Activities

# Chapter 15: Sampling

## Activity 15.1

Find a small jar or container. Take a piece of plain, A4 paper and cut it into 100 squares of the same size. On each of the squares draw either a red, blue, black or yellow cross (so that you have 25 squares with a red cross, 25 with a blue cross, etc.). This is your total population. Fold each of the squares so that the coloured cross cannot be seen and place them in the jar. Draw out 20 squares.

Do you have an equal number of squares with the red, blue, black and yellow cross?

If not, how representative of your total population is your sample?

What might this mean for the findings of a research study using this sampling strategy?

## Activity 15.2

Take the container and 24 of the squares with a red cross and 24 of the squares with a blue cross that were used in online activity 15.1. Write M (for male) against 12 of the blue and 12 of the red crosses. Write F (for female) against the other 12 blue and 12 red crosses. You should now have 12 blue crosses with an M, 12 blue crosses with an F, 12 red crosses with an M and 12 red crosses with an F.

Place the 24 squares with an M in the container and draw out 10. Then place the 24 squares with an F in the container and draw out 10.

How representative of your total population is your sample?

What might this mean for the findings of a research study using this sampling strategy?

Whilst you will have an equal number of males and females in your sample, you may still have an unequal number of red and blue squares. How could a researcher avoid this problem occurring?

## Activity 15.3

For further insight into recruiting ‘difficult to reach’ participants and snowball sampling read:

Ellard-Gray, A. Jeffrey, N.K. Choubak, M. and Crann, S.E. (2015) Finding the Hidden Participant: Solutions for Recruiting Hidden, Hard-to-Reach, and Vulnerable Populations, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 14(5): 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1609406915621420>

## Activity 15.4

For further insight into theoretical sampling read Chapter 7, ‘Theoretical sampling’ in:

Corbin, J. and Strauss, A. (2015) *Basics of Qualitative Research.* 4th edn. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

## Activity 15.5

We have covered the most commonly used sampling strategies in this book. However, other sampling strategies may be used, therefore look up and make notes on the following sampling strategies which you may see used in health care research:

* Multi-stage sampling
* Dimensional sampling
* Proportionate stratified sampling
* Disproportionate stratified sampling
* Volunteer sampling

## Activity 15.6

Read the following two papers, one is quantitative and the other is a qualitative study.

[Bloxsome, D.](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Bloxsome%2C+Dianne) [Bayes, S. and](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Bayes%2C+Sara) [Ireson, D.](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Ireson%2C+Deborah) (2020) “I love being a midwife; it's who I am”: A Glaserian Grounded Theory Study of why midwives stay in midwifery, Journal of Clinical Nursing, [29(1-2](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/13652702/2020/29/1-2)): 208–220.

[McLachlan](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=McLachlan%2C+HL), H.L. [Forster](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Forster%2C+dA), D.A. [Davey](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Davey%2C+M-A), M-A. [Farrell](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Farrell%2C+T), T. [Flood](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Flood%2C+M), M. [Shafiei](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Shafiei%2C+T), T. and

[Waldenström](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/action/doSearch?ContribAuthorStored=Waldenstr%C3%B6m%2C+U), U. (2016) The effect of primary midwife‐led care on women’s experience of childbirth: results from the COSMOS randomised controlled trial, British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, [123(3](https://obgyn-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.bcu.ac.uk/toc/14710528/2016/123/3)): 465–474.

As you read the papers consider the following:

* How are the sample sizes explained and justified? Do you think an appropriate rationale is given?
* What were the participant inclusion and exclusion criteria?
* Did the sampling strategies enable the researchers to achieve the study’s aims/objectives?
* Did the sampling strategies enable the researchers to achieve the fundamental principles of the research method used?

## Activity 15.7

What are the pros and cons of the following ways in which contact could be made with potential participants?

* Face-to-face discussion
* Letter
* Telephone call
* Email
* Word-of-mouth (snowball sampling)
* Posters displayed in venues where potential participants will see them
* Notices on websites or in journals
* Calls for participants posted on social media

## Activity 15.8

These two papers explore different issues concerning participant recruitment:

Daly, D. Hannon, S. and Brady, V. (2019) Motivators and challenges to research recruitment – A qualitative study with midwives, *Midwifery*, 74: 14–20.

Marks, A. Wilkes, L. Blythe, S. and Griffiths, R. (2017) A novice researcher’s reflection on recruiting participants for qualitative research, *Nurse Researcher*, 25(2): 34–38.