

Abi, a statistical programmer and researcher at an institute, encountered an ethical dilemma while analysing data on the nutritional value of a cereal called Whizzz. This use case sheds light on the fundamental principles of research integrity and the use of statistical data. It highlights crucial issues in research ethics and emphasises the responsibility of data analysts.

Firstly, addressing the ethical implications of presenting data that can support contradictory conclusions is essential. As per the Office for Statistics Regulation and UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics, One of the pillars and principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics is Honesty and integrity. People in organisations that release statistics should be truthful, impartial and independent and meet consistent standards of behaviour that reflect the broader public good. (Code of Practice for Statistics, 2022). Manipulating data or analyses to support a preconceived notion undermines the research's integrity and can have severe implications since the data collected indicates that Whizzz is harmful.

Abi is indeed obligated to present both the positive and negative analyses as they align with the norms relating to objectivity, which necessitates the presentation of findings as they differ from what one might want them to be (Resnik, 2011). Concealing negative results, especially those indicating potential harm, could have profound public health implications and be considered a research ethics violation.

#### References:

Resnik, D. B. (2011). What is Ethics in Research & Why is It Important? Available from: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis> [Accessed 22nd January 2024].

UK Statistics Authority (2022). Code of Practice for Statistics. Available from: <https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Code-of-Practice-for-Statistics-REVISED.pdf> [Accessed 22nd January 2024].