



MARKSCHEME

May 2010

PSYCHOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 3

5 pages

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1. Ethics need to be carefully considered when conducting a one to one semi-structured interview.

Discuss ethical considerations

(a) before the interview takes place

[4 marks]

Before the interview, the interviewer needs to plan questions in advance by ensuring that none of them contain material that is ethically doubtful. This could extend to such matters as gender, age, ethnicity, religion and several other issues. It may also be argued that the interviewer should prepare themselves thoroughly on the subject matter of the interview in order to help establish rapport with the interviewee. The prospective interviewee must be informed of the aim and nature of the research.

Award **[3 to 4 marks]** where relevant ethical considerations are well discussed.

Award **[1 to 2 marks]** where relevant ethical considerations are outlined, or described but no discussion is offered.

(b) during the interview

[4 marks]

The interviewer should try to establish rapport with the interviewee. At the start of the interview the interviewee should be reminded that the information will be kept confidential and that the identity of the interviewee will remain anonymous. The right to leave the interview at any time should be mentioned and written consent by the interviewee should be obtained to confirm that the interview transcription will become the property of the interviewer or his organization.

Award **[3 to 4 marks]** where relevant ethical considerations are well discussed.

Award **[1 to 2 marks]** where relevant ethical considerations are outlined, or described but no discussion is offered.

(c) after the interview has finished.

[2 marks]

After the interview the interviewee should be offered the opportunity to hear the recording, to see the transcript and to require any amendments to be made. A debriefing should be provided including the opportunity for the interviewee to withdraw their data.

Award **[2 marks]** where relevant ethical considerations are discussed.

Award **[1 mark]** where relevant ethical considerations are outlined, but no discussion is offered.

N.B. Although it is possible that some degree of overlap may occur in the points made in answers to parts (a), (b) and (c), the examiner should expect sufficiently different information for each point to award marks accordingly. Marks should not be awarded for the same information being produced two or three times.

2. Discuss how both participant *and* researcher expectancies may affect the validity of qualitative research. [10 marks]

Refer to the paper 3 markbands when awarding marks.

Candidates should show that the operation of participant and researcher expectancies may make the resulting findings invalid. They may be invalid because the participant's behaviour is likely to be untypical of his or her normal behaviour. Such behaviour lacks ecological validity. Candidates may explain that performance of participants on cognitively demanding tasks, for example solving a complex mathematical problem, tends to decrease in the presence of an audience. Biased researchers are almost certain to take a less than objective view of the behaviour that they investigate. A researcher's expectancy may bias the results, therefore the conclusions drawn from the results may not be valid.

Award **[7 to 10 marks]** for responses that present a detailed discussion of likely effects of both participant and researcher expectations on the validity of a research investigation.

Award **[4 to 6 marks]** for responses that are mainly descriptive of participant and researcher expectations but offer only limited discussion of effects of these on the validity of research.

Award **[1 to 3 marks]** for responses that offer limited definitions of participant and/or researcher expectancies. Answers that focus only on aspects of validity, for example ecological validity, and do not apply their discussion to participant and researcher expectancies, should receive marks in this range.

Award up to a maximum of **[5 marks]** for responses addressing only participant or researcher expectations.

3. Identify and evaluate ways of recording behaviour that may be used in research involving participant observation. [10 marks]

Refer to the paper 3 markbands when awarding marks.

The term “participant observation” refers to an observer who is a complete participant. Responses may include either overt (disclosed) or covert (undisclosed) participant observation, or both. Recording may be achieved by hidden or open audio or video recording or discreet note-taking by the researcher.

Overt participant observation usually entails the researcher becoming part of a group activity over a suitable period of time sufficient for relevant observations to be made. Importantly the others in the group are made aware of the researcher’s presence. There are occasions, however, when the observer makes known their presence to the group but does not inform them of the method of recording behaviour and conversation. This is done so that the normal behaviour of the group is maintained without fear of the recording.

In covert observation the researcher’s true identity is not revealed. Deceit is involved, group members are not consulted, researchers may manipulate the situation in order to provoke certain actions and recordings may be made secretly, without anonymity or confidentiality clauses being agreed.

Evaluation may include comments on ethical, cultural or methodological considerations involved in overt and/or covert participant observation.

Candidates may well include evidence from relevant studies and this should be given credit.

Award **[7 to 10 marks]** for identification and effective evaluation of recording methods appropriate to participant observation.

Award **[4 to 6 marks]** for identification and mainly descriptive accounts of recording methods appropriate to participant observation with limited evaluation.

Award **[1 to 3 marks]** for identification and minimal description of recording methods in general.

If only one way of recording behaviour is concerned, then award up to a maximum of **[5 marks]**.

Award **[1 mark]** for merely identifying ways of recording behaviour.