Case study: Innaproprate use of surveys

In 2018, the Cambridge Analytica scandal exposed the exploitation of Facebook survey data to sway political campaigns in the United States and the United Kingdom. Millions of Facebook users' private information, including that of their friends, was obtained by Cambridge Analytica through ostensibly innocuous personality tests without their express agreement. Democratic processes were impacted by the use of this data to target voters and create psychological profiles (Confessore, 2018). Concerns regarding permission and the right to privacy are brought up in this case from an ethical perspective. Transparency and autonomy were violated since users were not informed that their data will be utilized for political influence.

Another example was Target's use of purchasing data in 2012 to forecast when female customers—including minors who had not told their families—might get pregnant garnered media attention in 2012 due to its predictive analytics techniques. Target's marketing materials, which featured products aimed at expectant moms, led to the young woman's father learning of her pregnancy, which made the case well-known (Hill, 2012). Target used predictive analytics to customize advertisements after examining survey results and consumer purchasing patterns.

As a second example of the illicit use of surveys, the dating site provider OKCupid acknowledged in 2014 that it had conducted tests on its users without telling them, including manipulating match rates to gauge user reaction to possible matches. Users unknowingly participated in a psychological experiment in which the compatibility % was changed to determine if they would continue to seek a connection (Rudder, 2014).

Serious ethical questions regarding informed consent were brought up by this example. Users' confidence was betrayed by OKCupid's studies since they were unaware of and powerless to stop the manipulation of their data. Socially, this

emphasized the value of permission in psychological research and strengthened mistrust of tech firms.