5/31/2019

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DIPLOMA IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENT THREE ADM NO AIPMS/210/002/2019

1. Why is choosing the right question important in Monitoring and Evaluation?

Choosing the right question is important in Monitoring and Evaluation because of the following reasons:-

* It helps you understand what effects different parts of your effort are having

By coming up with questions carefully, you can evaluate different parts of your effort. If you add an element after the start of the program and you focus on examining it, you may be able to see its effect separate from that of the rest of the program.

* It makes you clearly define what it is you're trying to do

What you decide to evaluate defines what you hope to accomplish. So choosing evaluation questions at the start of a program or effort makes clear what you are trying to change, and what you want your results to be.

* It shows you where you need to make changes

Careful selection of questions and making them specific to your real objectives should tell you exactly where the program is doing well and where the program is not having the intended effect so that you are able to know where you need to make changes.

* It guides your future choices

Assuming you find that your program is particularly successful in certain areas and not in others, in this case you may decide to emphasize the successful areas more, or to completely change your approach in the unsuccessful areas. That, in turn, will change the emphasis of future evaluation as well.

* It highlights unintended consequences

When you find unusual answers to the questions you choose, it often means that your program has had some effects you did not expect. Sometimes these effects are positive, sometimes negative and sometimes neither.

* In participant evaluations**,** stakeholders are involved in setting the course of the program making it more likely that the needs of the community will be met.
* It provides focus for the evaluation and the program

Careful selection of evaluation questions keeps you from becoming scattered and trying to do too many things at once, thereby diluting your effectiveness at all of them.

* It determines what needs to be recorded in order to gather data for evaluation

Choosing a clear evaluation questions makes the actual gathering of data much easier, as it clearly defines what kind of records must be kept and what areas need to be examined.

1. Using Archival data has its own bottlenecks. Name five and explain how to overcome them.
2. Limitations of archival data

* Construct validity

Archival data can come from many sources and some of the sources may be large-scale surveys conducted for the purposes of enabling future studies that are yet to be determined and will utilize psychometrically sound measures. More common will be archival databases assembled for purposes other than conducting any sort of research.

* Difficulty in establishing causal inferences(Causality)

One of the primary challenges associated with archival data is that researchers cannot easily test causal relationships with it. Relying on secondary data often compromises internal validity of a research. The researcher can analyze data trends, but it is difficult to establish that a particular factor causes another.

* The data may not match with or directly respond to the research question, so the data may have to be re-coded to answer a new question.
* Company data particularly maybe seen as commercially sensitive and it may be difficult to gain access to company archives, which may be stored in different departments or on the company intranet, to which access may be difficult.
* A researcher using archival data has no control over the quality of the data collected, which may not be seen as rigorous and reliable as data. In this case, the data may be incomplete or there might have been error in data entry.

1. Mitigating Limitations of Archival

* Construct validity

The limitations regarding measurement and construct validity can thus be addressed through careful selection of archival data sources and variables and by complementing archival methodologies with methodologies that are more common in micro-organizational research (e.g., surveys, lab studies, field experiments).

* Difficulty in establishing causal inferences

Archival researchers attempt to address the difficulties of establishing causal inferences in several ways. First, since establishing causality in archival research is difficult, the researcher must clearly control for and provide other alternative explanations. This manner of helping to mitigate threats to internal validity often requires the researcher to become immersed in statistical methods and techniques, since controlling for other explanations can be challenging.

* Data not matching with research question. Of course, the archival data might have been collected for a different purpose and automatically will not match with the research question of the researcher. In this case a researcher may have to re-code the data to answer his research question.
* Difficulty in obtaining company archival data due to sensitivity and researcher having no control over the quality of the data collected can be solved by collecting primary data in case there is enough resources in terms of time and money.

1. Why is research important component in monitoring and evaluation? Give and explain four.

* Accountability. There is a significant level of resourcing from donor finances, and this financial backing brings with it a responsibility to demonstrate the efficiency of what is being offered to beneficiaries. More rigorous, objective evidence is required. If your program is to maintain its good image, and continue to attract funding from donors then effective, research-based systems of accountability are essential.
* Gaining a wider perspective. Research studies allow managers to gather perspectives from different stakeholders about an emerging problem or a problem that the intervention is already addressing thereby enabling the management to make informed decisions.
* Using research tools and instruments to collect feedback on the progress

Brief research questionnaires can be used to collect feedback from beneficiaries on a regular basis, as a means of generating information that can provide both the beneficiaries and the managers a basis for reviewing the progress of the project.

This kind of data can also give a project manager better sense of their own effectiveness with different groups.

* Becoming sensitized to the experiences and needs of beneficiaries.

Research studies that focus on the experience of beneficiaries can serve as useful reminders that the beneficiaries may have a different perspective on what is happening. In addition, research into experiences of specific problems and conditions can help to sensitize the project managers to the needs of benefiaries from these groups

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