About user data collection and surveillance practices and how it threatens the democracy

Introduction

We can define user data collection procedures as the technological and organizational procedures where the data collectors or technology owners are collecting the users behavioral and health related data. The surveillance practices are practices where the data collection is done purposely in secret. In the context of technology, the behavioral data is usually the data about the technology usage patterns with the purposes of product development. Of course, the behavioral observational studies could also exist outside the field of technology. The health related data is the data about users health status. Usually the behavioral data is modeled as one state diagram where the states are the web resources and we have transitions between states, which are triggered when the user clicks on some button. Each state has associated number of clicks and behavioral pattern which is associated with it. For example, the movement pattern, interaction with the pages and how user is using the pages. Recently, there is considerable amount of the brain research which are lead by the big tech companies and research centers around the world. A brain activity monitoring is usually done with the help of the radio-tracing substances which then could be detected with the gamma ray detectors. The goal is to measure the blood flow through various brain parts. Different real-life activities are associated with the different blood flow distribution on the PET scan images. A front-end which the users are seeing could be modeled as the state diagram where the user clicks trigger the transition to the next state. Technologically, collected data could be used for several purposes, based on the underline optimization goal. In the case of the social media, the overline optimization goal is the maximization of the time spent on this platforms. On the other hand, some information services have an goal to increase the speed to the real-life services which are connected to the website.

Interpretation of the data

Interpretation of the health and behavior data is usually done through the process of **diagnosis.** A diagnosis is the process where the data is interpreted, classified in order that it could be acted on it. Classification and data interpretation is usually ambiguous process. For example, let's analyze the following mental illness:

*"**Autism** is a [neurodevelopmental disorder](#) characterized by symptoms of deficient reciprocal social communication and the presence of restricted, repetitive, and inflexible patterns of behavior that are impairing in multiple contexts and excessive or atypical to be [developmentally](#) and [socioculturally](#) inappropriate"*

In order that some behavior is classified with the autism, person needs to have following symptoms:
1. Deficient reciprocal social communication
2. Repetitive and inflexible patterns of behavior that are impairing in multiple contexts

In reality, both this two features could be classified in the broad area of behaviors with different labels.

Connection to the politics

Outside the realm of the technology, there exists movements and projects whose aim is the modeling of user's behavioral pattern and employment of the treatment-response methodologies in order to achieve some underline goal. In democracy, user chooses his own treatments and he is bilaterally notified about the actions which are going to take place when the certain message is communicated. As already stated, the possession of the data could be leveraged in both positive, pushing he user to his personal end goal. Or in the negative way, in which case he is pushed to negative outcome.