

Created Friday, February 20, 2015 9:45 PM (Pre-PhD)
Notes on the experience of participating in research interviews while working at iHub

PhD student from Ireland – Feb. 19, 2015 – Media Development

I was tired and sick and felt in a fog. Lady did not introduce herself or her topic well and assumed that because she had sent an email with the intro (about 6 months ago) that I already knew what she was interested in. She did not ask if she could audio record but promptly flipped on the audio recorder.

The interview took about 1.5 hours. I paid for my own lunch (at a location that she had not asked if I was okay with; I was actually hoping we could go to a cheaper place).

Master's student from Sweden – Feb. 20, 2015 – Anthropology

Again, girl did not introduce herself or her topic well and assumed that because she had sent an email with the intro (about 1 month ago) that I already knew what she was interested in. She did not ask if she could audio record but promptly flipped on the audio recorder. She told me that the interview she had done yesterday had been a waste because she had deleted the audio afterwards by accident. Made me question her competence. She shouldn't have told me that.

She said she had never done "real" fieldwork. All they did was learn theory and then go to a café and ask some questions to someone.

Her motivations for studying in Kenya – she has a Kenyan boyfriend she met while on study abroad in Iceland and she felt (this was after the interview) that "Kenya was so exciting and open." I couldn't just talk to techies in Sweden the way I do here (i.e. easier access to participants). Also, it's more interesting. In Sweden, it's "boring" not as exciting.

She mentioned it wasn't her first time to Kenya and I probed and asked when she had been here before. Turns out she had been here for 2 months when she was 12 years old. In my mind, I thought, that wouldn't have made you keen on any of the topics you are studying right now. Just by being in a place doesn't mean you "get a place". But I empathize with the need to show previous time and experience in a location (since everyone asks me – how long have you been here?).

She asked extremely basic questions (what is iHub), which did not show background research. If she was doing so to understand if my view of iHub was different from others, she should have intro'ed the question as such.

The interview took about 1.5 hours. I paid for my own lunch (at a location I had suggested).

October 7, 2020 [I am now 5 years into my PhD]

I happened across this document which was on my computer today and decided it was a nice artifact to upload to RDS as fieldnotes (of just some of my experiences as a research subject). These were just two of many (uncountable) experiences of being researched.

I want to also note that I never heard back any kind of follow-up from either of these researchers and do not remember their names.