

Research Methods and Professional Practice

March 2022

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« Collaborative Learning Discussion 2

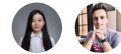


Lewle Seneviratne

Initial Post

28 days ago

3 replies



Last 22 days ago

Evidence-based research advocates the idea that ethical information about food can impact consumers, and labelling food in an ethically appropriate manner can positively influence consumers' expectations and perceptions (Armstrong et al., 2019). Therefore, improving and ensuring the public trust in academic and professional scientific societies through best practices in scientific rigor and transparency is key accelerate the shift to fair and sustainable food systems.

However, ethical considerations associated with nutrition and its related fields of research are often complicated by factors that are overly holistic to tangled links between nutrition research and marketing (Rucker & Rucker, 2016).

Considering the tangled dilemma between nutrition research and marketing, the case study of Whizz reflects a similar issue of ethical sensitivity of the food-related analysis.

Concerning the nutrient profiles of foods, in 2006, the European Union established regulation no 1924/2006 emphasising that health claims shall not be false, ambiguous or misleading, rather the health claims should be evidence base ensuring their trustworthiness (The National Archives, 2006)

Therefore, it is important to reflect the accuracy of the information by analysing correct data in a way that supports two or more different conclusions.

References

The National Archives (2006) Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European parliament and of the council. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2006/1924/chapter/II> [Accessed 27 April 2022].



Armstrong, B., Meskin, A. & Blundell-Birtill, P. (2019) Delicious but Immoral? Ethical Information Influences Consumer Expectations and Experience of Food. Available from: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00843/full> [Accessed 27 April 2022].

Rucker, R. B. & Rucker, R. R. (2016) Nutrition: Ethical Issues and Challenges. *Nutrition Research* 36(11). DOI:10.1016/j.nutres.2016.10.006

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3 replies

1



Post by [Marzio Hruschka](#)

Peer Response

[26 days ago](#)

Hi Sebastian,

Thank you for highlighting the link between nutritional research and marketing and the problems that accompany it.

I fully agree that analysing information and providing all the results irrespective of a company's marketing agenda is important. Furthermore, a legal framework must be implemented to protect consumers from being misled and making an economic decision that they would not otherwise have made.

An interesting study conducted by Théodore et al (2021) analysed persuasive techniques utilised in digital marketing of products with poor nutritional values in Mexico. The study found that products with an excess of critical nutrients were most frequently advertised across social media using a variety of persuasive marketing techniques. Their conclusion was that these techniques appealed especially to children and adolescents and hence, need to be regulated.

Reference

Théodore, F. L., López-Santiago, M., Cruz-Casarrubias, C., Cendoza-Pablo, P. A., Barquera, S. & Tolentino-Mayo, L. (2021) Digital Marketing of Products with Poor Nutritional Quality: A Major Threat for Children and Adolescents, *Public health* 198: 263–269. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2021.07.040>

Reply



2

Post by [Man Sze Wong](#)[23 days ago](#)*Peer response*

Hello Lewle,

After reading your initial post, I have learnt more about "Evidence-based research" but I think it would be easier for readers to understand if a definition of "Evidence-based research" can be added in the first paragraph.

Also, there are a lot of information related to the ethical considerations associated with nutrition and its related fields have been provided but I think the answers for the situation which needs to be discussed for the collaboration discussion 2 can be mentioned in the initial post as well. Hope my recommendations are useful for you.

[Reply](#)

3

Post by [Lewle Seneviratne](#)[22 days ago](#)*Summary Post*

The case study discussion raised ethical concerns over Abi's approach and accountabilities as a statistical researcher when analysing the nutritional value of a new cereal Whizzz. From the case study, it is evident that Abi as a statistical researcher, can tamper with data in reporting the nutritional value of Whizzz.

According to Frey (2018), the highest obligation for avoiding the use of deceitful or false data lies with each researcher, who should be able to provide comprehensive details regarding the data gathering process and analysis, allowing other researchers to examine and evaluate the rationality of the study and the interpretation of the data analyses.

A medical researcher, Eric Poehlman's case relates to research misconduct relates to falsified data on the link between obesity and ageing, exemplifies some of the personal, professional, and legal consequences of using misleading data, he was then sentenced to a jail term of 1 year and 1 day with a fine of \$180,000 and was banned for life from participating in any federally funded research activities (Interlandi, 2006).

Further, professional institutions for statistical researchers, such as the American Statistical Association (2022) and UK Statistics Authority (2018), outline the criticality of maintaining data and methods integrity for mitigating known or suspected restrictions, flaws, or biases in the data or methods, while evaluating the professional conduct of statistical researchers.

Therefore, even Abi is not a member of a professional institution, from a social, legal and ethical perspective, he is obliged to analyse correct data in a way that supports two or more different conclusions; however, there is not enough literature to support where Abi as a researcher could be accountable if manufacturer, publicise only the favourable results.



As Marzio (2022) stated, implementing a legal framework to safeguard consumers from being misled by organisations for economic benefits is crucial, which would prevent the manufacturer from publicising only the favourable results. Considering the American Society for Nutrition (N.D.), the European Council No 1924/2006 and the Norwegian Consumer Authority (2012), it is a fact that countries act individually and collectively to safeguard consumers by evaluating and dealing with apparent conflicts of interest in complex, twisted relations between nutrition research and marketing.

References

American Society for Nutrition (N.D.) About Us. Available from: <https://nutrition.org/about-asn> [Accessed 28 April 2022].

American Statistical Association (2022) Ethical Guidelines for Statistical Practice. Available from: https://www.amstat.org/docs/default-source/amstat-documents/ethicalguidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=bdeeafdd_3 [Accessed 28 April 2022].

Frey, B. (2018) Fraudulent and Misleading Data. *The sage encyclopedia of educational research, measurement, and evaluation* 4. DOI: 10.4135/9781506326139.

Interlandi, J. (Oct 22, 2006) An Unwelcome Discovery. *New York Times*. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/22/magazine/22sciencefraud.html> [Accessed 30 April 2022].

Norwegian Consumer Authority (2012) The Marketing Control Act. Available from: <https://www.forbrukertilsynet.no/english/the-marketing-control-act#chapter-1> [Accessed 30 April 2022].

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