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**Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation**

Assignment 3

Question 1

Why is choosing the right question important in M&E?

Choosing the right question in M&E is important because the questions should directly determine the goal of your program and how you wish to influence the issue of concern. The right questions help the research to focus on getting the right information with regard to the goal and objectives of the program. In other words it defines what you seek to change. It also important to ensure the questions do address whether the target population is reached and the interests of key stakeholders is met. At the same time the questions must address the satisfaction of the participant.

Choosing the right question can also help in ensuring that the unintended impact or consequence is/are highlighted.

Q2

Using archival data has its own bottlenecks. Name five and explain how to overcome them.

The following are the bottlenecks in using archival data:

1. Using archival data give you historical experience. It can never give the current experience of the study group. However archival data can be used as baseline or even provide a comparison or control group.
2. It is difficult to say with certainty that the changes or the trends you see in the archival data are related to the independent variable under study only as the quality of collection of the data and reliability of the researcher is not known. However, archival data can still be useful as it can allow you to find areas that you may need to focus more on.
3. Sometimes the data is not in a form that can be easily analysed. However, this can still be used to give a clearer picture or deeper and better understanding of the community or the population you are dealing with. It can help one to understand the dynamics, cultural beliefs etc. about that community
4. Also the data could be specific to a certain population which is not the same or similar to your population. However, this can be overcome by using data to infer whether your approach will work or not. Also comparison of the large population from the archival data to your study population can be used to show the seriousness of the situation.
5. The method used could also not be compatible to what you wish to study. However, the archival data may help to identify already existing trends that may affect your results of your evaluation. If for instance there has been an ongoing trend, before you implemented your intervention, archival data may be able to show that which will allow you to control your study more so you can be able to evaluate your impact only.

Q3

Why is research an important component in M&E?

Research is an important aspect in M&E because it helps in choosing the right course of action in your program or project and hence helps to ensure the right choice of the evaluation question.

Research also helps in improving ones credibility as an M&E specialist because it guides you to look at issues that work and issues that are of concern to relevant stakeholders. In that way one is likely to get relevant support, for instance funding.

Research helps to come up with appropriate solutions for issues that are of major concern to the stakeholders or the community. In other words it helps to come up with effective interventions.

Also research helps to ensure that, no wheel is reinvented un-necessarily. This can save costs significantly.

***References***

*Diploma in Monitoring – Module 3 2019 notes*