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DATA COLLECTION IN THE TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXT

September 18th 2020

AMAP Workshop

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In-depth interviews

Rural Kenya: Activist women advocating against female circumcision

Urban South Korea: Working & stay-at-home mothers, both in-person & virtual interviews

VASUNDHARA KAUL

Mixed methods

Interview and survey experience in rural India in areas of agriculture, domestic violence, child marriage, and sanitation

Planning online survey experiment in Europe

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- Group Activity
- Discussion & Final Questions

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Transnational vs. International Research

- Transnational and international used interchangeably to refer to research in non-U.S. contexts
- Transnational: Research across nation state boundaries
- International requires the **existence of the domestic/the familiar**
  - What is foreign for one researcher might not be foreign to another
- Just minor technicalities?
  - In keeping with our goal today of making non-U.S. research more accessible by addressing some barriers to transnational data collection
  - Contribute to the adoption of a more global orientation within U.S. research (You can read more about transnational studies perspective HERE)

GROUP ACTIVITY

QUESTION?

What is the research question you would like to address?

METHOD?

Which method would be best suited to address this question?

REGION?

Which non-U.S. geographical area would you like to do this research in?

BARRIERS?

What are the hurdles/problems you anticipate in undertaking this research?

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STEP 1: CHOOSING THE SITE

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THREE LEVELS OF SURVEY RESEARCH

Level 1: Secondary data which is publicly available (ICPSR, IPUMS, government agencies, Pew Research Center, etc.)

Benefits: Least resource intensive
Drawbacks: Limitations in sample and questions you can ask

Level 2: Primary data collection on a platform like MTurk and Prolific

Benefits: You can ask your own questions
Drawbacks: Sample representativeness, moderately resource intensive

Level 3: Primary data collection through fieldwork

Benefits: Your own dataset and can reach populations that are underrepresented in traditional, mainstream surveys
Drawbacks: Resource and time intensive; working knowledge of local language/dialects; CITI training required for staff if hiring staff to help in data collection
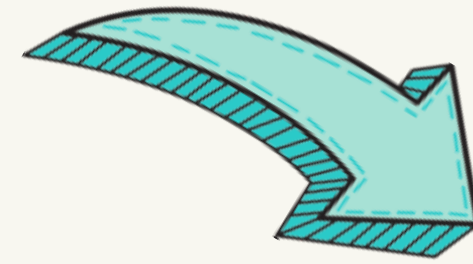
SELECTING INTERVIEW SITES

COUNTRY
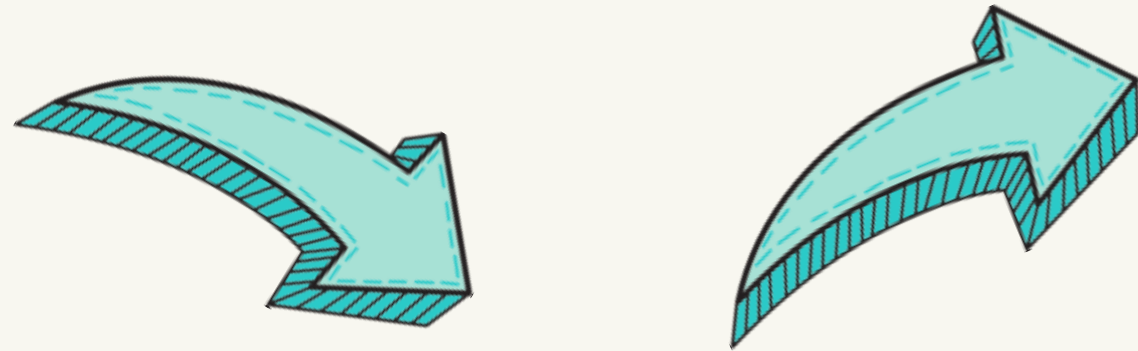
PROVINCE

CITY

COUNTY

HOW DO I KNOW I CAN COLLECT DATA HERE?

- **Cultural Familiarity and Cultural Shock**

- **Ease of Communication**
  - Fluency in English often concentrated in urban locations
  - Need for a translator?
  - Dialects/Regional Variations

- **Political Stability**

- **Existing Contacts**
  - If you collaborate with other universities to do the data collection, you're most likely to fall in the exempt IRB category (discussed later)
  - Can help you identify good translators (if you don't already speak the language), help with planning logistics, and provide important contextual information

Countries where English is the official language or the de facto language 2020

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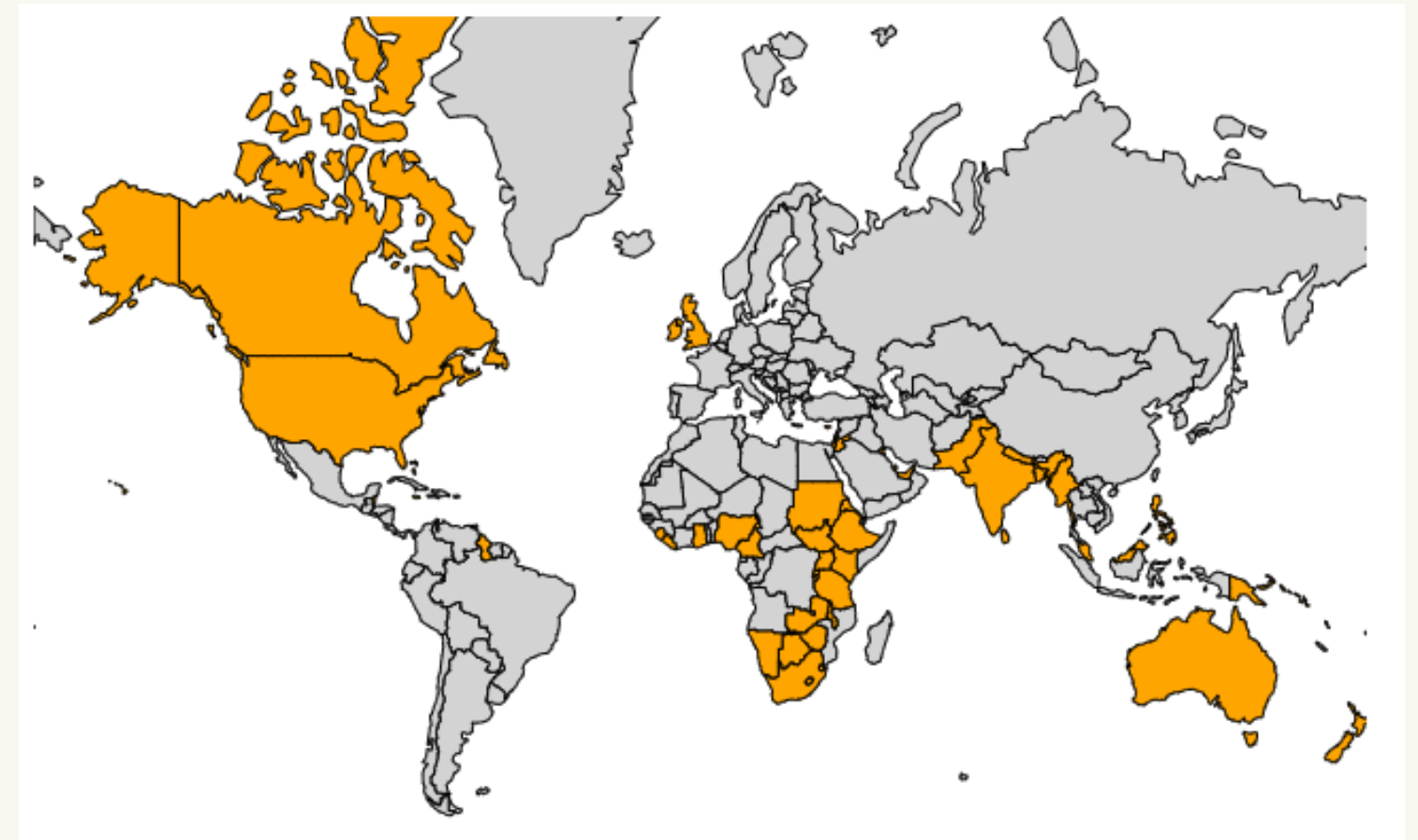
HOW DO I KNOW I CAN COLLECT DATA HERE?

- **Cost**
  - Living cost like rent, food, internet, etc.
  - E.g. Rent in Kenya ($ 70/month) vs. Korea ($ 700/month)
  - Local transportation & international flights
- **Logistics (Accommodation & Transportation)**
  - Closest airports and other modes of transportation
  - Booking online in advance
  - Renting a car/ public & private transportation
- **Timeline**
  - Account for local holidays, school calendar, etc.
  - E.g. In Korea, a semester is from March to July, so mothers are busier in July and August
- **Study Sites** (eg. agincourt)
- **Medical requirements** (vaccinations, generic equivalents, etc.)

STEP 2: RECRUITMENT

RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS

- In-person data collection:
  - Use established points of contacts and rely on local individuals for help with snowball sampling (E.g. NGO personnel, university faculty, grad students, research center etc.)
  - <u>Critical to have a central point of contact</u>, irrespective of whether you know the language or not. Local community organizations or local researchers are great resources to tap into.

- Online data collection:
  - When using platforms like **<u>Prolific/MTurk</u>**:
    - Advantages: Easy to recruit and compensate participants without too much legwork from SOME countries
    - Disadvantages: Can't get representation from marginalized communities
  - When **<u>not</u>** using platforms like **<u>Prolific/MTurk</u>**:
    - Snowballing is the best approach
      - You might not know someone directly, but they might know someone - <u>don't hesitate in reaching out to people</u>.
      - Social media is a great place!

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DESIGNING RECRUITMENT

- **Flyers**
  - Language
    - Make sure to use the correct language (not literally, but the right vocabulary and expression)
    - Critical to run it by your local contacts, especially those familiar with your potential research participants
  - Platform
    - Online flyer - Identify the right website & learn the online culture
   - On-site flyer - Design? Language? Where to post?
- **Mode of communication**
  - How can the participant reach out to you? What's a popular mode of communication in the country of concern? (eg. whatsapp, kakaotalk, facebook messenger, etc.)
- **Compensation**
  - To show appreciation & not too much to be a motivating factor to participate in research
  - Be creative & be culturally & socially appropriate. E.g. I offered sanitary pads in Kenya and $27 in Korea

Most importantly…. Be patient & flexible but also proactive
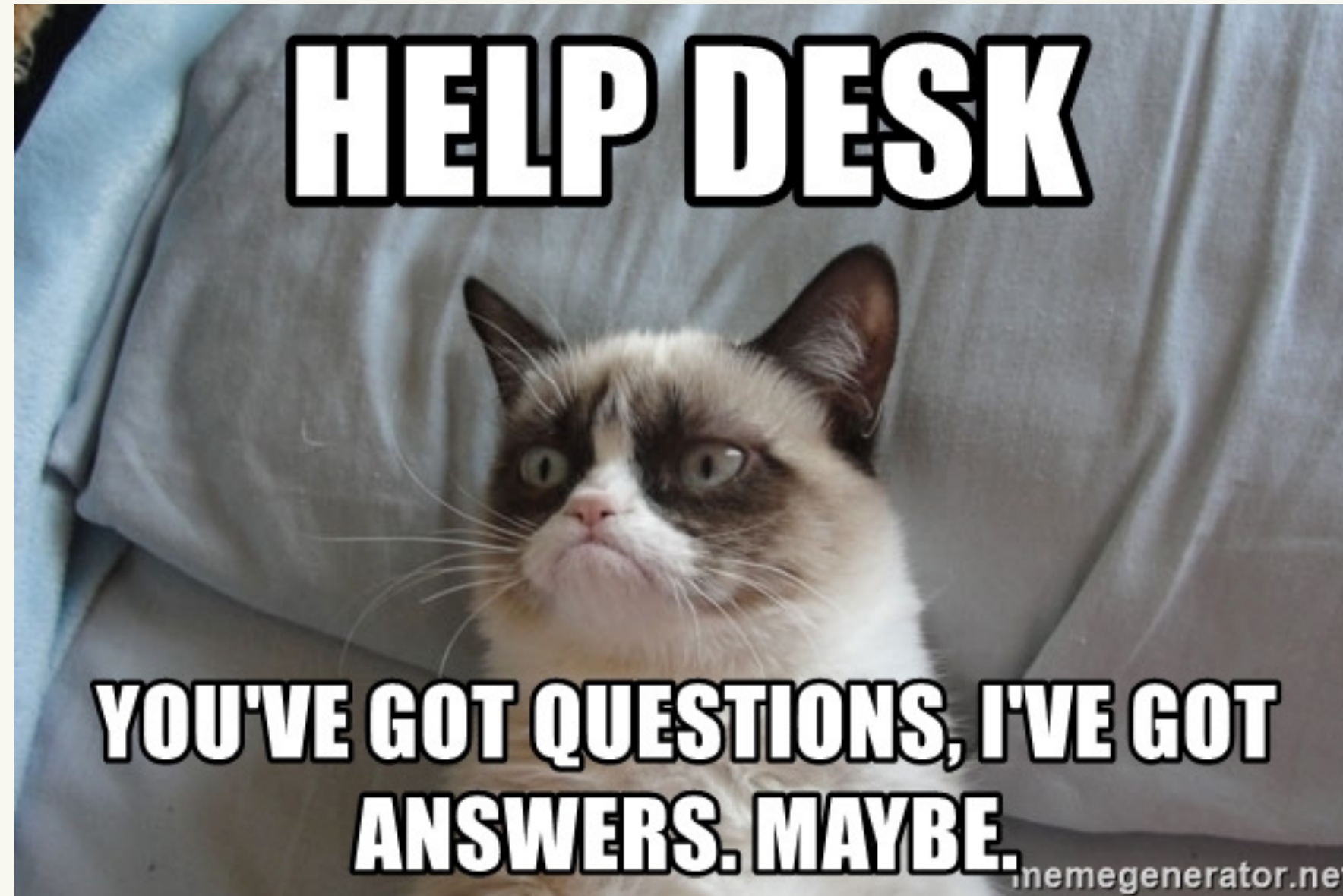
STEP 3:
TRANSLATION
&
LANGUAGE

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ONSITE TRANSLATION

Professional Translator

Very expensive (e.g. $100/interview)

Faster turnaround (usually within a day or two)

Depending on whom you are hiring, could not be familiar with the research topic

More inclined to use technical jargon rather than colloquial language

Non-Professional Translator

Lower financial burden (e.g. $20/interview)

Need to ensure that the translation quality is accurate later; might entail more work later on

If hiring someone familiar with research topic, could benefit from their expertise in translation (eg. NGO person, grad/undergrad students, etc.)

More likely to be familiar with more colloquial language

Self-Translation

No financial cost

Most (your) time intensive

More authentic since you're working with both raw & translated data (when doing interviews)

Accuracy depending on your language proficiency. You could hire native language speaker later for quality control

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LANGUAGE COMPLEXITIES

- **Even if your survey/interview schedule is in English, the terms used for the same object vary across the countries**

- **Dialects**
  - Important to be cognizant of regional variations and those across national boundaries. E.g. Difference in mexican and mexican-american spanish & the spanish spoken in Colombia.
  - Dialects spoken within the country also vary

  Helps to be working with local researchers in such situations

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STEP 4:
IRB PROCESS

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IRB CRASH COURSE

- **Same rules apply for transnational studies as U.S. based studies.**

- **Two categories: Exempt or Review**
- **Exempt:**
  - <u>Eight categories of research</u> that are exempt from IRB review.
  - Determine whether your study is exempt using Purdue's new online system, <u>Cayuse IRB</u>. (<u>Instructions on using Cayuse</u>)
- **Review:**
  - Expedited Review: Occurs on a rolling basis by a subset of the IRB committee
  - Full Review: High risk studies that are reviewed at a convened meeting of a majority of board members. Application materials have to be submitted two weeks prior to the meeting.
  - **<u>Transnational studies can be subject to both forms of reviews</u>**

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THE IRB PROCESS FOR INTERVIEWS

- **Highlight your <u>cultural competency</u>**
  - Past experience (both academic & non-academic)
  - Ability to observe cultural and social norms
- **Letters of Support**
  - From local government agency, politician, faculty member or other experts
  - Better to prepare in advance: Multiple meetings and visits required for letter
  - Need to endorse that:
    - The research design and questions will not violate cultural and social norms
    - You have the ability to carry out the research in a culturally sensitive manner
  - Letters were about 1 page each (submitted 3 letters for Kenya and 1 letter for Korea)
- **Translation:**
  - The English & translated copies of the interview schedule (questionnaire), recruitment flyer, consent forms need IRB approval
- **Participant Compensation**
  - Important to have a strong justification for compensation amount (including coffee). Ensure that you adhere to it. No gifts are allowed.

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U.S. IRB TECHNICALITIES

- When designing your study, keep in mind that:
    - If you hire a **translator**, that individual is a **non-key personnel**
    - If you hire **staff to help with data collection**, they will be **required to undergo CITI training**.
    - If you partner with a host institution to do the data collection and you are just designing the survey and doing the data analysis, you are more likely to be exempt from a full review.

- You must obtain the IRB approval <u>before</u> you begin the data collection.
- Timelines: Approval for transnational studies can take longer than when your study is U.S. based.
- [CITI Training](#) must be complete before seeking IRB approval
- You can seek assistance on your protocol from the IRB office. They are currently not doing walk-ins but you can easily [schedule a call online](#).

SOME OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...

- What are the **local IRB rules and regulations** in the country where you're doing research?

- If using consent forms, **prepare ample copies** in advance!
  - On site, you might not have access to a copier/printer.
  - You are not allowed to share a picture/scanned version of signed consent form unless you have specified it in your IRB application

STEP 5:
BUDGETING

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS FACTOR IN...

- **Visa application fees** (if applicable)
  - If receiving grant, make sure it's supported by the grant.
- **Flights**
  - Don't forget to include local transportation to/from the airports in your estimates!
- **Local transportation**
  - There are always unexpected needs for transportation so it's always better to slightly over-estimate.
- **Participant Compensation**
- **Interview cost** (if applicable)
  - E.g. Are you meeting at a cafe? Then, include the price for coffee for yourself and the participant. These small costs add up quickly!
  - If accompanied by a translator or support staff, you should include their transportation and food/coffee costs.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS FACTOR IN...

- **Food & Accommodation**
  - Use multiple sources for cost estimates: e.g. Ministry of foreign affairs guidelines, WorldBank country statistics data, travel books/blogs, friends, etc.
- **Translation** (if applicable)
- **Transcription** (e.g. $1/min for non-prof & $15/min for professional)
  - For translation and transcription, it's cost-effective to hire people locally. The rates are usually cheaper for local languages.
  - E.g. it will be cheaper to transcribe English interviews in the U.S. while it will be more expensive in a non-English speaking country, and vice versa.
- **Hardware and software requirements** (if applicable)
- **Bank/Credit Card Transaction fees**
  - In case you are using cash advances or credit cards overseas, there are transaction fees from the bank. Usually, they are pretty expensive.
  - If using cards, could be better to withdraw large sums, fewer times.
  - It could be the best to use the cash (however, there are also exchange fees to convert to local currency)

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THINGS TO BE MINDFUL ABOUT

- **Be mindful about exchange rates**
  - Your budget in the USD might be different from your budget during the data collection, and from the post-data collection
  - To simplify the reimbursement process, it's advisable to keep a record of expenditure in the local currency, and convert to USD all at once at the end
- **If using Purdue Business Credit Card,**
  - Need to let the business office know about your travel date in advance, so that they can contact the bank for travel notice
- **KEEP ALL THE RECEIPTS!**
  - Both paper & an online copy (take pictures on your phone and upload to a cloud service immediately)
- **Keep a running excel sheet to log the expenditure**

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STEP 6: NAVIGATING CULTURAL NORMS

BEFORE LEAVING...

- **Take the time to read and <u>learn about the country in general</u> before you leave!** (But don't always believe what your read online. Rely on multiple sources)
  - Travel books and guides (online sites can be dodgy at times)
  - Talk to individuals who have worked there (if possible)
  - Government websites (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc.)
  - NGO and international organization websites and reports

- **If you have <u>medical requirements or food restrictions</u>, plan for these things in advance.**
- **If you are collaborating with a local institution, <u>do not feel hesitant about asking questions and seeking their suggestions.</u>** Also, inform them about point (2) so that they are also aware about your requirements.
- **Determine your <u>technology needs and plan for them in advance</u>.** Wifi and 24x7 electricity are not always easily accessible but there are easy ways to work around them

...AND YOU'RE THERE!

- Spend the **first few days acclimatizing** and getting used to the new environment.
- If doing research in rural areas, be prepared to **travel long distances**
- Be observant of **what everyone around you is doing** (e.g. taking off your shoes when entering a room, etc). It's okay to say no to some things, especially when you are a complete outsider (e.g. water)
- Be prepared for **questions about your personal life** - what are you comfortable sharing/not sharing?
- Your clothes, mode of transportation, consumption of food and water, etc. will convey **your socioeconomic status**. Not possible to completely mitigate but good to be mindful.
- **Non-ideal interview settings** - some participants are just not comfortable speaking to outsiders alone
- Important to **seek clarifications** - do not transfer your understanding of a particular term to different cultural contexts

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# TIPS ON WORKING WITH COLLABORATORS

- Share your **resource requirements** with collaborators before you arrive on site (e.g. an empty room to conduct interviews; a resource person to travel to the site locations with you)
- Schedule the data collection days in advance and **check-in before the day of the visit**
- Be prepared for **long wait times** before and in between data collection/days of no data collection
- Sometimes collaborators can get involved in participant recruitment which can get fraught with **power dynamics**

TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH IN COVID TIMES

- Your plans may change due to COVID and travel restrictions
- Prepare for Plan B and C in case of change of plan
- If internet connection becomes an issue for conducting virtual interviews/surveys, you can be creative with budgeting (e.g. paying for internet connection, etc.)

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GROUP ACTIVITY II
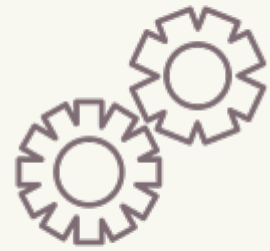
EXISTING BARRIERS?

Based on what we have discussed today, do you feel you will be able to address the barriers/hurdles that you had originally anticipated?
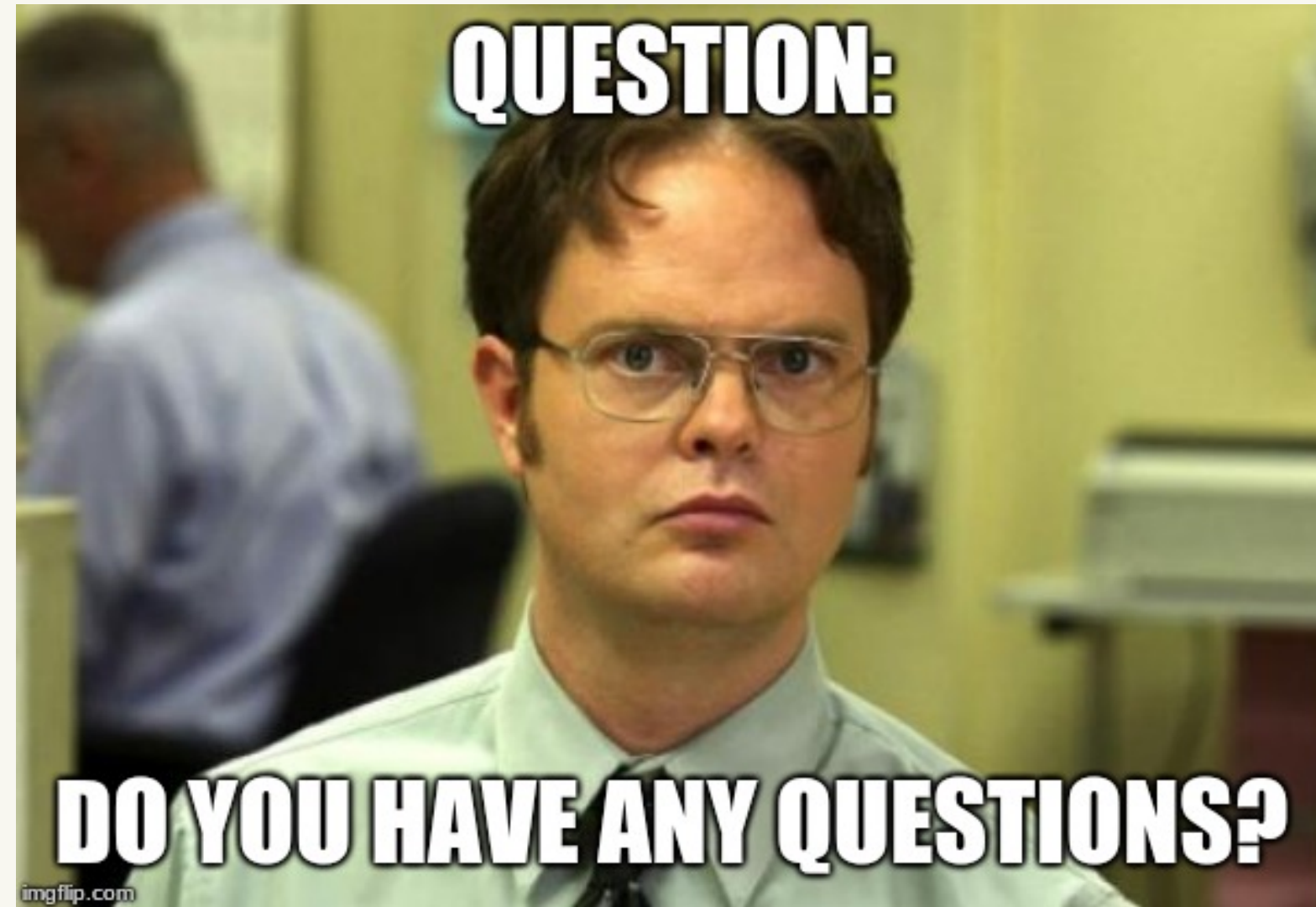
NEW BARRIERS?

Are there any new barriers/hurdles that you are now aware of?

STRENGTHS?

What strengths do you feel you have in undertaking your transnational research project?

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RESOURCES

- [List of English speaking countries 2020](#) (countries where English is the official language or the de facto language, i.e. the language used by the majority of speakers but not considered the official language)
- [Video from Cornell on how to do transnational research in the time of Coronavirus](#)
- [Harvard's International Research Project Planning Guide](#)
- [Ten simple rules for international short-term research stays](#)
- [IRB guidelines on international research from Fordham University](#)
- [More on IRB and other things to consider from IU](#)
- [Book on "Doing on International Research: Global and Local Methods" by Christopher Williams](#)