

Some of the characteristics of observation method of data collection are as follows:

1. Observation is a Systematic Method:

Observation is not haphazard or unplanned. The length of the observation periods, the interval between them, the number of observations, the area or situation of observation and various techniques used for observation are carefully planned. Often there are systematic managements for controlling the situation if special factors are to be studied, for example study of honest behaviour, sportsman spirit, leadership qualities etc.

ADVANTAGES:

2. Observation is Specific:

It is not just looking around for general aspects of human behaviour. Rather it is

directed at those specific aspects of total situation which are assumed to be significant from the stand point of the purpose of the study. The layman may frequently overlook what is crucial while observing an event or phenomenon, but the scientific observer should look for some definite things which suit his purpose of study so as to economise his time, money and effort for observation.

3. Observation is Objective.

Observation should be objective and free from bias as far as possible. It should generally be guided by a hypothesis. The observer must maintain ethical neutrality. He must consider hypothesis as something to be tested. But at the same time he must maintain a flexible attitude, so that he can deviate from his original plan when such deviation appears inevitable.

ADVANCEMENTS.

4. Observation is Quantitative.

Although many important phenomena cannot be quantified, it becomes almost an imperative to use some means for quantifying observations in order to increase their precision and to facilitate their analysis. Even the quality should be converted into quantity, because qualitative data is subjective and quantitative one is objective and can further be interpreted in objective manner.

5. Observation is an Affair of Eyes.

P.V. Young remarks that observation is a systematic and deliberate study through eye. An observer gathers the data which he has seen in his own eyes. Collecting information through eyes is probably the most trustworthy technique of data collection in social research.

ADVERBEMENTS.

6. Definite Aim:

Observation must have some definite aims and objectives. It should be clearly defined before the beginning of the actual observation process. Without the proper aims and objectives observation will be unsystematic and expensive.

7. The Record of Observation is Made Immediately:

During the observation period it is very difficult on the part of the observer to remember each and every element of observation. He may forget much important information. If we rely on memory the factor of forgetting will enter and affect the data of observation. Therefore the observer should record all important information's as soon as the observation is completed.

ADVERBEMENTS.

8. Observation is Verifiable.

Observation result can be checked and verified. Observation must be verified with usual criteria of reliability, validity and usability. It may be possible to check the findings of the observation by comparing the results of different observers by repeating the study.