

Collaborative Discussion 2 – Research Methods and Professional Practice – Peer Response, Michael Geiger – Michael Geiger

Another approach to examining the case study is by asking under what circumstances Abi would be ethically or legally guilty. Surprisingly, there is no clear answer to this question in the international context. Resnik et al. (2015) found that only 55% of research and development funding countries had established a national policy on misconduct at the time of the study. Among the countries with a national policy on misconduct is the United Kingdom. The guidelines and requirements that organisations should implement can be found in the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) Code of Practice for Research. UKRIO (N.D.) states the following reasons for misconduct in research:

- a) Fabrication
- b) Falsification
- c) Misrepresentation of data and/or interests and/or involvement
- d) Plagiarism; and
- e) Failures to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for:
 - i) Avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to:
 - Humans;
 - Animals used in research; and
 - The environment, and
 - ii) The proper handling of privileged or private information on individuals collected during the research.

In relation to Abi's case study, two key definitions of misconduct in research stand out. On the one hand, the deliberately one-sided interpretation of the data could result in a misrepresentation of data according to paragraph c). On the other hand, the case study shows that the product may possibly be harmful, so paragraph i) is affected. In order to prevent both threats of misconduct in research, an objective, transparent and factual approach is of central importance.

References:

Resnik, D. B., Rasmussen, L. M., & Kissling, G. E. (2015). An international study of research misconduct policies. *Accountability in research*, 22(5), 249-266. Available from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08989621.2014.958218> [Accessed 20 January 2023].

UKRIO (N.D.) Code of Practice for Research. Available from: <https://ukrio.org/publications/code-of-practice-for-research/3-0-standards-for-organisations-and-researchers/3-16-misconduct-in-research/> [Accessed 20 January 2023].