

Ethical consequences of Big Data analyses on human self-organized social actions

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The objective of this work is to investigate ethical implications of Big Data analyses in the dynamics of self-organized human social actions. Considering that the data collected by large companies allow for: (1) The establishment of correlations with some predictive power, and (2) The guidance of future social interactions through individualized persuasion methods, this paper will try to answer the following question: What are the possible ethical consequences of the application of Big Data analysis with financial purposes to predict human patterns of social actions? The impact of Big Data techniques on secondary self-organized actions will be focused, that is, on actions that involve learning processes and changing behaviour patterns (Debrun, 2009). Our hypothesis is that methods of social persuasion to promote financial interests of companies using Big Data techniques, which are beyond the understanding of individuals, could deeply affect the emergence of secondary self-organized patterns of actions considered ethically relevant to contemporary society.