## NON-PROBABILITY SAMPLING

This refers to methods where random selection procedures cannot be employed. These strategies are less likely to produce a representative sample, but despite this are the strategies more likely to be used in social science research. Nonprobability sampling methods are the ones most likely to be used when a qualitative approach is used.

Examples of non-probability strategies include:

## • Convenience samples (opportunistic)

- As the name implies, the sample is selected because they are convenient. They are much easier to gather because they are readily available to the researcher. However, this convenience may contribute to a particular bias in the sample. Imagine researching the public's awareness of radiography as a profession but using your fellow students as the sample of the public. Handy but not unbiased.
- Purposive samples
  - The researcher selects the sample based on judgment. This is usually an extension of convention sampling. For example, a researcher may decide to draw the entire sample from one "representative Oity, even though the population includes all cities. When using this method, the researcher must be confident that the chosen sample is a figurently representative of the entire population.
- **Quota sampling** is the non-probability equivalent of stratified sampling. Like stratified sampling, the researcher first identifies the strata and their proportions as they are represented in the population. Then convenience or judgment sampling is used to select the required number of subjects from each stratum. This differs from stratified sampling, where the strata are filled by random sampling.
- **Snowball sampling** is a special non-probability method used when the desired sample characteristic is rare. It may be extremely difficult or cost prohibitive to locate respondents in these situations. Snowball sampling relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. While this technique can dramatically lower search costs, it comes at the expense of introducing bias because the technique itself reduces the likelihood that the sample will represent a good cross section from the population.

Non –probability sampling:

- is practical
- is economical
- suitable for clinical setting where there may be no other option