

**Qualitative Analysis: Good Stuff Restaurant Cam in Hermosa Beach, California**

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## **Qualitative Analysis: Good Stuff Restaurant Cam in Hermosa Beach, California**

The purpose of this paper is to summarize and analyze two virtual visits that were conducted at the Good Stuff Restaurant in Hermosa Beach, California. The virtual visits were made possible by a webcam that was stationed at the restaurant. The visits were conducted on a Friday afternoon and a Sunday afternoon in June, between the hours of 2PM and 3:30PM. This qualitative analysis will outline the setting, people, and actions that were observed in each virtual visit. The observations will then be analyzed to identify themes and trends between the two visits. The webcam was made available on YouTube. Field notes were recorded using Microsoft Word and the Snipping Tool program was used to capture screenshots of the two visits for further analysis.

### **Setting**

The Good Stuff Restaurant is located right next to the beach. The webcam appears to be situated on the roof of the restaurant. Two tables, each with two to three chairs, are positioned closest to the webcam on the right side of the screen. Each table has a large umbrella. For both visits, the umbrellas were closed. To the left, there is a booth where the restaurant staff greet the customers. A blue door with the Good Stuff logo occasionally blocks the webcam's view of the booth; this is where the customers would be entering and exiting the restaurant.

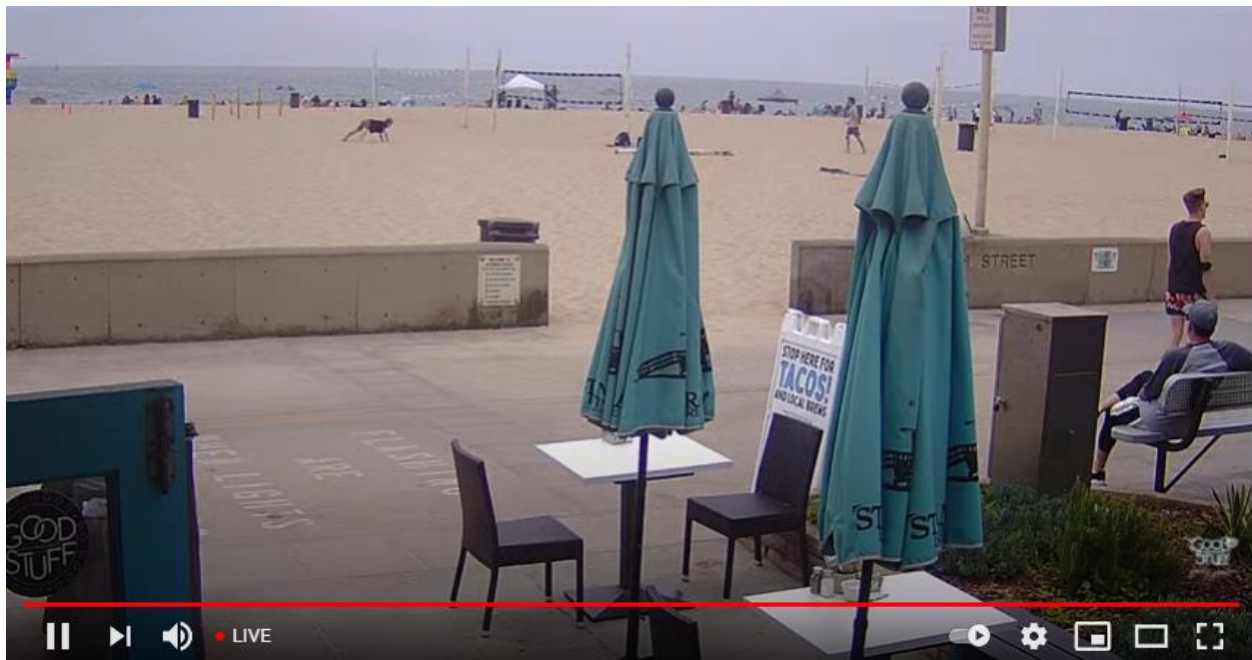
Moving away from the restaurant side of the setting, the webcam captures the view of the sidewalk which separates the restaurant and the beach. A bench is located on the right side of the camera, on the side closest to the restaurant. Adjacent to the bench appears to be a copper-colored trash can. The sidewalk is primarily used for pedestrians. During the second visit, one police car drove on the sidewalk but it was a tight squeeze. No one could walk beside the police car.

Moving the furthest away from the sidewalk is the entrance to the beach. There are two grey barricades, with an opening in the middle for people to enter and exit the beach. Behind the left grey barricade is another trash can. Past the trash can is the expanse of the sandy beach. On the sand, there are four volleyball nets. Finally, the ocean and the sky can be seen in the distance. During both visits, the sky and the ocean appear to have a blue-grey color. The ocean is darker in color than the sky. There were no clouds during either visit. Groups of multicolored beach umbrellas can be seen where the sand and the ocean meet.

The weather was sunny and calm, as expected for a summer day in California. Since the setting was viewed through a webcam, scents and sounds could not be captured. One notable difference between the first visit and the second visit was that one of the volleyball nets was twisted on the second visit.

### Figure 1

*A screenshot of the setting in Hermosa Beach*



**Figure 2**

*The volleyball net closest to the restaurant was twisted during the second visit*

**People****General Overview**

A wide variety of people groups were present during both visits. The different types of groupings included individuals, families, groups of friends, and couples. A wide range of ages were represented including adults, children, babies, and teenagers. Many people were walking their dogs on the sidewalk. Some people were entering and exiting the beach, but many people were just passing through on the sidewalk. While some of the people were there for leisure, there were many others who were exercising.

The people were dressed in clothing that would be appropriate for the beach such as t-shirts, tank tops, light jackets, shorts, athletic wear, and bathing suits. Overall, people were dressed comfortably. Occasionally, beach goers could be spotted in jeans or long pants. Many people carried items such as umbrellas, bags, backpacks, and beach chairs.

## Prominent Figures

A few prominent figures were observed during the two visits. During the first visit, there was a woman that emerged from the restaurant and was pacing back and forth on the sidewalk. Eventually, the woman leaned against the grey barricade. She was looking at her phone. It looked like she was waiting for someone. Finally, she walked out of camera view. Another group of people that stood out were a man and a toddler. It could be inferred that they were related as father and daughter. The man and the toddler were waiting outside of the restaurant for a few minutes. Eventually, a restaurant staff member walked up to the pair and handed the man a brown bag with food inside. The man shook hands with the restaurant staff member. This was shocking due to the current context of COVID-19. Most people have stopped shaking hands to avoid spreading the virus. No one was sitting at the outdoor tables of the restaurant for the first 25 minutes of the visit. By the end, a couple was seated at one of those tables, which turned them into prominent characters for the first visit. Unfortunately, the visit was over once their server came by to take their order.

During the second visit, a man wearing a patterned shirt and jeans sat on the left barricade. The man was talking on the phone. The man eventually walked out of the camera view: similar to the woman in the first visit. A notable difference between the first visit and the second visit was that more people were seated at the outdoor tables during the second visit. Three young men sat at the tables for the entire duration of the visit. The group of men originally sat at the table closest to the sidewalk, but they moved to the table that was closer to the restaurant entrance. This group of men were the only people that could be seen eating during the visit. The men ordered burgers, french fries, and pancakes with syrup. Towards the end of the

second visit, a couple sat down at the abandoned table and ordered their food from the restaurant staff.

During the first visit, there was one restaurant staff member wearing a grey shirt and dark blue shorts that primarily handled all the customer interactions. During the second visit, a couple of restaurant staff were spotted but were not seen as often as the staff during the first visit. It looked like more people were going inside the restaurant during the second visit compared to the first visit.

### **Action**

Many activities were happening during both visits. Some of the activities could be captured quantitatively while many moments can only be described qualitatively. Three variables were focused on during both visits which included people biking, people eating at the restaurant, and people playing beach volleyball.

**Table 1**

*Number of people that engaged in activities at Hermosa Beach*

Activity	Number of People	
	Observation 1 - Friday	Observation 2 – Sunday
Biking	126	172
Eating at the restaurant	16	52
Playing beach volleyball	2	4

The most frequent activity during both visits was biking. People on bikes would whiz across the camera. During the second observation, there were more people that were walking

with their bikes than actually riding them. Many bikers were traveling at a faster rate of speed and some bikers were moving at a slower pace. During the second observation, a group of 12 bikers passed through the camera at one time. During both observations, some people were riding alone, and some people were riding in small groups of three to five. Even though biking was the only form of transportation that was recorded quantitatively, there were also many people who were riding scooters, skateboards, and roller blades. Occasionally, adults would be transporting their children in wagons or strollers.

There was a significant difference in people eating at the restaurant compared to visit one and visit two. On Friday, only 16 customers entered or exited the restaurant. On Sunday, that number increased to 52 customers. Even though the camera did not capture the inside of the restaurant, the camera captured all the customers that were entering and exiting. A few of the customers were carrying food bags out of the restaurant and some customers were just carrying their personal belongings.

One of the most surprising things was that only six people in total were playing beach volleyball between both observations. Only one volleyball net was being used during each visit. The other volleyball nets were left alone.

A reoccurring theme was the use of the sidewalk area to gather belongings. As people entered or exited the beach, they stopped by the barricade to change their shoes, organize their items, or clean the sand off their bodies. Most of the people kept to themselves or their family and friend groups. During the first observation, a couple of groups acknowledged each other but otherwise, everyone was functioning independently. Another commonality was that only one group was spotted eating during both visits. During the second visit, the group of young men got their food by the end of the visit. However, everyone else that sat on the patio did not eat during

the 30-minute time frame of each visit. These customers ordered food, but the observations ended before their food was delivered to them.

Overall, Hermosa Beach was bustling with visitors. The environment was energetic and complex. This was a contrast to the calm atmosphere of the sand and the ocean. During both observations, it was apparent that people were there to enjoy themselves and have fun.

### **Data Analysis**

The environment was mostly consistent across both visits. The types of people visiting the setting and the actions they were performing in the setting were similar between observation one and observation two. There were a few individuals like the pacing woman, the man and toddler, the man on the cell phone, and the outdoor customers, who became prominent figures because of the length of time they were seen on the camera. However, there was no one during either visit that was doing something that would have been visually surprising. For example, no one was wearing a flamboyant outfit, or no one was cartwheeling across the sidewalk. Even though the environment was bustling with a lot of people and activity, no one was being overly distracting. The people kept moving throughout the environment and did not linger in the setting for too long. Only the restaurant staff or the customers eating outside were lingering due to the nature of their activities which were working or eating.

It was surprising that less people were playing on the beach. Most of the action was happening on the sidewalk. Although a lot of people were entering and exiting the beach, there were not any kids or families playing in the sand. Most likely, these activities were happening by the beach umbrellas toward the ocean, which were outside of the camera's range of view. The volleyball nets were underutilized in both observations. It was interesting that even though different forms of entertainment were available like eating food from the restaurant, playing



volleyball on the beach, or playing in the sand: those activities were not the main events of the observation. The main activities were related to travel such as walking, running, biking, skateboarding, and roller blading. This location was being used to travel through or to make a pit stop. Another surprise was that barely anyone was spotted carrying surfboards or boogie boards, which would be expected for this environment.

Based on the quantitative data in Table 1, there were more people at the beach during observation two than there were at observation one. The three variables showed an increase from visit number one to visit number two. This makes sense since visit number two was conducted on Sunday, so people have the day off from work to visit the beach. Even though a smaller number of people were at the beach during observation one, it was still eventful and lively.

Overall, both observations showed that this is an attraction that people come to so they can socialize, relax, play, and exercise. Even though the setting was busy, the atmosphere was stress free and leisurely. The observations would have been extremely different if they were conducted in the morning or the evening. The observations would have also been different if they occurred in the wintertime instead of the summer. However, the visits in the afternoon show the beach as an ideal destination for the summer to spend time with family, friends, or even alone.

### **Reflection**

This qualitative analysis was a memorable experience. It was wonderful to visit a beach from the comfort of my own computer. It was rewarding to take a seemingly normal experience like going to the beach and analyzing everything that was happening. I found myself invested in the events, even though I was watching strangers that I did not know.

As an observer, I was happy that I set up my notes in advance using the model notes that were provided for me. Once I started each observation, I knew what I was looking for. A perk of

conducting the visits online was that I was able to type my notes. I have a hard time with handwritten notes, and I think that would have severely impacted the quality of my observations if I were conducting the observations in person. I was also able to take screenshots during both observations which helped me remember the highlights of the visits as I was writing my paper.

I ran into unexpected challenges during both visits. I originally wanted to record how many people were wearing masks and not wearing masks as my fourth and fifth variables. However, I soon realized that trying to do more than three variables was going to be too difficult. The bikes kept whooshing by on the screen. I would be observing another person or action and then I would need to quickly write a tally mark for the bike. The camera would frequently freeze or buffer. I have a strong internet connection and I usually do not have issues with YouTube videos. I often had to refresh the page to get the webcam to work again, so I missed some moments that would have been interesting to include in the qualitative analysis.

As an educator, I now have a better idea of how many elements I can focus on at one time. I will be conducting in person observations in a classroom for the first time when this course is over. I will make sure to set up my notes in advance again, so I have a clear objective as to what I am observing. This experience also showed that the seemingly normal events that were happening at the beach, still showed patterns and trends. As an educator, I should take opportunities to stop and observe what is going on in my classroom. When I focus on just observing rather than teaching or interacting, I may notice interesting patterns that could inform my practice. These observation skills will be vital as I am working with my mentor teacher during my student teaching.