Analytical Essay: Impact of the Cognitive Biases on the Research Process

Nowadays, the use of the Internet is the most popular method of searching the information for an academic research. Starting his essay, MacCoun claims that the last half of the XX century changed the “legitimacy of science as impartial means of finding truth” (1998, par. 1). Obviously, the easiest way of getting the information that Internet communications provide has not only positive issues. The negative impact of such a tool can be found in the reduction of the personal research and increase of the use of other researchers’ opinions and arguments. Although Internet sources and search engines, such as Google in particular, are helpful tools that make the process of finding the information needed very fast and simple, their help may lead to the cognitive dissonance within the research process due to the impact of biases on the research.

Using the various sources that support student’s argument, it is possible to face an issue of biases. When a student sees idea and its argument, one can take it for granted and fail to find all the variables. The tutors also impact students with the concrete opinion (Potvin, Hazari, Tai & Sadler, 2008). Often preparing the academic papers, students select those subjects which are more close and similar to their expectation and desired results instead of providing a deep searching and comparing the different statements and conclusions. Therefore, an academic paper is more dependent on the experience and other people’s opinion than the personal quantitative research is. Using the works by experienced scientists, students should provide the personal analysis. However, it is difficult to avoid the biases in many disciplines.

Carr & Blettner (2009) insist that cognitive biases are usually related to entrepreneurs. It is obvious that the biases impact on the searching process, the process of discovery and exploitation. For instance, making conclusions, students

can drop a particular idea only because it is not popular in the society or does not have enough supporting arguments (Carr & Blettner, 2009). Students usually base a work on the well-known literature, integrating the established ideas into their papers. Such theoretical framework is a ground for the cognitive biases that implicate the process of critical examination, choosing the most appropriate methods and achieving the unique scientific results. Carr & Blettner (2009) have studied the dimensions of implication that include the mechanical affect, position of the meta-cognitive biases over the knowledge and the flexibility of thinking and stability of the biases. Therefore, the students should be careful of the biases' framework and try to develop the personal methods and theoretical propositions. It is better to arouse the discussions that could lead to the unique solutions and conclusions.

Understanding the danger of the judgmental biases, the students can select the subjects more carefully. The personal interpretation should be independent and free from the exterior opinions (Tetlock & Levi, 1982). From the other side, the biases can be considered as the personal prejudices and interests of the student. Thereby, analyzing the different sources, the students choose only those ideas that are related to their own stereotype. In this situation, the scientific evidence is not a guarantee of an objective choice and analysis carried out by a student.

Greenwald & Schuh indicate that in some cases the term of bias can be considered as the "prejudicial attitude, as in 'gender discrimination' and 'racial bias'" (1994, p. 623). If the cognitive biases impact our attitude to a number of social aspects, choosing the sources and the arguments for the academic papers, students are guided by the stereotypes and a subjective attitude instead of an objective one. The belonging to the particular ethnic group and social community also impacts the

perception and forms the biases. Thereby, the students face with a problem of stereotyping that impacts the way of critical thinking (Schreiner n.d., p. 2).

Although the accessibility of a number of sources in Internet makes students' research easier, this situation can be dangerous due to the high level of the biases' impact on a personal way of analytical thinking. The negative impact can lead to the reduction of the possibility of getting the unique scientific results and diminishing of the role of personal interpretation and discussion. Google, as one of the most well-known and powerful searching engines, makes the process of searching the information easier but, at the same time, the chance to be attached by the simplicity is high. Students choose the first information they find, neglecting the deep analysis and critical thinking. Guided by the different biases, they provide the results based on the experience of the qualified scientists instead of applying their personal opinion.

Reference List:

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