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Your Facebook 'Likes' could soon cost you a job: study

Reported by Ninemsn staff

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The pages you 'Like' on Facebook are likely to have a major impact on what jobs you get in the future, a new study has found.

According to researchers at the University of Cambridge and Stanford University, computer models can draw accurate and detailed conclusions about your personality and money management skills, among other things, based on the pages you 'Like' on the social media network, The New York Times reports.

Employers may eventually use this technology when making hiring decisions.

Using a sample of 86,220 volunteers who completed a 100-item personality questionnaire, the researchers determined that computer predictions based on Facebook Likes are more accurate than those made by the participants' Facebook friends using a personality questionnaire.

"Currently, occupational psychologists evaluate people's characteristics and decide the fit between people and jobs," researcher Youyou Wu from Cambridge University told Business Insider.

"It's very likely that in the future this process of assessing personalities and determining how someone's characteristics are related to a certain job will be automated using computer models like ours."

Another researcher from Cambridge, David Stillwell, said employers will be presented with a list of job candidates that computers deem the best matches, without any prior knowledge of them.

"Besides the benefits we already mentioned, this approach would help promote equality in the selection process and avoid human biases prevalent in occupational settings," Mr Stillwell adds.

"Computers do not favour people of certain gender, race, or personality."

But the researchers are unsure whether this method will eventually also be used to fire employees.

"I think it's likely that some companies will experiment with computer's evaluations, and use it as a reference in addition to other traditional metrics," researcher Dr. Michal Kosinski from Stanford University said.

"There are also legal and ethical concerns that need to be addressed before any implementation," he explains.