

Report on field research in Adisadel, Ghana

In partial fulfilment of completing my master program (Master of Art in Development management), it is compulsory for me to conduct field research aimed at addressing at least a development issue. As a result of this, I have an interest in investigating how the health status of the children in Africa can be improved through prevention of one of the most common disease in the region (malaria). I decided to investigate the factors associated with mothers' usage of insecticide-treated nets in Ghana.

Although my research location was in Adisadel which is a small town close to the Central region capital (Cape coast). For this, I understood that the best host institution to be contacted for my research would have been the University of Cape Coast for its proximity to my research location. Unfortunately, all efforts to reach out to the institution via emails and calls were not successful. As an alternative to the situation, I contacted the Department of Sociology in the University of Ghana, and fortunately, I received a prompt response thereby referring me to one of the postgraduate research assistants of the department named Mr [REDACTED]. After contacting him via email and Whatsapp audio and video calls, he confirmed his willingness and excitement to assist throughout the fieldwork which is to be conducted in the Central region of Ghana. Additionally, Mr [REDACTED] is Ghanaian who speaks fluently in addition to English Twi and Ga (the two most common languages in the Central region of Ghana).

Several weeks before my arrival in Ghana, I maintained a stable communication with Mr [REDACTED] through Whatsapp calls. During this period, preparations were made by him for my arrival pick up from the Accra airport and the upfront booking of accommodation for both of us in Cape Coast city. August 22, 2019, was my arrival date to Accra in Ghana, I was received by Mr [REDACTED] and his fiancée (Ms [REDACTED]) who both accompanied me with a Taxi to the hotel room at Eden Lodge in Cape Coast. A hotel room was booked in Cape coast city because of the city's proximity to Adisadel (15 minutes by road transport). I took three days off to relax from the stressful journey, get to know Mr [REDACTED] even more and discuss in detail my research objectives and methodology.

On Monday 26th of August 2019, Myself and Mr [REDACTED] had the first preliminary activities of the field research as we had a walk around the community to have a first-time idea about the geographic mapping of the community to strategize the data collection process. This was done for 6 consecutive days. On Monday 2nd September 2019, the instruments for the data collection (questionnaire) were prepared and printed after some corrections done by my thesis mentor via

email. The next day was tasked at pre-testing the questionnaire with some locals around the hotel location as well as two hotel staffs who agreed to participate in the pre-test of the questionnaire. The actual field research commenced on Wednesday 4th of September 2019 in Adisadel community. The exercise begins around 7 am until 5 pm every day except Sunday. On Fridays, the exercise last until 1:30 pm. The data collection process went so smooth than I expected because of the following notable reasons. First, most of the people in the community were very friendly and are so welcoming to visitors. Secondly, there was limited language barrier as opposed to what I predicted because a majority of the respondents (mothers of children under five years) in the community have at least basic education which eased the communication between us through use of English language and Pidgin¹. However, in some other cases where the respondents were non-literate and are unable to speak English or pidgin, Mr [REDACTED] translates and explains the questions to the respondents in Twi or Ga, also fill in their responses to the questions in English.

Apart from the field research activities, my daily life activities in Ghana was very similar to what I am used to in Nigeria, so it is not surprising I felt so much at home. During the field research activities, we crossed path lots of Nigerians which made the adaptation to be quite easier and faster for me. The daily activities most times include the field research which lasts for the whole day till evening. Usually in the night, myself and Mr [REDACTED] together with some Nigerian friends hang out in a nearby bar to have some drinks and have fun.

My best experience in Ghana was my integration with the Ghanaian culture I read about many years ago. Also, my stay was like a home away from home as I was very familiar with the music (usually Ghana and Nigeria combination) as well as the delicious foods which are common to both Nigeria and Ghana, such as Jollof rice, Fufu, Banku and others. More importantly, I enjoyed the cordial working together with Mr [REDACTED] who was so committed throughout the whole research activities.

I would admit that my stay in Ghana was not a perfect one because, on 22nd October 2019, I lost my mobile phone inside the taxi while coming back from Adisadel going back to Cape coast metropolis. It was the only moment regretted my stay in Ghana. In addition to this, one challenge I faced during this fieldwork exercise is waking up early morning at 5 am to prepare for the fieldwork exercise, because after the first week of the exercise, we found that most of

¹ Pidgin language is an informal English language with a bit mixture local language, it is spoken in most West African countries where English is the official language. Although some difference can be observed in the language by countries, but it is well understood by different country speakers

the eligible respondents are best accessible during the early morning hour just when the business opens for the day.

Generally, the field research was a success despite the few challenges and regrets.