

# Research Methods

SOC 100

Module 1

Why do research?

Does national culture shape who attends university?

## Quantitative and Qualitative

- **Quantitative:** “A methodological approach that relies on numerical data. This approach seeks to determine causal relationships and correlations between variables.”
- **Qualitative:** “A methodological approach where researchers seek to develop in-depth understandings of social phenomena and interpret meanings of social actors through the collection of non-numerical data.”

# Quantitative Example

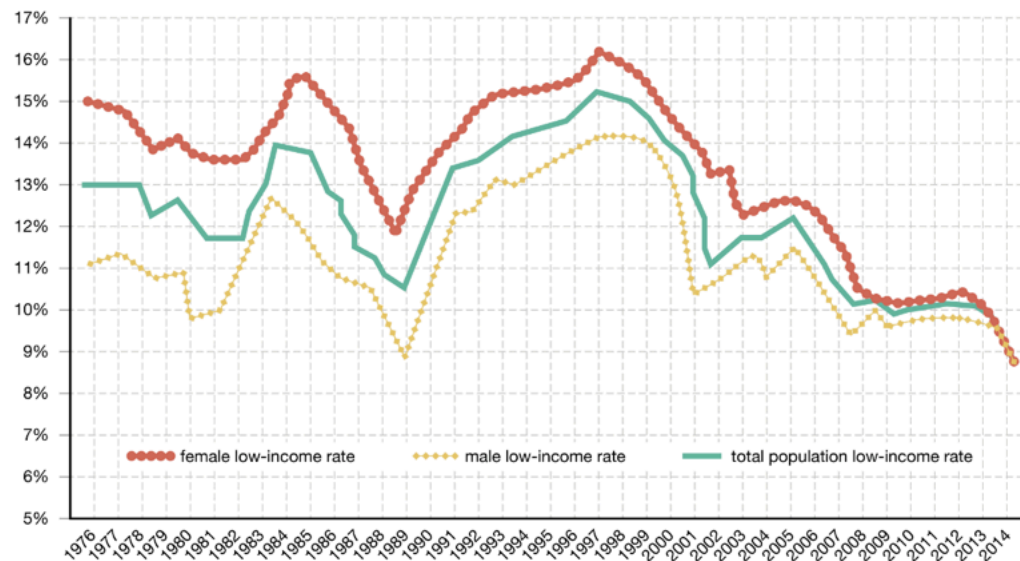


Figure 7.5: Percentage of Canadians in Low Income by Gender, 1976-2014 | Source: Employment and Social Development Canada 2016

# Qualitative Example

I guess I would say unusual, experimental dishes.” Fred puts it a little more bluntly when he states, “It’s kind of weird and cool to say I’ve had goat testicles in rice wine.”

While it was much more common for men to describe these sorts of culinary adventures, our interviews with women also contain a few examples of this theme. Most striking among them was Faye’s tale of driving her family halfway across the country to sample the Navajo stew served at a hospital cafeteria. “I think I’d read about it in one of my—I really like to travel, I’m an obsessive traveler, so in one of my travel books probably,” she explains. “You know, off the beaten track type of book where they talk about, you’ve gotta go to this place in Page, Arizona.” As a self-described “obsessive traveler,” Faye references an upper-middle-class lifestyle characterized by extensive mobility, allowing for exotic cultural experiences in “off the beaten track” places.<sup>3</sup> That she would craft her family’s vacation plans to suit her own culinary curiosity flies in the face of ideals of food and femininity based around selflessness and domesticity. Thus, while our data support the argument that narratives of adventure and discovery facilitate the performance of particular masculinities, it also suggests that foodie culture may provide a space for women to enact these intrepid identities in ways that also exhibit

# Goals of Quant v. Qual

“In comparison, a qualitative research project is oriented toward achieving a depth of understanding related to the research topic rather than establishing patterns.”

This will have implications for your research question, how you sample, whether you articulate variables and a hypothesis, the conclusions you draw...

Is social class a factor in who attends university after high school?

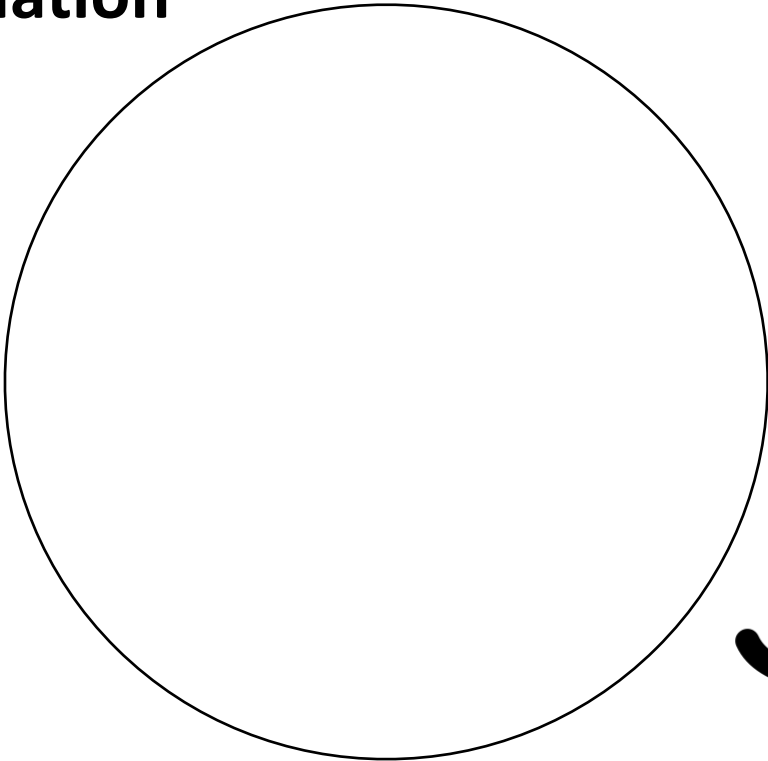


# Sampling

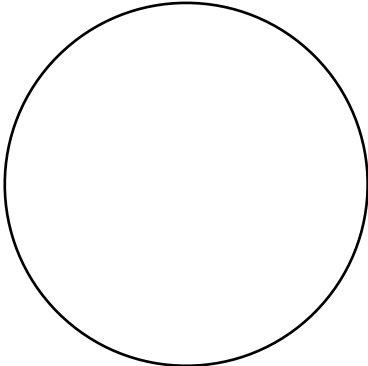
- **Population:** “The entire set of items, events, units, or people about which the researcher has a research interest.”
- **Sample:** “A subset of a population of interest that is selected to be part of research.”

Sampling

**Population**



**Sample**



# Sampling

## **Probability sampling**

- Mathematically random
- Typically aim for a representative sample
- Better for establishing generalizability of findings

## **Non-probability sampling**

- Non-random
- A purpose tied to your research topic guides the selection of a sample
- Not generalizable

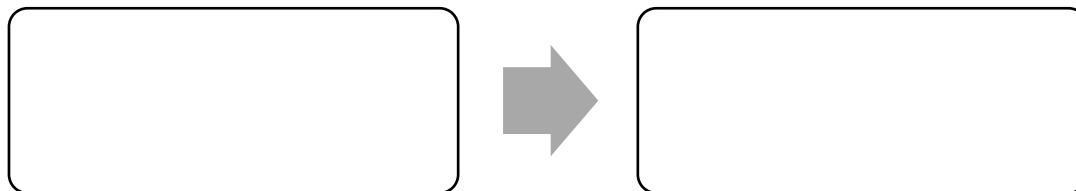
# Is social class a factor in who attends university after high school?

What kind of quantitative data could you collect to answer this research question?

What kind of qualitative data could you collect to answer this research question?

# Variables

- **Variable:** “The measure of a concept that can change.”
  - Examples...
- **Independent variable:** “The variable that causes change in the dependent variable.”
- **Dependent variable:** “The variable that changes after a change in the independent variable.”



# Methods

## **Covered in your textbook**

- Surveys and Questionnaires
- Interviews and Focus Groups
- Field Research
- Official Statistics
- Experimental Design

## **Other sociological methods**

- Content analysis (qual and quant)
- Historical-comparative
- Ethnography
- Net-nography
- Secondary analysis
- Visual methods
- Time-use diaries
- Social network analysis
- And more!