Well-being method for social survey

How to create a connection between the interviewed person and the person interviewing?

Points of Departure

Both parties are equal

Well-being is the central interest

The social research themes are understood in the context of the lives of the people and not separate from this

The 3 stages

1 Common human interest

The first stage concerns the establishment of common human interest. As human there are a number of areas that touch us all deeply, what ever our background: our health, our autonomy and security and the future of our children. This we can share and discuss and exchange our experiences.

A number of questions that can be asked at this stage:

- How is your health and what are the concerns?
- How do you see the life and future of your children?
- Do you feel safe and secure? Can you manage with your income?
- How do you feel from day to day?
- What risks do you see for your family?

Not all questions need to be asked – what is important is the natural flow of the conversation and the understanding that is jointly developing.

It is good to do this as equals and exchange experience – with interviewer/ visitor comparing one's own life with that of the interviewee and also encouraging mutual questions.

This stage of questions established the human connection. It also triggers thinking about what is important for one's self and the choices one is making.

2 Reflections

Following common human interest stage, more reflective questions can be asked. These encourage light analysis of one's situation and that of others and give a lot of mutual of often unexpected holistic insight.

Examples of such reflexive questions are:

- How are things done?
- How do other help each other?
- How is your relation with members of family?
- How is your relation with neighbours?
- How you look at things in your life, how you look at others; how you look at yourself?
- What are your roles, are you content with these?
- Would you say that people help each other?
- Do you think things will be different in the future?

One can also ask to give examples and relate to what is in the house or immediate environment to illustrate the points.

What is important, is to listen to what is behind something out of empathy. This will often generate new perspectives/ understanding of priorities. It will help one to understand what is driving, how decision are made, and what are boundary constraints.

3 Thematic dicussions

From these two stages one can move to topics that originally triggered the learning visit (e.g. road construction program, mobility and access and environmental effects) and that one wants to understand better.

One can raise these in a conversational way and see how they relate to the well-being. By this time there is a good deep understanding of each others lives and the thematic question can relate to these interests. Best is to use of a checklist that one either has memorized or quickly glances at.

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