

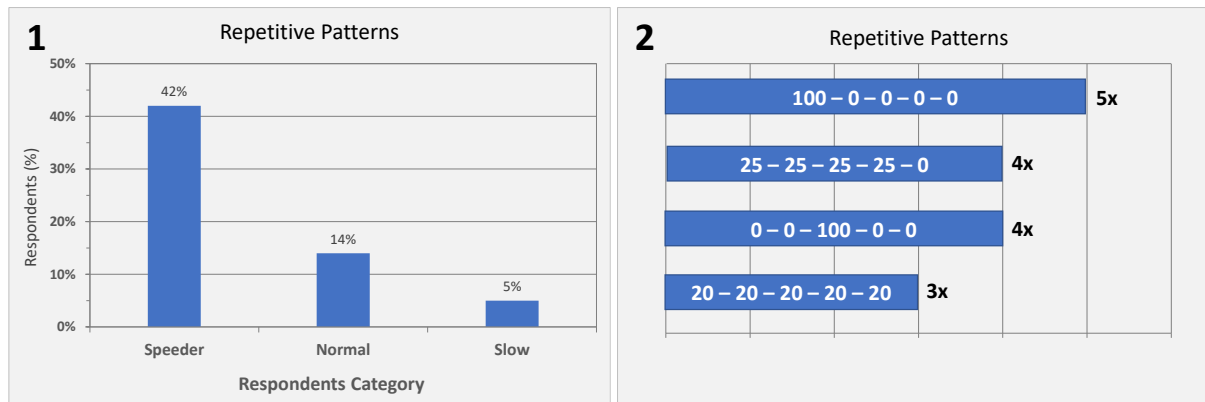


### Speeding and Cheating

In a recent Market Research Insights report, we reported that even surveys that recruit only pre-selected, highly specialized medical experts are not immune to participants speeding through the survey and providing implausible results. Finishing a survey in 30%-50% of the estimated time can only be achieved by not reflecting the questions or the answers, for example by straightlining the answers or by responding with repetitive patterns, such as 25/25/25/25 or 100/0/0/0 shares.

Knowing about this potential negative impact, we analyzed a recent survey conducted with expert medical professionals on current and expected medical practice by looking for suspicious patterns in the survey responses.

Fig. 1 shows that 42% of the speeders (approx. 10% of the total respondents) used repetitive patterns, such as straightlining (allocating the same shares across different questions) when answering the survey, compared to normal (5%) and slow (14%) responders. However, some of the questions were not suited for straightlining, since they required inputs on the percentage of patients receiving certain medications across different patient groups. Therefore, we analyzed the results of the survey for the presence of suspicious patterns in those questions.



As shown in Fig. 2, common straightlining (allocating 20% to each product across 4 different patient groups) was used by 3 respondents. 4 respondents allocated 25% shares to the first 4 medications, while the last choice received zero shares across all different patient groups. Some respondents showed more innovative patterns: 5 respondents allocated 100% to the first medication on the list across all patient groups, while the other 4 alternatives received 0% shares. 4 respondents showed an interesting variation of the 100% version: They allocated 100% to the 3<sup>rd</sup> medication on the list. Either way, treating all patients across different patient groups with one medication is highly implausible from a medical perspective. These results suggest that some respondents may choose quick (and dirty) answers to the survey questions – no matter how plausible or implausible they might be.

**The bottom line:** Our analysis revealed that speeders provide very different and often highly implausible answers when compared to normal and slow responders. Although only from a minority of respondents, those implausible answers do not just add random noise, but they do affect the outcome of the survey! In total, when averaged with all respondents, these questionable answers modify the overall results by approx. 10%. To that end, eliminating respondents that produce repetitive patterns is a must to gain robust results that can drive management decisions.

If you would like to discuss how to conduct market research that you can be confident in, please contact us at [info@kogent-hc.com](mailto:info@kogent-hc.com).