

# [Participant observation](https://assignbuster.com/participant-observation-essay-samples-3/)

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Observation Diary Extract of activities in a local cafe This is an extract of a day’s observation made at cafe located at the main junction linking the highway to the town at the end of the street. The diary contains a detail of participatory observation of events that happen in the cafe. The participatory observation took place on 16th Saturday, in the morning from 9. 30 to 11. 30 am. The following is an extract of participatory observation that took place at a local cafe on Saturday. Since it is a weekend, many people visit the cafe, which is the only cafe in the town. On entering the cafe, there is plenty of activity inside with the most prominent ones being the serving of clients by the waiters. I am very excited to complete this project from the fact that it is a Saturday morning, and I will have the chance to do my University work as I interact with my friends. We enter the cafe, chose the corner table where we sat and chat. The choice of the corner table is on it's strategic locality in the cafe as it allows me a clear view to all the tables in the cafe. My friends are busy with their phones chatting am seated opposite them observing all the activities in the cafe. The cafe premises have just opened a few minutes ago, and most of the customers entering the premise are the first client’s today. There are many activities in the cafe and every waiter is busy taking orders and delivering breakfast to clients in the cafe. Across the floor, there are a number of families seated with their children. Most of the couples are young, and the three families have their children in the average age of 5 to 8. The mothers are busy on their phones, and some of the husbands are browsing through the newspapers. One of the couples is busy trying to get their children to eat and stop playing with the food. Across the couples is an older man who is taking his breakfast. He asks for another French toast when the waiter approaches him with the bill. Seated in the other corner is a middle-aged man who asks for coffee and hurriedly drinks it after receiving a phone call before dashing outside. His movement makes me spot a blond woman sitting outside. She seems to be more relaxed and in her hand is a cigarette, which she smokes from time to time. On the table is a magazine that she peruses regularly and seems to confirm something from her laptop. Her hair is straight and swings freely when a cool breeze blows. New clients enter at an average of around 20 minutes. Most are alone and busy with their iPhones and laptops. They must be browsing the social media or doing their homework. Some of the clients are leaving paying their bills and others enter. In the kitchen, the chef is busy preparing the breakfast and snacks. Some of the staff is busy washing dishes. The waiters approach the kitchen counter, here they pick orders and deliver the breakfast to the clients. Questions A. Did you participate in the observation? Does this have any implications for your data? I actively participated in the observation. However, this has no implication on the observation and collection of data. The cafe is a social place and people are expected to relax and blend in smoothly. The observation gave me an opportunity to relax enjoying a mug of coffee with friends as I did my university work. B. Was the setting for your research project open or closed? We're some parts inaccessible to you? My research setting was very open. All areas of the cafe were freely accessible to me. I observed as the public entered and leave without any question after paying their bills. The kitchen is inaccessible to the public except the cafe staff. However, their counter was big enough to see what was happening in the kitchen. C. Did you have to negotiate access to the field? Does accessibility have any implications for your research? The cafe was easily accessible to me. The setting of the observation was in a free and public place that was accessible to all. This was advantageous to my study, as the people in the cafe did not know that they were being studied. The setting of the cafe atmosphere did not require me to ask for any permission to carry out the study. D. How did you feel during the participant observation? To what extent these feelings affected the observation exercise? The observation project was an interesting activity and I enjoyed conducting the observation. The task involved in the observation was independent of my emotions towards the project and my personal feelings never affected the recorded data.