PUTTING EVALUATION TO USE: Sharing Stories of ATE Evaluation Use

Michael A. Harnar | michael.harnar@wmich.edu
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do these findings compare with your experience?
2. What makes an evaluation more or less useful?
3. What would you share as evidence of evaluation use?

HOW IS EVALUATION BEING USED BY ATE PROJECTS?

We asked principal investigators (PIs) what changes they made to their projects’ implementation, goals, or objectives as a result of their evaluations.¹

- Many PIs reported making changes where evaluative evidence (e.g., reports or survey data) suggested changes were needed. For example, changing the focus of curriculum because employment data indicated a need in a particular arena more so than the ones they were serving currently.
- There were numerous examples of an evaluator playing an integral role in the project. For example, evaluators helped with survey design, implementation, and data collection; they served as another experienced voice in the room with technical skills that can contribute to the program; and they were described as helping “refocus, refine, revise” the project.
- Effects from evaluation were also described as conceptual. For instance, a respondent said the evaluation helped the PI better understand the program.

Type of reports received from evaluator (n=249)

- Written: 31%
- Oral: 4%
- Both: 48%
- None: 17%

Made changes to project implementation as a result of evaluation (n=205)

- Yes: 46%
- No: 37%
- Unsure: 17%

Frequency of interaction with evaluator among projects that did not and did make changes to project based on evaluation. (n=167)

- Did not make changes:
  - Continually: 3%
  - Often: 16%
  - Occasionally: 26%
  - Infrequently: 11%
  - Rarely: 4%
  - Both: 48%

1 Data are from the 2019 Annual ATE survey; 304 invited, 279 completed = 92% response rate; 89% had an evaluator in 2018.

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