

# Candidate 1 evidence

## Part B – Source Questions

15.

Observation would be a partly strong method to investigate racism within the criminal justice system, in specific covert observation. This is due to the positive of being unknown as an informant in this environment which unlike other research methods where people know they are being investigated those being observed are unaware and there for will be their true selves. This method is shown to be effective with James Patricks cover observation of glassgow gangs. In the 90's he went under cover for months exploring the gang culture and then wrote a book on his experiences. He was able to get an in-depth understanding of the social dynamics at play so he could give a quality explanation of why things happened the way they did in gangs. This opportunity for qualitative first hand research makes this an excellent method for investigating this issue.

A flaw though of this method is the risk that the researcher may 'go native' the commitment needed for their research would mean surrounding yourself in this situation non stop for an extended period of time probably minimum a couple months. No matter how nuteral the researcher may seem if surrounded by these racist ideas constantly there is a chance they could start to belive them and go along with the crowd, which would then put the whole investiagation at risk.

One way in which this method would fail is the time it would take to conduct, to be truly trusted to properly hear what goes on within the criminal justice system such as the police force it would take an intense commitment from the research to spend months infiltrating the system. However as shown in the Panorama documentary where a reporter did go undercover in a police academy to see the racism and sexism, he reported his shock and how fast people were openly bigoted, so with proper preparation it is possible to get a very indepth understanding.

A potential flaw with this method is it is open to bias from the researcher, first hand information has the strength of the reporter being able to understand. With covert observation there is only the ability for one person to infiltrate so it will only be their experience within this system. This issue especially would struggle with ethical issue of bias as if the researcher was a white person they would have a different experience in this investigation and would be slightly less aware as they haven't experienced racism, however to send in a person of colour would have ethical issues of putting them at risk of experiencing bodily harm or the constant surrounding of racism could have very negative mental health effects.

Another method for researching racism within the criminal justice system would be face to face semi structured interview with people who had experienced it first-hand. Unlike many other research methods this would allow the interviewer to get more of a personal relationship with who they are interviewing. It also gives opportunity for in-depth qualitative answer as with such a sensitive topic certain quantitative research methods would not give such an in-depth understanding of the issue. Such as the interviews done by Dombey and Dombey on women's experience with sexual violence. This too was such a sensitive topic that needed to be handled carefully and the face to face interview made them able to get a true understanding of the women experience and the same would be possible with this investigation of the criminal justice system and racism. The Dombey and Dombey interview was able to get accounts of women's very personal experience and this would provide the same research.

A negative of using interviews however is some people may not be comfortable talking about their experiences with racism as it may have been done by someone in power. This also brings up the ethical issues involved as with such a serious topic with such powerful people (those in the criminal justice system) those who partake in the interview must be anonymous as the information they reveal could put them in danger if going public, it could harm their careers if it was found out they spoke about someone important. This issue also occurred during the Dombey and Dombey interviews as they wrote that many women were hesitant about speaking of their personal experience as they fear they may be identified. This is also true in this situation as some of the qualitative information if published could be such a specific situation the person who spoke out may be identified and at risk. This would be a negative with interviews as the ethical issues with protecting those who they speak to are very serious as it could cost people their safety if handled incorrectly.

Another research method that could be used are official statistics. These could be quantitative research done by the government polling a large population rather than one first hand experience. This would give the ability to have a holistic look at the issue, and would give a starting point for understanding the depth of the issue, as both other methods take a lot of time a preparation this could be done quickly and easily to give an understanding while investigating this issue.

The negative with this method however for this issue is that the criminal justice system is linked to the government and things said bad about it could reflect on them. There would be a potential bias in the statistics that would be found and would not give the same in depth understanding, and with this issue of racism scale is important but an in-depth understanding of the issue is more so.

Another issue with this method is that it would not be quantitative and would have no ability for follow up questions, such as in the 2020 government statistics on rural safety. With 1/10 people feeling unsafe at night however there was no ability to compare what they felt unsafe about or any scale of their feeling which with this issue that kind of in-depth understanding is essential. As well as a Marxist view of the flaws of trusting the government on issues that could look badly on them.

In conclusion covert observation would be the best method for investigating racism within the criminal justice system with a combination of interviews of those willing to come forward about their experience of racism. Due to covert observations ability to get a qualitative understanding and see the true dark underbelly it would provide the best in-depth understanding of the issue. The ethical issues involved are something researchers should be aware of and understand the risks

involved with it and make sure it is handled correctly. The combination of interviews would also be able to get in-depth views as well as more than just one experience. The ethical issues of protecting those interviewed identities should be of up most importance. And the covert observation should fill in some things that people weren't comfortable answering. Official statistics could maybe be consulted to get a starting understanding however on such an issue they do not provide a qualitative enough view and that is more important on this particular issue.

## Candidate 2 evidence

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7.	<p>An advantage of observation is that it allows for less involvement of the researcher as they are simply observing conversation and beliefs regarding interest groups. This will allow for less tailored responses about interest groups effect in politics and may allow more information to be gathered as conversation between participants will flow and could lead to <del>to</del> better insight on their views.</p>
	<p>An advantage of observation is that if it is unobtrusive it allows for unknown presence of a researcher. This is important because it will cause people to be more relaxed and potentially give better more truthful answers about interest groups, it may also allow for their own participation in interest groups to be revealed. Giving the <del>researcher</del> researcher insight on potential bias.</p>
	<p>A disadvantage of observation is it is a lengthy process as a researcher has to simply observe and isn't able to interject. This is important as it means that despite</p>

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<p>all the time put it to finding out interest groups role in politics, they may not get desired answers and therefore would be left with not completed answers. A focus group would be better for this research face to face interview would be better for this as it would allow follow up questions to be asked, meaning fuller, more specific answers can be asked about interest groups.</p>	
<p>Another disadvantage of observation is that if it's uncovert and the people being evaluated are unaware of the fact their could be problems of consent as the people giving their opinions may not want their views to be published or to be part of data about interest groups. This is important, as it takes possible valuable opinions from researchers away regarding interest groups. A better method of research regarding issues of consent are online surveys. Due to their optional format, people make the conscious choice to share their opinions, and are therefore, far more willing to engage to</p>	

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share their views on interests groups hold in politics.

An ~~advantage~~ disadvantage of observation may be bias held by the researcher. This may result in 1 sided perspectives being fed back after observation is completed or a lack of duality in their research as they haven't fully observed everyone's views on the matter. The usage of focus groups would be far more useful in this as a scribe is typically present to note everyone's ~~an~~ answers, this means that the researcher would have to need to get ~~the~~ everyone's views but they would all be noted and would make the research on the role of interest groups in politics more all encompassing as you may get opinions of people in interest groups and get people's views who are not part of one.