

Interview example

LIST OF CONCEPTS IN THE INTERVIEW

“Chida” = an animal (sheep, goat, hen, etc.) ready to be slaughtered usually by the order of a witch craft when a person is sick from either physical or psychological causes..

“Circumsicion”= the common type performed in this area is the excision of the clitoris. However, circumcision is universal regardless of the religion. It is performed around the age of 7 years.

“Dua”= is a prayer usually done in a group by religious people and locally accepted older men and women. Dua mostly is accompanied by Kchat chewing to focus in prayer or to stabilize emotion. It is very common among the Moslems.

”Edir” = a self-help community association mainly aimed at assisting people at the time of the death of family members.

“Kocho”= food prepared from a false-banana plant. The trunk and the root is prepared in lengthy procedure. The parts of the plant are chopped and stored for a long period to ferment before consumed in various preparations, as bread or porridge.

“Coffee ceremony = coffee is boiled in three consecutive cycles. Usually attended by neighbours. The ceremony may take an hour or more. For the women that is a regarded as a resting time.

“Kchat”= a green leaf that is chewed for its stimulating effect. In the end there is depression phase.

“Nekersa”= is a local terminology that means tuberculosis.

“Samba”= A local term to describe Pulmonary Tuberculosis. Samba literally means lung. Also see “Nekersa”

“Sedeka”= food prepared for free offer to relatives and neighbours. Commonly prepared from animal slaughtered by the order of the witchcraft (“Chida”).

“Teff”= a thiny grain grown only in Ethiopia for food. The flour is used to make a special kind of thin bread called “Injera” that is one of the main component of the Ethiopian national food.

“Tellel”= a procedure done by the women alone when they feel that their own spirit or the spirit of their parents are angry with them and makes them sick or infertile. Also believed to relief anxiety resulting from the introduction of a new wife by the husband. Some amount of local cheese is prepared and sufficient amount of spicy and melted butter is poured on it. The butter is used as a mirror to show the sick women's face through. The women believe that when they look at their own faces through the butter the bad spirit will be frightened and go out of their body. After the procedure, the butter and the cheese are eaten by the sick women. In case there is excess the small children under five will get a share.

“Witchcraft” = a person believed to have magical power to solve problems. They are consulted for any problem.

INTERVIEW WITH A WOMAN FROM RURAL BUTAJIRA

I: We are conducting a study on the health of women in this community. The main purpose of our coming to you is to get some information for the study. I have been informed by X about your willingness to share your experience.

R: Yes, X has asked me to participate in the discussion. She even asked for help to get in contact with similar women for interviews. I will try to help you in this matter.

I: Thank you! As you see, the discussion is taped. The taping is important since we cannot write down everything you will say. I hope you don't mind.. However, the information will be used only for research purposes. Therefore, you can feel free to talk, would you?

R: It does not matter. We have to participate for our life to be better in the future. We do not benefit from being shy.

I: That is good.

R: We need our area to develop. I promise to arrange some more women for your work. The traditional birth attendants are helpful and kind. They are not very well paid, yet they are ready to help us. As you see me, I am a little bit tired at present. I can't work (sitting relaxed). I have been to the health center last week but the doctors are telling me that I am not more than 6 months. I don't know why, but I feel so tired. I replied to the Dr. that I feel I am ready to deliver and I have prepared the maize flour (laughter).

I: Are you not in your 9th month of pregnancy?

R: I don't think so. I am not more than 6 months. I was arguing with the Dr. to tell me the exact duration of my pregnancy. He said that I should know. I replied that he has to know (laughter). It was nice. He was joking and talking to me friendly. He advised me to take more food. He emphasised that I need various foods and a lot to drink. But it is not easy to do as he advised. I have five children and we have to share what is available. The doctor was concerned that I should take some rest in the relatives' house.

I: Can't you do that?

R: No, I can't. What about my family? The cattle? The Doctor also advised me to stop pregnancies. But I can't.

I: Why not? What about contraceptives?

R: Children are gifts. Our husbands don't like contraceptives.

I: What about you?

R: Honestly, we don't like it (laughter). I have had many bad experiences during my pregnancies. It was my 5th month. A neighbour called me to her house for a cup of coffee. I took the hot coffee and returned home. I started to suffer from severe abdominal cramp and the baby was expelled. I was bleeding profusely. A local woman came and told us that the placenta was not effectively working. I became so weak and sick. I can't forget that time. The placenta was not expelled. The bleeding was continuous. I was carried to the Hospital. A

white women, I think she must have been a Doctor, expelled the placenta after 4 days. That was horrible. The expelled placenta was black with a foul smell.

I: What do you think about being pregnant?

R: I am fed up of it. You know pregnancy is not a difficult thing but husbands are not helpful. They can't see the difference between a pregnant and a non-pregnant woman. They don't care for pregnant women. They don't care! They are even happy if they receive money from "edir" (community association) after the death of the wives or children.

I: According to your view what are the common problems that women face in your community?

R: Lack of support from husband during pregnancy is one major problem.

I: In what way?

R: First of all pregnant woman don't take sufficient food. They continue life just like non-pregnant women. The sun is so strong. Strong sun can burn the placenta.

I: What else? What about the problems of the non-pregnant women?

R: What non-pregnant? Husbands can't tolerate infertile women.

I: Is it a must to have children? Do you mean that infertile women don't live with husbands?

R: Yes, they divorce. There is no alternative. The husband and husbands relatives insult the infertile women by saying "Beklo" (mule). A mule can't give birth. As soon as a woman knows she is infertile she will run away. She has to try another chance. Otherwise, who can simply feed her? She may try 6 or 7 husbands.

I: What other problem do the infertile women face? Or can you mention other problems faced by women?

R: Poverty is the other problem. It is a problem everywhere.

I: Do you have flour mills?

R: Oh yes we do. We are relieved.

I: What about water?

R: We do have. These days our life is much better.

I: What about a school? Do you send the children to school?

R: Yes. They walk to another village. The small kids go to read the Koran.

I: Do you send the girls to school?

R: No, we don't send the girls, except a few families.

I: Why not?

R: What about the household work? Both mothers and fathers don't let the girls. They let them work at home or do some business. They are engaged in marriage when they are getting bigger.

I: Why do you do that? You have seen educated women leading a better life? Haven't you?

R: Yes, we have. But (pause), you see I had a plan to send the girls to Butajira for schooling but I don't know how I changed my mind. It is not common to send girls to school.

I: What is the main reason for not sending the girls to school?

R: Parents are busy. They need someone to cover the household work. That is usually done by the girls.

I: What about the boys?

R: The boys are also participating in the farm work. Yet, they are at least sent to study the Koran. And some of them are sent to school. Girls have few chances. Children have a lot of things to do, both at home and in the farm. Parents do occupy children with different kinds of work, they don't encourage them to go to school. Most parents are not buying pens, pencils and books to their children.

I: In your opinion what does health mean?

R: Health is when there is enough to eat at home.

I: What else?

R: When people are educated it is health by itself. Because people could identify the bad and the good. This is by itself health. Whether you have or don't have, if there is knowledge you feel healthy.

I: When do you say that a woman is healthy?

R: A woman is healthy when she keeps her body normal and well especially during delivery.

I: Would you please explain more what you mean by that?

R: Eating proper diet, washing the body and planning for family life is the duty of a healthy woman.

I: Can you give me an example?

R: Oh no, I can't. Do you think there is a healthy person or woman at this time? If there is someone completely healthy, that must be GOD himself.

I: Who do you think is unhealthy women? How is she doing?

R: She is unhappy.

I: How unhappy?

R: Unhappy due to lack of money, lack of resources, lack of children. These are the causes. Such a woman is unhealthy. She loses hope.

I: What are the different kinds of health problem that a woman in this community face?

R: The air brings the disease. The air (weather) is the cause.

I: How?

R: If there is sufficient rain there won't be diseases.

I: What are the name of the diseases of the air?

R: "Nekersa" (glandular TB) on the neck. This disease is bad. It goes to the abdomen or bursts. "Samba" (pulmonary TB) is common. Malaria is also abundant, that is the inside and the outside type. The outside type causes shivering. People mainly are dying from malaria. The other diseases are not so common..

I: What about diseases affecting especially women?

R: They are not different.

I: What are the complaints women make?

R: Backache, headache and some complain of tiredness. Some are sick due to other peoples comment or tongue.

I: How is that? Please explain it further.

R: What we mean is that "the tongue" of people, what they say, is evil. It causes illness. This is true in the case of smaller villages like this. If it is a big town it does not matter. Children are not well noticed there. Here, every eye and tongue is evil. We suspect this as the cause of illness or death. We are seriously worried about what people could say about our children, and our property. We are also afraid of evil eyes.