**PET - QUALITATIVE SECONDARY DOCUMENTS**

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| **Define the**  **method** | **Information that has been collected or created by someone else for their own purposes, but which the sociologists can then use.** | | | | |
| **Example(s)** | **The census**  **Documents such as letters documents and diaries** | | | | |
| **Circle correct** | **Quantitative** | **Qualitative** | **Positivist** | **Realist** | **Interpretivist** |
|  | **Strengths** | | **Weaknesses** | | |
| **Practical** | * Can be quick and cheap way of doing research as someone else has already produced the information. * They are free source of huge amounts of data. * It helps to make primary data collection more specific since with the help of secondary data, we are able to make out what are the gaps and deficiencies and what additional information needs to be collected. * It helps to improve the understanding of the problem. * It provides a basis for comparison for the data that is collected by the researcher. | | * However those who produce it may not be interested in the same questions as the sociologists, as those secondary sources may not provide exactly the information that the sociologists need. * Governments only collect information for themselves and not for benefit of sociologists-so there may be none available for the topics we are interested in. * The definitions that the state uses may be different from those that sociologists would use. | | |
| **Ethical** | * Don’t necessarily need permission to use them. * Could be accessed via official websites or archives, which provide permission to use them. | | * Someone’s information and work you may need to get consent to use it. * Concerns with using public documents used by schools. * Permission is needed. * Personal documents may not be shared – you need informed consent | | |
| **Theoretical** | * Validity – documents can provide important insights into the meaning held by teachers and pupils giving high validity * Representativeness – official documents required from schools such as racism incidents makes it more likely to form a picture of racism across the whole country of schools. * Reliability – public documents are produced in a systematic format, enables researchers to make dircect comparasons of absence rate of pupils in schools. | | * Issues with public documents related to absence rates would be accidental mistakes makes when filling in registers reducing reliability of attendance. * All documents are open to different interpretations, so could lack validity. * May not be representative- documents could be missing etc. | | |