## **PET - FIELD EXPERIMENTS**

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| **Define the**  **method** | A field experiment is attest carried out in a natural environment to establish cause and effect between identified variables. | | | | |
| **Example(s)** | Rosenthal and Jacobson: conducted a field experiment to test their theory on the self-fulfilling prophecy and the impact of teacher labelling.  Mary Sissons: study on the effect of social class on peoples willingness to give directions to an actor: can be used to show the problem of lack or reliability. | | | | |
| **Circle correct** | **Quantitative** | **Qualitative** | **Positivist** | **Realist** | **Interpretivist** |
|  | **Strengths** | | **Weaknesses** | | |
| **Practical** | * These experiments are conducted in normal social situations, and therefore have normal social conditions. * (rather than in an artificial lab environment) * There is a much lesser risk of demand characteristics as participants may not be aware that they are being studied. | | * The more realistic that they make the situation, the less control that they have over the situation or the experiment. * School may not be happy letting researchers in. * Using field experiments as their method makes it harder identify the true cause due to not being able to control all the variables – the change in variables could influence the results. | | |
| **Ethical** | * You are able to gain consent * The behaviour that one has in a field experiment is more likely to reflect real life, due to its natural setting. | | * No consent: covert * Researcher might have negative consequences for the participants * The researcher may mislead the participants e.g. Pygmalion in the classroom * Could cause psychological harm to the participants. | | |
| **Theoretical** | * Not artificial, so that increases validity. * Representative as they are in natural conditions * Due to it not being in a lab, there is no Hawthorne effect. * This means that the information that they gain is not bias and seen to be truer. Results are more valid. | | * (Depending on whether they are covert or overt) Research participants changing their behaviour (Hawthorne effect) – so therefore reduces validity. * Lacks reliability: due to lack of control of variables * Lacks representativeness due to small sample sizes. | | |