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ASSIGNMENT: Module 4

1.a)Collecting information or data is just one part of the process of monitoring and evaluation.

What is meant by data analysis?

**Data Analysis** is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data. According to Shamoo and Resnik (2003) various analytic procedures “provide a way of drawing inductive inferences from data and distinguishing the signal (the phenomenon of interest) from the noise (statistical fluctuations) present in the data”.

While data analysis in qualitative research can include statistical procedures, many times analysis becomes an ongoing iterative process where data is continuously collected and analyzed almost simultaneously. Indeed, researchers generally analyze for patterns in observations through the entire data collection phase (Savenye, Robinson, 2004). The form of the analysis is determined by the specific qualitative approach taken (field study, ethnography content analysis, oral history, biography, **unobtrusive** research) and the form of the data (field notes, documents, audiotape, videotape).

An essential component of ensuring data integrity is the accurate and appropriate analysis of research findings. Improper statistical analyses distort scientific findings, mislead casual readers (Shepard, 2002), and may negatively influence the public perception of research. Integrity issues are just as relevant to analysis of non-statistical data as well.

State any three uses of monitoring and evaluation results.

At the programme level, the purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to track implementation and outputs systematically, and measure the effectiveness of programmes. It helps determine exactly when a programme is on track and when changes may be needed. Monitoring and evaluation forms the basis for modification of interventions and assessing the quality of activities being conducted.

Monitoring and evaluation can be used to demonstrate that programme efforts have had a measurable impact on expected outcomes and have been implemented effectively. It is essential in helping managers, planners, implementers, policy makers and donors acquire the information and understanding they need to make informed decisions about programme operations.

Monitoring and evaluation helps with identifying the most valuable and efficient use of resources. It is critical for developing objective conclusions regarding the extent to which programmes can be judged a “success”. Monitoring and evaluation together provide the necessary data to guide strategic planning, to design and implement programmes and projects, and to allocate, and re-allocate resources in better ways.

Describe any seven factors that may lead to project failure.

1. Inadequate Project Planning

 Project planning is an important part of project management and it is the responsibility of the project manager to set a proper plan for the project. Project planning is generally used to organize distinct parts of a project including workload, project plan, management of team etc. You must have a clear vision of what you are going to do and know how to execute tasks to reach the project goal. But if the project is not planned properly then it may fail or doesn’t meet all the expectations of stakeholders and customers.

2. Scope Creep

Scope creep refers to change in scope of the project and also known as requirement creep or feature creep. The scope is the work required for a project. Scope creep refers to how the requirements of a project keep on changing over a project lifecycle. It is caused by the changing requirements of the project stakeholders or due to miscommunication and dissidence. It may result in roadblocks, project delay or move over budget and hence project failure but sometimes it is not a bad thing. Scope creep is an actuality that every project manager predicts and plans for.

3. Use of Unpracticed Tools and Techniques

Good tools and techniques are required for the success of a project. A common illusion is made by the project manager and team leader to utilize unpracticed tools and techniques at the starting of project. Sometimes, it can cause many severe problems during project life-cycle as the team has to deal with the learning curve of new techniques along with usual project duties. As team members are not familiar with the new techniques, the project may undergo deferment issues. For this, team members should use new tools in the combat successively.

4. Shortage of Resources/ Requirements

 Every project requires some resources according to need. The quantity of resources depends on the size and scope of the project. Sometimes, the project is inaccessible due to the shortage of resources and necessary requirements. This is one of the cases in which project success is not available. For example, if a project requires a skilled Java programmer and candidate appointed for the project do not have that skill then the project cannot continue until a necessary resource is provided.

5. No or Poor Risk Management

At present, we have to deal with some actual facts in project management. Poor or no risk management has the ability to influence the project management. Project failure is the worst case of poor risk management. The goals are not reached and all the investment is wasted along with time and efforts that have been put into the project. Some of the most significant influences on the poor risk management are given as:

6. Lack of User Engagement

A project which is aimed at developing some product is going to have especial patrons i.e. a group of people who does business at the establishment. Whether the product is a part of the software, a hardware widget or development of existing mechanism, users are the extreme customers. The user should be engaged during the project life- cycle as their suggestion and feedbacks are categorized to guide the project effectually. Failure to user engagement in the project leads to an improper end result product and project is failed to meet the user expectations.

 7. Poor Controlling and Monitoring

Controlling and monitoring are the essential parts of project management. A project can succeed only when there is proper governance for the project management. Without proper planning and monitoring, the project may fail. The absence of controlling and monitoring impacts the project in many ways:

* Deviation in cost, scope, and schedule baselines
* Project may not be completed on time as expected
* Quality of the deliverables can be degraded
* Company/organization stature will damage
* Antagonism between project team can be raised.
* Poor project performance
* Unsatisfied customer

8. Inexperienced Project Managers

Project failure is a common term that every project manager wants to rupture from. No one craves to take the responsibility of project failure as it may blot his career record. But if a project fails, then it simply means that project manager did a poor job. Ensure that the project manager has enough knowledge of what the best techniques are because hiring of well-skilled project manager can’t be omitted.

9. Ineffective Communication

Project team knows their manager only through his communications. Whether it a project, an operation or personal life, communication plays an important role. Without communication, you are executing tasks in the murky area.

Project managers should develop a communication plan. Even time-to-time meet-ups should be planned to discuss the project performance.

10. Poor Project Management

When there is no above-mentioned reason for project failure then the project may fail due to poor management. If a project is decently staffed, have a good WBS, proper planning, availability of resources, proper scheduling, and the support of sponsors but even gets fail then the only reason behind it is that project management was poor. The success of the project depends on the project manager and project team. Therefore, appoint right staff for your company/organization with significant experience.

2. Identify any six parts of a monitoring and evaluation report

**1.       Organizational Structures with M&E Functions**

The adequate implementation of M&E at any level requires that there is a unit whose main purpose is to coordinate all the M&E functions at its level. While some entities prefer to have an internal organ to oversee its M&E functions, others prefer to outsource such services. This component of M&E emphasizes the need for M&E unit within the organization, how elaborate its roles are defined, how adequately its roles are supported by the organizations hierarchy and how other units within the organization are aligned to support the M&E functions within the organization.

**2.       Human Capacity for M&E**

An effective M&E implementation requires that there is only adequate staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary M&E technical know-how and experience. As such, this component emphasizes the need to have the necessary human resource that can run the M&E function by hiring employees who have adequate knowledge and experience in M&E implementation, while at the same time ensuring that the M&E capacity of these employees are continuously developed through training and other capacity building initiatives to ensure that they keep up with current and emerging trends in the field.

**3.       Partnerships for Planning, Coordinating and Managing the M&E System**

A prerequisite for successful M&E systems whether at organizational or national levels is the existence of M&E partnerships. Partnerships for M&E systems are for organizations because they complement the organization’s M&E efforts in the M&E process and they act as a source of verification for whether M&E functions align to intended objectives. They also serve auditing purposes where line ministries, technical working groups, communities and other stakeholders are able to compare M&E outputs with reported outputs.

**4.       M&E frameworks/Logical Framework**

The M&E framework outlines the objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project and the indicators that will be used to measure all these. It also outlines the assumptions that the M&E system will adopt. The M&E framework is essential as it links the objectives with the process and enables the M&E expert know what to measure and how to measure it.

**5.       M&E Work Plan and costs**

Closely related to the M&E frameworks is the M&E Work plan and costs. While the framework outlines objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project, the work plan outlines how the resources that have been allocated for the M&E functions will be used to achieve the goals of M&E. The work plan shows how personnel, time, materials and money will be used to achieve the set M&E functions.

**6.       Communication, Advocacy and Culture for M&E**

This refers to the presence of policies and strategies within the organization to promote M&E functions. Without continuous communication and advocacy initiatives within the organization to promote M&E, it is difficult to entrench the M&E culture within the organization. Such communication and strategies need to be supported by the organizations hierarchy. The existence of an organizational M&E policy, together with the continuous use of the M&E system outputs on communication channels are some of the ways of improving communication, advocacy and culture for M&E

**7.       Routine Programme Monitoring**

M&E consists of two major aspects: monitoring and evaluation. This component emphasizes the importance of monitoring. Monitoring refers to the continuous and routine data collection that takes place during project implementation. Data needs to be collected and reported on a continuous basis to show whether the project activities are driving towards meeting the set objectives. They also need to be integrated into the program activities for routine gathering and analysis.

**8.       Surveys and Surveillance**

This involves majorly the national level M&E plans and entails how frequently relevant national surveys are conducted in the country. National surveys and surveillance needs to be conducted frequently and used to evaluate progress of related projects. For example, for HIV and AIDS national M&E plans, there needs to be HIV related surveys carried at last bi-annually and used to measure HIV indicators at the national level.

**9.       National and Sub-national databases**

The data world is gradually becoming open source. More and more entities are seeking data that are relevant for their purposes. The need for M&E systems to make data available can therefore not be over-emphasized. This implies that M&E systems need to develop strategies of submitting relevant, reliable and valid data to national and sub-national databases.

**10.   Supportive Supervision and Data Auditing**

Every M&E system needs a plan for supervision and data auditing. Supportive supervision implies that an individual or organization is able to supervise regularly the M&E processes in such a way that the supervisor offers suggestions on ways of improvement. Data auditing implies that the data is subjected to verification to ensure its reliability and validity. Supportive supervision is important since it ensures the M&E process is run efficiently, while data auditing is crucial since all project decisions are based on the data collected.

**11.   Evaluation and Research**

One aspect of M&E is research. The other is evaluation. Evaluation of projects is done at specific times most often mid- term and at the end of the project. Evaluation is an important component of M&E as it establishes whether the project has met he desired objectives. It usually provides for organizational learning and sharing of successes with other stakeholders.

**12.   Data Dissemination and Use**

The information that is gathered during the project implementation phase needs to be used to inform future activities, either to reinforce the implemented strategy or to change it. Additionally, results of both monitoring and evaluation outputs need to be shared out to relevant stakeholders for accountability purposes. Organizations must therefore ensure that there is an information dissemination plan either in the M&E plan, Work plan or both.

3. Why is feedback an important component of project monitoring and evaluation?

Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback will help you to assess and make any necessary changes to your work in order to improve your effectiveness. They will also ensure that you are accountable for your actions and will help you to hold others to account for theirs. Together, they are key elements of any successful rights-based programme.