

Individual Assessment Assignment 3 Ethical reflections and Peer Evaluation

Ethical reflections and personal comments on Data privacy in social media.

‘Privacy is a basic human need’ and ‘it is understood as a necessary condition for individual autonomy, identity, and integrity’ (Debatin.B. 2011). However Social media tends to demand more engagement of its users, which means putting ones own personal information inherently and increasingly at risk.

Data privacy in regard to Social Media raises quite a few ethical questions, the main one being the sacrifice of personal data privacy in exchange for targeted advertising. Debatin. B (2011) states ‘Privacy protection in online social media seems to be an oxymoron. After all, the main purpose of participating in social networks is the exchange of information, most of it highly personal, and the maintenance and expansion of one’s social relationships.’ To gain the most benefits of social media, it is required to train social media giants, such as Facebook and Instagram, algorithms to show you the content you want to see. This requires spending a lot of time on their respective apps and letting them watch and record what content you engage with (like, comment, share), what advertisements you click on and therefore what appeals to you.

Personally, I think that Social media giants have too much of a monopoly and too little regulation on what they can do with people’s private information. The law has struggled to keep up with with adequate legislation to protect it. ‘Scandals relating to Cambridge Analytica’s data brokerage, recurrent stories about Facebook’s privacy violations, and the leaking of data from a gamut of sites ranging from online dating websites to major retailers have all contributed to revealing the colossal amounts of sensitive information being compiled by large organizations, both public and private, and their dubitable claims to safeguard it.’ (Southerton et al. 2020).

To conclude, no one organisation, government, group or individual has complete control over all of their data. Nearly every one of those groups does not have your best interests at heart. Data privacy laws in social media both nationally and internationally fail to fully protect individuals from data breaches and malicious use of personal data in social media and until they catch up, the onus remains with the individual to be meticulous with how much of their personal data ends up in the hands of these Social Media Giants and other associated companies purchasing this information.

References

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