

Sampling

The Census is an example of a full population study, whereby every household in the UK is researched. However, normally it is too difficult to research everyone in the **target population**. Sampling is the process of selecting a smaller group (**sample**) to represent a larger group (**target population**) in social research.

Target Population: everyone the researcher aims to represent.



Sampling Frame: list from which the sample is drawn e.g. a school register.

Quantitative Sampling Techniques

Random Sampling	Every individual has an equal chance of being chosen, e.g. picking names out of a hat.
Systematic Sampling	Selecting every 'nth' person from a sampling frame, e.g. every 10th person on an electoral register.
Stratified Sampling	Dividing the population into relevant subgroups (strata) and then drawing a random sample from each stratum, e.g. when sampling doctors, ensuring 8% of the sample are Asian to reflect the national proportion.
Cluster Sampling	A multi-stage approach, e.g. first researchers sample areas, then streets within those areas, then households within those streets.



Quantitative sampling has the potential for high representativeness and generalisability to the target population. ✓

However, these types of sampling require a sampling frame, which may not always be available. Also, even with these sampling techniques, unrepresentative samples may occur by chance. ✗

Qualitative Sampling Techniques

Snowball Sampling	Researchers start with a few participants who then refer them to others, creating a snowball effect, e.g. the researcher makes contact with a gang member, who then gets them in contact with friends.
Self-Selecting (Volunteer) Sampling	Participants volunteer to take part, e.g. a volunteer responds to an advert on social media.
Quota Sampling	The researcher finds a required number of people with specific characteristics, e.g. 40 men over 50 years old.

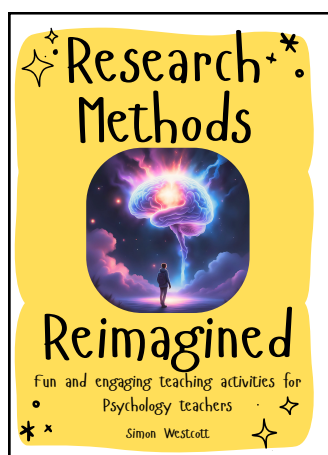
Qualitative sampling is useful for researching hard-to-reach groups, and also for finding participants specific to your research. ✓

However, these types of techniques are not representative and the researcher may have samples which lack diversity. ✗

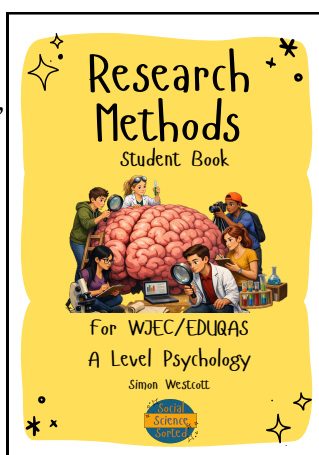


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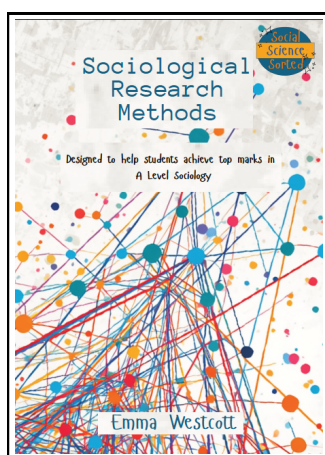


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