**RMPP Unit 5 Reflective Activity**

In the case of the Cambridge Analytica scandal, Facebook was not sufficiently protecting the privacy of the rich profiles users had created on the platform (Confessore, 2018). Several provisions in the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into effect following the Cambridge Analytica scandal, can help us to understand how this happened.

As the users were not informed of the full purposes for processing their data, they were not able to give informed consent (EUR-Lex, 2016). In addition, the data used was not limited to what was necessary for the user to be able to partake in a quiz and instead shared the full profile of the affected users. Furthermore, political views are considered to be a sensitive category of data that should be more stringently protected and this was not the case. Ultimately the users were unaware of how their data was to be used and the likelihood is that not all users would have signed up to this if they had been informed. Cambridge Analytica took advantage of a mechanism that would allow them to unethically procure rich, candid and free data on the population. As this could be effectively used in political campaigns, they saw this as an opportunity to profit through processing the data and selling it on.

Despite the scandal around Cambridge Analytica, Facebook surveys continued to be used inappropriately by research firms, such as CubeYou (Castillo, 2018). The surveys were supposed to be for academic purposes only but the data was actually sold on for marketing purposes. Whilst the impact of these surveys may not be as wide as the political manipulation resulting from the Cambridge Analytica survey misuse, it could still lead to the deception and manipulation of users for gain. Furthermore, the unethical approach to surveys does not just affect the users of these platforms, but have also been found to affect the employees (Nieva, 2022). Employees of firms, such as Facebook and Google, have reportedly been duped into sharing sensitive personal information about their mental health in order to sell the benefits of the Lyra platform. This is unethical as they were assured that the data would be confidential and it was instead shared with their employer.

In conclusion, the data-centric world we are now living in has led to the inappropriate use of surveys that can affect a number of populations. Whilst all of the surveys described are optional, the manipulation of respondents appears to be linked to underlying unethical business practices and could lead to potential harms. Events like this have led to regulations, such as the GDPR in the EU and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the US, being introduced to create both transparency and accountability regarding the handling of this valuable personal data.

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