



Social Surveys

The basics

Definition - typically a closed question questionnaires to collect data in a standardised form from large groups of people

Quantitative data

Types

Face to face

Phone

Structured interviews

Open vs closed questions

By post

By hand (streets/ in schools)

Self completion questionnaires

Online

Operationalisation

Sampling

Likehert scale

Related concepts

Strengths

Positivism

Find trends, make correlations and generalisations

Reliability

Objective/ value free

Easy to repeat and verify

Representativeness

Easy to obtain large samples

Practical factors

Quick/ cheap/ easy access

Ethics

Informed consent

Limitations

Interpretivism

Lacks feeling/ empathy

No insight/ depth

Validity

Imposition problem

Who completed them?

Practical

Low response rate

Ethics

Too cold for sensitive topics

Reflects ideology of Researcher/ assumes expert superiority

Nature of topic

Not useful for

Sensitive topics

Complex topics

Researching deviance

Useful for

Simple topics

Overviews of population