

Abstract

People all around the world continue to speak about how the world is getting worse over time. Our perception of the world around us has changed – and not for the better. However, how is our perception different from reality? This paper evaluates how our world is changing for the better and how our perception of the world is negatively skewed due to three main factors: the media, the fear instinct, and the focusing illusion.

Statistical analysis involving hypothesis testing and analytic graphs was used to prove ignorance of basic world facts (education, environment, and economics). The hypothesis test stated that there is sufficient evidence at an alpha level of 0.05 to conclude that if a random person were to take the survey created, he or she would get less than 15% of the questions correct. Statistics show that the world is actually getting better, yet people continue to remain ignorant to this fact. As the media's influence increases, people believe there is no more hope left for our world. A sample of 23 students between the age of 15-18 in North Carolina were surveyed on basic facts about the world; the results later graphed and evaluated using a proportion test to depict ignorance. Additionally, people of all ages in America were surveyed in 2016 to provide a broad sample size and range of people. Information on media influence and the perception of people was collected and analyzed to understand the possible causes and effects of our ignorance. The purpose of this study is not only to analyze how humans are ignorant on basic facts about the world, but also why we are ignorant and how we can combat this ignorance. With this knowledge in mind, further action can be taken to increase our understanding of the world and receive unbiased information.