Don’t Forget People in the Use of Big Data for Development

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DATA 150

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Big data denotes the ability to search, aggregate, and cross-reference large data sets. The emergence of big data has revolutionized the development of nations. Unlike in the past, the phenomenon has allowed for the generation of data to inform the decision-making process on various levels. The generation of big data has been promoted by the popularity of mobile devices and the internet that generates substantial user data. The digital footprint left by the users can be aggregated and cross-referenced against large data sets and used to inform decisions relating to credit lending, relief services during disasters, and national resource distribution. However, Snowden's revelation about the National Security Agency surveillance in 2013, together with the ambiguous complicity of internet companies and global controversies, calls for the need to incorporate the human factor in the use of big data for development.

The use of big data has shown great potential in improving living conditions and the development of humanity. According to Blumenstock (2018), the utilization of big data is already making meaningful impacts on people's lives by offering various services and generating information that can be used by government agencies to improve the living conditions of the citizens. Additionally, the utilization of big data has great potential in improving the health outcomes and quality of individuals. It can be used to develop individualized care programs that are dependent on the data generated from each individual. Moreover, the use of big data can reshape education, research, and development. Through the exposure and analysis of the existing data, better educational outcomes, research and development can be realized, resulting in better and more effective living conditions.

Furthermore, the use of big data in the prediction and warning of disasters is central to human development, as demonstrated by the coronavirus disease outbreak. Blumenstock (2018) argues that big data can be used to predict and warn about imminent disasters before they happen. In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, big data in the development of prevention techniques and general knowledge about the virus cannot be underscored. Medical research and development on the condition have helped reduce mortalities from the virus and have also helped in surveillance of the spread of the disease. While the world is still grappling with the novel-virus, it is clear that a permanent solution shall only be realized through the utilization of big data (Hua & Shaw, 2020). this phenomenon is not only limited to the Covid-19; natural disasters such as earthquakes, fire outbreaks, and storms can be tracked using big data.

Besides, the use of big-data shall go along way in the monitoring of sustainable development goals and, in turn, human development by using user data to gauge various matrices of social development. These matrices could measure childhood nutrition, gender equality, educational achievement, and maternity survival rates. As such, the significance of big data in human development can not be underscored. The utilization of big data can promote individuals' health outcomes by developing individualized health outcomes. Big data can also be used in the prediction of pandemics and issuing timely warnings about diseases, as demonstrated by the coronavirus disease pandemic. Besides, the use of big data on human development can also be seen in the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as various developmental indices can be established using country specific information.

References

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