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Some tips and insights to aid secondary data searchers

Secondary Data Research and value

- Researchers can develop original research from secondary data *if data is used for a unique purpose rather than duplicating the original study*
- Sometimes, researchers use selected data from several databases to construct original studies
- Reviewing secondary data can also provide extensive background for research requiring collection of original data

Assessing and Evaluating

- Secondary data needs to be assessed and evaluated for value as part of the research
- Some aspects to consider:
 - Source
 - Methodology
 - Applications

Assess what can be learned

- Perhaps most importantly,
 - What can be learned from this data?
 - How does the data fit into the research agenda?
 - How does the data align with other research data?

How to start

- As a researcher, I can use secondary data in the form of surveys, statistics, or records of any kind.
- Searching databases can be time consuming but can also yield treasures.
- Start by becoming familiar with large and reliable data sources.

The University of Phoenix Library has some secondary databases

- Go to the University Library.
- Look under General Resources to find Government Resources.
- Click on Easy Stats to find demographic data about any state, city, or county in the US.
- The National Center for Educational Statistics provides data on school systems across the US.
- Many other sources exist in our library including article, book, and other published materials databases. These two contained quantitative data and seemed most appropriate to the CEITR.
- Other excellent government or academic sources can be found by searching outside our library.

Pew Research Center

- The Pew center includes extensive research on almost every aspect of American life.
- <http://www.pewinternet.org/topics/>

Examples of specific Pew resources

- Two specific Pew Center studies that are especially related to CEITR are college students and technology:
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/07/19/college-students-and-technology/>
- And: The future of Gamification:
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/07/19/college-students-and-technology/>
- The future of Gamification includes surveys and interviews where the questions are all about imagining the future of the Internet conducted in cooperation with Elon University.
<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/imagining/vox-populi/default.xhtml>

Roper Center for Public Opinion

- The Roper center home:
<https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/> The Roper Center has datasets, blogs, and search engines.

The National Center for Educational Statistics (in UOP library)

- Among other resources, NCES <https://nces.ed.gov/> provides training in using data sets.
- <http://nces.ed.gov/blogs/nces/post/learning-to-use-the-data-online-dataset-training-modules>

More NCES resources

- A handy software package will allow the user to select statistics and develop graphics:
<http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/index.aspx>
- Much of NCES is concerned with K-12 education, but the site also works with post secondary data, including study on persistence in college students (2011-2014).
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2016401>

Consortium for European Social Science Data archives

- CESSD: <http://cessda.net/eng>
- The consortium sponsors events, training, and extensive data related to social issues in Europe.

The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research

- <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/> has an extensive data on demographics, aging, and education.
- The search engine is sophisticated and allows a user to search across many datasets.
- Over 700 member organizations can access and download data at no charge.
- Even non-members may learn of valuable resources that could be available elsewhere.

Learning more

- Some sites offer lessons or tutorials in search techniques.
<http://designresearchtechniques.com/casestudies/secondary-research/>
- And Google search tips
<https://bynd.com/news-ideas/google-advanced-search-comprehensive-list-google-search-operators/>.

Big data is big news

- Access to big secondary data sources has opened many new possibilities.
- Follow the link below to find the Whitehouse initiative in using big data across the Federal Government.
- https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/big_data_fact_sheet_final_1.pdf

Regional Centers

- Federal funding to regional research centers where resources and researchers from industry, academia, and government come together.
- https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/big_data_fact_sheet_final_1.pdf

Assembling data from multiple sources: The College Scorecard

- The US. Department of Education gathered data from several large databases to assess colleges and universities across the nation.
- The scorecard provides a detailed snapshot of every school and university in the United States.
- <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>

Industry uses Secondary Data

- Read the story of how advertising images changed due to analysis of secondary data.
- <http://designresearchtechniques.com/casestudies/secondary-research/>

Assessing value added schools

- Another big, Harvard based study gathered data from multiple databases to calculate the probability of districts having a positive influence on low income students as adults.
- http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/04/upshot/an-atlas-of-upward-mobility-shows-paths-out-of-poverty.html?_r=0
- Best in the nation: Dupage County, IL.

More simple search tips

- Use Advanced Google Search
- Use words that reflect how data might go into the database
- Looking for life expectancies for males versus females?
- Use gender as the first word
- Add life expectancy as the exact word or phrase
- Include male or female as any of these words
- Stipulate domain as .gov
- Stipulate range of dates (1900-2014)

Screen Shot results (gender, male, female, life expectancy, .gov)

[Actuarial Life Table - Social Security](https://www.ssa.gov/oact/STATS/table4c6.html)

<https://www.ssa.gov/oact/STATS/table4c6.html> ▼

Here we present the 2013 period life table for the Social Security area population. For this table, the period **life expectancy** at a given age is the average ...

[Calculators: Life Expectancy - Social Security](https://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html)

<https://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html> ▼

When you are considering when to collect retirement benefits, one important factor to take into account is how long you might live. According to data compiled by ...

[FastStats - Life Expectancy - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov)

www.cdc.gov › [NCHS Home](#) › [FastStats Homepage](#) › [Life Stages and Populations](#) ▼

Apr 27, 2016 - Source: Deaths: Final Data for 2013, table 7[PDF - 1.5 ... Populations in the United States, 1999-2013; **Life expectancy** at birth, at 65, and 75 years of age by ... **Life expectancy** by age, race, and sex, 1900-2011 United States Life Tables, ... U.S. Decennial Life Tables for 1999-2001: State Life Tables [PDF - 1 ...

[\[PDF\] Life Expectancy Table](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/publications/docs/.../06adm-5att8.pdf)

https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/publications/docs/.../06adm-5att8.pdf ▼

Attachment VIII. **Life Expectancy Table. Male. Female. Male. Female. Age. Life. Expectancy. Life.**

Same search using .edu instead of .gov

[PDF] [gender and race differences in criminal justice processing](#)

<https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/...42/.../0000431.pdf?...> ▼ University of Michigan Library ▼
by RC Sarri - 1986 - Cited by 25 - Related articles

importance of **gender** and race as critical variables in criminal justice system processing IS ... Atlanta, for example, showed that, in **1900, 2086** Table 3 reveal an overall **male/female** sex ratio of. 5.3 in 1980. but maintenance of family life.

[PDF] [Period Life Tables: A Resource for Quantitative ...](#) - Scholar Commons

scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1094&context=numeracy ▼
by TJ Pfaff - 2012 - Related articles

Jan 4, 2012 - A period life table provides an estimate of the probability that a person will die at a particular age. ... comparisons (e.g., of **gender** disparity, larger now; of infant mortality, smaller now). Area **1900-2100**. ... **Male Female**.

[PDF] [LIFE IS CHEAP: USING MORTALITY BONDS TO HEDGE ...](#)

crr.bc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2005/10/wp_2005-13.pdf ▼ Boston College ▼

... mortality tables. Although patterns of mortality declines differ by **gender**, the reasons for ... Preston and Wang (2005) investigated the recent narrowing of the **male-female** mortality differential **1900-2100** Actuarial Study No. 120 Social ...

Remember: Evaluate sources

- The dot.Gov search brought up data from Social Security and the Center for Disease Control
- The CDC report was developed by the US Department of Health and Human Services
- Can you trust the data, which you may or may not be able to download?
- Can you use the research as background for your own original work?

Remember

Every box or space on the Advanced Search inquiry can limit or expand your search

You can specify Blogs, facebook, twitter, images, news and more

Each constellation of search terms will bring a different result

Remember

- Some sites will download data on demand.
- Other sites will require a formal request.

Some sites may stipulate specific requirements before releasing data.

Although the data is public access, researchers will need to go through an IRB process.

Enjoy your search experience

- Hunting for secondary data is a little like beach combing
- Sometimes, amazing discoveries turn up.