate a few well-defined research questions

- Brainstorm a list of search terms related to your topic and then search for sources

- Briefly review sources and use what you learn to refine your topic and research questions

Starting a Literature Review

The necessary first step:

- Select a topic and formulate a few well-defined research questions
 - Examples:
 - Human capital formation (far too broad)
 - The technology of skills formation (still a bit broad)
 - Empirical estimation on the technology of skill formation (manageable)
- Brainstorm a list of search terms related to your topic and then search for sources

- Briefly review sources and use what you learn to refine your topic and research questions

Starting a Literature Review

The necessary first step:

- Select a topic and formulate a few well-defined research questions

- Brainstorm a list of search terms related to your topic and then search for sources
 - Keyword searches
 - Text/bibliographic databases
 - Reviewing reference sections
- Briefly review sources and use what you learn to refine your topic and research questions

Starting a Literature Review

The necessary first step:

- Select a topic and formulate a few well-defined research questions

- Brainstorm a list of search terms related to your topic and then search for sources

- Briefly review sources and use what you learn to refine your topic and research questions
 - Working backwards
 - Identifying core literature, the “classics”
 - Search out this preceding literature
 - (In simple terms) once you found a very suitable paper, look at what papers they are citing

- It is often useful to start reading with the most recent publications. This allows:
 - Focusing more quickly on current knowledge,
 - Recent research often includes references to relevant earlier research
- First read the abstract or summary to determine relevance and whether to review the article.
- As you read, keep in mind that the central purpose is to identify and describe the relevance of the study to your research

How to structure a literature review?

After taking in so many papers:

- How do we make sense of it all?
- How do we convey the sense that we've made to someone else?

How to structure a literature review?

- Seek common themes that tie together more than one paper.
- see if you can you lump papers together in multiple ways?
 - Is there an order within each strand?
 - Is the chronological development important?
 - Do authors agree with one another in their conclusions, or do they contrast with each other?
 - Do they agree on methodology?
 - Are there papers that fit in more than one strand of literature?
- Now that you've figured it out, tell the tale!
- You don't have to go into great detail about every paper. A sentence or two is often (but not always) enough

How to structure a literature review?

Some of the key issues one needs to evaluate:

- Is the research question significant and is the work original and important?
- Have the instruments used been demonstrated as reliable and valid?
- Do the outcome measures relate clearly to the variables with which the investigation is concerned?
- Does the research design fully test the hypothesis?
- Are the subjects representative of the population to which generalizations are made?
- Did the researcher observe ethical rules?
- Has the research reached such a stage that publication is justified and the results are meaningful?

How to structure a literature review?

A checklist of things to look out for:

- **Introduction** Why did they start the research?
- **Methods** What did they do?
- **Results** What did they find?
- **Discussion** What do the results mean?

Writing a Literature Review

- Continually link your discussion of the literature back to your thesis and research questions
- Link studies to one another; stress relatedness of research on your topic
- Prioritize Classics: Identify “classic” studies and discuss them accordingly (i.e., with more detail, and with an eye for their influence)
- Evaluate Gaps: Identify shortcomings of particular studies and/or the body of research as a whole; be critical!
- Frontier: Identify areas for further research; where can research on your topic go from here?

- Be mindful of your audience
 - be scholarly, but avoid jargon
 - manifest your grasp of the literature
 - show where your research fits
- Subheadings can help to clarify structure of review (for full-length literature reviews)
- Use direct quotations sparingly; paraphrase studies

Similarity:

- *also, again, in addition to, additionally, similar to, similarly, alike, like, agree, agrees with, ...*

Disagreement:

- *contradicts, counter, opposite, differs, debate, at odds, on the other hand, disagree, disagrees with, ...*

Evaluation:

- *classic, pioneering, important, influential, lacks, fails to consider, ignores, overlooks, limited by/to, confined to, restricts attention to, ...*

Works Consulted: Citation Issues

Citation Tool used to manage the search results

- Choose your citation tool before conducting your literature reviews
- **RefWorks, EndNote, iCite, BibTex**

When to Cite

- In general, you need to give credit with a citation anytime you use someone else's ideas.
- Appropriate citation practice is of crucial importance. Failure to cite properly is plagiarism
- If you use someone else's ideas without using the same wording, use a general citation such as "according to Friedman (1986), ..."
- If you use another author's exact words, enclose the passage in quotation marks and cite the source, including page number. Lengthy passages should be indented

How to Cite

- Nearly all economics journals use the "science" citation convention of citing author and year in the text
- **Every work cited in the text must appear in the list of references at the end of the paper**

Where do I search for literature on my topic?



ScienceDirect

Scopus



Probably you are already familiar with various search interfaces that are suitable for literature research.

- Web search engines can be a great starting point for your research, especially academic search engines such as Google Scholar.
- Almost all web search engines come with the disadvantage that we do not know which sites and sources they actually search.
- In order to obtain reliable and quotable on-topic information and to make sure that you do not miss important publications, the services of a university library are essential.

Google Scholar is publicly available and covers all subjects.

- It sorts articles the way researchers do, weighing the full text of each article, the author, the publication in which the article appears, and how often the piece has been cited in other scholarly literature
- It has the simple Google search, in addition to a more advanced search option which allows searching by keyword, author and publication.
- It is also possible to limit by date and by specific broad subject areas.
- It also provides a link to the article (which may or may not be freely available), the number of times cited and links to citing articles, related articles and alternate versions.

Note of Caution: Google Scholar is not a recognized scholarly source and some of its citations are inaccurate or redundant. As such, it is advised that it be used as a finding aid.





Articles include patents Case law

Stand on the shoulders of giants

[BibTeX](#) [EndNote](#) [RefMan](#) [RefWorks](#)

Scholar About 461,000 results (0.04 sec)

Articles

minimum wage, maximum unemployment

[Full-text @ SFX UK](#)

Case law

M Summers - *Economic Affairs*, 1991 - Wiley Online Library
 2. Abstract The **Minimum Wage** is now a controversial part of the political debate in the run-up to the General Election. Martin Summers, a research associate of the Institute of Economic Affairs, reviews the evidence of how the **minimum wage** has worked in other ...
[Cite](#) [Save](#)

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Any time

The effect of the minimum wage on employment and unemployment: a survey

[\[PDF\] from researchgate.net](#)

Since 2015

CC Brown, C Gilroy, A I Kohen - 1982 - nber.org

Since 2014

In this paper, we survey theoretical models of the effect of the **minimum wage** and, in somewhat greater detail, evidence of its effect on employment and **unemployment**. Our discussion of the theory emphasizes recent work using two-sector and heterogeneous- ...

Since 2011

Cited by 873 Related articles All 8 versions Web of Science: 236 Cite Save

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Sort by relevance

Minimum wage unemployment and growth

[Full-text @ SFX UK](#)

Sort by date

P Cahuc, P Michel - *European Economic Review*, 1996 - Elsevier

This paper shows that, in an overlapping generations, model with endogenous growth, **minimum wage** legislation does not necessarily has negative consequences on economic performance. Such legislation can have positive effects on growth by inducing more ...
 Cited by 235 Related articles All 8 versions Web of Science: 46 Cite Save

include patents

include citations

Cite

Copy and paste a formatted citation or use one of the links to import into a bibliography manager.

MLA Brown, Charles C., Curtis Gilroy, and Andrew I. Kohen. "The effect of the minimum wage on employment and unemployment: a survey." (1982).

APA Brown, C. C., Gilroy, C., & Kohen, A. I. (1982). The effect of the minimum wage on employment and unemployment: a survey.

Chicago Brown, Charles C., Curtis Gilroy, and Andrew I. Kohen. "The effect of the minimum wage on employment and unemployment: a survey." (1982).

The CERGE-EI Library

- Offers a multitude of bibliographic databases for subject specific search
- Has a rich resource of economic literature, journals and contemporary economic literature

So how do you find the right database for your subject in the library?



Library

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Fulltexts, Abstracts

[Cambridge Journals Online](#)    

[EBSCOhost Research Databases](#)   

[EconLit with Full Text \(EBSCOhost\)](#)    

minimum wage unemployment

AND

AND

[Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Search History](#)

Refine Results

Current Search

Boolean/Phrase:

[minimum wage](#)
[unemployment](#)


Limit To


- Full Text
- References Available
- Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1969 Publication Date 2015

Search Results: 1 - 10 of 255

Relevance Page Options

-  **Selected Issues of the Minimum Wage in the Czech Republic**
- Pavelka, Tomas; Skala, Marek; Cadil, Jan; *Ekonomie a Management*, 2014, v. 17, iss. 4, pp. 30-45

Subjects: Employment; Unemployment; Wages; Intergenerational Income Distribution; Aggregate Human Capital; Aggregate Labor Productivity ; Price Level; Inflation; Deflation ; Personal Income and Other Nonbusiness Taxes and Subsidies; includes inheritance and gift taxes ; Social Security and Public Pensions ; Health Insurance, Public and Private ; Wages, Compensation, and Labor Costs: Public Policy
-  **Minimum Wage and Its Relation to Unemployment in Slovak Regions**
- Vickova, Viera; Palascakova, Daniela; *Actual Problems of Economics*, 2014, v. 157, iss. 7, pp. 315-21

Subjects: Wage Level and Structure; Wage Differentials ; Wages, Compensation, and Labor Costs: Public Policy ; Unemployment: Models, Duration, Incidence, and Job Search ; Unemployment Insurance; Severance Pay; Plant Closings ; Urban, Rural, Regional, Real Estate, and Transportation Economics: Regional Migration; Regional Labor Markets; Population; Neighborhood Characteristics

The database Web of Science is an on-line subscription-based scientific citation indexing service. Some essential facts concerning the Web of Science:

- **Type of database:** Citation database
- **Content:** More than 18 million entries in the section Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI); almost 3.5 million entries in the section Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI).
- **Fields of research:**
 - SCI - all areas of natural sciences, medicine and engineering sciences
 - SSCI - all areas of social sciences including the natural scientific-oriented neighboring disciplines of social medicine and psychology.
- **Reporting period:** SCI 1900-; SSCI 1985-
- **Special features:** “Cited Reference Search” - using this option you can analyze citations (prospectively and retrospectively)
- The Web of Science Core Collection and other databases are combined in the “Web of Science”. The Web of Science Core Collection comprises three separate sources: data about the natural sciences, the social sciences and the arts & humanities.

Start by visiting the Web of Science (formerly Web of Knowledge) cite

▶ <http://webofknowledge.com/>

Web of Science

Start by visiting the Web of Science (formerly Web of Knowledge) site

▶ <http://webofknowledge.com/>

The screenshot displays the Web of Science homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Web of Science™', 'InCites™', 'Journal Citation Reports®', 'Essential Science Indicators™', and 'EndNote™'. On the right side of this bar are links for 'Sign In', 'Help', and 'English'. Below this is a dark grey header with the 'WEB OF SCIENCE™' logo on the left and the 'THOMSON REUTERS™' logo on the right. A secondary navigation bar contains 'Search', 'All Databases', 'My Tools', 'Search History', and 'Marked List'. A welcome message reads: 'Welcome to the new Web of Science! [View a brief tutorial.](#)'

The main search area features a 'Basic Search' dropdown menu. Below it is a search input field containing the text 'Example: oil spill* mediterranean'. To the right of the input field is a 'Topic' dropdown menu and a blue 'Search' button. Below the input field are links for '+ Add Another Field' and 'Reset Form'. To the right of the search button is a link: 'Click here for tips to improve your search.'

Below the search area is the 'TIMESPAN' section, which includes a radio button for 'All years' (selected) and a dropdown menu. Below that is a radio button for 'From' followed by a date dropdown set to '1900', the word 'to', and another date dropdown set to '2015'. At the bottom of this section is a link for 'MORE SETTINGS'.

Web of Science

Start by visiting the Web of Science (formerly Web of Knowledge) cite

▶ <http://webofknowledge.com/>

The screenshot displays the Web of Science website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Web of Science™", "InCites™", "Journal Citation Reports®", "Essential Science Indicators™", and "EndNote™". On the right side of this bar are "Sign In", "Help", and "English" options. Below the navigation bar, the "WEB OF SCIENCE™" logo is prominently displayed on the left, and the "THOMSON REUTERS™" logo is on the right. A "Search" button is located on the left side of the main content area, and a dropdown menu for "All Databases" is open, showing a list of databases including "Web of Science™ Core Collection", "BIOSIS Citation Index™", "Current Contents Connect®", "Data Citation Index™", "Derwent Innovations Index™", "KCI-Korean Journal Database", "MEDLINE®", "SciELO Citation Index", and "Zoological Record®". A "Learn More" link is at the bottom of this dropdown. To the right of the search bar, there is a "Topic" dropdown menu and a "Search" button. Below the search bar, there is a "Reset Form" link. The main content area also features a "Basic Search" dropdown menu and a "Welcome to the new Web of Science! View a brief tutorial." message. At the bottom left, there is a "TIMESPAN" section with a radio button for "All years" and a date range selector set to "From 1900 to 2015".

Start by visiting the Web of Science (formerly Web of Knowledge) cite

▶ <http://webofknowledge.com/>

Search My Tools ▾ Search History Marked List

Results: 93
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

You searched for: TOPIC:
(technology of skill formation)
Refined by: WEB OF SCIENCE CATEGORIES: (EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH OR ECONOMICS) AND **DOCUMENT TYPES:** (ARTICLE)

Timespan: All years. **Indexes:** SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, A&HCI, CPCI-S, CPCI-SSH, BKCI-S, BKCI-SSH, CCR-EXPANDED, IC.

[...Less](#)

Create Alert

Refine Results

Search within results for...

Web of Science Categories ▾

- ECONOMICS (74)
- EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH (22)
- SOCIAL SCIENCES MATHEMATICAL METHODS (6)
- HEALTH POLICY SERVICES (4)

Sort by: **Times Cited -- highest to lowest** ▾

◀ Page of 10 ▶

Select Page ▾

1. **The technology of skill formation**
By: Cunha, Flavio; Heckman, James
Conference: 119th Annual Meeting of the American-Economic-Association Location: Chicago, IL Date: JAN 05-07, 2007
Sponsor(s): Amer Econ Assoc
AMERICAN ECONOMIC REVIEW Volume: 97 Issue: 2 Pages: 31-47 Published: MAY 2007

2. **Estimating the Technology of Cognitive and Noncognitive Skill Formation**
By: Cunha, Flavio; Heckman, James J.; Schennach, Susanne M.
ECONOMETRICA Volume: 78 Issue: 3 Pages: 883-931 Published: MAY 2010

3. **Formulating, Identifying and Estimating the Technology of Cognitive and Noncognitive Skill Formation**
By: Cunha, Flavio; Heckman, James J.
Conference: SOLE 2005 Meeting Location: Univ Calif Berkeley, Berkeley, CA Date: 2005
JOURNAL OF HUMAN RESOURCES Volume: 43 Issue: 4 Pages: 738-782 Published: FAL 2008

4. **Globalization, immigration, and education: The research agenda**
By: Suarez-Orozco, MM

Analyze Results

Create Citation Report

Times Cited: 252
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

Times Cited: 145
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

Times Cited: 122
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

Times Cited: 86
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Web of Science: Summary of Steps

The steps that you need to take in order to find the relevant literature on Web of Science efficiently are explained below

- Go to <https://webofknowledge.com/>
- Choose: [All Databases > Web of Science Core Collection](#)
- In the [Search](#) box type your keywords (e.g., minimum wage AND unemployment)
- Choose from the drop-down list next to the search line whether you want these keywords to be in: Topic, Title, Author, Editor or Publication date etc.
- To add another search line click on [+ Add Another Field](#).
- Choose [Time span](#). (limit time to 5 years - unless the topic is extremely narrow)
- Click on [More settings](#) and choose only [Social Sciences Citation Index \(SSCI\) - 1900-present](#) under [Web of Science Core Collection: Citation Indexes](#) (for the literature review that's what's most relevant)
- Click [Search](#)

Web of Science: Summary of Steps

When the search results are displayed, refine and save the results using the following:

- Choose [Document type](#) from the dropout list (e.g. “Article”)
- Choose Field. From the [Web of Science Categories](#) choose [Economics > Refine](#)
- Next you can choose how to sort the papers found - the drop-down list is just above the papers.
- Usually one chooses either [Publication Date - newest to oldest](#), (to track what aspects are really hot now) or [Times Cited - highest to lowest](#) (to see the most influential papers)
- Check all the articles you think might be relevant (by ticking the box in-front); click on [Add to Marked List](#) - this saves you a lot of time by saving all citation info including the titles, authors, publication details and abstracts
- When done selecting papers, Go to [Marked list](#). Chose what you want to see in your final output: Author, Abstract, Title, Source etc.
- Choose the type of document the results should be stored in. (e.g. [Save to other file formats](#) gives you options to save citations in tab-delimited, html or biblatex formats)
- Once you have read abstracts and decided which papers are relevant, get the full text and start reading

How to obtain the full texts of articles:



SFX - Service, Fernleihe, eXtras (Service, interlibrary loan and more)

- Many databases provide you with a link or button that you can use to access electronic full text: the link resolver SFX
- In some databases the SFX button is shown in the result list, while in others you have to go to the full de-tails of the respective article
- By clicking on SFX, a new window or tab opens listing acquisition possibilities

Web of Science: Summary of Steps

How to obtain the full texts of articles:




KNIHOVNA

—
AKADEMIE VĚD ČR





Title: The Technology of Skill Formation

Source: The American Economic Review [0002-8282] Cunha, Flavio yr:2007 vol:97 iss:2 pg:31 -47

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