

# Naturalistic observation argumentative essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In order to perform a naturalistic observation, I went to the University of Arizona's food court in the Student Union to observe a convenient sample of people. On September 18, 2011 at approximately 7: 15 pm. I observed 23 people for 15 minutes. There were 16 males and 7 females present during that time period. Without intruding, I watched as these people ate, socialized, and passed through the food court, but I paid particular attention to one target behavior: frequency of phone usage. My operational definition for frequency of phone usage is the number of times people glance at, text, or talk on any mobile device while in a public area.

Over the course of 15 minutes, I used the scan sampling method to observe this target behavior. Whenever I saw someone use his or her phone I used a tally mark to record it in a notebook. At the conclusion of 15 minutes, I had 14 tallies for males who were alone, 5 tallies for males in a group (two or more individuals), 9 tallies for females who were alone, and 4 tallies for females in a group. Based on this data, one would think that males tend to use their phones more often than females do, but that is not an accurate conclusion considering there were more males in the food court during that period of time.

On the other hand, I did have one very apparent observation. People who were in the food court by themselves had a much greater tendency to use their phone than people who had at least one other individual with them. Since this observation was so eminent, if I were to conduct a correlational study the two variables I would use would be the number of people (single individual or number of members in a group) versus the frequency of phone usage.