

Unexpected and dangerous situations cropped during field research data collection for public health research: an experience sharing

By

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Background

- Researcher has conducted 50 large/small scales research in India and Ethiopia, and
- Experienced unexpected dangerous situations during field research despite taking care of ethical rules and regulations.

Few dangerous situations

- Female respondents' husband planned to rape female data collectors
- Male researchers were physically beaten by community
- Field researcher's vehicle was surrounded by community members with rifles, guns and didn't allow to collect data detaining more than 4 hours
- Community became angry after 2 days friendly field data collection in the village and surrounded the vehicle of field researchers with sticks, rifles, guns
- On the way to rural area for data collection before stopping researcher's vehicle in one village by villagers having sticks, sharp weapons, stones in hands who was in attacking mood pelted small stone on the vehicle

Narrating Story

- One experience only
- Female respondents' husband planned to rape female interview data collectors

Ethics Observed

- Technical : there was technical clearance on questionnaire
- Administrative: There was ethical clearance from the government, district administration and police were informed detailed program of our research. But such situation nobody expected.

Why it happened?

- Cultural/individually sensitive family planning questions asked
- Women in the area generally do not participate in the information provision process
- Insufficient knowledge about characteristics of the area and sampled villages before entering the village

Damage to individual, If following would have happened?

- Kidnapping of the girls
- Kidnapping, rape and killed
- Kidnapped, raped and survived
 - How to provide medical treatment?
 - How to compensate survived person?

Some suggestions

- **During field research:**
 - Inform district administration and just before entering the area or village inform responsible police station
 - If possible, announce through district mass media about the research team, research agenda, period of field work in the area (from this date to that date)
- **Secure field researchers with life as well as health insurance**

Challenges for LMIC organizations

- Organizations conducting research do not take the responsibility of field researchers
- Organizations do not have budget to pay insurance premium of field researchers
- Grant making/funding organizations do not raise this specific challenge while signing the contract
- Grant making/funding organizations should add some fund for such cause

Thank you

Questions please