

In a bid to 'fix' Facebook, social media giant files patent to tell if a user is rich or poor

Facebook has filed a patent application for a technology that will automatically detect the users' socio-economic status and segregate them in one of three classes -- working class, middle class or upper class.

According to the patent, the social media giant wants to build a system that collects users' personal data, such as education, homeownership and internet usage, in order to predict their socio-economic status, Dailymail reported on Saturday.

The patent, that was made public on Friday, suggested an algorithm that might improve Facebook's targeting capabilities, helping it serve up more relevant advertisements to users.

"By predicting the socio-economic groups of users, [Facebook] is able to help the third party present sponsored content to the target users," the patent read. "Third parties are able to effectively promote their products or services, and the online system can provide a more engaging user experience to users," it added.

Facebook would ask the users what is their age and from there, it would throw questions that would be seemingly relevant to users of that age group. "In the filing, 20 to 30-year-olds are asked how many Internet devices they own, while 30 to 40-year-olds are asked whether or not they own a house," the report said.

The social media giant might also consider other information like a person's travel history, what kinds of devices the user owns, how many Internet-connected devices they own and what their highest level of education is, to know the socio-economic status.