

Advantages to Insider Status

Positionality

- a nuanced perspective for observation, interpretation and representation
- an equalized relationship between researcher and participants
- expediency of rapport building
- immediate legitimacy in the field
- economy to acclimating to the field

Access

- expediency of access
- access to more in-group activities

Data Collection/Interpretation/Representation

- insight into the linguistic, cognitive, emotional, sensory and psychological principles of participants
- knowledge of the historical and practical happenings of the field
- stimulation of natural interaction and behavior
- detection of participants' hidden behaviors and perceptions
- detection of nonverbal gestures of embarrassment and discomfort
- detection of informants' actual behavior versus their performed selves
- identification of unusual and unfamiliar occurrences

Complications to Insider Status

Positionality

- Insider status unchecked can complicate or overwhelm researcher role.
 - ♦over-identification or over-reliance on status obscures researcher role or goal of research
 - ♦social roles in group or community constrain researcher role and objectives
 - ♦expectation to participant in community events or affairs
 - ♦overload with exchange or reciprocity requests from participants
 - ♦requests to take sides in community political and moral issues
 - ♦the rise of value conflicts as a result of research and community member role
 - ♦compromised professional ethics and/or research results
 - ♦participants' perceptions and expectations co-opt researcher or constrain role

Access

- bias in entering field and establishing rapport
- limited access based on political climate

Data Collection/Interpretation/Representation

- observer and/or participant role may be culturally inappropriate
- large amounts of impression management to maintain rapport and/or identity
- selective reporting
- difficulty with recognizing patterns due to familiarity with community
- bias in selecting participants
- breaking or maintaining relationships with participants when leaving the field
- community interaction style compromises interview process or observation
- insiderness obscures representation or implementation due to turbulent or changing political and historical climate of the field