I’ve Got Bias on the Brain: An investigation Regarding the Relationship between an Individual’s Pre-existing Bias and Their Perception

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Cognitive Bias, often referred to as “subjective reality”, is the unconscious tendency to have a preference for something based on previous experiences or knowledge. Since all people have past experiences we all have conscious and unconscious biases that influence our decision-making. This action is inevitable; however, we cannot let bias solely dictate our decision-making. This experiment examines if there is a relationship between people’s predetermined bias using a series of quotes from famous politicians and the test participants' responses. The hypothesis, if the test participant agrees with one quote from a particular politician then the test participant will disagree with a similar quote from a politician from a different political party. One hundred and twenty-four individuals (test participants) were tested using 29 quotes, 24 of the quotes being bias testable (controversial statements), and five of the quotes were nonbias testable. The 24 statements provided the test participants an opportunity to prove or disprove a bias 12 times. Each statement was shown with a politician’s face above it and then a similar quote was shown later with a different politician but similar wording of the original quote. 89.5% of the participants changed their opinion at least once (111 of the 124 test participants). 53% of the test participants changed their response 25% or more of the time (3 questions or more). 11% of the test participants changed their response 50% or more of the time (6 questions or more). All of the information collected proved my hypothesis correct.

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