

Participant I: -> after survey

-> higher goal only if potentially extreme negative impact

- chose posts that are informative / from a news source
- no extreme content in both directions
- did not only stuff that fits to own goals - also stuff he sees critical, because he thinks it's important to break out of a bubble
- would only hide content that is highly polarizing/hateful and splits society
- always prefers posts that have facts based rather than emotional content
- but realized he has the dilemma that the platform would soon become a news platform if he would moderate it. Show content based on standards for newspaper
- think that maybe recommender should not distinguish between users and show them the same content

Participant II / 3: -> after survey

-> No real higher goal, only hide misinformation

- chose posts very similar to part I - mostly informative stuff and also stuff that he does not agree with, but where he had the feeling that the goal of the post is not to solely spread hate and bring people up against each other.
- when he saw content that deals with people denying the efficiency of corona vaccines, he thinks that this is content that should be hidden because it is misinformation. In the example of somebody telling a story of a relative that dies he thinks this should also be shown in this feed, even though it might push the user in a direction he does not like. But he believes that no content should be censored, just because it might cause a reaction that he does not like.

Participant III : -> after survey

-> Higher goal

- Scenario in which a higher goal exists is highly relevant for him
- Would distinguish if he thinks that goal is important for society as a whole or if it is a "niche"-topic. E.g would push people towards environmental sustainability.
- Would remove all topic that is going into a right-wing direction, because in his opinion this is content that aims to hurt other people and therefore should not be publicly available
 - Is aware that this might be considered as censorship, but believes that humans are prone to being influenced by polarizing and dogmatic content, and that this is a fight where you can not win if you "play by the rules"
- However would also not show content where he agrees with the message or goal behind it, but the message itself is hurtful, even if it is hurtful to a group he despises
 - But not because he the act of being hurtful to this group by itself is an ethically reprehensible, but rather out of "tactics", because this would push these people even further away from opening up to other opinions.
- Finds it funny that people disagree so much with this idea, because currently advertisement does exactly this influencing, but without having the goal that society benefits, but rather people are exploited
- Doesn't see influencing people as something bad, in his opinion there is no scenario where humans do not manipulate other humans -> reactions and actions always trigger a reaction of others that often have a deeper subconscious goal.

Participant IV: → before survey

-> No higher goal, classic recsys

- They saw themselves in the role of the platform provider behind the recommender system
- Wanted to maximize profit → Goal: Maximize for engagement
- Selected content that fit the user's interest best regardless of whether it aligned with the participant's own opinions
- However, wanted to stay out of getting too political if avoidable (e.g. if another post was politically less charged while also aligning with the user's previously liked content, this post would be favored)
- Sees it as problematic to recommend something opposed to the user's interest: Might make the user abandon the platform (no higher goal is reached *and* the platform loses its user base) → Platforms that recommend only based on the user's interests will be the "winners" as users will likely prefer these platforms where they do not feel influenced/pushed and are engaged more
- However, after the survey, the participant noted that they still think it is a good idea, especially if the single user profits directly (e.g. more healthy lifestyle). Thinks it needs to be implemented in a way that users can opt-in/opt-out of this alternative recommendation style and can individually adapt their goals

Participant V: → before survey

-> No higher goal, classic recsys - in hindsight: higher goal to avoid negative impact (e.g. radicalization)

- They acted the way they already knew recommender systems behave
- Wanted to maximize profit → Goal: Maximize for engagement
- Realized that it was their own interpretation of the task to maximize for profit/engagement, which the task never states
- Consideration: Could also recommend more diverse or opposed content
- Found it hard to recommend the content that maximizes engagement when it did not align with their own opinions/values
- In hindsight, would change selection:
 - Would recommend opposed content
 - Reason #1: Foster discourse to not only reinforce people's opinion and avoid radicalization that might have negative impact in the real world
 - Reason #2: Annoy the users who do not have the participant's own opinion so that they cease using the platform

Participant VI: → before survey

-> Higher goal: Personal political agenda (but in reality: independent institution)

- from beginning on acted with political motivation
- choose the answers which pushed the user into the direction of the personal political agenda
- → influence for a "greater goal"
- this goal should ultimately be chosen by an independent institution

Participant VII: → after survey

-> Higher goal for users "at risk" (with extreme opinions)

- tried to not undermine the users autonomy but at the same time didn't want to push the user deep into echo chambers
- therefore it seems that for seemingly harmless topics a users interests can directly influence the recommendations, but people with extreme opinions on important and dangerous topics can be nudged for a greater good
- its difficult who decides what the greater good is in most situations

Participant VIII: → after survey

-> no higher goal, only nudging for diversification

- tried not to let own worldview influence the recommendations
- at the same time thought it was a good idea to nudge people into more diverse worldviews → not completely opposing misinformed standpoints, but also not only showing confirming information
- would be a good if interests could be classified into "topics" and recommendations include diverse set of opinions from the topics
 - so topic would be "vaccine" not "why vaccines are bad"

Participant IX: -> after survey

-> no higher goal, but avoid misinformation

- Proposed to show informative posts
- Said that recommender systems should make more fact checking and block false information
- Fact checks should be highlighted → in best case the recsys is able to show the correct fact
- Nevertheless he thinks recommender systems should mix the informative posts with the content the user wants to see (except it ist fake news)

Participant X: -> before survey

-> no higher goal

- Wants to keep recommender systems as they are
- He thinks that the user should see the content he likes to see as he is paying with his data. Therefore nudging is not ok
- Users should see content as long as the content is covered by freedom of speech
- Private companies should not be motivated to try to use their power in order to influence their users