

Social Media and Confirmation Biases

How Social Media will confirm your own personal biases
without you even realizing it!

What is a Confirmation Bias?

A confirmation bias is when a person seeks out information that support their own beliefs and opinions without using or seeking out opposing viewpoints and opinions.

Social media is used to confirm these biases in individuals. People may be targeted with ads or research opinions that only support their idea. If they see others promoting it, it must be true!

Social Media and Biases Example #1

Rachel usually uses social media just to chat with her friends. However, lately she has been noticing that she is seeing a lot of ads popping up since the election is upcoming. She has chatted with her friends a few times on different occasions on who she will be voting for. Now, all of the political ads that she sees are for her person she planned on voting for. She does not see any ads from the opposing person or party. This confirms Rachel's thoughts that she is voting for the right person.

Social Media and Personal Biases Example #2

Jeremy is planning on purchasing a new car within the next few weeks. He has always believed Toyota is the best brand of car to buy. Since he has been searching online for new trucks, all of his ads on Facebook have been the local Toyota dealership with great rates and rebates to buy a new truck. This confirms Jeremy's belief that he now needs to buy a new truck from Toyota.

How is Social Media Used To Target Specific Audiences?

Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Twitter are just a few social media applications that are used to target audiences and therefore, confirm personal biases from around the world. These apps use a specific algorithm to target audiences in order to promote various ads and events. Using this information, individuals will confirm their own biases through the use of social media and will likely not even realize it.

Types of Biases Found On Social Media

Political

Sports

Trends

News Stories

Clothing

Time to Reflect!

Which of the following situations supports a bias through social media?

Choose the best answer with your group. You may only choose one answer!

- A.** Mary has been researching both candidates for election day and looking up opposing viewpoints for each.
- B.** Jackson has been researching new laws being voted on on election day.
- C.** James has been reading Tweets from multiple sources about why one particular candidate is the best choice.
- D.** Alex has been researching the locations of the voting polls and times that they are open.

Which of the following situations is NOT a situation of a confirmation bias through social media?

A. Jenny has been receiving ads about upcoming events in the area and now has a few ideas for the upcoming weekend.

B. Lisa wanted to buy a new pair of hiking boots, but has always heard one particular brand is the best. This brand continues to show up on social media so Lisa knows that she should buy those.

C. Jimmy went to a political rally over the weekend. All of the Reels that are showing up on his account are supports of the candidate at the rally. Jimmy knows that this candidate is his best choice.

