**PET of PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Define the** **method** | **Where the researcher does not join in with the activities of the group- either covert or overt. They are at a distance** |
| **Example(s)** | **‘Why Kids Kill’ – dispatches documentary** |
| **Circle correct** | **Quantitative** | **Qualitative - somtimes** | **Positivist** | **Realist** | **Interpretivist** |
|  | **Strengths**  | **Weaknesses**  |
| **Practical** | -Less likely to reject the sociologist because they know who you are and what the aims of the research are (overt)-Can be cheaper than other methods e.g. questionnaires.-Don’t necessarily need to be trained-Access less of an issue if using CCTV- Not as time consuming as Participant observation- No real risk of going native | -Could be issues with access e.g. schools may not want someone to come in an observe-Access could be very difficult to hidden groups, such as gangs – their behaviour may not be overtly happening |
| **Ethical** | -Overt-gains consent -Overt- no deception- can make aims clear -Overt + covert – less issue of getting involved in dangerous situations than participant obs | -Covert- lying and deceiving -Overt – could be some risk if people don’t wish to be observed. - Covert – lack of consent |
| **Theoretical** | -Reliability could be high as an observation schedule can be used to tick off how many times a behaviour occurs - Can see how groups interact (element of validity)- Covert – lack of hawthorne effect | - Relies on subjectivity to analyse the data as you can’t ask questions-Lacks validity due to not being able to ask questions. - Hawthorne effect (overt) – people may change behaviour. Decreases validity. -Small samples means you can’t represent target population – practical issue that it’s hard to study large groups with this method.-Cannot generalise the data to wider groups.-Interpretivists don’t really like the method as you can’t ask questions |