**What is bias in relation to research and why is understanding bias important?**

Bias is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as: ‘an inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair’; ‘a concentration on an interest in one particular area or subject’; ‘a systematic distortion of statistical results due to a factor not allowed for in their derivation’ (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>).

Understanding research bias is important for several reasons:

Firstly, bias exists in all research, across research designs and is difficult to eliminate;

Secondly, bias can occur at each stage of the research process;

Thirdly, bias impacts on the validity and reliability of study findings and misinterpretation of data can have important consequences for practice.

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**What is the Research Process?**

Research process consists of a series of steps or actions required for effectively conducting research while formulating the research problem, extensive literature survey, developing hypothesis and research objectives, preparing the research design, determining sample design, collecting data, execution of the project, analysis of data, generalization and interpretation, and preparation of the report or presentation of the results.