

e-Portfolio Activity:

**Reflective Activity 1 – Ethics in Computing in the age
of Generative AI**

Resubmission

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Introduction

Surveys are effective tools to collect information and insights and understand the opinion of the public, but the misuse of survey information can lead to professional, legal, ethical and social violations. The 2018 Cambridge Analytica case highlights the data exploitation that created the violations. In this assignment, how the Cambridge Analytica misused survey data will be discussed. Eventually, other examples will be drawn and Ethical, Social, Legal, and Professional Implications will be discussed.

Cambridge Analytica and Facebook: A case on Data Exploitation

The Cambridge Analytica Scandal indicates that the data of Facebook users were collected from a personality quiz app. They were eager to sell the psychological profiles of the Facebook users to the American Voters to political campaigns (Confessore, 2018). It is the largest known data leak in Facebook history where data of millions of users were leaked (Confessore, 2018). The purpose of the data leak was to create political ads and manipulate the voters during the 2016 US presidential election. As a result, a sparkling debate on the ethical and legal use of data began. This has also highlighted the inappropriate use of survey data and potential pitfalls in the data privacy and protection in the companies who collect such data (Confessore, 2018).

Other examples of Inappropriate use of Surveys

An inappropriate use of survey data is the use of medical survey data inappropriately which consists of sensitive health information of the patients (Chiruvella and Guddati, 2021). Some companies distribute the health survey data of the patients not to improve

the healthcare system but to sell the data to the pharmaceutical and insurance companies. Although strict regulations have come with the prioritisation of Health data Management (HDM) Policy, illegally selling the patient data to such companies without consent is referred to as inappropriate use of survey data (PTI, 2022).

A major example of misusing surveys can be given through an effective targeted market. It has been shown that organisations tend to obtain personal data of the consumers through the help of surveys. In this aspect, recent evidence has shown that customer satisfaction surveys are done to collect proper data from the customers to understand their interests on organisational products (Salesforce, 2024). It has been shown that in majority aspects, these data tend to collect the personal information from the customers which includes the demographic information, financial information and preferential information. This often affects the autonomy and privacy of the customers.

Ethical, Social, Legal, and Professional Implications

In terms of the **ethical implication**, autonomy breaching has been the major implication of surveys which is done through collecting personal information of customers. For **social implications**, the inappropriate survey usage can be evidenced through reducing trust of customers in organisations. This particularly damages the reputation of organisations and negatively affects the overall relationship among consumers and companies. The **legal consequences** can be evidenced from the breaching of “General Data Protection Regulation Law” (GDPR Law) by Cambridge Analytica. It has been observed that a fine of “£500,000” has been imposed on Facebook by “UK's data protection watchdog” as a

result of the Cambridge Analytica scandal (BBC, 2018). It can be stated from **“Professional consequences”** is the damaged brand image of an organisation.

Summary

It can be stated from the scandal of Cambridge Analytica that misuse of surveys often can result in potential reputational, legal, financial and social damage for organisations. Maintenance of a transparent communication and survey approach is necessary for upholding the reputation and brand image of a company.

References

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