

FAQ 10: How do you sample children for quantitative research?

What's the issue?

Sampling for quantitative research depends on whether or not researchers are aiming for a probabilistic sample from which they would like to draw inferences about the population (i.e., to what extent sample statistics reflect the population parameters). A number of issues usually have to be considered (choosing the population, the sampling frame, the way of sampling, and the sample size). When aiming for a representative sample, things get more complicated as researchers need a list of children to sample from. This can be quite difficult. However, they could establish a list of all schools in the area they are interested in studying, and sample children from there.

Common practice

- f* When conducting a survey with children and parents, the household could be used as unit of analysis.
- f* If financial or time sources do not permit face-to-face surveying at home, children could be sampled by school (e.g. a sample based on clusters), covering different regions of the country. Instead of individual children, sample groups of children occurring naturally in the population could be sampled – this is known as cluster sampling.
- f* If researchers want various subgroups (e.g. age subgroups

status (SES). Based on lists of student

References and further resources

Kalton, G. (1983). *Introduction to survey sampling*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Sapsford, R. (2007). *Survey research*. London: Sage Publications.