

Abi has analyzed data from the new cereal, Whizz, and has discovered both positive and negative implications of the product. Ethically, he is obligated to present both positive and negative analyses to satisfy the requirements of the profession. According to the European Science Foundation (2011), research integrity demands that individuals demonstrate honesty in communication, objectivity, and transparency, and openness and accessibility. Accordingly, Abi must present both sides of the analysis to maintain these elements of research integrity. The importance of presenting both positive and negative analyses is evident in the BCS Code of Conduct which stresses that researchers have to protect public health and the well-being of individuals and the environment (BCS 2022). The failure to reveal the negative analyses would be a violation of the code since the consumption of the cereal could affect people's health.

Abi has analyzed the cereal and discovered both positive and negative implications of its consumption, but he cannot be responsible for the use to which others put his results. Farrimond (2013) contends that researchers often gather and analyze information and present it to ethics committees that determine the use of the information. Accordingly, researchers cannot be held liable for the way others use their results as long as they present accurate findings that demonstrate both positive and negative implications. However, researchers cannot overlook their responsibility to maintain the accuracy of their findings, for example, by discussing the results in public forums. They cannot support the position of the users of the results because it would be a violation of regulations. For example, the Food Safety Act of 1990 highlights the significance of ensuring that organizations serve or sell food in the nature, quality, and substance that consumers expect (Food Standards Agency 2022). Abi is not responsible for the use to which others put the results, but he cannot support their presentation of the outcomes if they violate regulations and codes of conduct.

Abi should present both the positive and negative results of the analyses, but the manufacturer is likely to publicize the positive ones and ignore the negative outcomes.

In such a case, Abi has several courses of action. He can present the findings of his analyses to food safety authorities to ensure the public understands the health implications of Whizz. According to the UK Research Integrity Office (2021), researchers must accept their responsibility to publish and disseminate research in ways that report their investigations and present findings accurately without selection that can be misleading. Therefore, Abi has to share the findings of his analyses with food safety authorities through the publication and dissemination of the information. Abi can recommend qualitative research that involves examining the health implications of consuming Whizzy. In this case, the goal is to underscore his results that the company may refute after he disseminates the information. Qualitative research can be helpful in situations where the subject involves more dynamic processes than static qualities (Kaplan and Maxwell 2005). The company could argue its decision to publicize the positive analyses while ignoring the negative outcomes was based on its belief that the negative results did not offer a robust justification for its publication. Faced with this situation, Abi should recommend qualitative analyses of consumers of the product to verify his findings. The goal is to ensure he maintains his ethical obligation of presenting accurate and reliable findings to the public.

References

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