Research Methods

Ethical Research - whether the research is morally right or wrong and will not harm anyone.

There are four main elements of ethical research -

Consent: the participant must have agreed to take part

Confidentiality: details of the participants actions must remain confidential and there identity must remain anonymous.

Avoidance of harm: the participant must not be harmed physically or psychologically by the research process

Avoidance of deception: researchers should be honest about the study's complication

Validity

Validity is concerned whether the results have uncovered the truth about social life. Participant observation and unstructured interviews tend to have the highest validity. If subjects are not truthful, validity is lowered and questionnaires and closed questions both lower validity because people cannot say what they really mean.

Reliability

Reliability means that the research should be repeated in a different time or place and similar results gained. Questionnaire and structured interviews tend to have the highest reliability as long as the sample used is representative.

Methodological Triangulation

When you use more than one method to support results because researchers find it difficult to have high levels of both validity and reliability with using more than one method.

Right of withdrawal

Subjects should be able to end their involvement at any stage if they wish to.

Informed Consent

Subjects of research should know what the research is about and have agreed to take part.