

CASE STUDY

Experiences with Being Pressured to Misrepresent Evaluation Findings: Preliminary Results

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THE SAMPLE

I surveyed a random sample (N = 2523) of non-student members of the American Evaluation Association. Responses were received from 940 individuals, representing a return rate of **37%**. Females were overrepresented in the respondent group; 68% of the respondents were female, while 62% of the non-respondents were female.

THE RESULTS

A few highlights from the data:

- 42% of the respondents report that they have felt pressured to misrepresent findings.
- Of respondents who have felt pressured, 70% have had this experience in more than one evaluation.
- Characteristics of respondents' MOST RECENT experience with being pressured to misrepresent findings:
 - impact/Outcome evaluations were most frequently involved
 - pressure was most likely to come from the individual who hired or assigned the respondent to conduct the evaluation
 - most often, pressure focused on making evaluation results look more positive or less negative
 - nearly 40% of respondents felt that the individual who applied pressure KNEW that he/she was asking for misrepresentation
 - nearly half of the respondents sought advice from others on how to deal with the pressure being applied
 - in ethical terms, 20% of the respondents were "not at all satisfied" with how the situation was resolved, while 22% were "very satisfied"
 - only 30% of the respondents believed that something could have been done to prevent the attempt to pressure them