

Data Owner Benefit-Driven Design of People Analytics

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With increasingly digitalized workplaces, the potential for sophisticated analyses of employee data rises. This increases the relevance of people analytics (PA), which are tools for the behavioral analysis of employees. Despite this potential, the successful usage of PA is hindered by employee concerns. Especially in Europe, where the GDPR or equivalent laws apply, employee consent is required before data can be processed in PA. Therefore, PA can only provide relevant insights if employees are willing to share their data. One potential way of achieving this is the use of appeal strategies. In the design of PA, the core strategy that can be used is the inclusion of data owner benefits, such as automated feedback, that are given to employees in exchange for sharing their own data. In this paper, we examine benefits as an appeal strategy and develop four design principles for the inclusion of benefits in PA. Then, we describe an exemplary set of analyses and benefits, demonstrating how our principles may be put into practice. Based on this exemplary implementation, we describe and discuss the results of a user study ($n = 46$) among employees in the EU and UK. Our study investigates the factors that foster or hinder employees' consent to sharing their data with PA. Then, we introduce our data owner benefits and analyze whether they can positively influence this consent decision.

Our introduced data owner benefits were, contrary to our expectations, not suited to motivate our participants to consent to sharing their data. We therefore analyze how participants judge the benefits. Participants generally appreciate having them, confirming the value of including data owner benefits when designing PA. Some of our introduced benefits negatively influenced participants' sharing decision, though, meaning that careful consideration of potential risks is required when conceptualizing them.

CCS Concepts: • **Human-centered computing** → **Empirical studies in HCI**; • **Software and its engineering** → *Designing software*; • **Security and privacy** → Social aspects of security and privacy.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: HR analytics, Talent analytics, Disclosure decision, Privacy calculus, Qualitative study

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1 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digitization of the modern workplace. As working spaces become increasingly digitized, more and more digital tools are used to manage and organize work. These tools collect data on various aspects of work, enabling more comprehensive analyses. This can be leveraged by people analytics (PA)—tools that analyze the data of individuals, typically employees, at the workplace [36]. Their purpose is to provide various insights and aid the management of the company by allowing for a more objective and evidence-based way of making business decisions.

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Such analytics have been used to great effect in practice, showing promise in different areas of use [7]. Despite this, there are also some barriers to the successful adoption of PA: For instance, the use of AI with historical data could cause biased decision-making if the data is not checked for biases [17]. Another important concern to mention is the privacy aspect: Due to their heavy reliance on data, PA tools require accurate information in order to function properly.

Legal frameworks such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) [10] require that employees consent before their data may be analyzed by PA. The disclosure of individuals depends on several factors, including, among others, the perceived risks and benefits of the disclosure [35]. This privacy calculus means that two approaches exist to increase employees' willingness to share: decreasing the risks, e.g. by providing additional transparency [41], or increasing the appeal of the decision. To accomplish the latter, Zieglmeier et al. [40] define three types of appeal strategies: values, incentives, and benefits. Unlike values, which guide the development of PA in an abstract manner and incentives, which are external to the tool, benefits are connected to the usage of the tool and therefore distributed during its usage [40]. As an example, consider a PA tool that measures the performance of employees – one potential benefit that could be given to employees is automated feedback on where they could improve.

The aim of this paper is to explore a shift in perspective for PA away from one that is predominantly focused on the needs of managers (who are generally the *data consumers* [31] in our scenario) towards one that explicitly includes employee (*data owner* [31]) benefits. Our work is structured as follows: First, we provide definitions for the fundamental concepts we are working with: our privacy model, people analytics, benefits, and the notions of *data owner* and *data consumer*. Then, we describe an abstract view of PA tools and propose a way data owner benefits could be incorporated into it. With the help of recommendations from existing literature, we conceptualize four principles for the data owner benefit-driven design of PA. Based on an exemplary implementation with a set of analyses and benefits, we demonstrate how our principles could be put into practice. To evaluate our principles, we then present the results of a user study we have conducted and explain potential threats to validity. Afterwards, we provide an insight into related literature and discuss our findings in the context of PA and existing design approaches.

The results of our study reveal insights into the thought process of participants in a fictitious scenario based on our exemplary implementation. While participants typically recognized the value our analyses could provide, they also voiced concerns regarding the privacy implications of consenting to them. The more intrusive or risky the analysis was perceived to be, the fewer participants stated that they would consent to it. Contrary to our expectations, we find that the introduction of the benefits we conceptualized was not sufficient to significantly influence the willingness to disclose data. Consequently, we analyze the attitudes of our participants towards the benefits. We find that respondents generally appreciated them, with over 70% of them preferring a scenario with benefits over a scenario without benefits. This highlights the value of introducing data owner benefits when designing and implementing PA. However, we also find that some participants feared negative consequences due to the benefits. This decreased their willingness to consent, which highlights that PA developers should think carefully about the potential risks of the benefits they introduce.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

We first introduce the concept of PA, as well as the terms data owner and data consumer. We then explain, using one particular privacy model [35], how the decision of data owners can be influenced to encourage the sharing of data. Finally, we explain the concept of benefits as a concrete appeal strategy in the context of people analytics.

2.1 People analytics tools in the workplace

The primary focus of this paper is on PA. These analyze personally identifiable information in the context of the workplace, most commonly for human resource management (HRM) [36]. The goal of such tools is “to help organisations understand their workforce as a whole, as departments or work groups, and as individuals, by making data about employee attributes, behaviour and performance more accessible, interpretable and actionable” [36, p. 224]. To achieve this, PA tools commonly utilize artificial intelligence to derive insights from employee data.

While this opens up many opportunities for effective management [13], some authors have also pointed out risks of PA that may hinder adoption by companies [17, 37]. For instance, employees might not trust PA projects if they believe that their employers collect too much information about them, and thus be more reluctant to provide accurate information [37].

Throughout this paper, we use the notions of *data owner* and *data consumer* [see 31] to refer to the people that are involved when a PA tool is used. Most commonly, employees represent the data owners and managers the data consumers. Depending on context and hierarchical structure, managers may also be data owners as well, though.

2.2 Privacy calculus and disclosure decisions

As previously noted, perceived risks may hinder the willingness of a data owner to disclose accurate data. The privacy decisions made by individuals have been studied by several authors in various contexts [e.g. 29, 35, 38]. One notable example that explicitly models disclosure decisions is the APCO Macro Model [35, p. 998]. It states that the decision to provide data depends on, among other factors, the privacy calculus, which itself depends on the perceived risks and benefits of the disclosure. Regarding PA, this indicates two possible ways of influencing the disclosure decision in favor of sharing data: By decreasing the perceived risks, e.g. by giving data owners greater transparency regarding how their data is used [41] or by increasing the benefits of a disclosure, e.g. through the use of appeal strategies such as incentives [40].

2.3 Benefits as an appeal strategy

To increase the appeal of data disclosure, appeal strategies can be employed. Zieglmeier et al. [40] define three dimensions: *Values*, which are instilled into the PA tool at design time, tool-independent *incentives*, which managers can provide to employees when the PA system is already in use, and *benefits*. Benefits are inherent affordances of a PA tool and “inherent to the usage of the tool and irrevocably connected to it” [40, p. 219]. They can range from an improved quality of information to personalized feedback for users [40].

3 APPROACH

In this section, we describe our approach in three steps: First, we introduce the fundamentals, assumptions, and conceptual limitations of our approach. Based on this, we propose a set of principles for the data owner benefit-driven development of PA tools, explaining their rationale and how they impact the development process of such a tool. Finally, we describe an implementation that incorporates our principles.

3.1 Introducing data owner benefits into PA

We start by presenting the status quo of PA, which focus on providing insights to data consumers. Then, we present the desired transformation and note conceptual limitations of our approach.

3.1.1 PA tools without data owner benefits. Figure 1 shows an informal model of a high-level view on a PA tool: The tool collects personally identifiable data from data owners (usually employees)

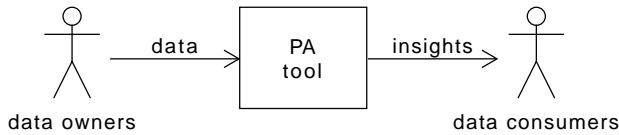


Fig. 1. Informal model depicting the abstract perspective on a PA tool. The arrows symbolize the data flow between data owners, the tool itself, and data consumers.

and, using some set of analyses, provides insights to data consumers (usually managers). This perspective places a large focus on the needs of data consumers. We assume that, in general, this perspective is the most prominent one in the development of PA tools. To justify this assumption, consider the software development process: As mentioned in Section 2, the primary goal of PA is to help organizations manage their workforce [36]. As a result, the funding for PA projects is generally provided by the company, making it the client during the development process. Since software engineering requires “the incremental evolution of the system toward a solution that is acceptable to the client” [3, p. 8], this gives the company significant control over the requirements. If the company does not sufficiently take benefits of data owners into account (e.g. because it predominantly focuses on the management perspective), this may result in the view depicted in Figure 1. Further indications can be found in real-world examples of PA tools: Human resource management tools such as *Personio*¹ are primarily marketed towards management [28], which aligns with the goal of such tools [36], but also indicates that there is a focus on the needs of data consumers. Another aspect that could be considered is the volume of information collected and processed by the PA tool. If large amounts of data are collected, data owners may be less likely to disclose accurate data [36] – at the same time, less collected data means fewer analyses for data consumers to use. As a real-world example, consider the reports provided by *Microsoft Teams Analytics* [22], which provide extensive insights ranging from the device usage [23] to the activity of users based on their meetings, messages, and calls [24]. We hypothesize that such analytics could be viewed as intrusive (see Section 4.3). It should be noted that all of this is not to say that employees do not indirectly benefit from disclosing their data – it is just that the relationship between the disclosure and the positive effect may not be immediate, apparent or clear to the data owner in question.

3.1.2 Desired transformation. Our goal is to incorporate benefits into the design of PA tools as depicted in Figure 2. While there may be several ways of doing so, we have conceptualized one specific approach that ties benefits and insights to each individual analysis provided by the PA tool. This exemplary approach can be seen modeled in Figure 3: Data collected from data owners is processed by the analysis, which outputs an intermediate result. This intermediate result is then postprocessed in a separate step. During this postprocessing stage, no further analyses on the data should be conducted – it should solely be used for purposes such as tailoring the results to a specific user’s perspective or visualizing them. The result of postprocessing are a set of insights for data consumers and a set of benefits for data owners. Note that these results need not be disjoint – in the simplest case, the insights gathered from the analysis could be forwarded as benefits to data owners.

¹<https://www.personio.com/> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

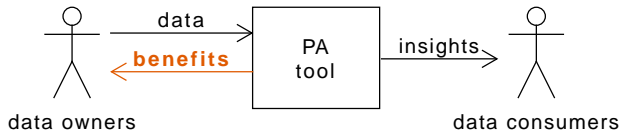


Fig. 2. Informal model depicting a modified perspective on a PA tool, explicitly considering the benefits of data owners. The arrows symbolize the data flow between data owners, the tool itself, and data consumers.

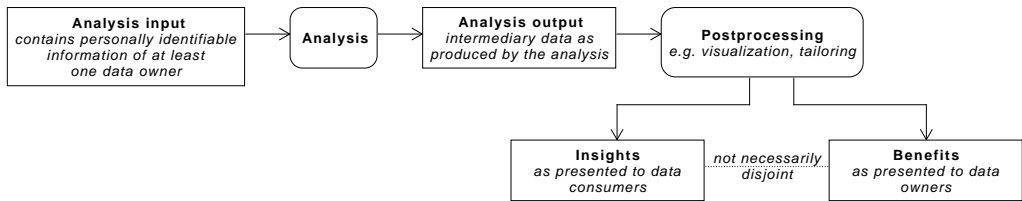


Fig. 3. Informal model showing one potential way of modeling data owner benefits at the analysis level as discussed in Section 3.1. Regular rectangles represent data objects, serving as the input and output to processing steps, which are denoted using rounded rectangles.

Modeling analyses, benefits, and insights this way provides multiple advantages that are relevant to our principles in Section 3.2: For one, it requires developers to come up with data owner benefits as they conceptualize analyses for PA tools, which ensures that every analysis carries at least one data owner benefit that is inherently related to the insights generated by the analysis. In addition to this, the model does not prescribe a mechanism (e.g. dashboards, notifications) for the distribution of benefits and insights.

3.1.3 Conceptual limitations. It is important to note that the models in Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3 reveal three other aspects of PA that may influence its acceptance and usefulness within a company. These aspects go beyond the inclusion of benefits and can be seen as conceptual limitations of our approach. Consider the flow of data within a PA tool. First, the tool must collect the data, which poses the first challenge: the collected data must be available and suitable to derive the desired insight. If the data is insufficient or data owners refuse to disclose it, the analysis will not be useful. PA developers should carefully consider this when choosing the input data of each analysis. The next part is the actual analysis (i.e., the processing step), which has to transform the data. If the analysis is unable to deal with the input data or produce actionable insights, then its usefulness will be limited. Finally, even if the analysis is implemented perfectly, there is always a human component to consider. Ultimately, a manager has to interpret and act upon the generated insights. The manager may draw the wrong conclusions from the data and be unable to use PA to its full potential.

3.2 Principles of data owner benefit-driven design

In the following, we conceptualize principles to aid the transformation described in the previous subsection. For each principle, we provide a description, a rationale as to why the principle makes sense, and how the principle may affect the development process. To further illustrate, we develop a running example that incorporates each of the principles.

The principles were developed in a three-step process: They were initially prepared by the first author based on relevant literature. Then, the second author reviewed the principles and provided feedback, based on which the first author finalized the principles. In any case, the following principles are not to be understood as an exhaustive or universal list, as the development of PA, much like the development of all software, depends to a great extent on the requirements of the specific project [4]. Furthermore, the conceptual limitations discussed in the previous subsection apply; our principles can only be considered applicable if these limitations are handled in suitable ways.

Running example. Consider an analysis that, based on the sentiment of messages, generates an insight about how the overall mood of a team of employees develops over time.

3.2.1 P1 – Informed consent. Data owners must be informed about the purpose of analyses and given the choice to opt out. If a user chooses to opt out of certain analyses, the system must ensure that their data is not used for those analyses and revoke access to the corresponding benefits.

Rationale. Consider legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – it requires that, before analyzing data, informed consent is retrieved from the owner of said data [10]. With respect to privacy concerns, this informed consent can raise acceptance for analyses due to additional transparency [17, 36]. Given these points, data owners can be seen as *data sovereigns* that are in charge of their data and must be convinced of its usage [41], which is where benefits [40] come into play.

Impact on development. The implementation must provide an opt-out page. Ideally, the analyses, including their insights and benefits, are explained there as well (see also P3). Additionally, the implementation must support the exclusion of data owners from analyses and benefits that have opted out.

Running example. The PA system provides an opt-out page where every analysis provided by the system is listed and explained. On this page, users can find the analysis introduced above, along with an explanation describing the data collected as well as the potential insights generated from the analysis.

3.2.2 P2 – Conceptualization of analyses and benefits. When conceptualizing the analyses and insights of a PA tool, the corresponding benefits (for data owners) should be devised as well. As mentioned in Section 3.1, each benefit could range from merely sharing the insights of the analysis with all involved data owners to providing a specialized, distinct view to each of them.

Rationale. Our hypothesis is that the inclusion of benefits will help increase the willingness of data owners to disclose their data for the purposes of PA. Furthermore, previous research suggests that it is important that “employees experience the benefits of PA projects, and not just the organization” [37, p. 912].

Impact on development. The most immediate consequence of this principle is that, during requirements elicitation, benefits need to be taken into account. This puts more emphasis on the needs of data owners throughout PA development, as their perspective must now explicitly be taken into account when the tool is constructed. Since changes to the requirements of a system tend to have significant impacts on other aspects of the system [4], we can derive further principles (see P3 and P4).

Running example. As a benefit, the insight could be provided without modification to the members of the team (i.e. the data owners).

3.2.3 P3 – Distribution of benefits. The PA tool must be able to distribute benefits to data owners. This assumes appropriate access control to ensure that only the intended recipient of a benefit has access to it.

Rationale. This principle follows directly from the goal of this paper and the inclusion of benefits: Since we wish to make benefits accessible to data owners, a corresponding distribution mechanism must be part of the PA tool.

Impact on development. Developers must account for this distribution mechanism during the design and implementation of the system. Such a mechanism may also include postprocessing (e.g. tailoring / visualization) as described in [Section 3.1](#).

Running example. The analysis could be presented to managers as a graph on a dashboard. Since in this case, the benefits and insights are identical, the same graph can be presented to team members as well.

3.2.4 P4 – Explanation and communication of benefits. Benefits must be explained in a clear and understandable way. This explanation must be accessible to data owners in a prominent location.

Rationale. If benefits are not perceived or understood, then data owners may not (accurately) take them into account when making disclosure decisions. Furthermore, transparency about the purpose of the collected data, which in our case includes the computation of data owner benefits, can promote trust in PA systems [17, 36].

Impact on development. For each benefit, developers should devise a textual explanation describing what data owners receive if they consent to the corresponding analysis. This explanation could be checked against readability measures to ensure that it will be read and understood by data owners.² This explanation can be connected to the opt-out page described by P1: When consent is requested from the owner, a clear explanation of the gained benefits can be provided to allow an informed decision and positively influence the disclosure decision.

Running example. In the running example, the benefit is presented using a graph on a dashboard. The corresponding dashboard element could provide a tooltip describing that the graph depicts the mood of the team over time based on the sentiment expressed through comments sent by team members. This information is also presented on the opt-out page.

3.3 Exemplary implementation

In the following, we demonstrate how our design principles can be applied to a realistic use case of PA. To make the analyses, their benefits, and the metrics more tangible, we first establish the context in which such a tool may be used. We then, based on existing literature and real-world examples, conceptualize a set of analyses and benefits, along with ways of visualizing and distributing them. To help potential users to quickly understand the usage and value proposition of the analyses, each analysis is intentionally simplified compared to related real-world examples. We close by describing the resulting proof of concept implementation and how our principles were realized. Note that the focus of this implementation is on the design principles, not on the concrete algorithms or correctness of the analyses themselves.

3.3.1 Context. According to [Rasmussen and Ulrich \[32\]](#), PA should always be devised with specific business challenges in mind. Such business challenges are dependent on the needs of the company

²On a related note, [Fabian et al. \[8\]](#) have found that most privacy policies may be hard to read.

seeking to utilize PA. In turn, these needs are dependent on the type of the business. We therefore narrow down the use case of our example.

One potential use case of PA is in software development [34]. This scenario is useful for our case, as work in software development has been digitalized since the beginning, meaning that various mature tools exist that produce usable data for analyses. We model the structure of a fictitious software development company as follows: The company consists of teams of software developers, with each team working on a different software project. Each team has at least one manager. As is common in software development, various tools are used: Developers use a messenger such as Slack³ to communicate, an issue tracker (e.g., Jira⁴) to manage their tasks, and a version control system such as Git⁵ to keep track of changes to the source code of their projects. The data collected by these tools can be used to conduct analyses, which will be explained in the following.

3.3.2 Analyses and benefits. Having established the context for which our PA tool is intended, we devise a set of analyses. Each analysis is accompanied by a description indicating the business challenge it aims to address, the data sources of the analysis, and how the analysis can be visualized. In accordance with P2 (Conceptualization of analyses and benefits), we define data owner benefits along with the analyses.

A1-PH: Are there any projects at risk of failure? (project health). This analysis could rely on data such as sentiment of messages written by developers, as well as changes in the meeting profiles of teams: A drop in sentiment or a sudden increase in the number of meetings may indicate that a project is at risk [34]. One example of a tool with the potential of analyzing meeting-related statistics is Microsoft Teams, which can track the number of meetings of a user [24]. For sentiment analysis, an example is the PA software by Jive Software [15], which can analyze sentiment within teams to gauge employee satisfaction. Our example analysis can be visualized using a graph as depicted in Figure 4. If a data owner consents to the use of their data for the sake of this analysis,

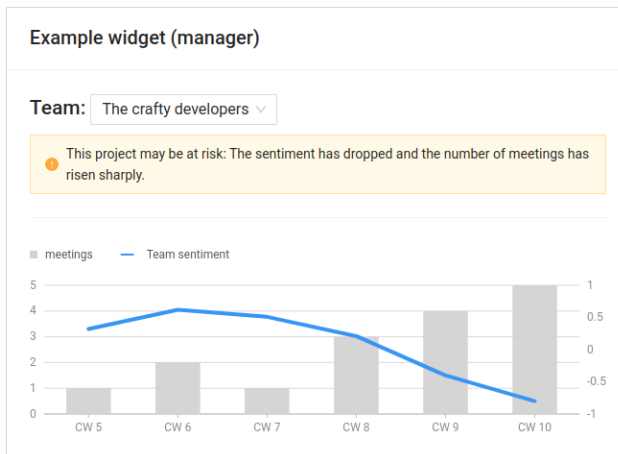


Fig. 4. Dashboard widget related to the analysis A1-PH. The bars of the graph indicate the number of meetings per calendar week, while the line indicates the average sentiment expressed in messages of developers in that week. Higher values indicate an overall better sentiment.

³<https://slack.com/> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

⁴<https://www.atlassian.com/software/jira> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

⁵<https://git-scm.com/> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

they receive a similar dashboard widget, limited to their team’s data and including additional information about their own sentiment compared to the group. If they do not, they are excluded from the calculation; the sentiment of their messages is not used when computing the team’s average sentiment.

A2-DC: Which developers interact with each other? (developer collaboration). As mentioned before, the communication between developers may be used as a data source for analyses. Singer et al. [34] give an overview of different ways that interactions between developers can be leveraged. As an example, knowing which developers interact with each other can help detect isolated developers and allow managers to intervene accordingly [34]. Alternatively, one could examine how strongly interconnected each team is to gain an insight into how well its developers work together as proposed by Leonardi and Contractor [19]. In practice, Polinode [30] is one such example. This tool visualizes in a graph which employees commonly work together. Figure 5, then, shows our implemented dashboard widget depicting such an analysis. As benefit, a data owner may receive a

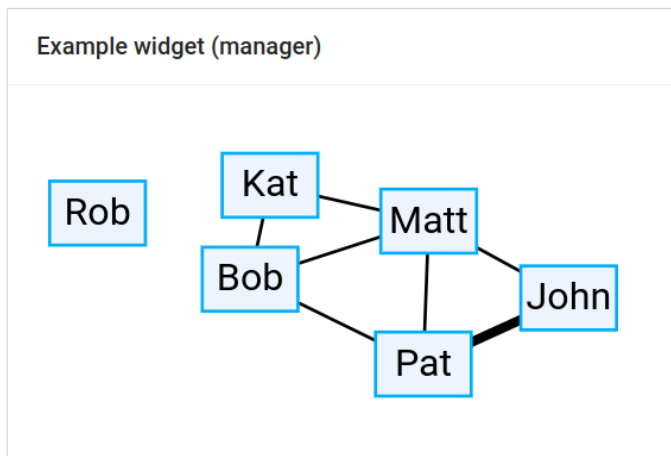


Fig. 5. Dashboard widget related to the analysis A2-DC. The connections between the nodes of the graph indicate which developers interact with each other.

dashboard widget with an individualized graph – one that shows their connections to other people within the company. Should the data owner refuse to provide their data, they will not receive such a widget, their messages will not be processed, and they will not be included as a node in any graph pertaining to this analysis.

A3-DP: Which of our developers are performing well, who may need support? (developer performance). Another potential use of people analytics is to examine the performance or productivity of employees. Davenport et al. [7] name an example where Google used analytics to track the employees with the highest and the lowest performance. In software development, information indicating the performance of employees could, for instance, be derived from issue tracking data: A simple metric for determining the productivity of a developer may be based on how many issues they resolve in a given amount of time or how many contributions they have made. Indeed, developer analytics such as IBM Cloud DevOps Insights [6] leverage information from version control and issue trackers, demonstrating that these data sources can be valuable in practice. Figure 6, accordingly, shows our widget displaying performance statistics of developers. As for benefits, consenting developers may receive the same statistics about themselves, along with periodical

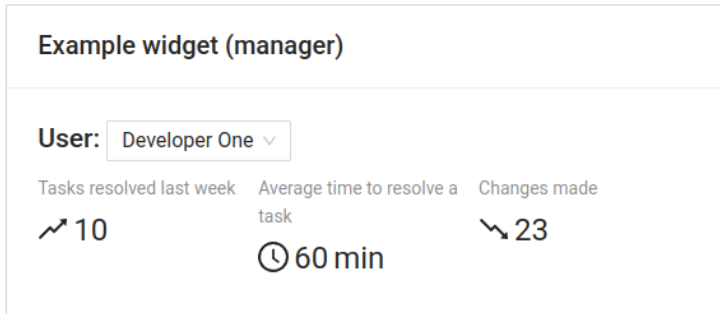


Fig. 6. Dashboard widget related to the analysis A3–DP. It depicts three activity indicators for each developer: The number of tasks resolved, the average time done to resolve a task, and the number of commits on the main branch of the code repository.

feedback on how these statistics develop over time. In case the data owner does not consent, their data will not be used for feedback or performance statistics. In this case, the dashboard widget will not allow its users to select the corresponding data owner.

A4–DE: Which technologies does each developer have the most experience with? (developer expertise). Finally, version control information can be used to examine what technologies (and files) a developer is most accustomed to, which can aid managers when finding suitable developers for a task. As Guzzi and Begel [12] demonstrate, such a metric can be used to aid in finding the right developer to ask questions about a certain file. The corresponding dashboard widget is shown in Figure 7. Since

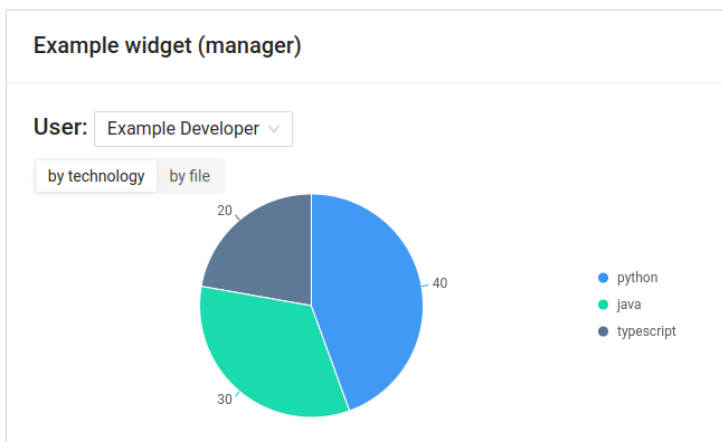


Fig. 7. Dashboard widget related to the analysis A4–DE. The slices of the pie chart represent the share of each technology in the developer's work as tracked by version control.

this analysis, just like A3–DP, draws from version control data, the IBM Cloud DevOps Insights [6] suite can be named as a real-world instance of such an analysis. As with A1–PH and A2–DC, the corresponding benefit can be realized by providing data owners with the same insight, tailored to their own data. If a data owner does not consent to this analysis, this analysis behaves analogously to A3–DP: the data is not processed, and the data owner cannot be selected in the widget under any circumstances.

3.3.3 Implementation. Our proof of concept implementation offers two variants of an opt-out page: One that only presents the analyses without noting any data owner benefits, and one that explicitly links consent to potential benefits received. Each description provides information about the collected data and the intended insight of the analysis. Users are further informed about the consequences of consenting: They receive information about what the manager will see (i.e., the previously presented dashboard widgets) and, in case benefits are enabled, the description is extended by information about the provided benefits. To make sure the benefits would be perceived during the evaluation, the changes were highlighted in yellow. The concrete descriptions for each analysis can be found in [Appendix C](#).

The aforementioned features, analyses, and benefits reflect our principles: P1 (Informed consent) and P4 (Explanation and communication of benefits) are realized through the textual descriptions on the opt-out pages, and the exemplary dashboard widgets represent P3 (Distribution of benefits). Additionally, P2 (Conceptualization of analyses and benefits) is realized, as we conceptualized all analyses together with their benefits.

4 EVALUATION

To assess the impact of benefits on participants' willingness to disclose their data, we conduct a mixed-method evaluation. This section is dedicated towards describing the design of our study, formulating corresponding research questions, and describing our findings.

4.1 Method

The study was conducted using an eight-page questionnaire. In this subsection, we describe the design of our study, the questionnaire our participants answered, and the methods we used to analyze our results.

4.1.1 Questionnaire. Our questionnaire consists of eight pages of questions and one welcome page with a privacy statement and followed a before / after design. To ensure compliance with the GDPR, potential participants were first informed about the purpose of the study and how their data would be processed. Those that did not consent to the use of their data were asked to return their submissions on Prolific; their data was not collected.

At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked about their age (Q1), gender (Q2), employment status (Q3), whether they would classify their job as closer to that of a manager or an employee (Q4), and if their job is closer to a white-collar job or a blue-collar job (Q5). Participants were then presented with a scenario: They would assume the role of a software developer in a fictitious software development company. The scenario description was accompanied by a brief explanation of Jira, Slack, Git, and the concept of PA.

Participants were then shown the privacy settings depicted in [Appendix C](#) without benefits, asking for each analysis whether they would consent in the given scenario (Q6 – Q9 for A1–PH to A4–DE). To ensure that even non-technical respondents could follow the descriptions, we minimized the use of technical terms in favor of simpler language. Afterwards, we asked participants whether they felt like they understood the analysis descriptions (Q10) and to mention anything that was unclear (Q11). After an attention check (Q12), respondents were then prompted to give an insight into their decision-making process for each analysis (Q13 – Q16).

Once participants had completed the first part, they were given a description of a change in the scenario: The company would now introduce data-owner benefits distributed to each employee. Afterwards, we showed them a second version of the privacy settings page, this time including the data owner benefits conceptualized in [Section 3.3](#). To ensure that the benefits would be perceived, we highlighted all changes with a yellow background color (see [Appendix C](#)). Once more, participants

were asked whether they would or would not consent to each analysis (Q17 – Q20), given the modified scenario. Similarly to before, we then asked if participants understood the benefits (Q21 and Q23), if anything was unclear (Q22), and to explain their reasoning once more, this time taking into account the benefits and their impact on the decision (Q24 – Q27). Finally, participants were asked which variant of the scenario they preferred (Q28), another attention check (Q29), and whether they had any additional remarks (Q30). The concrete questions of our questionnaire can be found in [Appendix A](#).

As a result of this design, all participants completed the questionnaire in the same order. We intentionally chose this design, as we consider this the more realistic scenario in the real world. Employees will usually be faced with an existing PA tool that they are used to working with, and be newly introduced to benefits rather than losing them. Furthermore, as we focus on the qualitative analysis, we decided against a control group, as that would have reduced the number of participants exposed to our intervention.

4.1.2 Data collection. We recruited a total of 51 participants (not including six users who canceled their submission), one of which was rejected, via Prolific.⁶ To narrow down the sample of eligible users, we utilized Prolific’s demographic prescreening.⁷ We selected according to three criteria:

- **Fluent language:** English, since that is the language of our questionnaire
- **Employment status:** Part-time or full-time, to recruit users that are familiar with the workplace setting, thus increasing the likelihood of realistic answers
- **Country of residence:** United Kingdom or any country within the European Union, to ensure that all participants reside in regions that fall under the GDPR [10] or GDPR-equivalent legislation.⁸ This is because we want to ensure a common frame of regulation among all participants – after all, our privacy model [35] includes a relationship between the privacy concerns of an individual and regulation, meaning that privacy issues could be viewed differently depending on what laws are in effect.

4.1.3 Data analysis. To analyze the results, we used both qualitative and quantitative methods as described below.

Qualitative analysis. In order to determine the factors that influenced the privacy choices of our participants and to assess the impact of data owner benefits on their decisions, we analyzed the answers to the questions Q13 – Q16 and Q24 – Q27 using the following process: In a first step, both authors worked on the first half of the data independently – they then met and agreed upon a common coding scheme for both sets of questions. Afterwards, both authors coded all of the answers using this new scheme, adding new codes where appropriate. The assigned codes were then finalized by the first author. The resulting coding scheme along with examples can be found in [Appendix B](#). The coding itself was inspired by recommendations of [Adu \[1\]](#).

Quantitative analysis. In addition to the qualitative analysis of the free-text answers mentioned above, we performed McNemar’s test [21] using the exact test (described in e.g. [9]) to assess whether there was a significant impact of the introduced benefits on the willingness of our participants to consent to each analysis. This was made possible by the before / after design of our study.

4.2 Research questions

We examine the following research questions:

⁶<https://www.prolific.co/> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

⁷<https://researcher-help.prolific.co/hc/en-gb/articles/360009221093-How-do-I-use-Prolific-s-demographic-prescreening-> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

⁸<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection> (last accessed 2022-10-21)

- RQ1: Did participants understand the analysis and benefit descriptions provided in the survey?
 RQ2: How did respondents view each analysis, which factors influenced their initial privacy decisions?
 RQ3: Did data owner benefits significantly influence the outcome of privacy decisions in our scenario?
 RQ4: How did participants perceive the introduced data owner benefits?
 RQ5: Overall, did participants prefer the introduced people analytics with or without data owner benefits?

4.3 Results

In total, 57 people started the survey, 51 of which successfully completed it. One participant was excluded due to low-effort answers as per Prolific’s rejection policy.⁹ Of the remaining 50 participants, an additional four were excluded due to failing an attention check (i.e. providing an incorrect answer to Q12 or Q29) or if their Likert scale responses to Q21 and Q23 differed by at least two points (e.g. "Strongly agree" and "Neither agree nor disagree"). This left us with 46 viable sets of answers which are described in the following. Each respondent has been given an identifier, R1, which we will use to refer to answers written by them.

4.3.1 Demographics. The demographic breakdown of our answers is shown in Table 1. We observe that our sample primarily contains people under the age of 45 (about 87%) and more men than women. Almost a quarter (23.9%) of respondents indicated that their role in the workplace was closer to that of a manager than to that of an employee.

4.3.2 RQ1 – Did participants understand the analysis and benefit descriptions provided in the survey? As mentioned in Section 3.2, one of our design principles specifies that data owners must be able to reach an informed decision, which in turn requires understandable descriptions. Figure 8 shows that, when asked whether they felt like they understood either the analyses (Q10) or their associated benefits (Q21), all participants either agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that all of them felt that they understood the scenario.

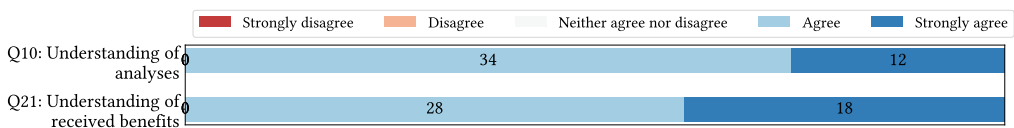


Fig. 8. Answers to questions Q10 (agreement with the statement ‘I felt like I understood all analyses (A1 to A4).’) and Q21 (agreement with the statement ‘I felt like I understood what benefits I would receive if I consented to an analysis.’), both on a Likert scale.

When asked to clarify what, if anything, was unclear about the analyses (Q11), eight participants provided responses. Three of them were non-answers such as “N/A” (R40) or “-” (R27). The remaining answers were related to various concerns: One participant was unsure about whether they understood everything “due to it all being new language” (R20). Indeed, a language barrier may exist for some participants because almost all countries we included during the pre-screening stage of our study do not have English as their national language. Three participants each referred to an aspect they felt was missing from the analysis descriptions provided to them: How long the data will be stored (R8), how exactly the sentiment of messages will be determined for A1–PH, and missing

⁹<https://researcher-help.prolific.co/hc/en-gb/articles/360009092394-Approvals-rejections-returns> (last accessed 2022-10-19)

Table 1. The demographics of our survey. All percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.

Question	Option	Number	Percentage
Q1 (age)	24 or younger	17	37.0%
	25 – 34	18	39.1%
	35 – 44	5	10.9%
	45 – 54	3	6.5%
	55 – 64	3	6.5%
	65 or older	0	0.0%
Q2 (gender)	Male	28	60.9%
	Female	18	39.1%
	Other	0	0.0%
	Prefer not to say	0	0.0%
Q3 (employment status)	Unemployed	0	0.0%
	Student	10	21.7%
	Employed	32	69.6%
	Self-employed	4	8.7%
	Retired	0	0.0%
	Other	0	0.0%
Q4 (role in employment)	Manager	11	23.9%
	Employee	31	67.4%
	Unsure	1	2.2%
	Not applicable	3	6.5%
Q5 (white or blue collar)	White-collar	33	71.7%
	Blue-collar	7	15.2%
	Unsure	3	6.5%
	Not applicable	3	6.5%

interactivity within the widget of A4–DE (although this respondent “later realized the widget is clickable” (R5) and asked us to “disregard” this remark). Finally, one respondent indicated that the “intensions [sic!] of the manager” (R11) were unclear. Certainly, the manager’s true motives may differ from the intended purpose of the analysis. This is a factor that some participants mentioned when explaining their initial privacy decisions (see RQ2). Regarding benefits, there were three responses to Q22, all of which were non-answers.

4.3.3 RQ2 – How did respondents view each analysis, which factors influenced their initial privacy decisions? We first recorded whether each participant would consent to each of the analyses from Section 3.3 without having introduced any benefits. Figure 9 shows the proportion of participants giving consent per analysis. As can be seen, there are significant differences between the analyses: While only three participants stated that they would not consent to A4–DE (developer expertise), 27 participants said that they would refuse to provide their data for the purposes of A2–DC (developer collaboration). With fifteen and twelve non-consenting respondents, the distributions of A1–PH (project health) and A3–DP (developer performance) appear to be similar.

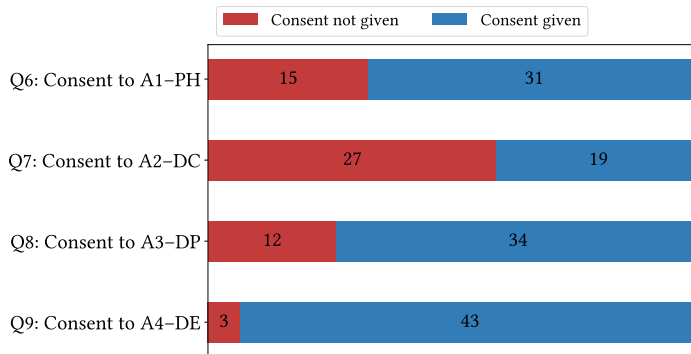


Fig. 9. Rates of initial consent to the analyses among our participants.

To understand these differences, we asked participants to explain their choices (Q13 – Q16). We then assigned codes to each answer (see Section 4.1) and classified the codes into the following four categories:

- **Value:** Answers that took into account the value of the analysis for the company or for the data owners themselves. This also includes answers that deemed the analysis unnecessary or questioned whether it is suitable to measure what it is intended to measure.
- **Sensitivity:** Responses that assessed how sensitive the data involved or how intrusive the analysis is perceived to be.
- **Risks and concerns:** Answers mentioning a perceived risk or the fear of some negative consequence in case consent is given.
- **Other.**

Table 2 shows how our codes are distributed among the responses to the questions Q13 – Q16. Immediately, we can observe differences between the analyses: A2-DC (Q14), which our participants were the least willing to consent to, was seen as particularly intrusive and sensitive due to the inclusion of private messages in its metric, with one participant remarking that “private messages should remain private” (R33). To a lesser extent, this also applies to A1-PH (Q13): Multiple participants state that they would not like their messages to be processed for the purposes of sentiment analysis as they perceive it to be intrusive. We also observe that A2-DC had the highest number of answers that questioned its validity, typically because they thought the information was not suited to derive the intended insights. E.g., “I don’t believe that data from a computer can evaluate the reasons” (R18) or “the number of times Developer A mentioned Developer B in their messages may not directly correspond to the health of the project” (R12).

On the other hand, A4-DE (Q16), the analysis that had the highest rate of consent, was not referred to by any participant as very sensitive – instead, some participants argued that it is the right of the company (or that it is common practice for a company) to collect such data if management chooses to do so. In addition to this, most respondents highlighted the usefulness of the analysis to the company, e.g. through being able to assist employees better or by providing managers with the ability to “to better plan the work” (R44). Sensitivity-wise, A3-DP (Q15) is judged similarly, though fewer participants noted its use to the company compared to A4-DE.

Each analysis had a set of perceived risks and concerns associated with it. Multiple participants were concerned that their data may be misused by their manager (e.g. to persecute or terminate them), that it may be interpreted wrongly, or otherwise lead to negative consequences for employees.

Table 2. Codes assigned to the answers to Q13 – Q16 (relating to each analysis). Examples can be found in Appendix B.

Category	Code	A1-PH	A2-DC	A3-DP	A4-DE
Value	analysis valuable for company / management	22	11	19	28
	questions validity of analysis	5	14	9	3
	analysis valuable for data owner	9	6	8	7
	unnecessary analysis	2	4	1	0
	objective analysis	0	1	3	0
Sensitivity	intrusive analysis / sensitive data	13	18	4	0
	no intrusive analysis / sensitive data	7	2	3	6
	right of the company	1	0	3	6
	data already available	1	1	1	3
	common practice	0	0	2	1
Risks and concerns	no risks	3	2	5	6
	risk of data misuse	3	7	5	1
	feeling watched	2	2	4	1
	fear of negative consequences	0	3	6	0
	risk of misinterpretation	1	2	3	0
	requires consent from all parties	2	1	1	1
	monitoring influences behavior	1	1	2	0
unsafe	1	1	0	1	
Other	nothing to hide	1	1	3	1
	unsure whether to consent	3	2	0	1
	analysis considered disallowed	1	0	0	0
	potential peer pressure	0	0	1	0
	misunderstood consent	0	0	1	0
No code assigned	-	0	0	1	0

As an example, one participant remarks for A3-DP that they would “feel constantly watched” (R3) and are afraid of being “punished by the employer” if their “performance [...] is slightly worse than the average” (R3). Indeed, the fear of misuse and negative consequences was the most common among A3-DP as it intends to measure the performance of employees. This, as another participant remarks, could be used to “justify bad performance reviews.” (R5) An additional concern mentioned by some respondents is that “employees would just act differently [...] knowing they are being monitored,” (R14) which may be compounded by the fear of negative consequences if they do not have statistics that their manager approves of. For instance, “employees could do as much as possible but with the lowest quality” (R42) to increase the number of tasks they complete throughout the week, thus improving their statistics as presented by the widget of A3-DP.

Other noteworthy points raised in answers were a “nothing to hide” attitude towards some analyses, e.g. “If you are a productive person, you should have no qualms about this information being collected,” (R41) or a fear of peer pressure regarding consent to analyses because “maybe other

colleagues would consent and it would be odd not to also consent” (R32). Finally, some participants remarked that they were unsure about whether to consent (e.g., R17).

4.3.4 RQ3 – Did data owner benefits significantly influence the outcome of privacy decisions in our scenario? During the survey, participants were asked twice about whether they would consent to each analysis in the given scenario, first without any benefits, then with our set of data owner benefits. Table 3 shows the overall change in consent throughout all participants and across the two variants of the scenario. Just from looking at the data, we can already see that there is was

Table 3. Number of participants consenting to the analyses A1–PH to A4–DE without (before) and with (after) provided benefits.

	After: Consent	After: No consent	Σ
A1–PH			
Before: Consent	26	5	31
Before: No consent	0	15	15
Σ	26	20	46
A2–DC			
Before: Consent	17	2	19
Before: No consent	1	26	27
Σ	18	28	46
A3–DP			
Before: Consent	31	3	34
Before: No consent	1	11	12
Σ	32	14	46
A4–DE			
Before: Consent	41	2	43
Before: No consent	1	2	3
Σ	42	4	46

most probably no significant impact of our introduced benefits on the data sharing consent. To confirm our suspicions, we perform McNemar’s exact test [9] for each analysis and receive p-values of 0.0625, 1, 0.625, and 1 for A1–PH, A2–DC, A3–DP, and A4–DE respectively. Out of these, only the p-value for A1–PH approaches statistical significance at $\alpha = 0.05$ – however, a closer inspection of the reasoning behind these changes reveals that one participant may have misunderstood the second scenario, revoking their consent only because their “boss would be able to see much more than [they] would,” (R46) which would have been the case in the first scenario as well. Accounting for this would increase the p-value for A1–PH to 0.125. In any event, our observations do not yield evidence of a statistically significant influence on the outcome of participants’ decisions, positive or negative. Despite this, the number of non-consenting respondents increases for every analysis, which indicates that the introduced benefits could raise concerns among employees. In the following research question, we consider this possibility when analyzing the reasoning for respondents’ decision.

4.3.5 RQ4 – How did participants perceive the introduced data owner benefits? Participants were asked to explain why (or why not) the introduced benefits affected their decision-making process

(Q24 – Q27). Table 4 contains the distribution of codes across analyses. As with RQ2, the codes are grouped into four categories:

- **Value:** Answers that assessed the usefulness or the appeal of the introduced benefits.
- **Risks due to benefits:** Responses indicating some concern introduced by the presence of benefits.
- **Impact on decision:** Answers explaining the impact of benefits on the willingness to consent.
- **Other.**

Table 4. Codes assigned to the answers to Q24 – Q27 (related to A1–PH to A4–DE).

Category	Code	A1–PH	A2–DC	A3–DP	A4–DE
Value	benefit appreciated	15	8	22	23
	benefit not appealing	6	12	3	3
	benefit should be part of the tool	0	0	1	2
Risks due to benefits	benefit negatively influences individual	4	0	3	0
	benefit increases tracking & surveillance	2	2	1	1
Impact on decision	benefit not necessary for consent	8	9	9	15
	benefit not sufficient	4	7	3	1
	benefit changed decision	4	3	4	3
	no benefits could change decision	3	6	2	0
	benefit affirmed decision	1	0	1	2
	benefit does not outweigh risk	2	1	0	0
Other	reciprocity	2	2	2	1
	nothing to hide	1	0	0	1
	unsure about consent	1	0	0	0
	misunderstands benefit	1	0	0	0
No code assigned	–	3	6	4	4

The data reveals insights about the role of benefits in the decision-making process: It was common for participants to appreciate the benefits in some way, typically because they believed that the provided information would be interesting or even valuable: One answer to Q24 states “It is interesting to see such reports, it can be useful to me to improve my work” (R15). Occasionally, participants went a step further, arguing that the inclusion of the benefit is “something that should be done” (R14) or that “if [their] manager can see it, [they] should see it too” (R39). At the same time, not every participant thought the benefits were useful or appealing, e.g. because they believed that they could “manage to know these stats [themselves]” (R2). Certainly, the provided benefits give data owners an insight on statistics that they could infer from their own work.

While not every participant explicitly talked about the impact that benefits had on their decisions, the findings in Table 4 are generally in line with the values examined for RQ3 (see Table 3): Most commonly, participants stated that the benefits were not necessary for them to consent (because they had already consented) or that they were not sufficient to convince them to change their decision, e.g. because the risks of the analysis were perceived to be too large to overcome. Indeed, the data depicted in Table 3 shows that most participants did not change their decision even after benefits were introduced. Some participants go even further, stating that the analysis is sensitive

enough such that no benefit could convince them to consent to it, e.g. because of the data used in the analysis: “giving access to my messages is a no for me” (R24 on Q24).

In a few cases, we do observe an impact of benefits on the decision, both positive and negative. Participants who were convinced to consent by the benefits were typically interested in the data, e.g. “I would like to know this information” (R22 on Q25), whereas participants who changed their decision in the opposite manner voiced concerns about the nature of the benefits. The benefits of A1–PH were perceived to be problematic due to the fact that it would reveal the aggregated sentiment of the team to every data owner who consented. For one participant, this “makes it a bigger privacy breach,” (R14) another participant feared “more negative feelings within the group” (R27) if someone saw that their own sentiment was below the group average. Issues with the benefits associated with A3–DP arose from additional stress or being “observed and controlled” (R23).

4.3.6 RQ5 – Overall, did participants prefer the introduced people analytics with or without data owner benefits? At the end of the survey, we asked participants whether they preferred the first variant of the scenario (without data owner benefits) or the second variant (with data owner benefits). Table 5 shows the results, grouped by the role stated (manager, employee, or other). In general, managers appeared to be less appreciative of the second variant, with only four out of nine preferring it compared to 77.4% of employees. Six participants had no preference either way.

Table 5. Answers to Q28 (i.e., preferring the scenario with or without benefits), grouped by the answers given to Q4 (role in employment). While about 77.4% of employees preferred the variant with data owner benefits, only about 45.5% of managers did. Overall, about 71.7% of respondents preferred the second variant.

Group (Q4)	Prefer first variant	Prefer second variant	No preference
Managers	4	5	2
Employees	3	24	4
Not applicable	0	3	0
Unsure	0	1	0
Σ	7	33	6

4.4 Threats to validity

When interpreting the results of our study, it is important to keep potential threats to validity in mind. For one, our sample is not representative and its size is limited, meaning that our findings do not generalize. Another threat arises from the way we recruited our participants. Users on Prolific receive monetary compensation for their successful participation in a study, which may incentivize them to work through questionnaires faster and less thoroughly. To mitigate this risk, we included checks in our survey (Q12, Q21, Q23, Q29) for filtering out inattentive participants. Another aspect to consider is the design of our study itself: Our questions rely on self-reported data and hypothetical scenarios, not on a real-world workplace setting, which may decrease the accuracy of our results. Furthermore, the design of our study assumes that the scenario in which data owners gain benefits is likelier than the reversed scenario. As a result, all participants saw the questions in the same order; there is no control group. It could therefore be sensible to examine the scenario in which the benefits are not introduced, but taken away.

5 RELATED WORK

In this section, we examine related literature by covering two aspects. First, we highlight design approaches that tackle issues similar to the ones our principles address and, if applied to PA, would

factor in employees as important stakeholders. Then, we explore literature examining the risks and benefits of PA.

5.1 Design approaches involving stakeholders

Existing design approaches for interactive systems address problems similar to the one presented in this paper, although they are not focused solely on PA. Human-centered design (HCD) [14], for instance, aims to improve the user experience by actively involving users throughout the design and development process. The goal is an overall better usability, e.g. through reduced stress for the users of a system [14]. However, there are also limitations to significant user involvement. Since users are generally not experienced designers themselves, their requests may lead to convoluted designs if followed without careful consideration [27]. A related approach is participatory design (PD), which encompasses various techniques [26] that translate as participatory practices into the software development process [25]. PD involves the users of the system as important stakeholders during the design process.

If applied to PA, such approaches would incorporate the interests of data owners and data consumers as stakeholders into the design of the respective PA tool. As our work is intended to be a first step towards improving PA design and the involvement of users does not always lead to better results [27], we have decided against involving stakeholders in the design of our implementation. However, it may be sensible to pursue a combination of either PD or HCD with our approach as a follow-up based on the findings described in Section 4.3.

The interaction of employee participation and different aspects of an organization have been studied from varying angles. For example, Zhou et al. [39] find that, in the context of human resource management, employee participation can boost organizational innovation [39]. Another example is the work of Leicht-Deobald et al. [18], who explore the impact HRM tools akin to PA have on the personal integrity of employees. One of their recommendations is to apply PD. By making managers and employees equals in the design process, all of them will have the opportunity to provide their unique perspectives. This, in turn, improves transparency and may help employees retain their personal integrity when HRM tools are used [18].

5.2 Investigating the risks and benefits of PA

Few works consider the problem of data owner appeal in PA [40]. Zieglmeier et al. [40] approach the topic in a generic fashion and provide a taxonomy of appeal strategies covering values, incentives, and benefits. They evaluate their taxonomy theoretically in expert interviews. However, their appeal strategies have not yet been practically applied or evaluated with employees themselves. We address this research gap by concretizing their concept and implementing the benefit strategy [40, Fig. 1].

Margherita [20], in comparison, adopt an organizational view on employee value of PA. Based on a systematic literature review, they identify key research topics categorized as enablers, applications, and value of PA, which includes employee value. Due to their focus, they naturally present a more theoretical overview, but their work can be a useful foundation. For example, they identify that PA can support employee reskilling or provide them with wage transparency [20], which can be classified as PA benefits. Their work does not consider the design of PA, though, and therefore can be seen as complementary. Chatterjee et al. [5] also study the risks and benefits of PA. Their research is more similar to our work, in that they examine the attitudes of individuals towards PA, taking into account their potential upsides and privacy implications. However, their participants were asked to rate several statements regarding PA on a Likert scale [5], whereas we asked participants to provide their reasoning in free text answers. More importantly, our work addresses the design of PA, which is not the primary focus in [5].

On the other side of the spectrum, [Khan and Tang \[16\]](#) and [Giermndl et al. \[11\]](#) focus more on the risks and concerns regarding PA. Privacy calculus theory suggests that both risks and benefits are relevant for an employee's disclosure decision [2, 40]. We should recognize, though, that some risks and ethical issues of PA are arguably too large to be tolerated [see, e.g., 18]. For example, [Khan and Tang \[16\]](#) warn that the boundaries of employee monitoring need to be clearly delineated. They suggest that the inclusion of, e.g., wearable data or social media monitoring should be critically examined [16]. The risk of such invasive monitoring is also highlighted by [Giermndl et al.](#), who note that, in the workplace, the forced adoption of technologies is combined with more severe consequences for an individual. Therefore, they warn that the logic from other analytics should not just be applied to PA, but adapted according to those factors [11].

6 DISCUSSION

In this section, we discuss our results in the greater context of people analytics and examine the privacy concerns mentioned by participants. Additionally, we explain what the results could mean for the role of data owner benefits in the design of PA and discuss the possibility of involving stakeholders in the design process.

6.1 Perceived risks and concerns regarding our analyses

The overarching goal of this work is to increase the willingness of data owners to disclose their data. We therefore analyze the factors that influenced the disclosure decisions of our respondents. While we do find that participants commonly recognize the value of the analyses (for the company or otherwise), there are also concerns associated with the analyses. These concerns may (and in our sample, seem to) negatively influence the willingness to provide consent in some participants and should be addressed. In the following, we summarize the concerns mentioned by participants and explain their implications for the design, implementation, and use of PA.

One concern that respondents took into account is the value an analysis can provide, either to the company or its employees. In particular, several participants questioned the validity of analyses itself, either due to its desired insight or how it processes data. For instance, multiple participants disapproved of the use of sentiment analysis in the metric of A1-PH (project health). Indeed, as analyses become more sophisticated with the use of artificial intelligence, their underlying reasoning may become less transparent [11], thus potentially decreasing trust.

Another concern is the sensitivity of the data involved. This aligns with our privacy model [35]: the riskier or more costly a data usage is perceived to be, the less likely someone is to disclose their data. A2-DC (developer collaboration), which was considered to be particularly intrusive and questionable due to its use of private messages in its metric, had a low consent rate compared to A4-DE (developer expertise), which was generally not seen as intrusive.

Third, respondents remarked upon the possibility of misuse and misinterpretation by the manager. For instance, the analysis A3-DP (developer performance) could, according to some participants, be used to persecute or punish them in some fashion. Of course, the *true* intentions of the manager analyzing the data cannot be captured by the description of the purpose of the analysis such as the ones we provided to participants (see [Appendix C](#)). To deter such misuses, it may be sensible to make all data usages available to the corresponding data owners [see, e.g., 41].

Finally, respondents also mentioned other negative consequences, commonly related to feeling watched or pressured by the analyses, potentially resulting in negative consequences for the well-being of employees. The source of this pressure could be peer pressure, as the manager knows who consented to each analysis, which could result in non-consenting employees appearing as though they are trying to hide information about their performance. Alternatively, the pressure

could stem from the analysis itself, e.g. in the case of A3–DP, employees may feel the need to adapt their behavior to the metric of the analysis rather than improve the way they work.

Ultimately, the concerns mentioned by our respondents relate back to the conceptual limitations discussed in [Section 3](#). Participants remark upon the collected data, the implementation used to process it, and how the manager may interpret the results. This highlights the importance of these issues and shows why designers should be transparent about them, for data owners may consider them relevant in their decision-making.

6.2 The role of data owner benefits

Our results suggest that the introduced benefits were not sufficient to significantly influence the decisions of our participants. This could mean that the specific benefits we defined in [Section 3.3](#) are ill-suited and a different set of benefits could have had a more significant impact – after all, only 11 of 184 answers to the questions Q24 – Q27 state that no benefit would have been able to change the decision. This indicates that not the concept of benefits in general, but their specific instantiation in our case were a factor in their effectiveness. Moreover, we find that several respondents whose decision was unaffected still appreciated having data owner benefits, with over 70% of participants preferring the variant of the scenario that includes them. Therefore, it is likely that data owner benefits have a place within PA regardless of their power to affect disclosure decisions, if only to increase the acceptance of PA among employees. Even so, PA developers should be careful not to conceptualize benefits that increase privacy concerns (e.g. some participants took issue with the fact that the benefit of A1–PH would provide aggregated data about them to their colleagues).

On a related note, managers were more skeptical of the variant with data owner benefits, with less than half of them preferring it over the base scenario. While the remaining data does not yield any conclusions about a unique managerial perspective, this could be one possible aspect for future studies. As managers may inhabit the role of a data owner as well as a data consumer, it may be interesting to differentiate the managerial perspective more based on this aspect.

6.3 Addressing conflicting interests by involving stakeholders in the design

Our results indicate that, contrary to our expectations, the benefits did not sufficiently alter the disclosure decisions of data owners. Furthermore, there were several concerns associated with the analyses themselves. One potential issue could be the conflicting interests of the different stakeholders. According to [Tursunbayeva et al. \[37\]](#), managers use PA to achieve strategic goals, whereas employees may have concerns regarding how their data is analyzed and used. This contrast creates two distinct perspectives that must both be considered, which is why [Tursunbayeva et al.](#) recommend including employees in PA projects to prevent unethical PA practices. [Khan and Tang \[16\]](#) also acknowledge a divide in how different stakeholders view PA. In particular, they state that the workforce may respond negatively to PA should their concerns remain unaddressed. These issues may be one potential explanation for our findings.

To address and resolve employee concerns at an early stage in development, the design approach of PD recommends discussing and resolving conflicting interests early in the design process. This should be done by involving all stakeholders, in our case both data owners and data consumers, in the development of PA tools [[26](#), [33](#)]. Combining PD with our suggested approach may lead to a design that further increases the appeal to data owners. Additionally and arguably more importantly, as data owners would be involved at an early stage, their concerns could be addressed in the design. This allows developers to verify early whether their implementation meets our design principles, based on stakeholder feedback.

7 CONCLUSION

Our contribution in this paper is threefold. First, we explore the concept of benefits as an appeal strategy and, based on recommendations from existing literature, devise a set of principles for the data owner benefit-driven design of people analytics. Then, we illustrate how our principles could be put into practice by providing a set of analyses with corresponding data owner benefits and describing an exemplary implementation. Finally, we evaluate our principles by analyzing and discussing the results of the user study we have conducted. We examine the attitudes of our participants towards the provided analyses and benefits and assess the impact of data owner benefits on the privacy decisions in the fictitious scenario of our study.

While our findings do not provide evidence that indicates a significant impact on privacy decisions, we consider them valuable as they reveal various potential privacy concerns that employees may encounter in the presence of PA. Our results further show that data owner benefits were generally appreciated among the respondents of our survey. We believe that data owner benefits are likely a sensible addition to the design of PA, albeit not one that is capable of addressing every perceived risk. We hope our study inspires further research into both privacy concerns in PA and the use of data owner benefits to improve the appeal of PA for those subjected to their analyses.

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A QUESTIONNAIRE

Our questionnaire contained the following pages and questions:

A.1 Demographics

- **Q1** (single choice): How old are you?
 - 24 or younger
 - 25 – 34
 - 35 – 44
 - 45 – 54
 - 55 – 64
 - 65 or older
- **Q2** (single choice): What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
 - Prefer not to say
- **Q3** (single choice): Which of these best describes your current employment status?
 - Unemployed
 - Student
 - Employed
 - Self-employed
 - Retired
 - Other
- **Q4** (single choice): If applicable, would you consider your role to be closer to that of a manager or that of an employee?
 - Manager
 - Employee
 - Unsure
 - Not applicable
- **Q5** (single choice): If applicable, would you describe your work as closer to a white-collar or a blue-collar job?
 - White-collar (e.g. a desk job, administrative work)
 - Blue-collar (requiring manual labor)
 - Unsure
 - Not applicable

A.2 Base scenario description

Participants were then shown the scenario description depicted in [Figure 10](#).

A.3 Consent in the base scenario

For each analysis, the participants were presented with a description (see [Appendix C](#)) asked to indicate their preference:

- Please read the description of each analysis and indicate if you would consent to this use of your data.
 - **Q6** (yes / no, referring to A1): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

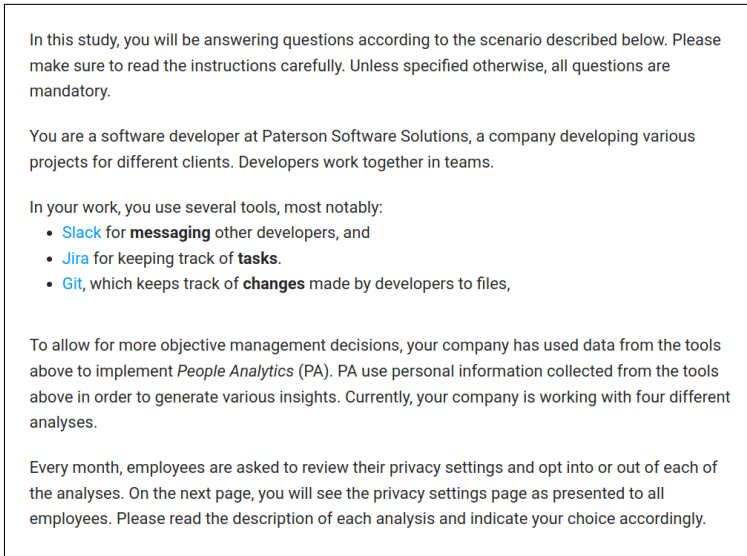


Fig. 10. The scenario description presented to participants of our survey.

- **Q7** (yes / no, referring to A2): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.
- **Q8** (yes / no, referring to A3): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.
- **Q9** (yes / no, referring to A4): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

A.4 Questions about the base scenario

- **Q10** (Likert scale): How much do you agree with the statement 'I felt like I understood all of the analyses (A1 to A4)'?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
- **Q11** (free text, optional): If anything, what was unclear?
- **Q12** (attention check, single choice): For this question, please choose the option 'No, I definitely do not think so' - it is a test to ensure that you are paying attention.
 - Yes, that would definitely be helpful
 - Yes, but I would not use it
 - No, I definitely do not think so
 - I am unsure
- Briefly explain your privacy choices - why did you (not) consent to each analysis? (Each answer should be approximately one to three sentences.)
 - **Q13** (free text): A1 - Project health
 - **Q14** (free text): A2 - Developer collaboration
 - **Q15** (free text): A3 - Developer performance

- **Q16** (free text): A4 - Developer expertise
- **Note:** To allow participants to reflect upon their choice, their privacy choice was appended to each question (**Q13 – Q16**), e.g. A1 - Project health (*consent given*) if the respondent had indicated that they would consent to A1-PH in question **Q6**.

A.5 Scenario change description

The scenario was now changed to include data owner benefits – the concrete description is shown in [Figure 11](#).

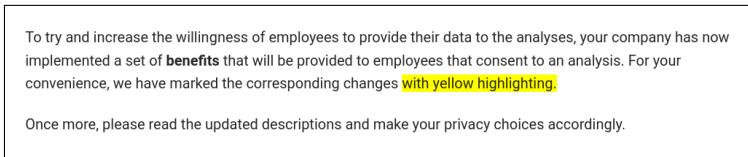


Fig. 11. Description of the change made to the scenario.

A.6 Consent in the changed scenario

This time, respondents were shown updated variants of the analysis descriptions ([Appendix C](#)) and asked:

- Once again, please indicate whether you would consent to each analysis. Changes are highlighted in yellow.
 - **Q17** (yes / no, referring to A1): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.
 - **Q18** (yes / no, referring to A2): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.
 - **Q19** (yes / no, referring to A3): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.
 - **Q20** (yes / no, referring to A4): I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

A.7 Questions about the changed scenario

- **Q21** (Likert scale): How much do you agree with the statement 'I felt like I understood what benefits I would receive if I consented to an analysis'?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
- **Q22** (free text, optional): If not, what was unclear?
- **Q23** (Likert scale): Given the statement 'I understood what benefits I would receive if I consented to an analysis', how much do you agree?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

- Once more, briefly explain your privacy choices. Did the introduced benefits affect your decision? If so, how? If not, why not? (Each answer should be approximately one to three sentences.)
 - **Q24** (free text): A1 - Project health
 - **Q25** (free text): A2 - Developer collaboration
 - **Q26** (free text): A3 - Developer performance
 - **Q27** (free text): A4 - Developer expertise
- **Note:** Once more, participants were presented with their previous choices, e.g. A1 - Project health (*consent not given* → *consent given*) if they had indicated consent in **Q17** but not in **Q6**.

A.8 Preference and final remarks

- **Q28** (single choice): All in all, which variant of the scenario would you prefer?
 - First variant (without employee benefits)
 - Second variant (with employee benefits)
 - No preference
- **Q29** (attention check, Likert scale without neutral option): How much do you agree with the statement 'I breathe at least once per day.'?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
- **Q30** (free text, optional): Are there any other remarks you would like to make?

B QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: CODES

Table 6 and Table 7 contain the codes assigned to answers during our qualitative analysis.

Table 6. Codes assigned to the answers to questions Q13 – Q16.

Code	Example excerpt	Participant	Analysis
analysis valuable for company / management questions validity of analysis	"I do find this to be an invaluable tool for the manager."	R5	A3-DP
analysis valuable for data owner unnecessary analysis	"I think the number of private messages is not authoritative"	R44	A2-DC
objective analysis	"This helps me get better training offers and better assignments"	R11	A4-DE
	"I believe that this collection of such data is completely unnecessary"	R38	A2-DC
	"This is the most objective way to measure my work."	R17	A3-DP
intrusive analysis / sensitive data	"I do not want my (or anyone else's) messages to be analyzed in any way."	R12	A1-PH
no intrusive analysis / sensitive data	"it does not seem intrusive on sensitive/personal matters for the workers"	R5	A1-PH

– Continued on the following page –

Table 6 (continued). Codes assigned to the answers to questions Q13 – Q16.

Code	Example excerpt	Participant	Analysis
right of the company	“It is not unreasonable to collect such data if the employer wishes.”	R41	A1-PH
data already available	“The number of meetings and Slack messages made between colleagues is easily accessible within a company anyway.”	R32	A1-PH
common practice	“It is a standard procedure at many workplaces to measure workers’ performance [...]”	R12	A3-DP
no risks	“I was happy to consent for no other reason that it would have no adverse affects.”	R41	A1-PH
risk of data misuse	“I believe that this collection of such data [...] may be misappropriated.”	R38	A2-DC
feeling watched	“I’d feel constantly watched.”	R3	A3-DP
fear of negative consequences	“it could be detrimental to the mental well-being of employees”	R37	A2-DC
risk of misinterpretation	“The company could draw incorrect conclusions from this data”	R37	A1-PH
requires consent from all parties	“I did not include this analysis as some employees might not wish to do so”	R37	A1-PH
monitoring influences behavior	“it feels like employees would just act differently in the text chain knowing they are being monitored”	R14	A1-PH
unsafe	“I wouldn’t feel safe allowing this.”	R23	A4-DE
nothing to hide	“If you are a productive person, you should have no qualms about this information being collected.”	R41	A3-DP
unsure about consent	“I was unsure to give consent.”	R17	A1-PH
analysis considered disallowed	“It breaks privacy”	R19	A1-PH
potential peer pressure	“maybe other colleagues would consent and it would be odd not to also consent.”	R32	A3-DP
misunderstood consent	“The productivity of one member/employee can’t be measured just by the number of tasks in a week, [...]” – yet gives consent	R31	A3-DP

Table 7. Codes assigned to the answers to questions Q24 – Q27.

Code	Example excerpt	Participant	Analysis
benefit appreciated	“I think it is interesting to see such reports, it can be useful to me”	R15	A1-PH
benefit not appealing	“the information I would be provided is pretty useless”	R12	A1-PH
benefit should be part of the tool	“This is a good benefit [sic!] and something that should be done.”	R14	A3-DP
benefit negatively influences individual	“Having this benefit would stress me out even more. ”	R3	A3-DP
benefit increases tracking & surveillance	“If anything, having the data [...] available to everyone who consents makes it a bigger privacy breach.”	R14	A1-PH
benefit not necessary for consent	“I will share the information with or without the benefit”	R9	A4-DE
benefit not sufficient	“The benefits are not enough.”	R40	A3-DP
benefit changed decision	“i have changed my idea just for the plus tool that would be curious to se [sic!]”	R21	A3-DP
no benefits could change decision	“I dont think any benefits would have convinced me to accept these terms.”	R7	A1-PH
benefit affirmed decision	“that extra tool for me has confirmed my choice”	R21	A1-PH
benefit does not outweigh risk	“they do not change my opinion [...], I still think it is very intrusive”	R13	A1-PH
reciprocity	“If my manager can see it, I should see it too”	R39	A1-PH
nothing to hide	“I dont really care what they will do”	R1	A1-PH
unsure about consent	“I’m still skeptical about the usefulness [sic!] of chat monitoring - but still agreed”	R25	A1-PH
misunderstands benefit	“I did not like the fact that I would not receive some of the project benefits...”	R40	A1-PH

C ANALYSIS DESCRIPTIONS

The images at the end of this document depict the analysis descriptions as they were provided to the participants of our questionnaire. Each description has two variants – one without any data owner benefits, one with data owner benefits.

▼ A1 - Project health ? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

For each calendar week, we will analyze:

- How often your team has met during that week.
- How positive or negative the sentiment of Slack messages sent by members of your team was during that time.

This will help us determine if any projects are at risk of failure or need additional attention.

If you consent

Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that they can use to check, for each project / team, the data mentioned above. The data is limited to the past five calendar weeks.

Example widget (manager)

Team:

⚠ This project may be at risk: The sentiment has dropped and the number of meetings has risen sharply.

Calendar Week	meetings	Team sentiment
CW 5	1	0.5
CW 6	2	0.8
CW 7	1	0.7
CW 8	3	0.4
CW 9	4	-0.2
CW 10	5	-1.0

If you do not consent

Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 12. Description of A1–PH (project health) without data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

∨ A1 - Project health
? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

For each calendar week, we will analyze:

- How often your team has met during that week.
- How positive or negative the sentiment of Slack messages sent by members of your team was during that time.

This will help us determine if any projects are at risk of failure or need additional attention.

If you consent

- Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that they can use to check, for each project / team, the data mentioned above. The data is limited to the past five calendar weeks.
- You will receive a similar dashboard widget presenting the data mentioned above for your team. Additionally, you will be able to see how the sentiment of your messages compares to the team average. This information will not be given to your manager(s).

What your manager(s) will see (Click here) What you will see

Example widget (employee)

Project health of your team ?

● This project may be at risk: The sentiment has dropped and the number of meetings has risen sharply.

■ meetings
— Team sentiment
— Your sentiment

Calendar Week	meetings	Team sentiment	Your sentiment
CW 5	1	0.5	0.5
CW 6	2	0.8	0.7
CW 7	1	0.5	0.5
CW 8	3	0.2	0.3
CW 9	4	-0.2	0.1
CW 10	5	-0.5	0.0

If you do not consent

- Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.
- You will not receive any benefit(s) listed above.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 13. Description of A1-PH (project health) with data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

∨ A2 - Developer collaboration ? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze:

- The number (but not the content) of private Slack messages exchanged between employees.
- The number of times employees have directly mentioned the names of their colleagues on Slack.

This will help us learn more about the structure of teams - for example, we can find isolated team members this way.

If you consent

Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows who each employee interacts with the most.

Example widget (manager)

```
graph LR; Rob[Rob]; Kat[Kat]; Matt[Matt]; Bob[Bob]; Pat[Pat]; John[John]; Kat --- Bob; Kat --- Matt; Bob --- Matt; Bob --- Pat; Matt --- Pat; Matt --- John; Pat --- John;
```

If you do not consent

Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 14. Description of A2-DC (developer collaboration) without data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

∨ A2 - Developer collaboration
? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze:

- The number (but not the content) of private Slack messages exchanged between employees.
- The number of times employees have directly mentioned the names of their colleagues on Slack.

This will help us learn more about the structure of teams - for example, we can find isolated team members this way.

If you consent

- Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows who each employee interacts with the most.
- You will receive a similar dashboard widget that shows who you most commonly interact with.

What your manager(s) will see (Click here) What you will see

Example widget (employee)

Your interactions ?

```

graph LR
    Pat[Pat] --- You[You]
    You --- Matt[Matt]
            
```

If you do not consent

- Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.
- You will not receive any benefit(s) listed above.

✓

✗

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 15. Description of A2–DC (developer collaboration) with data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

▼ A3 - Developer performance ? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze:

- Statistics from Jira: The number of completed tasks per employee, as well as the average time to fix each task.
- Statistics from Git: The number of changes made by each employee.

This will help us better understand the productivity of our employees and how it evolves over time.

If you consent

Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows the collected productivity data for each employee.

Example widget (manager)

User:

Tasks resolved last week	Average time to resolve a task	Changes made
↗ 10	🕒 60 min	↘ 23

If you do not consent

Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 16. Description of A3-DP (developer performance) without data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

∨ A3 - Developer performance ? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze:

- Statistics from Jira: The number of completed tasks per employee, as well as the average time to fix each task.
- Statistics from Git: The number of changes made by each employee.

This will help us better understand the productivity of our employees and how it evolves over time.

If you consent

- Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows the collected productivity data for each employee.
- You will receive a similar dashboard widget showing your productivity data.
- You will periodically receive notifications containing automated feedback on your performance data.

What your manager(s) will see [\(Click here\) What you will see](#)

Example widget (employee)

Your productivity data

Tasks resolved last week	Average time to resolve a task	Changes made
10	60 min	23

(Example notification) Throughout the past seven days, you have resolved 10 tasks - a 20% increase compared to last week!

If you do not consent

- Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.
- You will not receive any benefit(s) listed above.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 17. Description of A3–DP (developer performance) with data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

▼ A4 - Developer expertise ? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze the files that you have worked on via information gathered from your Git commit history. This will help us learn about what technologies our developers are most proficient with.

If you consent

Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows what technologies (or files) each employee has worked with the most.

Example widget (manager)

User:

by technology by file

Technology	Percentage
python	40%
java	30%
typescript	20%

If you do not consent

Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 18. Description of A4–DE (developer expertise) without data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

▼ A4 - Developer expertise
? Undecided - Please make a choice

Data usage and purpose

We will analyze the files that you have worked on via information gathered from your Git commit history. This will help us learn about what technologies our developers are most proficient with.

If you consent

- Your manager(s) will gain access to a dashboard widget that shows what technologies (or files) each employee has worked with the most.
- You will receive a similar dashboard widget that shows the same information, limited to your own data.

What your manager(s) will see (Click here) What you will see

Example widget (employee)

Breakdown of your work ?

by technology by file

Technology	Percentage
python	40%
java	30%
typescript	20%

If you do not consent

- Your data will not be used for this analysis. In particular, it will not be visible on any dashboard widgets.
- You will not receive any benefit(s) listed above.

I would consent to the use of my data for the purposes of this analysis in the described fictitious scenario.

Fig. 19. Description of A4–DE (developer expertise) with data owner benefits in our exemplary implementation.

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