

Recommenders and their ethical issues

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Summary Ethical issues about recommenders are still the order of the day in an increasingly digitized world where all our data is increasingly on the Internet, a referrer can be really dangerous. This paper attempts to address the main ethical issues of any recommender: 'Ethical problems with recommender systems by Silvia Milano'.

Introduction

Recommenders are algorithms that we use every day without realizing it. From article recommenders, to clothing, to travel... Each platform has its own recommender and even uses information that especially has not been collected from the platform itself but through internet browsing. This is what puts the podcast in context. Music platforms like Spotify, Netflix or as we have been able to see the subject of Recommender, a recommender of clothing items from HM. The recommender may have problems or have an unethical tendency.

"The task of a recommendation system—i.e. what we shall call the recommendation problem—is often summarised as that of finding good items (Jannach and Adomavicius 2016)"

Discussing

The podcast discusses two really interesting points. The negative impact that a recommender can have on society and the question of the violability of the user's rights. In my opinion, the technology of a recommender has a good ethical use what happens is that many times what is not wrong is not the algorithm but the data itself that is introduced is biased. So discussing this, let's look at it from the philosophical points of view.

From a consequentialist point of view, a referrer can have a negative impact on society. From recommending sexist items, recommending users that do not really exist, recommending fake news, recommending racist songs or incitement to violence, etc. So how can we address a problem which is often called a black box where we introduce a series of data inputs and get an output without really knowing what our black box is learning? So from my point of view by controlling the distribution of the data, but this leads me to think from the point of view of more censorship, and that there is no absolute truth so it could have serious consequences on influencing society to not really have absolute freedom and be biased to what we recommend. So, then we can get into the other part of the ethics. It may then be a universal solution to the problem, but this could be counterproductive if we are actually conditioning

the algorithm to learn something we want it to learn. We are influencing the algorithm personally to learn what we want it to learn through censorship of the data. Censoring data when a person can be perfectly influenced by society, by the culture of where they live, by their life experiences, I think it would not be the best way to have a universal solution to the problem of referrers. If there are architectures such as GAN's where there is a discriminator that is not based on the density of the dataset, I do not know what would happen if it were applied in a recommender, where an artificial intelligence itself would discard recommended items.

Finally, I will address the problem of data violability. In context, since the creation of the web 1.0 to the web2.0 where most of the information is held by large multinational companies, the fact of connecting to the internet you are already giving a series of information, based on cookies, clicks, visits that can then be used as a recommender or even manipulate the price of the same items to scare you that you are missing the good time of offer. To this end, there is a lot of discussion about the future of web3.0 where the power passes directly to the user, for what information to share and not, and to get a fair return on your own data. Commonality wins over individualism. Although I would like to believe that everything would be more friendly, I see it difficult that any website will be regulated by this new web, and that the control over our data is not already too late.