Sample Search for NUR 5120

Below is a sample search for the social/environmental determinants of health search. The personal interest is in a rural area and most particularly in water quality. The aim is to examine water quality issues in a rural area, looking for both the effects on health when water quality is compromised and interventions to improve water quality for the rural population. The focus is a personal local community of which you are a part. Remember that you are not trying to focus on a disease or condition, nor are you trying to provide education to those directly and negatively impacted (those already experiencing health disparities) by the lack of good water quality. Rather you are trying to identify specific determinants of health that, if strengthened or enhanced in the local community through active interventions or strategies, would positively effect the population experiencing the inequity or disparity.

Factors (or social and environmental determinants) that affect a population’s health can include quality of air, water, soil, housing conditions; access to healthy foods and activities; freedom from fear of crime or harm; socioeconomic status including income opportunities, livable wages, class, interpersonal interactions (family), etc. Your search should identify resources to help you understand how maximizing the determinants of health could minimize health inequities or disparities and it should also identify evidence-based strategies for promoting the underlying factors/determinants that contribute to health.
Start your search with a keyword search to see what initial results are returned. In this example, a keyword search was done for “water quality.” To do a keyword search in EBSCOhost, simply type a word into your first keyword box and leave the box to the right set at **Select a Field (optional)**. No limits are set on the search initially, so that you can see what comes up in your results.

At this point, you can scroll through the first 10 or 20 articles to see what you have retrieved. Check the detailed records for the abstracts and the subject headings. Note the subject headings on articles of interest. This will help define key terms for you that are used in the database. **When you use the subject headings, you will find more relevant articles.** Please note that the subject headings are the same terms you would find if you used the Thesaurus built into the database. If you look at the subjects listed under the citations in your results list, you will see that in this search, **water quality** is a subject heading, as well as **water pollution**. (Please note that water pollution is the “absence” of good water quality.)

**NOTE:** Once you have identified key subject headings, you can further enhance your search by using the Thesaurus. The Thesaurus catalogs the discipline-specific terms that are used to index the articles in the database. Using the Thesaurus is generally a more powerful and efficient method of searching. To see more on how to use the Thesaurus in **Social Sciences Full Text**, access the tutorial titled “Using the Thesaurus in Social Sciences Full Text.”
Another way to locate subject headings is to use the **Subject** limit to the left of your results. Under **Refine Results** you will see a series of limits. If you click on the heading **Subject**, you will be given some subject headings that you can use that are related to your search. Note that for this search, **water quality management** and **water quality** are both listed as subject headings.
If you click the **Show More** link below the **Subject** limit area, you will be given a window with more subject headings.

Note that **water supply** is a subject heading. If you use the terms from the **Subject** limit window, it will limit the search that you are currently in. If you wish to perform a new search using the subject term(s) that you found, simply click cancel on the subject heading window to return to the search screen. Then go back to the top of the page and input your subject terms and select **SU Subject** from the **Select a field (optional)** box.
Use your results to modify your search. In the below search, “water quality” is searched as a subject. You can look through the results and see what other terms you can use to modify the search. Since “water quality” is a very precise term, you may want to broaden the search a little. A search for “water pollution” as a subject will do this.
Adding a keyword or another subject heading against the original search will focus further. In this search, “drinking water” has been added as a keyword search against the original “water pollution” subject search. Again, look through the results to see what has been returned and look for alternate or additional subjects to add to the search to focus further.
Continue to add subject terms or keywords against your main search to locate relevant articles. In this search, the keyword searches of “health” and “rural” have been added to the subject search of “drinking water.” Play with the various synonyms that you find for your topic and add your population to the search to focus.

Once you have focused into your best searches, you can limit your results to peer-reviewed or to a date limit. On the results screen, to limit to peer-reviewed items, just put a check in the box next to **Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals** in the limits field to the left of the results. This will limit your current results. You can also add date limits here.

To see how to add items to a folder and how to print, email and save items from a folder, continue to the next tutorial entitled: “Adding Items to a Folder in EBSCOhost.”