With reference to the rigor of the system adopted, observation is classified into (e) controlled observation, and (f) uncontrolled observation.

Participant observation

In this observation, the observer is a part of the phenomena or group which is observed and he acts as both an observer and a participant. The persons who are observed should not be aware of the researcher's purpose. Then only their behavior will be 'natural'. The concealment of research objective and researcher's identity is justified on the ground that it makes it possible to study certain aspects of the group's culture which are not revealed to outsiders makes it possible to study certain aspects of the group's culture which are not revealed to outsiders.

The advantages of participant observation are:

1. The observer can understand the emotional reactions of the observed group, and get a deeper insight of their experiences.

2. The observer will be able to record context which gives meaning to the observed behavior and heard statements.

Disadvantages

1. The participant observer narrows his range of observation.

2. To the extent that the participant observer participates emotionally, the objectivity is lost.

Because of the above limitations, participant observation is generally restricted to those cases where non-participant observation is not practical.

Non-participant observation

In this method, the observer stands apart and does not participate in the phenomenon observed. Naturally, there is no emotional involvement on the part of the observer. This method calls for skill in recording observations in an unnoticed manner.

Direct observation

This means observation of an event personally by the observer when it takes place. This method is flexible and allows the observer to see and record subtle aspects of events and behavior as they occur. He can free to shift places, change the focused the observation. A limitation of this method is that the observer's perception circuit may not be able to cover all relevant events when the latter move quickly, resulting in the incompleteness of the observation.

Indirect observation

This does not involve the physical presence of the observer, and the recording is done by mechanical, photographic or electronic devices. This method is less flexible than direct observation, but it is less biasing and less erratic in recording accuracy. It also provides a permanent record for an analysis of different aspects of the event.

Controlled observation

This involves standardization of observational technique and exercise of maximum control over extrinsic and intrinsic variables by adopting experimental design and systematically recording observations. Controlled observation is earned out either in the laboratory or in the field. It is typified by clear and explicit decisions on what, how and when to observe. It is primarily used for inferring causality, and testing causal hypothesis.

Uncontrolled observation

This does not involve control over extrinsic and intrinsic variables. It is primarily used for descriptive research. Participant observation is a typical uncontrolled one.

Planning of observation

The use of observation method requires proper planning.

First, the researcher should carefully examine the relevance of observation method to the data needs of the selected study.

Second, he must identify the specific investigative questions which call for use of observation method. These determine the data to be collected.

Third, he must decide the obseivation content, viz., specific conditions, events and activities that have to be observed for the required data. The observation content should include the relevant variables.

Fourth, for each variable chosen, the operational definition should be specified.

Fifth, the observation setting, the subjects to be observed, the timing and mode of observation, recording, procedure, recording instruments to be used, and other details of the task should be determined.

Last, observers should be selected and trained. The persons to be selected must have sufficient concentration powers, strong memory power and untrubusive nature. Selected persons should be imparted both theoretical and practical training.

Observation Tools and Recording Devices

Systematic observation requires the use of observation schedule (or observationnaire), diary and various mechanical recording devices.

Schedule: The data requirements are identified by analyzing the core of the problem, the objectives of the study, the investigative questions, hypothesis and the operational definition of concepts and out of the data requirements, items of data to be collected through observation are identified. A schedule is then constructed, covering those items of data.

It should be constructed in such a manner as to make it possible to record the necessary information easily and correctly. Enough space should be provided for recording observations for