

## **Collaborative Discussion 2: Peer Response 1 (241 words)**

Dear Christopher,

Thank you for your contribution to this discussion. You have effectively highlighted the ethical dilemma Abi faces and the pressure he faces to produce favourable results. What you have discussed in great detail is the potential action Abi could take, identifying it as p-hacking, and cherry-picking the produced results to meet the expectations of the company contracting the research and analysis. In fact, this is not an unusual practice, as researchers are greatly incentivised to produce statistically significant results (John et al., 2012). Additionally, researchers who are inexperienced and insufficiently mentored may not even realise what they are doing is deemed as an unethical research practice (Andrade, 2021).

Where I believe you could enhance your discussion further is by identifying alternative courses of action Abi could take, such as presenting both positive and negative analyses, and highlighting the benefits of doing this. By assessing the potential consequences of the unethical action, i.e., misreporting his results, and the responsibilities towards himself as a researcher, the scientific field and even public health could add depth to the analysis. Additionally, given the potential consequences, i.e., harm to public health, there is a potential regulatory, even legal aspects to Abi's dilemma, which require serious consideration.

Generally, you have provided a strong foundation by referencing relevant ethical guidelines and acknowledging the core dilemma, and overall, it could be strengthened

by offering a broader perspective of Abi's options and their potential impacts. Thanks again for your discussion.

#### References:

- Andrade, C. (2021) HARKing, cherry-picking, p-hacking, fishing expeditions, and data dredging and mining as questionable research practices. *The Journal of clinical psychiatry*, 82(1): 25941.
- John, L.K., Loewenstein, G. & Prelec, D. (2012) Measuring the prevalence of questionable research practices with incentives for truth telling. *Psychological science*, 23(5): 524-532.