

Levels of a Variable

When your variable is subdivided into categories (ordinal or nominal data), it is important you consider the number of levels of your variable. The number of levels of a particular variable is the number of possible outcomes. Below are a few examples given for Ordinal and Nominal data.

Examples:

- For the Nominal variable **Gender**, the possible outcomes are male or female and hence there are two levels.
- For the Nominal variable **Blood Type**, the possible outcomes are A, B, AB or O. Hence the number of levels is four.
- For the Ordinal variable **Stages of cancer**, the possible outcomes are I, II, III or IV. Hence the number of levels is four
- For an Ordinal variable on a **likeliness scale**, the possible outcomes are very unlikely, unlikely, neutral, likely, very likely. Hence the number of levels is five.

If your data is quantitative rather than ordinal or nominal rather than recording the number of levels you should make note of the range of values observed.