**PET - PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION**

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| **Define the**  **method** | **Where the researcher joins in on the activities of the group** | | | | |
| **Example(s)** | **James Patrick – gang leader for a day**  **Paul Willis - Lads** | | | | |
| **Circle correct** | **Quantitative** | **Qualitative** | **Positivist** | **Realist** | **Interpretivist** |
|  | **Strengths** | | **Weaknesses** | | |
| **Practical** | * Get to experience what’s going on, resulting in a better understanding * Because participant observation enables the sociologist to build a rapport with the group and gain its trust it has provided a successful method of study e.g. football hooligans, thieves, drug dealers | | * Very time consuming e.g. Whyte’s study took him four years to complete * Researcher needs t be trained in able to be recognise aspects of a situation * Can be personally stressful and demanding especially if covert * Requires observational and interpersonal skills which not everyone possesses * Many groups may not want to be studied this way and some have the power to make this difficult for the observer | | |
| **Ethical** | * If the researcher is overt, You can ask for permission to observe making it easier to record data and therefore more reliable | | * Gaining entry and consent to group can be tricky * With covert observations you will have to lie to participants to ensure you remain undercover | | |
| **Theoretical** | * Primary source data not interrupted by anyone else * Rapport more likely with participation and honesty * Rich qualitative data * Able to gain valid data- ask questions about the participants behaviour. | | * Presence of researcher Hawthorne effect * Observation may lack structure so quality can be a problem * Lack of structure unreliable difficult to replicate * Small samples so not representative | | |