

sampling?

Sampling definition: Sampling is a technique of selecting individual members or a subset of the population to make statistical inferences from them and estimate characteristics of the whole population. Different sampling methods are widely used by researchers in [market research](#) so that they do not need to research the entire population to collect actionable insights. It is also a time-convenient and a cost-effective method and hence forms the basis of any [research design](#). Sampling techniques can be used in a research survey software for optimum derivation.

For example, if a drug manufacturer would like to research the adverse side effects of a drug on the country's population, it is almost impossible to conduct a research study that involves everyone. In this case, the researcher decides a sample of people from each demographic and then researches them, giving him/her indicative feedback on the drug's behavior.

Select your respondents

Types of sampling: sampling methods

Sampling in market research is of two types – probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Let's take a closer look at these two methods of sampling.

1. **Probability sampling:** [Probability sampling](#) is a sampling technique where a researcher sets a selection of a few criteria and chooses members of a population randomly. All the members have an equal opportunity to be a part of the sample with this selection parameter.
2. **Non-probability sampling:** In [non-probability](#) sampling, the researcher chooses members for research at random. This sampling method is not a fixed or predefined selection process. This makes it difficult for all elements of a population to have equal opportunities to be included in a sample.

In this blog, we discuss the various probability and non-probability sampling methods that you can implement in any [market research](#) study.

Types of probability sampling with examples:

[Probability sampling](#) is a sampling technique in which researchers choose samples from a larger population using a method based on the theory of probability. This sampling method considers every member of the population and forms samples based on a fixed process.

For example, in a population of 1000 members, every member will have a 1/1000 chance of being selected to be a part of a sample. Probability sampling eliminates bias in the population and gives all members a fair chance to be included in the sample.

There are four types of probability sampling techniques:

- **Simple random sampling:** One of the best probability sampling techniques that helps in saving time and resources, is the [Simple Random Sampling](#) method. It is a reliable method of obtaining information where every single member of a population is chosen randomly, merely by chance. Each individual has the same probability of being chosen to be a part of a sample.
For example, in an organization of 500 employees, if the HR team decides on conducting team building activities, it is highly likely that they would prefer picking chits out of a bowl. In this case, each of the 500 employees has an equal opportunity of being selected.
- **Cluster sampling:** [Cluster sampling](#) is a method where the researchers divide the entire population into sections or clusters that represent a population. Clusters are identified and included in a sample based on demographic parameters like age, sex, location, etc. This makes it very simple for a survey creator to derive effective inference from the feedback.
For example, if the United States government wishes to evaluate the number of immigrants living in the Mainland US, they can divide it into clusters based on states such as California, Texas, Florida, Massachusetts, Colorado, Hawaii, etc. This way of conducting a survey will be more effective as the results will be organized into states and provide insightful immigration data.
- **Systematic sampling:** Researchers use the [systematic sampling method](#) to choose the sample members of a population at regular intervals. It requires the selection of a starting point for the sample and sample size that can be repeated at regular intervals. This type of sampling method has a predefined range, and hence this sampling technique is the least time-consuming.
For example, a researcher intends to collect a systematic sample of 500 people in a population of 5000. He/she numbers each element of the population from 1-5000 and will choose every 10th individual to be a part of the sample (Total population/ Sample Size = $5000/500 = 10$).