**Case study exercises for experimental module**

Created by the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

Instructions: Please read the entire article before answering the questions below. We have provided this PDF copy of the assignment so you can work through the assignment offline. However, please make sure to submit your answers in the Google Form here.

Case I: Viswanathan et al. (2020) – Improving households’ attitudes and behaviours to increase toilet use in Bihar, India

**1. How did the authors attempt to mitigate selection bias through their study design?**

*Answer key: The authors used a randomized design where clusters (village wards) were randomly assigned to treatment or control. Using a randomized ensures that there aren’t differences between the two groups and that there aren’t certain attributes in one population that would lead them to have self-selected into the intervention. Note: Due to the intervention design, participating in community meetings was voluntary indicating that selection bias could still have been a factor affecting who actually took up part of the intervention.*

**2a. How did the authors integrate qualitative and quantitative data throughout their study?**

*Answer key: The authors used a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design where quantitative data collection and analysis (for a cluster-randomized controlled trial) was followed by qualitative data collection (which included in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions). Both approaches were integrated at three different stages of the study: methodological (quantitative results informed development of qualitative tools); inferential (quantitative and qualitative results were analyzed by both teams and jointly written together); meta-inferential (inferences from the separate quantitative and qualitative data analyses were integrated to produce a meta-inference that then led to policy recommendations).*

**2b. Why do you think the authors chose a mixed-methods study design? If you were conducting the study, would you use the same approach? Why or why not?**

*Answers will vary.*

**3. What information did the authors learn from the process assessment that could have affected the impact evaluation results? Do you think it was necessary for the authors to have conducted the process assessment?**

*Answer key: The authors learned that the dosage and exposure of the intervention varied by facilitator and if there were active volunteers at the community meetings. This could mean that there were different effects of the intervention on households due to the differences in exposure. The authors also realized that their theory of change was missing two key assumptions that household members who participated in either the community or household meetings would convey that information to non-participating household members. If this assumption was not correct, then the intervention fidelity would be lower which could lead to a reduced impact. Answers to the second question will vary.*

**4. After reading the study, what takeaways or recommendations would you provide to stakeholders? What other types of information do you think should have been discussed in section 7 for policymakers to know?**

*Answers will vary.*

Case II: Fink et al. (2018) – Communication for development to improve health behaviours in Ghana

**1. Why were the authors not able to ensure a nationally representative sample? What do you think the authors could have done to increase generalizability?**

*Answer key: The authors chose nine of the 12 districts where the program was being implemented. The implementing team chose regions which had higher poverty rates and poorer maternal and child health outcomes so the evaluation had to be drawn from the same sample, even though it would not be nationally representative. Since it’s not representative, the impacts from this program cannot be generalized to the rest of Ghana. Answers to the second question will vary.*

**2. What did the study authors learn from the monitoring data collected? How would you use monitoring data in an impact evaluation? Do you think collecting that type of information is useful?**

*Answer key: The study authors learned that a large portion of the targeted communities didn’t benefit from the interventions and that intervention exposure was low. Answers to the second and third questions will vary.*

**3. In section 10, the authors provide lessons learned for other researchers. If you were implementing a similar intervention as this study, how would you incorporate these lessons learned? Is there anything else you would do differently?**

*Answers will vary.*