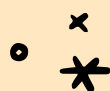


# Research Methods Key Terms



|                               |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Case Study</b>             | Research that examines a single example, e.g. a study of a school.                                                                                                         |
| <b>Closed-ended Questions</b> | Questions used in a social survey that allow only a limited choice of answers.                                                                                             |
| <b>Comparative Method</b>     | A research method that compares two social groups that are alike from one variable.                                                                                        |
| <b>Content Analysis</b>       | A method analysing the content of media or documents to transfer it into quantitative data.                                                                                |
| <b>Control Group</b>          | Researchers compare a control group and an experimental group. The control group is not exposed to any changes.                                                            |
| <b>Correlation</b>            | When two or more factors or variables vary together.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Covert Observation</b>     | A researcher studies individuals without their knowledge.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Documents</b>              | A source of secondary qualitative data. Public documents are published by governments, schools, charities. Private documents include letters, diaries and autobiographies. |
| <b>Empathy</b>                | Understanding how a person thinks and feels.                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Ethics</b>                 | Moral principles in research.                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Ethnography</b>            | An in-depth study of a social group in their natural setting.                                                                                                              |
| <b>Experiment</b>             | A test which aims to establish cause-and-effect between social variables.                                                                                                  |
| <b>Field Experiments</b>      | Uses some controlled elements, but takes place in natural settings.                                                                                                        |
| <b>Focus Groups</b>           | A qualitative research method that involves a moderated discussion with a small group of people.                                                                           |
| <b>Generalisability</b>       | The extent to which findings from a research sample can be applied to the wider target population.                                                                         |
| <b>Hawthorne Effect</b>       | The subjects of the research study know they are being studied and behave differently.                                                                                     |



# Research Methods Key Terms



|                                    |                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hypothesis</b>                  | An untested theory or explanation.                                                                                                               |
| <b>Impression Management</b>       | The process of controlling how others perceive you.                                                                                              |
| <b>Informed Consent</b>            | Participants have agreed to take part in research after they fully understand the process and purpose of the study.                              |
| <b>Interpretivism</b>              | A research approach which focuses on understanding the meaning and emotion behind human interactions. This approach favours qualitative methods. |
| <b>Interview schedule</b>          | A list of questions to be asked during an interview.                                                                                             |
| <b>Interview</b>                   | A method of gathering information by asking questions.                                                                                           |
| <b>Laboratory Experiment</b>       | Highly controlled environment where researchers manipulate an independent variable to measure its effect on a dependent variable.                |
| <b>Longitudinal Research</b>       | A study over an extended period of time at regular intervals.                                                                                    |
| <b>Non-Participant Observation</b> | A researcher studies individuals without getting involved in their activities.                                                                   |
| <b>Objectivity</b>                 | Research without bias or values.                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Official Statistics</b>         | Quantitative data collected by governments and official agencies.                                                                                |
| <b>Open-ended Questions</b>        | Questions in a survey which allow a respondent to expand on their answers and in their own words.                                                |
| <b>Operationalisation</b>          | Turning a complex process or concept into something measurable.                                                                                  |
| <b>Opportunity Sampling</b>        | A sampling technique whereby researchers select participants who are most easily available and accessible.                                       |
| <b>Overt Observation</b>           | The subjects of the research study are aware of the researcher's true identity and motives.                                                      |
| <b>Participant Observation</b>     | The sociologists study a group by participating in the group activities.                                                                         |

# Research Methods Key Terms



|                            |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pilot Study</b>         | A trial run of research conducted before the main study.                                                                                                        |
| <b>Pluralism</b>           | Using a mix of different methods in a single study.                                                                                                             |
| <b>Positivism</b>          | A research approach which focuses on researching people in a scientific way in order to establish cause-and-effect. This approach favours quantitative methods. |
| <b>Practical Issues</b>    | The logistical, financial and personal limitations that affect a researcher's choice of method.                                                                 |
| <b>Primary Data</b>        | Information collected first-hand.                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Qualitative Data</b>    | Information which is non-numerical about people's thoughts, feelings and attitudes.                                                                             |
| <b>Quantitative Data</b>   | Information in numerical form.                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Questionnaires</b>      | A list of written questions which can be used to gain data from a large range of people.                                                                        |
| <b>Quota Sampling</b>      | A sampling technique whereby researchers create a representative sample by selecting a specific number of individuals from sub-groups.                          |
| <b>Random Sampling</b>     | A sampling technique that chooses participants so every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.                                         |
| <b>Reliability</b>         | The consistency and stability of a research method or measurement.                                                                                              |
| <b>Representativeness</b>  | How well a sample reflects the characteristics of the wider population it is drawn from.                                                                        |
| <b>Secondary data</b>      | Information that has already been collected by someone else for a different purpose.                                                                            |
| <b>Snowball Sampling</b>   | A sampling technique whereby existing participants help recruit others from their social networks to take part in a study.                                      |
| <b>Stratified Sampling</b> | A sampling technique whereby the population is divided into groups (strata) and participants are selected from each group to ensure representation.             |
| <b>Subjectivity</b>        | When research is influenced by the researcher's own opinions.                                                                                                   |





## Theoretical Issues

The underlying assumptions and perspectives that guide a researcher's choice of topic, research method, and interpretation of data.

## Triangulation

The use of two or more research methods or data sources in a single study to check the reliability and validity of findings.

## Validity

The extent to which research methods provide a true, genuine, or accurate picture of social reality.

## Variables

Factors, characteristics, or conditions that can change or vary and are measured or observed by sociologists in research. An Independent Variable is the factor that is controlled, the Dependent Variable is the factor that is measured.

Extra Concepts:

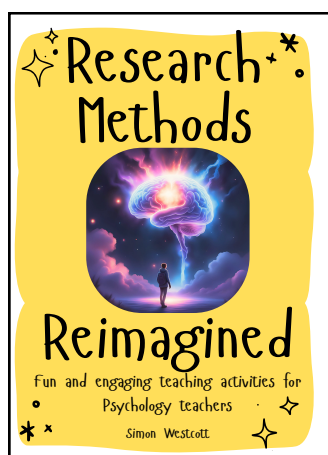


| Concept | Definition |
|---------|------------|
|         |            |

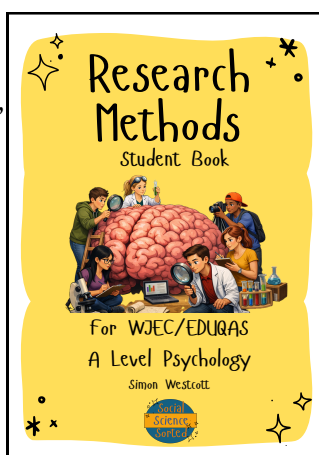


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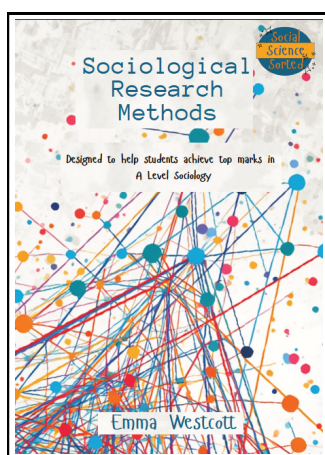


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