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The author David Brooks wrote two columns in the New York Times, entitled “The Philosophy of Data” and “What Data Can’t Do” from February 4th and 18th. In the column “The Philosophy of Data” David Brooks states “That everything that can be measured should be measured; that data is a transparent and reliable lens that allows us to filter out emotionalism and ideology; that data will help us do remarkable things — like foretell the future.” According to David Brooks, data does two things which are exposing when our intuitive view of reality is wrong and illuminate patterns of behavior we haven’t yet noticed. In David Brooks column he put forwards a question “In what situations should we rely on intuitive pattern recognition and in which situations should we ignore intuition and follow the data?” which I find to be of importance and the highlight when thinking about data. But depending on the situation you would have to decide on one of the two options. The option where situations in which we should ignore intuition and therefore follow the data that will tell us precisely what will happen or the option of relying on our own intuition of the pattern we seem to mentally recognize to be happening. Data will give us a more solid observation and concrete answer that we are looking for in certain situations. However, data can be subject to change, an event can happen all of a sudden therefore playing a role in the collected data causing something different to occur than what you expected from the data. Events are unpredictable causing the data we would tend to follow, to change. This brings upon an important key question which David Brooks asks in his column “What kinds of events are predictable using statistical analysis and what sorts of events are not?” Even if you know the outcome of the data if such events happened (the predictable and unpredictable) the decision is still left onto the person to make, as whether to go with the data or their own intuition. For example the CEO of a company who went with his own intuition rather than data. This was brought up in Brook’s second article “What Data Can’t Do” which I will touch base upon as well.

However I had found this column “The Philosophy of Data” very interesting because I didn’t realize data can be so useful like exposing when our intuitive view of reality is wrong in the given examples about the basketball player and the many teachers who have an intuitive sense that different students have different learning styles. I’ve learned that data can also help you in some situations and can change our wrong perspective on how we view reality. However I would like to know what kinds of events are predictable and which aren’t. As well as which situations you should rely on your intuitive pattern recognition and when to ignore it and rely on data. Data allows us to have ways to understand the present as well as the past and perhaps even the future.

In the column “What Data Can’t Do” David Books tells an outstanding story that hints the strengths and the limitations of data analysis depending on the situation. The economists of the CEO were aware of the data but were guided by a different way of thinking. They made their decision depending on commerce and trust which was extremely valuable to them instead of relying on the given data that presented that their company will go through a hard time (potential crisis) as well as decline in profits. But Brooks claims “In this world, data can be used to make sense of mind-bogglingly complex situations. Data helps to provide us reality in our intuitions to compensate for our overconfidence and establishing the actual perceptions of our desires. However data does a few things poorly according to Brooks such asdata struggles with the social, data struggles with context and data creates bigger haystacks. Also big data has trouble with big problems, data favors memes over masterpieces and data obscures values.

I liked how David Brooks played devil's advocate with his articles it made me look at both viewpoints. I found this article about "What Data Can't Do" to be true when viewing the pros and cons of data and learning the importance of data in itself. Data can only tell you so much, there are things in which can't be explained fully by just looking at numbers. Data can be manipulated easily to lead you to view things in one way or another depending on what its purpose or motive is, therefore making it very foolish to just depend on numbers to paint the full picture for you. Data is sometimes too heavily relied upon in which everything is turned into data unnecessarily when only a few main areas might be needed. I do however agree with the importance of data but would have to side with the fact that data is not the only mode to being informed or to making decisions.

I was quite intrigued by a specific topic mentioned in one of Brooks two articles regarding the CEO where as I choose to do further research on it. I had found an article called **“CEO duality and organizational performance: A longitudinal analysis”** that explains about a study that portrayed the difference in finances of 141 corporations over a 6-year time period. This resulted from some people wanting an increase of effective corporate governance which brought upon questioning of whether or not the performance was better between having an independent leadership or a CEO as the leader. Therefore all public corporations had to make a choice in regards to their structure of leadership. Many corporations choose to allow the CEO to continue serving as the leader (CEO duality), while some corporations had choose to want an independent board as leadership. However, the outcome of the study indicated that there was a significant difference in performance between the two types of leadership. The corporations for independent leadership outperformed those relying upon the CEO.

I had also found another article called **“Leadership structure: Separating the CEO and Chairman of the Board”** that explains about a study that portrays a possible reduction in costs in corporations. This resulted from shareholders and other people who take part in these corporations which brought upon their assumption of whether or not the separation in the title of the CEO and Chairman of the board will reduce costs as well as improve performance. These shareholder activists and regulators have been pressuring to retrieve this separation from U.S. firms. However, the outcome of the study indicated that having a CEO and a Chairman of the Board in corporations have potential costs and potential benefits. Therefore they won’t be having a reduction of costs but having an increase in costs. Results significantly presents that the costs of separation are larger than the benefits for most large corporations. This shows that it all depends on you to make a decision and if this given data can harm or help your corporation in the long run.

In conclusion, in the article **“CEO duality and organizational performance: A longitudinal analysis”** a study was conducted with 141 corporations regarding performance where data proved that independent leadership outperformed those who allowed the CEO to serve as the leader which played a difference in finances. Brooks claims it depends on the situation where you have to base your decision upon whether to go with the data or not. In his example with the economists of the CEO they were aware of the data but were guided by a different way of thinking. Some may still want to go through with keeping the CEO as a leader and some may not. It all depends on that particular CEO performance in their corporation and their own morals of wanting to keep that CEO as their leader. Brooks claim would also work for the second article called **“Leadership structure: Separating the CEO and Chairman of the Board”** that I have researched regarding the study of the separation of the title the CEO and Chairman of the Board into two titles where evidence proves that the costs are larger than the benefits for most large corporations. Therefore according to Brooks claims in his articles it depends on what is more valuable to you and your corporation, whether the particular benefits are worth more to you despite the costs being larger. The CEO in Brooks article made their decision depending on commerce and trust which was extremely valuable to them instead of relying on the given data that showed that they will have a decline in profits. In situations such as these presented from the articles or any situation at all you have to decide what you want to do despite the given data, the decision always depends upon you!