*The Internet is a global network and provides many benefits.  Please research and consider the impact of the Internet on privacy.  Locate at least two current articles about monitoring user activity online by private companies or governments.  Why are users monitored, how can they prevent this, can privacy be accomplished online?  Please make sure to cite sources in the APA style.*

The Internet has provided many benefits to the world through breaking the boundaries of information nonetheless of the location and time. We can access to the information of the other side of this globe that were published more than 10 years ago if the Internet is available. This has given many opportunities for many people to get an access to the information about this world, which can result in the equality to learn. Also, the spread of the Internet has given an influence to each person as a public speaker to raise a voice to challenge existing authority or hierarchy. There are the tips of iceberg of the good of the Internet, but we cannot ignore the bad side of the Internet. One of the most important points of the negative side of the Internet can be a problem of privacy. Along with a revolution of technologies, it has become more common to track the behavior of users by gathering data. While this makes it possible to develop a personalized recommendation system or gives an insight to preference analysis, it has caused many problems on privacy.

I want to raise two examples of monitoring users on the Internet. The first one is a potential issue that Office 365 can be a spy on workers (Goodwin, 2022). Office 365 is the standard business productivity and communication tools developed by Microsoft. Many famous applications such as Teams, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, and so forth are included. In the recent era of modern working environment, it is common to gather a data of employees to analyze the working hour or productivity. Also, monitoring a compliance policy and data security is a big role of IT admins or employers. To achieve those responsibilities, theoretically, supervisors must have accesses to all data of documents, emails and conversation or so. In the article, Office 365 has functions of data loss protection and backup of many type data for 18 months, and employers were able to exploit the function. Although there has been an update to give an alert before monitoring specific individuals, there is still potential abusage of this features. But at the same time, a healthy way to use this function is crucial for companies to protect employees from overwork or harassment. Therefore, it is quite important take a balance between privacy and data usage in order not to become a spy of workers.

The second example is about the issue of data exploit by software of remote schooling app for children (Harwell, 2022). In this article, it is said that many of remote schooling app which has had great impacts on children’s learning opportunity under the spread of COVID-19 were revealed to gather data of children’s behavior and provide them to the other companies for the usage of effective marketing or targeting strategies. The most important point of this problem is that children and their parents even do not realize their information are used in that way. There are applications that invoke the usage of behavioral data along with the agreement of the privacy policy, but some of them do not. The article pointed out that clear alert and notification is really important to protect users’ privacy. I do agree this point, since it is not always bad thing to use personal data for effective and efficient marketing strategies. If the recommended items fit to own preferences, it is very efficient for both company and users. But the problem occurs, when users do not realize their own data are used. Especially, if the targets are children who are not old enough to judge their own preferences and have an ability to distinguish what is good or bad, we have to pay the biggest attention on the usage of data.

Based on the two actual cases of data usages in terms of various users such as workers or children in the Internet environment, it is very important to pay attention how the data is used and how users are monitored. Of course, the main responsibility is on the side of software developer or company, but at the same time, we ourselves have to be careful. Taking a good balance of usage of data in a good way and privacy protection is crucial.

**References:**

Goodwin, B. (2022, June 21). *Microsoft Office 365 has ability to 'spy' on workers*. ComputerWeekly.com. Retrieved June 23, 2022, from <https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252521757/Microsoft-Office-365-has-ability-to-spy-on-workers>

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