Parks Project Observation Form Directions

General Directions

The purpose of the observation research you will be conducting is to provide a moving ‘snapshot’ of park users and activity. You will be provided with maps of the park on which you will record your observations. You will use one map every ten minutes during the 90 minute observation period to record information on the people who are in the park and the activities in which they are engaged. You will also use the map to mark where people enter park and their means of transportation. Lastly, the map will be used to record the number of cars in the parking lot.

Upon Arrival

When you arrive at the park, first make a note of the number of cars in the park’s parking lot. Then find a comfortable location where you can see most of the park activity.

Recording Observations

Now observe the people who are already at the park. Using the code record on the map the location of people in the park, whether they are alone or in a group, their age, and their gender. Also note on the map the activity in which they are engaged. Every 10 minutes you will repeat this exercise using a new map.

At the same time as you are recording information on park users, make a note on the map with an ‘X’ of the location where any people are entering the park. Also make a note on their means of transportation such as walking, car, bike or skateboard.

Demographic Codes

The demographic information for each park user can be coded using the following.

- ‘S’ for Single (Person of any age alone)
- ‘F’ for Family (Family is defined as an older person(s) with children. There can be one or more adults and one or more children)
- ‘G’ for Group (Three or more people of any age who seem to be unrelated. These groups would probably be similar in age. A group would also be a single adult with numerous unrelated children, such as a school group)
- ‘P’ for Pair/Couple (Two people of any age or gender)

The ages of your subjects being observed can be coded using the following.

- ‘P’ for Preschool (Small children less than six years old who need supervision)
- ‘C’ for Children (School age, able to play on their own, but not teenagers)
- ‘T’ for Teenagers (Can be difficult to determine, but often at park without adults)
- ‘A’ for Young adults (Looks as if in their twenties, able to live independently)
• ‘O’ for Older Adults (Age where they would have their own family)
• ‘E’ Elderly: (Families would be grown, may be at park with grandchildren)

Also record the gender of your subjects using the following:

• ‘X’ for Male
• ‘Y’ for Female

Activity Record

Next, record the activity in which they are engaged. Some examples are:

• Walking
• Exercising/jogging
• Walking dog
• Visiting with friends
• Using playground equipment
• Sitting
• Picnicking
• Swimming
• Sports activity (describe which sport)

For example, the information on your map might be:

SOX reading
GTX/GTY/GTY playing basketball
GTY/GTY/GCM walking dog
FAX/FAY/FCY/FPY playing on swings and slide

Additional Notes

As you observe the subjects please note any unusual behavior you observe. This could be problems you observe with equipment or facilities, i.e. mothers having to catch children before they run into streets. You might also observe problems among groups, i.e. soccer balls disturbing picnickers. Please record anything you feel would be of interest to those involved in park design.

Upon Completion

You will use nine maps for each observation period. At the end of the 90 minutes, clip all your maps together and place in the envelope provided. The forms will be returned to me at the end of all five observations.