CYS 2310
Policy, Legal, Ethics and Compliance

Lecture #7
Ethics and Practices of using Social Media platforms

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this lecture, you will be able to learn about:

- ✓ Privacy and Data Protection

- ✓ User Data Exploitation

- ✓ Online Harassment and Cyberbullying

- ✓ Spread of Misinformation and Fake News

- ✓ Impact on Mental Health

- ✓ Lack of Content Moderation and Accountability

- ✓ Influence on Political Discourse and Democracy

Introduction

➢ The use of social media platforms has become increasingly prevalent in society, offering numerous benefits such as communication, information sharing, and community building.

➢ However, there are also ethical concerns and questionable practices associated with these platforms.

➢ Here are some key issues related to the ethics and practices of using social media platforms:

Privacy and Data Protection

➢ Social media platforms collect and store vast amounts of personal data, which raises concerns about privacy.

➢ Users' personal information and online activities may be tracked, analysed, and potentially shared with third parties without their explicit consent.

User Data Exploitation

➢ Social media platforms often leverage user data to generate revenue through targeted advertising.

➢ This practice raises concerns about the manipulation of users' preferences, behaviours, and opinions.

➢ There have been instances of data misuse and unauthorized access to personal information, leading to privacy breaches and potential harm to individuals.

Online Harassment and Cyberbullying

➢ Social media platforms can be breeding grounds for online harassment, cyberbullying, and hate speech.

➢ The anonymity and ease of communication provided by these platforms can empower individuals to engage in harmful behaviours, which can have severe emotional, psychological, and even physical consequences for victims.

Spread of Misinformation and Fake News

➢ Social media platforms have been criticized for enabling the rapid spread of misinformation and fake news.

➢ The algorithms that determine content distribution may prioritize sensationalism and engagement over accuracy, leading to the amplification of false information and the erosion of trust in traditional sources of news and information.

Impact on Mental Health

➤ Excessive use of social media platforms has been linked to negative impacts on mental health.

➤ Constant exposure to idealized representations, cyberbullying, social comparison, and addictive behaviours can contribute to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and other psychological issues.

Lack of Content Moderation and Accountability

➢ The sheer volume of user-generated content on social media platforms makes it challenging to effectively moderate and enforce community guidelines.

➢ The inconsistent or insufficient moderation practices can allow for the proliferation of hate speech, violent content, harassment, and other harmful behaviours.

Influence on Political Discourse and Democracy

➢ Social media platforms have gained significant influence over political discourse and democratic processes.

➢ Issues such as the spread of disinformation, political manipulation, and filter bubbles can impact public opinion, undermine trust in institutions, and distort democratic decision-making.

Conclusion

➤ Addressing these ethical concerns and improving social media practices requires collaboration among platform operators, policymakers, users, and society as a whole.

➤ It involves implementing stronger data protection regulations, enhancing content moderation practices, promoting digital literacy, and fostering a culture of responsible and respectful online behaviour.

Review

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  - **Privacy and Data Protection**
    - **User Data Exploitation**
    - **Online Harassment and Cyberbullying**
    - **Spread of Misinformation and Fake News**
    - **Impact on Mental Health**
  - **Lack of Content Moderation and Accountability**
  - **Influence on Political Discourse and Democracy**
- **Conclusion**

End of Lecture