An Ethical Analysis of Cognitive Biases Among Seminary Users on Social Media

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Abstract

ognitive biases are among the most critical forms of misconduct in social media engagement. This study aims to examine how such biases influence the online behavior of seminary-affiliated users. Adopting a qualitative research method, the study is based on semi-structured interviews with 16 scholars and media experts from religious seminaries. The urgency of this research lies in the influential role of seminary users in religious outreach and the consequences of cognitive distortions on their online decision-making and behavior. Defined as patterns of irrational and exaggerated thinking, cognitive biases can negatively affect users' judgments and interactions in digital media. This study focuses on four specific biases—all-or-nothing thinking, hasty conclusions, overgeneralization, and mental filtering—and explores the ethical harms they pose within the online conduct of seminarians. According to the findings, the presence of these cognitive distortions often leads to unjust judgments, biased interpretations, and irrational reactions in social media spaces. Such outcomes not only undermine the credibility of seminary users but also distort the proper communication of religious values.

Keywords

Cognitive Bias, Online Behavior, Social Media, Seminary Users, Ethical Harm.

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