

Research Design

A research design can be defined as the preparation of conditions, for the collection and analysis of data in such a manner, which aims at combining relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. In other words, the design arrangement of a research project is commonly known as the “research design”. Besides, the decisions like what, where, when, how, etc., in regard to a research study, creates a research design. In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which a research is conducted. Moreover, it comprises the outline for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Hence, the design carries a blueprint of what the researcher will do, from composing the hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data. Overtly, the design decisions happen to be in respect of:

- 1) What is the research?
- 2) Where and why will the research be conducted?
- 3) What data is required for the research?
- 4) Where can be the data found?
- 5) What will be the time period of the research?
- 6) What will be the sample design?
- 7) What methods will be used for data collection?
- 8) How will be the data analysed?
- 9) In which style will be the research report prepared?

Based on the above mentioned design decisions, the complete research design may be divided into the following parts:

- (a) Sample design: this deals with the technique of selecting items and thus requires careful observation for the given research study.
- (b) Observational design: this relates to the conditions under which the experiments are to be conducted.
- (c) Statistical design: this concerns the question of how many items are to be observed, and how are the collected data and information going to be analysed.
- (d) Operational design: this deals with the methods by which the procedures specified in the sample, observational and statistical designs can be conducted.

The essential characteristics of a research design are as the following:

- (a) It is a plan, which specifies the sources and types of data relevant to the research problem.
- (b) It is a strategy, which decides the approach that will be used to collect and analyse the data.
- (c) Since most of the research studies are conducted under these two controls, it also includes the time and cost budgets.

In short, the research design must contain the following:

- (i) A clear and concise statement of the research problem,
- (ii) The population to be studied, and

(iii) The various procedures, methods, and techniques to be used for collecting and analyzing the data.

Need for Research Design:

Research design has a significant impact on the reliability of the results obtained. It thus acts as a firm foundation for the entire research. It is needed because it facilitates the smooth functioning of the various research operations. It makes the research as efficient as possible by giving maximum information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. For construction of a house, we need to have a proper blueprint prepared by an expert architect. Similarly, we need a proper research design or plan prior to data collection and analysis of our research project. Preparation of research design should be done carefully as even a minute error might ruin the purpose of the entire project. The design helps the researcher to organize his ideas, which helps to identify and correct his flaws, if any. In a good research design, all the components with each other or go together with each other in a coherent manner. The theoretical and conceptual framework must with the research goals and purposes. Likewise, the data collection strategy must fit with the research purposes, conceptual and theoretical framework and approach to data analysis.

The need for research design is as follows:

- It reduces inaccuracy;
- Helps to get maximum efficiency and reliability;
- Eliminates bias and marginal errors;
- Minimizes wastage of time;
- Helpful for collecting research materials;
- Helpful for testing of hypothesis;

- Gives an idea regarding the type of resources required in terms of money, manpower, time, and efforts;
- Provides an overview to other experts;
- Guides the research in the right direction.

Features of a Good Research Design:

When a researcher has formulated a research problem, he/she has to focus on developing a good design for solving the problem. A good design is one that minimizes bias and maximizes the reliability of the data. It also yields maximum information, gives minimum experimental error, and provides different aspects of a single problem. A research design depends on the purpose and nature of the research problem. Thus, one single design cannot be used to solve all types of research problem, i.e., a particular design is suitable for a particular problem.

A research design usually consists of the following factors:

- (i) The means of obtaining information;
- (ii) The availability and skills of the researcher and his staff, if any;
- (iii) The objective of the problem to be studied;
- (iv) The nature of the problem; and
- (v) The availability of time and money for the research work.

If a research study is an exploratory or formulative one, i.e., it focuses on discovery of ideas and insights, the research design should be flexible enough to consider different aspects of the study. Similarly, if the study focuses on accurate description or association between variables, the design should be accurate with minimum bias and maximum reliability. However, in practice, it is difficult to categorize a particular study into a particular group. A study can be categorized only on the basis of its primary function and accordingly, its design can be developed. Moreover, the above mentioned factors must be given due weight age while working on the details of the research design.

Research Design: Important Concepts

In order to facilitate a clear and better understanding of the different research designs, it is initially necessary to define all the various important concepts of research design itself.

1) Dependent and independent variables: A *variable* is a concept that can take on different quantitative values. E.g., weight, height, income, etc. A *dependent variable* can be defined as the variable, which depends upon or is a consequence of the other variable. On the other hand, an *independent variable* can be defined as the variable that is antecedent to the dependent variable. E.g., if height depends upon age, then height is a dependent variable, while age is an independent variable.

2) Extraneous variable: Although, the independent variables are unrelated to the study purpose, they might however affect the dependent variables, known as *extraneous variables*. E.g., When a researcher investigates the hypothesis of the relationship between children's gains in moral studies achievement and their self-concepts. The self-concept denotes an independent variable, whereas the moral studies achievement denotes a dependent variable. However, intelligence may also affect the moral studies achievement, but as it is unrelated to the study purpose, it will thus be called an extraneous variable.

3) Control: The most significant quality of a good research design is to reduce the influence/effect of extraneous variables. *Control* is a technical term, which is used while designing the study, by reducing the effects of extraneous independent variables. Besides, in experimental studies, the term control refers to the restraining of experimental conditions.

4) Confounded relationship: In case the dependent variable is bound by the influence of extraneous variable, the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is known to be confused by extraneous variables.

5) Research hypothesis: This can be defined as the prediction or a hypothesised relationship that needs to be tested by scientific methods. Besides, it is a predictive statement, which connects an independent variable to a dependent variable. Moreover, a research hypothesis needs to contain, at least, one independent and one dependent variable.

6) Experimental and non-experimental hypothesis-testing research: When a research aims at investigating a research hypothesis, it is known as the *hypothesis-testing research*. However, it can be of the experimental or the non-experimental design. On the other hand, a research in which the independent variable is manipulated is known as the *experimental hypothesis-testing research*, while the research in which an independent variable is not manipulated is known as the *non-experimental hypothesis-testing research*.

7) Experimental and control groups: When any group is exposed to the usual conditions of an experimental hypothesis-testing research, it is known as a *control group*. Whereas, when the group is exposed to some other special condition, it is known as an *experimental group*.

8) Treatments: This can be defined as the different types of conditions under which the experimental and control groups are put. E.g., In order to determine the comparative impact of three varieties of fertilizers on a crop yield, the three different varieties of fertilizers will be treated as three different treatments.

9) Experiment: This can be defined as the process of examining the truth of a statistical hypothesis, relating to some research problem. E.g., An experiment conducted in order to research the usefulness of a newly developed medicine.

Moreover, experiments can be of two types:

i. *Absolute experiment* The determination of the impact of a fertilizer on a crop yield is an example of absolute experiment.

ii. *Comparative experiment* The determination of the impact of one fertilizer, in comparison to another fertilizer, is an example of comparative experiment.

10) Experimental units: These represent the pre-determined plots or blocks, where different types of treatments are used. Moreover, such type of experimental units must be selected, as well as defined, very cautiously and thoroughly.

DIFFERENT RESEARCH DESIGNS:

Different research designs can be conveniently described if we categorize them as:

1. research design in case of exploratory research studies;
2. research design in case of descriptive and diagnostic research studies, and
3. research design in case of hypothesis-testing research studies.

We take up each category separately.

1. **Research design in case of exploratory research studies:** Exploratory research studies are also termed as formulative research studies. The main purpose of such studies is that of formulating a problem for more precise investigation or of developing the working hypotheses from an operational point of view. The major emphasis in such studies is on the discovery of ideas and insights. As such the research design appropriate for such studies

must be flexible enough to provide opportunity for considering different aspects of a problem under study. Inbuilt flexibility in research design is needed because the research problem, broadly defined initially, is transformed into one with more precise meaning in exploratory studies, which fact may necessitate changes in the research procedure for gathering relevant data. Generally, the following three methods in the context of research design for such studies are talked about: the survey of concerning literature, the experience survey and the analysis of 'insight-stimulating' examples.

The survey of concerning literature happens to be the most simple and fruitful method of formulating precisely the research problem or developing hypothesis. Hypotheses stated by earlier workers may be reviewed and their usefulness be evaluated as a basis for further research. It may also be considered whether the already stated hypotheses suggest new hypothesis. In this way the researcher should review and build upon the work already done by others, but in cases where hypotheses have not yet been formulated, his task is to review the available material for deriving the relevant hypotheses from it.

Besides, the bibliographical survey of studies, already made in one's area of interest may as well as made by the researcher for precisely formulating the problem. He should also make an attempt to apply concepts and theories developed in different research contexts to the area in which he is himself working. Sometimes the works of creative writers also provide a fertile ground for hypothesis formulation and as such may be looked into by the researcher.

Experience survey means the survey of people who have had practical experience with the problem to be studied. The object of such a survey is to obtain insight into the relationships between variables and new ideas relating

to the research problem. For such a survey people who are competent and can contribute new ideas may be carefully selected as respondents to ensure a representation of different types of experience. The respondents so selected may then be interviewed by the investigator. The researcher must prepare an interview schedule for the systematic questioning of informants. But the interview must ensure flexibility in the sense that the respondents should be allowed to raise issues and questions which the investigator has not previously considered. Generally, the experience collecting interview is likely to be long and may last for few hours. Hence, it is often considered desirable to send a copy of the questions to be discussed to the respondents well in advance. This will also give an opportunity to the respondents for doing some advance thinking over the various issues involved so that, at the time of interview, they may be able to contribute effectively. Thus, an experience survey may enable the researcher to define the problem more concisely and help in the formulation of the research hypothesis. This survey may as well provide information about the practical possibilities for doing different types of research. Analysis of 'insight-stimulating' examples is also a fruitful method for suggesting hypotheses for research. It is particularly suitable in areas where there is little experience to serve as a guide. This method consists of the intensive study of selected instances of the phenomenon in which one is interested. For this purpose the existing records, if any, may be examined, the unstructured interviewing may take place, or some other approach may be adopted. Attitude of the investigator, the intensity of the study and the ability of the researcher to draw together diverse information into a unified interpretation are the main features which make this method an appropriate procedure for evoking insights. Now, what sort of examples are to be selected and studied? There is no clear cut answer to it. Experience indicates that for particular problems certain

types of instances are more appropriate than others. One can mention few examples of 'insight-stimulating' cases such as the reactions of strangers, the reactions of marginal individuals, the study of individuals who are in transition from one stage to another, the reactions of individuals from different social strata and the like. In general, cases that provide sharp contrasts or have striking features are considered relatively more useful while adopting this method of hypotheses formulation. Thus, in an exploratory or formulative research study which merely leads to insights or hypotheses, whatever method or research design outlined above is adopted, the only thing essential is that it must continue to remain flexible so that many different facets of a problem may be considered as and when they arise and come to the notice of the researcher.

- 2. Research design in case of descriptive and diagnostic research studies:** Descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occurs or its association with something else. The studies concerning whether certain variables are associated are examples of diagnostic research studies. As against this, studies concerned with specific predictions, with narration of facts and characteristics concerning individual, group or situation are all examples of descriptive research studies. Most of the social research comes under this category. From the point of view of the research design, the descriptive as well as diagnostic studies share common requirements and as such we may group together these two types of research studies. In descriptive as well as in diagnostic studies, the researcher must be able to define clearly, what he wants to measure and must find adequate methods for measuring it along with a clear cut definition of 'population' he wants to study. Since the aim is to obtain complete and accurate information

in the said studies, the procedure to be used must be carefully planned. The research design must make enough provision for protection against bias and must maximize reliability, with due concern for the economical completion of the research study. The design in such studies must be rigid and not flexible and must focus attention on the following:

- Formulating the objective of the study (what the study is about and why is it being made?)
- Designing the methods of data collection (what techniques of gathering data will be adopted?)
- Selecting the sample (how much material will be needed?)
- Collecting the data (where can the required data be found and with what time period should the data be related?)
- Processing and analysing the data.
- Reporting the findings.

In a descriptive/diagnostic study the first step is to specify the objectives with sufficient precision to ensure that the data collected are relevant. If this is not done carefully, the study may not provide the desired information. Then comes the question of selecting the methods by which the data are to be obtained. In other words, techniques for collecting the information must be devised. Several methods (viz., observation, questionnaires, interviewing, examination of records, etc.), with their merits and limitations, are available for the purpose and the researcher may use one or more of these methods which have been discussed in detail in later chapters. While designing data-collection procedure, adequate safeguards against bias and unreliability must be ensured. Whichever method is selected, questions must be well examined and be made unambiguous; interviewers must be instructed not to express their own opinion; observers must be trained so that they uniformly record a given item of behaviour. It is always desirable to pretest the data collection instruments before they are finally used for the study purposes. In other words, we can say that “structured

instruments” are used in such studies. In most of the descriptive/diagnostic studies the researcher takes out sample(s) and then wishes to make statements about the population on the basis of the sample analysis or analyses. More often than not, sample has to be designed. Different sample designs have been discussed in detail in a separate chapter in this book. Here we may only mention that the problem of designing samples should be tackled in such a fashion that the samples may yield accurate information with a minimum amount of research effort. Usually one or more forms of probability sampling, or what is often described as random sampling, are used. To obtain data free from errors introduced by those responsible for collecting them, it is necessary to supervise closely the staff of field workers as they collect and record information. Checks may be set up to ensure that the data collecting staff perform their duty honestly and without prejudice. “As data are collected, they should be examined for completeness, comprehensibility, consistency and reliability.”

The data collected must be processed and analysed. This includes steps like coding the interview replies, observations, etc.; tabulating the data; and performing several statistical computations. To the extent possible, the processing and analysing procedure should be planned in detail before actual work is started. This will prove economical in the sense that the researcher may avoid unnecessary labour such as preparing tables for which he later finds he has no use or on the other hand, re-doing some tables because he failed to include relevant data. Coding should be done carefully to avoid error in coding and for this purpose the reliability of coders needs to be checked. Similarly, the accuracy of tabulation may be checked by having a sample of the tables re-done. In case of mechanical tabulation the material (i.e., the collected data or information) must be entered on appropriate cards which is usually done by punching holes corresponding to a given code. The accuracy of punching is to be checked and ensured. Finally, statistical computations are needed and as such averages, percentages and various coefficients must be worked out. Probability and sampling analysis may as well be used. The appropriate statistical operations, along with the use of appropriate tests of significance should be carried out to safeguard the drawing of conclusions concerning the study. Last of all comes the question of reporting the findings. This is the task of communicating the findings to others and the researcher must do it in an efficient manner. The layout of the report needs to be well planned so that all things relating to the research study may be well presented in simple and effective style. Thus, the research design in case of descriptive/diagnostic studies is a comparative design throwing light on all points narrated above and must be prepared keeping in view the objective(s) of the study and the resources available. However, it must ensure the minimisation of bias and maximisation of reliability of the evidence

collected. The said design can be appropriately referred to as a survey design since it takes into account all the steps involved in a survey concerning a phenomenon to be studied. The difference between research designs in respect of the above two types of research studies can be conveniently summarised in tabular form as under:

<i>Research Design</i>	<i>Type of study</i>	
	<i>Exploratory or Formulative</i>	<i>Descriptive/Diagnostic</i>
Overall design	Flexible design (design must provide opportunity for considering different aspects of the problem)	Rigid design (design must make enough provision for protection against bias and must maximise reliability)
(i) Sampling design	Non-probability sampling design (purposive or judgement sampling)	Probability sampling design (random sampling)
(ii) Statistical design	No pre-planned design for analysis	Pre-planned design for analysis
(iii) Observational design	Unstructured instruments for collection of data	Structured or well thought out instruments for collection of data
(iv) Operational design	No fixed decisions about the operational procedures	Advanced decisions about operational procedures.

3. Research design in case of hypothesis-testing research studies: Hypothesis-testing research studies (generally known as experimental studies) are those where the researcher tests the hypotheses of causal relationships between variables. Such studies require procedures that will not only reduce bias and increase reliability, but will permit drawing inferences about causality. Usually experiments meet this requirement. Hence, when we talk of research design in such studies, we often mean the design of experiments. Professor R.A. Fisher's name is associated with experimental designs. Beginning of such designs was made by him when he was working at Rothamsted Experimental Station (Centre for Agricultural Research in England). As such the study of experimental designs has its origin in agricultural research. Professor Fisher found that by dividing agricultural fields or plots into different blocks and then by conducting experiments in each of these blocks, whatever information is collected and

inferences drawn from them, happens to be more reliable. This fact inspired him to develop certain experimental designs for testing hypotheses concerning scientific investigations. Today, the experimental designs are being used in researches relating to phenomena of several disciplines. Since experimental designs originated in the context of agricultural operations, we still use, though in a technical sense, several terms of agriculture (such as treatment, yield, plot, block etc.) in experimental designs.

The basic principles of experimental designs:

The basic principles of experimental designs are randomization, replication and local control. These principles make a valid test of significance possible. Each of them is described briefly in the following subsections.

(1) Randomization. The first principle of an experimental design is randomization, which is a random process of assigning treatments to the experimental units. The random process implies that every possible allotment of treatments has the same probability. An experimental unit is the smallest division of the experimental material and a treatment means an experimental condition whose effect is to be measured and compared. The purpose of randomization is to remove bias and other sources of extraneous variation, which are not controllable. Another advantage of randomization (accompanied by replication) is that it forms the basis of any valid statistical test. Hence the treatments must be assigned at random to the experimental units. Randomization is usually done by drawing numbered cards from a well-shuffled pack of cards, or by drawing numbered balls from a well-shaken container or by using tables of random numbers.

(2) Replication. The second principle of an experimental design is replication; which is a repetition of the basic experiment. In other words, it is a complete run for all the treatments to be tested in the experiment. In all experiments, some variation is introduced because of the fact that the experimental units such as

individuals or plots of land in agricultural experiments cannot be physically identical. This type of variation can be removed by using a number of experimental units. We therefore perform the experiment more than once, i.e., we repeat the basic experiment. An individual repetition is called a replicate. The number, the shape and the size of replicates depend upon the nature of the experimental material. A replication is used

(i) to secure more accurate estimate of the experimental error, a term which represents the differences that would be observed if the same treatments were applied several times to the same experimental units;
(ii) to decrease the experimental error and thereby to increase precision, which is a measure of the variability of the experimental error; and
(iii) to obtain more precise estimate of the mean effect of a treatment, since σ^2 ?
 σ^2/n , where n denotes the number of replications.

(3) Local Control. It has been observed that all extraneous sources of variation are not removed by randomization and replication. This necessitates a refinement in the experimental technique. In other words, we need to choose a design in such a manner that all extraneous sources of variation are brought under control. For this purpose, we make use of local control, a term referring to the amount of balancing, blocking and grouping of the experimental units. Balancing means that the treatments should be assigned to the experimental units in such a way that the result is a balanced arrangement of the treatments. Blocking means that like experimental units should be collected together to form a relatively homogeneous group. A block is also a replicate. The main purpose of the principle of local control is to increase the efficiency of an experimental design by decreasing the experimental error. The point to remember here is that the term local control should not be confused with the word control. The word control in experimental

design is used for a treatment. Which does not receive any treatment but we need to find out the effectiveness of other treatments through comparison.

Sampling Design

CENSUS AND SAMPLE SURVEY

All items in any field of inquiry constitute a 'Universe' or 'Population.' A complete enumeration of all items in the 'population' is known as a census inquiry. It can be presumed that in such an inquiry, when all items are covered, no element of chance is left and highest accuracy is obtained. But in practice this may not be true. Even the slightest element of bias in such an inquiry will get larger and larger as the number of observation increases. Moreover, there is no way of checking the element of bias or its extent except through a resurvey or use of sample checks. Besides, this type of inquiry involves a great deal of time, money and energy. Therefore, when the field of inquiry is large, this method becomes difficult to adopt because of the resources involved. At times, this method is practically beyond the reach of ordinary researchers. Perhaps, government is the only institution which can get the complete enumeration carried out. Even the government adopts this in very rare cases such as population census conducted once in a decade. Further, many a time it is not possible to examine every item in the population, and sometimes it is possible to obtain sufficiently accurate results by studying only a part of total population. In such cases there is no utility of census surveys.

However, it needs to be emphasized that when the universe is a small one, it is no use resorting to a sample survey. When field studies are undertaken in practical life, considerations of time and cost almost invariably lead to a selection of respondents i.e., selection of only a few items. The respondents selected should be as representative of the total population as possible in order to produce a miniature cross-section. The selected respondents constitute what is technically called a 'sample' and the selection process is called 'sampling technique.' The survey so conducted is known as 'sample survey'. Algebraically, let the population size be N and if a part of size n (which is $< N$) of this population is selected according to some rule for studying some characteristic of the population, the group consisting of these n units is known as 'sample'. Researcher must prepare a sample design for his study i.e., he must plan how a sample should be selected and of what size such a sample would be.

STEPS IN SAMPLE DESIGN

While developing a sampling design, the researcher must pay attention to the following points:

1. **Type of universe:** The first step in developing any sample design is to clearly define the set of objects, technically called the Universe, to be studied. The universe can be finite or infinite. In finite universe the number of items is certain, but in case of an infinite universe the number of items is infinite, i.e., we cannot have any idea about the total number of items. The population of a city, the number of workers in a factory and the like are examples of finite universes, whereas the number of stars in the sky, listeners of a specific radio programme, throwing of a dice etc. are examples of infinite universes.
2. **Sampling unit:** A decision has to be taken concerning a sampling unit before selecting sample. Sampling unit may be a geographical one such as state, district, village, etc., or a construction unit such as house, flat, etc., or it may be a social unit such as family, club, school, etc., or it may be an individual. The researcher will have to decide one or more of such units that he has to select for his study.
3. **Source list:** It is also known as 'sampling frame' from which sample is to be drawn. It contains the names of all items of a universe (in case of finite universe only). If source list is not available, researcher has to prepare it. Such a list should be comprehensive, correct, reliable and appropriate. It is extremely important for the source list to be as representative of the population as possible.
4. **Size of sample:** This refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. This a major problem before a researcher. The size of sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It

should be optimum. An optimum sample is one which fulfills the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. While deciding the size of sample, researcher must determine the desired precision as also an acceptable confidence level for the estimate. The size of population variance needs to be considered as in case of larger variance usually a bigger sample is needed. The size of population must be kept in view for this also limits the sample size. The parameters of interest in a research study must be kept in view, while deciding the size of the sample. Costs too dictate the size of sample that we can draw. As such, budgetary constraint must invariably be taken into consideration when we decide the sample size.

5. **Parameters of interest:** In determining the sample design, one must consider the question of the specific population parameters which are of interest. For instance, we may be interested in estimating the proportion of persons with some characteristic in the population, or we may be interested in knowing some average or the other measure concerning the population. There may also be important sub-groups in the population about whom we would like to make estimates. All this has a strong impact upon the sample design we would accept.
6. **Budgetary constraint:** Cost considerations, from practical point of view, have a major impact upon decisions relating to not only the size of the sample but also to the type of sample. This fact can even lead to the use of a non-probability sample.
7. **Sampling procedure:** Finally, the researcher must decide the type of sample he will use i.e., he must decide about the technique to be used in selecting the items for the sample. In fact, this technique or procedure stands for the sample design itself. There are several sample designs (explained in the

pages that follow) out of which the researcher must choose one for his study. Obviously, he must select that design which, for a given sample size and for a given cost, has a smaller sampling error.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SAMPLE DESIGNS

There are different types of sample designs based on two factors viz., the representation basis and the element selection technique. On the representation basis, the sample may be probability sampling or it may be non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is based on the concept of random selection, whereas non-probability sampling is ‘non-random’ sampling. On element selection basis, the sample may be either unrestricted or restricted. When each sample element is drawn individually from the population at large, then the sample so drawn is known as ‘unrestricted sample’, whereas all other forms of sampling are covered under the term ‘restricted sampling’. The following chart exhibits the sample designs as explained above.

Thus, sample designs are basically of two types viz., non-probability sampling and probability sampling. We take up these two designs separately.

CHART SHOWING BASIC SAMPLING DESIGNS

Element selection technique ↓	Representation basis	
	Probability sampling	Non-probability sampling
Unrestricted sampling	Simple random sampling	Haphazard sampling or convenience sampling
Restricted sampling	Complex random sampling (such as cluster sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling etc.)	Purposive sampling (such as quota sampling, judgement sampling)

Non-probability sampling: Non-probability sampling is that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample. Non-probability sampling is also known by different names such as deliberate sampling, purposive sampling and judgement sampling. In this type of sampling, items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher; his choice concerning the items remains supreme. In

other words, under non-probability sampling the organizers of the inquiry purposively choose the particular units of the universe for constituting a sample on the basis that the small mass that they so select out of a huge one will be typical or representative of the whole. For instance, if economic conditions of people living in a state are to be studied, a few towns and villages may be purposively selected, for intensive study on the principle that they can be representative of the entire state. Thus, the judgment of the organizers of the study plays an important part in this sampling design.

In such a design, personal element has a great chance of entering into the selection of the sample. The investigator may select a sample which shall yield results favorable to his point of view and if that happens, the entire inquiry may get vitiated. Thus, there is always the danger of bias entering into this type of sampling technique. But in the investigators are impartial, work without bias and have the necessary experience so as to take sound judgment, the results obtained from an analysis of deliberately selected sample may be tolerably reliable. However, in such a sampling, there is no assurance that every element has some specifiable chance of being included. Sampling error in this type of sampling cannot be estimated and the element of bias, great or small, is always there. As such this sampling design is rarely adopted in large inquiries of importance. However, in small inquiries and researches by individuals, this design may be adopted because of the relative advantage of time and money inherent in this method of sampling. *Quota sampling* is also an example of non-probability sampling. Under quota sampling the interviewers are simply given quotas to be filled from the different strata, with some restrictions on how they are to be filled. In other words, the actual selection of the items for the sample is left to the interviewer's discretion. This type of sampling is very convenient and is relatively inexpensive. But the samples so selected certainly do not possess the characteristic of random samples. Quota samples are essentially judgment samples and inferences drawn on their basis are not amenable to statistical treatment in a formal way.

Probability sampling: Probability sampling is also known as 'random sampling' or 'chance sampling'. Under this sampling design, every item of the universe has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. It is, so to say, a lottery method in which individual units are picked up from the whole group not deliberately but by some mechanical process. Here it is blind chance alone that determines whether one item or the other is selected. The results obtained from probability or random sampling can be assured in terms of probability i.e., we can measure the errors of estimation or the significance of results obtained from a random sample, and this fact brings out the superiority of random sampling design over the deliberate

sampling design. Random sampling ensures the law of Statistical Regularity which states that if on an average the sample chosen is a random one, the sample will have the same composition and characteristics as the universe. This is the reason why random sampling is considered as the best technique of selecting a representative sample.

Random sampling from a finite population refers to that method of sample selection which gives each possible sample combination an equal probability of being picked up and each item in the entire population to have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This applies to sampling without replacement i.e., once an item is selected for the sample, it cannot appear in the sample again (Sampling with replacement is used less frequently in which procedure the element selected for the sample is returned to the population before the next element is selected. In such a situation the same element could appear twice in the same sample before the second element is chosen). In brief, the implications of random sampling (or simple random sampling) are:

- It gives each element in the population an equal probability of getting into the sample; and all choices are independent of one another.
- It gives each possible sample combination an equal probability of being chosen.

Keeping this in view we can define a simple random sample (or simply a random sample) from a finite population as a sample which is chosen in such a way that each of the ${}^N C_n$ possible samples has the same probability, $1/{}^N C_n$, of being selected. To make it more clear we take a certain finite population consisting of six elements (say a, b, c, d, e, f) i.e., $N = 6$. Suppose that we want to take a sample of size $n = 3$ from it. Then there are ${}^6 C_3 = 20$ possible distinct samples of the required size, and they consist of the elements $abc, abd, abe, abf, acd, ace, acf, ade, adf, aef, bcd, bce, bcf, bde, bdf, bef, cde, cdf, cef,$ and def . If we choose one of these samples in such a way that each has the probability $1/20$ of being chosen, we will then call this a random sample.

ESTIMATION

In most statistical research studies, population parameters are usually unknown and have to be estimated from a sample. As such the methods for estimating the population parameters assume an important role in statistical analysis.

The random variables (such as Formula) used used to estimate population parameters, such as Formula are conventionally called as 'estimators', while specific values of these (such as $X = 105$ Formula = 21.44) are referred to as 'estimates' of the population parameters. The estimate of a population parameter may be one single value or it could be a range of values. In the former case it is referred as point estimate, whereas in the latter case it is termed as interval estimate. The researcher usually makes these two types of estimates through sampling analysis. While making estimates of population parameters, the researcher can give only the best point estimate or else he shall have to speak in terms of intervals and probabilities for he can never estimate with certainty the exact values of population parameters. Accordingly he must know the various properties of a good estimator so that he can select appropriate estimators for his study. He must know that a good estimator possesses the following properties:

1. An estimator should on the average be equal to the value of the parameter being estimated. This is popularly known as the property of unbiasedness. An estimator is said to be unbiased if the expected value of the estimator is equal to the parameter being estimated. The sample mean $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$ is the most widely used estimator because of the fact that it provides an unbiased estimate of the population mean μ .
2. An estimator should have a relatively small variance. This means that the most efficient estimator, among a group of unbiased estimators, is one which has the smallest variance. This property is technically described as the property of efficiency.
3. An estimator should use as much as possible the information available from the sample. This property is known as the property of sufficiency.
4. An estimator should approach the value of population parameter as the sample size becomes larger and larger. This property is referred to as the property of consistency. Keeping in view the above stated properties, the researcher must select appropriate estimator(s) for his study. We may now explain the methods which will enable us to estimate with reasonable

accuracy the population mean and the population proportion, the two widely used concepts.

SAMPLE SIZE AND ITS DETERMINATION

In sampling analysis the most ticklish question is: What should be the size of the sample or how large or small should be 'n'? If the sample size ('n') is too small, it may not serve to achieve the objectives and if it is too large, we may incur huge cost and waste resources. As a general rule, one can say that the sample must be of an optimum size i.e., it should neither be excessively large nor too small. Technically, the sample size should be large enough to give a confidence interval of desired width and as such the size of the sample must be chosen by some logical process before sample is taken from the universe. Size of the sample should be determined by a researcher keeping in view the following points:

1. Nature of universe: Universe may be either homogenous or heterogeneous in nature. If the items of the universe are homogenous, a small sample can serve the purpose. But if the items are heterogeneous, a large sample would be required. Technically, this can be termed as the dispersion factor.
2. Number of classes proposed: If many class-groups (groups and sub-groups) are to be formed, a large sample would be required because a small sample might not be able to give a reasonable number of items in each class-group.
3. Nature of study: If items are to be intensively and continuously studied, the sample should be small. For a general survey the size of the sample should be large, but a small sample is considered appropriate in technical surveys.
4. Type of sampling: Sampling technique plays an important part in determining the size of the sample. A small random sample is apt to be much superior to a larger but badly selected sample.
5. Standard of accuracy and acceptable confidence level: If the standard of accuracy or the level of precision is to be kept high, we shall require

relatively larger sample. For doubling the accuracy for a fixed significance level, the sample size has to be increased fourfold.

6. Availability of finance: In practice, size of the sample depends upon the amount of money available for the study purposes. This factor should be kept in view while determining the size of sample for large samples result in increasing the cost of sampling estimates.
7. Other considerations: Nature of units, size of the population, size of questionnaire, availability of trained investigators, the conditions under which the sample is being conducted, the time available for completion of the study are a few other considerations to which a researcher must pay attention while selecting the size of the sample.

There are two alternative approaches for determining the size of the sample. The first approach is “to specify the precision of estimation desired and then to determine the sample size necessary to insure it” and the second approach “uses Bayesian statistics to weigh the cost of additional information against the expected value of the additional information.” The first approach is capable of giving a mathematical solution, and as such is a frequently used technique of determining ‘n’. The limitation of this technique is that it does not analyse the cost of gathering information vis-a-vis the expected value of information. The second approach is theoretically optimal, but it is seldom used because of the difficulty involved in measuring the value of information. Hence, we shall mainly concentrate here on the first approach.