Artificial intelligence and Digital Democracy: what opportunities and risks threaten the Arab region?

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Abstract:

Artificial intelligence impacts digital democracy's future significantly nowadays. The mechanisms of representation and political participation require careful examination. These technologies position themselves distinctly within the Arab scene. This study of AI operates as a non-neutral technical tool fundamentally. It carries significant political and normative dimensions explicitly. Algorithm design and actors' intentions shape these dimensions directly. The study adopts the analytical approach by reviewing the Western and Arabic literature. The theoretical framework draws from Jurgen Habermas's "public space" concept. This is providing key insights for understanding how digital platforms work and shaping democratic participation in the Middle East. Artificial intelligence demonstrates a paradoxical capacity: it enhances executive decision-making and broadens political participation. A trajectory evident in emerging "smart governance" initiatives across Arab states is designed to strengthen administrative effectiveness. Conversely, artificial intelligence poses substantial threats to democratic systems through content manipulation and the entrenchment of covert surveillance mechanisms. Mostly, in contexts where regulatory governance remains absent. This analysis contends that policymakers must transcend the fiction of "technical neutrality" and embrace "ethics-informed governance design". Public policy frameworks must mandate digital transparency and institutional accountability mechanisms. The Arab world requires the adoption of a comprehensive digital social compact. That could safeguard citizen autonomy against technocratic encroachment, and preserve democracy in an increasingly digitized political landscape.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Digital Democracy, Algorithmic Governance, Political Participation, Digital Rights, Digital Political Communication

1. Introduction:

In recent decades, the world has witnessed an unprecedented acceleration in the development of artificial intelligence technologies and their multiple applications, as these technologies include big data analysis, machine learning, natural language processing, and algorithm-supported decision-making in both state institutions and the private sector (Russell & Norvig, 2021, p. 35). Artificial intelligence has moved from being expert systems based on fixed and predetermined rules, to more complex and dynamic models based on huge neural networks that have the

capabilities of continuous learning from data. This enables it to modify and develop its performance according to changing and evolving contexts (kitchen, 2021, p. 112). Pascual (2015, P.3) observes artificial intelligence as no longer just an auxiliary tool. But it has become a central corporate structure in digital systems. Its algorithms penetrate areas such as credit, employment, and political content, but they operate with non-transparent mechanisms, which makes their decisions affecting individuals lack public oversight. Thus, artificial intelligence becomes a key architectural element that perpetuates the ambiguity of decision-making in digital governance.
Contemporary technological acceleration demands rigorous empirical investigation. Specifically, field-based longitudinal studies documenting artificial intelligence's institutional manifestations, within Arab governmental and corporate infrastructures. Advancing beyond abstract theoretical propositions requires systematic evidence collection regarding localized AI implementation impacts. Empirical documentation remains essential for informed policy formulation. It also deepens comprehension of region-specific technological trajectories effectively.

Democratic governance constitutes humanity's most enduring institutional framework for political organization. Through tracing genealogical lineage across millennia of historical development. Its inaugural classical instantiation emerged within the ancient Athenian polity through Cleisthenes' transformative civic reforms. This established the foundational architecture for participatory political engagement. Ober (2008, p. 52) emphasizes that Athenian democratic praxis depended upon tangible institutional mechanisms: collective deliberative assemblies, formal voting procedures, and the spatial-physical infrastructure of the agora. The open communal plaza, which facilitated unrestricted citizen movement and discourse circulation. These material conditions constituted the substantive infrastructure upon which classical democratic theory and practice were constructed.

Dahl (1989, p.108) asserts that democracy has undergone an important transformation through time. It has moved from demographically limited direct participation to representative systems based on universal suffrage. These systems relied on clear physical structures, however it included ballot boxes, his cards and official voter registers. These instruments represented institutional mechanisms for organizing the electoral process. It also contributed to enabling the collective will to express itself freely. This was done through elected institutions operating within a regulated legal framework. In a related context, Sunstein(2018, P.8) notes that modern digital technologies have gradually

transformed democratic practice. It has moved from traditional channels to new virtual spaces. Social media platforms and search engines have become influential tools. They contribute to the formation and guidance of public opinion. It has also influenced the distribution of information and news and determined the political interest of the public.

The digital transformation has sparked a wide debate about its impact on democratic practice. Morozov (2011, P.122) suggests that it may enhance participation or reproduce inequality. This is associated with such phenomena as filter bubbles and misinformation. In this context, Zubov (2019, P.184) emphasizes that artificial intelligence is not a neutral tool; rather, it is an organizational structure that carries implicit political options and challenges. On the other hand, recent studies highlight its potential for improving the quality of information. They also contribute to raising the efficiency of political and administrative decision-making (K.ochnig and nizelberger, 2020, P.371). In contrast, other research warns of the dangers of mass surveillance and manipulation of political content. In addition to perpetuating digital inequality and deepening gaps (Summerfield et al., 2024, P. 4; young, 2018, P. 505). These risks are increased in Arab contexts due to weak regulatory frameworks. They may interact with hybrid or authoritarian regimes to enhance control. Eubanks (2018, P.12) also considers that algorithmic systems may undermine the principle of equality before the law. Even when they seem to be nominally bound by legal norms.

At a theoretical level, these transformations require a re-examination of the concepts of public space, Political Participation and democratic legitimacy. Habermas ' ideas are used as a tool to understand the impact of algorithms on public communication. Therefore, Habermas (2006, p.413) explains that they change the conditions for the formation of a rational public will. It also affects the nature of public debate and the limits of political participation. The study is based on the premise that artificial intelligence is not a neutral tool. Rather, it is part of the restructuring of the structure of the political sphere and its mechanisms. Consequently, it raises a central question about his role in the future of democracy. This includes its narrow and general formality and influence in Political Practices. The research aims to provide a critical normative analysis that goes beyond technical description. It also seeks to understand the philosophical, political and ethical dimensions of these transformations. It focuses in particular on building an analytical framework that fits the Arab context. This is not enough to apply ready-made Western models; somewhat, it analyses the interaction of

algorithms with issues of governance and digital citizenship.

1.1. Research Problem

The research problem confirms the absence of an Arab theoretical approach that addresses artificial intelligence in sufficient depth. It also reveals a structural contradiction between its closed centralized nature and the requirements of democratic pluralism. This leads to the need to understand it as a political-technical structure that reshapes the structure of governance, and not just a neutral technical tool.

Despite the growing literature on the impact of algorithms in public space and disinformation, however, most studies lack linking predictive technologies to normative democratic concepts such as popular sovereignty and cognitive agency. It does not address the relationship between systems design and transformations in political participation, accountability and institutional legitimacy. This shortage is exacerbated in Arab contexts facing an acute research scarcity especially within digital spaces characterized. By uneven political openness, weak regulatory frameworks and the dominance of security approaches. The study therefore presents an analytical model that links the governance of artificial intelligence to the formation of the Arab public space, meanwhile highlighting the mechanisms of undermining the Democratic Agency of the citizen.

1.2. Research Objectives and Importance

This study object to analyze how artificial intelligence is reshaping the institutional structure of democratic systems and their basic functions, especially in Arab contexts that are witnessing digital transformations and disparities in governance patterns. This aim is structured around three objectives: to clarify the political character of algorithm design and its framing for public debate, to analyze opportunities to enhance transparency and digital accountability in the Arab scene, and to assess the risks of the concentration of digital power and the erosion of citizens ' cognitive autonomy. The study seeks to answer key questions related to the role of artificial intelligence in reshaping collective decision-making and its implications in Arab environments. It also examines strategic opportunities to improve the quality of political information and expand civic engagement. While considering structural challenges such as algorithmic surveillance and digital polarization, especially in the Arab context where the fragility of democratic institutions intersects with the expansion of digital infrastructures.

The strategic importance of the research stems from the transformation of the relationship of artificial intelligence to democratic governance, into a fundamental

political and normative issue. This affects the nature, distribution and legitimate limits of power. The research intends to present a critical approach that reveals the political character of artificial intelligence as a governance structure. It also aims to transcend Western centralism in the analysis of technology and digital phenomena, by putting forward an alternative theoretical vision. Commensurate with the specificity of Arab contexts experiencing rapid and emerging digital transformations.

The research provides a normative analytical framework that combines the leading Eurocentric theories, such as Habermas and Wiener. Due to their adaptation to the Arab specificity, to reveal the mechanisms through which artificial intelligence reshapes the relationship of the state. With citizens and the impact on the concept of digital citizenship and fundamental rights in a region suffering from varying institutional capabilities.

This framework not only applies Eurocentric theories to the Arab context. However, it also explores their suitability and modification to explain the unique phenomena resulting from the interaction of artificial intelligence. With fragile political structures and governance patterns in the region, this contributes to enriching the theoretical literature.

1.3. Literature review

Artificial intelligence intersects with the future of digital democracy in the Arab region in a context characterized by the weakness of representative institutions. The fragility of public space and the expansion of regulatory structures. This study provides a critical reading of opportunities and risks through an approach inspired by Habermas ' public space theory, technology philosophy, and algorithmic governance literature.

First: Artificial Intelligence and Digital Democracy in the Arab context

The international literature has shown that artificial intelligence is not inherently democratic or authoritarian, but rather its effects are determined by the patterns of design, organization and use. In the Arab context, this technology intersects with hybrid and authoritarian political structures. However, this renders the risks associated with the algorithmic encroachment upon the human lifeworld even more acute. The study of "AI Governance in the GCC States" indicates that the artificial intelligence strategies in the Gulf countries focus on maximizing economic value and digital transformation. Through a timid presence on issues of transparency, accountability and community participation (Albous et al., 2025). This development bias opens the door to the use of algorithmic structures to deepen centralization. It has strengthened control rather than expanded the democratic space, with disparities

between the Gulf states and the region, as countries such as Jordan and Egypt adopt different approaches (Yeganegi, 2025).

Algorithmic governance analyses highlight those digital codes play undeclared regulatory and legislative roles. As AI governance frameworks in the Gulf countries rely on "top-down" approaches, where strategies are formulated within narrow circles with the absence of real participatory mechanisms. For instance, SMEX reports reveal that "smart city" projects and surveillance systems are being used to enhance tracking and predictive analysis of people's behavior, entrenching "digital authoritarianism"(SMEX, 2025). At the same time, the study "How will advanced AI systems impact democracy?" One of the most prominent works that presented a comprehensive picture of the impact of advanced artificial intelligence in democracies, distinguishing between structural effects affecting institutions. Procedural affecting electoral processes and normative contributing to influencing democratic values at the present time (Summerfield et al,. 2024, p. 9). Affirms that its effects are determined according to design and organizational choices, with the potential to deepen surveillance. It has manipulated content and perpetuates digital inequality in the absence of appropriate regulatory frameworks. In terms of these results, they intersect with the study "digital transformation and the engines of Arab renewal" by Dr Mansouri, which indicated that the absence of a competitive environment and technical transparency may turn artificial intelligence tools into mechanisms for digital authoritarianism (Al-Mansouri, 2021, pp. 14-15). This study builds on this thesis, but then goes beyond it through adopting a normative framework inspired during Habermas's theory of dialogical democracy. It also reveals the political dimension inherent in the design architecture of the algorithms themselves.

Second: Algorithmic governance and deliberative democracy

Recent reviews on digital governance in the Middle East show that digital platforms have provided new spaces for expression, but they have deepened new forms of exclusion and inequality. Whereas some literature suggests that artificial intelligence can be used to enhance accountability and transparency. This potential remains limited in the Arab countries due to data access restrictions, a weak legal environment, and state control over digital infrastructures. The report warns, "Is Artificial Intelligence for Democracy or Against It?" Authoritarian regimes may exploit artificial intelligence to tighten control over the digital public space through facial recognition, network analysis and targeting opponents (Omar, 2025).

Revisions such as "Democratizing AI Governance" also discuss the tension

between specialized knowledge and the need to engage the public, and propose models to balance them (Ter-Minassian, 2025). The literature of the Centre for Arab Unity Studies discussed the need to break the monopoly of technical elites for digital decision-making (Ali and Hijazi, 2005, p. 20-21). While it lacked a systematic connection with the concept of "algorithmic legitimacy" with its three levels: inputs, processes and outputs, which is what this study seeks to establish.

Third: Political participation and public space

The study "Digital Technologies and Youth Democracy" shows that the digital environment has created new spaces for participation, especially among young people (Hakimi et al., 2025), but it deepened informational polarization the spread of disinformation and the reproduction of digital inequality. The value of internet sociology studies in the region such as Mansouri's works (2014, p. 72), which deconstructed the role of networks in Arab political transformations, warning against the illusion of empowerment under algorithms that control the hierarchy of appearance.

Although these studies do not focus on artificial intelligence as an independent category, they confirm that digital platforms and algorithms have become a crucial component in shaping public opinion and the boundaries of public space. Our study proceeds from this path to confirm that artificial intelligence represents an advanced link in the development of the digital public space. It restructures the entire flow of information through recommendation, filtering and predictive analysis systems. It will include prioritizing the political agenda itself, and this will force a radical rethinking of the concepts of participation, accountability and legitimacy. Based on the Habermas model as a normative framework for the analysis.

This study contributes to filling a knowledge gap at multiple levels. It not only improves digital services but also re-poses the question of the state-citizen relationship under algorithmic governance. The research adopts a normative framework inspired by Habermas's dialogical democracy, which allows for revealing the political dimension inherent in the design of the algorithms themselves. It also integrates Western and Arabic literature into a single analytical vision. Artificial intelligence is seen as both a technical and a political construct, not just a neutral tool. This transformation directly reshapes the conditions for democratic practice. However, this systematic linkage therefore gives the study an authentic character. It makes it comparable to the experiences of the global south countries similar to the Arab context, especially in light of the

challenges of digital transformation and technological sovereignty.

2. Theoretical Framework

This framework is based on four interrelated pillars: the first is Habermas's conception of dialogical democracy and public space. While the second concerns the literature of algorithm-based governance and political legitimacy. The third pillar comes from the critical philosophy of technology, which views technologies as political constructs imbued with values. The fourth is embodied in the manifestations of this framework within the Arab context as a distinctive applied field. This construction sought to explain artificial intelligence as both a political and communicative phenomenon. It is already reshaping the public space and influencing the mechanisms of governance. This perspective also makes it possible to analyze the overlap of algorithmic structures with basic democratic concepts, such as participation, accountability and legitimacy. This applies to Arab contexts undergoing fragile democratic transitions.
To consider the accelerated expansion of digital infrastructure.

2.1. Habermas: Dialogical Democracy and the Public Sphere

Habermas ' conception of deliberative democracy is an important explanatory input for understanding the interconnection of communication processes and democratic practice. He believes that democracy is not reduced to voting or representation, but is based mainly on the existence of an active public space for discussion. That allows citizens to freely express and deliberate rational arguments and build consensus through non-coercive debate. Where political legitimacy is based on the strength of argument, not physical force (Habermas, 1996, p. 287; Habermas, 2006, p. 411). This vision requires strict conditions: equality of participants, free access to information, the possibility of rational appeal of claims, and the absence of coercion or systematic domination. Which makes the quality of public communication the basis for the legitimacy of democratic decisions.

Habermas distinguishes between the system and the living world, warning against the colonization of the second by the first through non-communicative mechanisms (money and power instead of argument), which erodes the inherent understanding (Habermas, 1987, p. 332). This idea has spread from traditional media to digital platforms, as Kellner sees algorithmic structures today as part of a system of automated/technical rationality that colonizes the living world by regulating the flow of information and determining what is considered visible in the public sphere (Kellner, 2014, p. 12). The concept of public space provides a framework for

analyzing the impact of algorithms in the conditions of public debate: inclusiveness, pluralism, and the formation of a rational public will.

2.2. Democracy in an Algorithmic Society

The concept of algorithmic governance has emerged to describe the management of public affairs by algorithms that derive decisions from the analysis of big data (Yeung, 2018, p. 507), not only automating procedures. But it also reshapes the mechanisms of classifying individuals, distributing opportunities, determining who is seen and who is marginalized, thereby making it part of the power structure and a tool for engineering behavior (Danaher, 2016, p. 248). This marks a transition to governance by design, where codes become invisible legislation that automatically regulates behavior.

This raises fundamental questions about the legitimacy of algorithmic decisions across three levels: the legitimacy of inputs where citizens are excluded from participating in the definition of criteria, the legitimacy of processes where algorithmic models remain ambiguous as a "black box", and the legitimacy of outputs that may produce biased or unfair decisions (Busuioc, 2021, p. 238). Consequently, the actual processing requires clear legal frameworks, transparency in the mechanisms of the algorithms ' work, and real civic participation in the design and control. In a society run by algorithms, the question of democracy becomes more complicated: can political systems adapt the principles of participation, transparency and accountability to a reality in which sensitive sectors are managed by artificial intelligence systems that do not fully understand their mechanisms and citizens do not participate in their design or take their lives (Helbing et al. 2019, p. 76). The future of democracy depends on whether these systems can be integrated into institutional arrangements that allow oversight and accountability, or left as closed structures that deepen the gap between those. Who have control over algorithms and those who are subject to their decisions without informed consent (Zuboff, 2019, p.184).

2.3. Technical Tools as Political Constructs

The philosophy of critical technology crystallized by Langdon Wiener provides a vital dimension to the understanding of artificial intelligence. In his article "Do tools have political connotations?" (Do Artefacts Have Politics?), however Wiener refutes the thesis of technology neutrality, showing that some technologies carry in their design structure latent political orientations (Winner, 2017, p. 123). Distinguishes between politically flexible and adaptable technologies and technologies structurally linked to specific patterns of power. That calls for strict

centralized arrangements, such as nuclear energy (Winner, 2017, p. 131).

Algorithmic systems used in traffic management or the organization of public services can be designed to expand civic participation and ensure transparency. Or built to facilitate mass surveillance, deepen inequality and concentrate power in the hands of limited elites (Danaher, 2016, p. 251). From this perspective, artificial intelligence becomes an "embodied political tool" in which a certain distribution of power and a specific value system are embodied (Stilgoe, 2020, p. 76). Based on Wiener's thesis, artificial intelligence combines political flexibility and malleability with structural restriction. It can be directed to promote democratic values through participatory designs and transparent control mechanisms. However, it can turn within closed centralized models into an oppressive structure that imposes authoritarian patterns (Summerfield et al,. 2024, p. 6). Therefore, analyzing the impact of artificial intelligence on democracy requires a critical examination of the technical structures and institutional arrangements governing. Its design and deployment, and assessing the level of openness of these systems to participation and accountability, or their closure within elitist networks of control and knowledge monopoly.

2.4. Manifestations of the Theoretical Framework in the Arab Context

These theoretical frameworks reveal that artificial intelligence in authoritarian and hybrid contexts is presented not as a technical neutrality. However, as an extension of the authority's options in reshaping the economic and security spheres. These theoretical foundations make it possible to read (AI) investments in some Gulf countries from a broader angle. Its organizational employ in some Arab regimes, whether authoritarian or hybrid, is to be understood as a specific political and normative option. However, that is not just purely technical or economic projects. In the Gulf countries, AI investments are presented within the narratives of" digital transformation"," smart cities" and" knowledge economy"; nonetheless the coupled with the expansion of monitoring capabilities and predictive analysis of the behavior of citizens and residents. Which raises troubling questions about the limits of transparency and the nature of community participation. In determining the trends of these technology policies (Albous et al., 2025, p. 2400).

From the perspective of Habermas, it can be said that the expansion of algorithmic structures in the management of the Arab digital public domain is taking place in light of already fragile public spaces. This, in turn, multiplies the risk of "colonizing the living world" with algorithms that are not subject to Real deliberative control. The algorithmic governance perspective also

shows that digital codes and architectures in these contexts practically perform undeclared legislative and regulatory functions. Through determining who is seen and who is marginalized in the public space, and imposing certain patterns of acceptable behavior. Wiener's philosophy of Technology suggests that these systems are not reduced to their" technical neutrality"; they embody certain authoritarian arrangements, artificial intelligence, in the absence of democratic governance frameworks. It can turn into an authoritarian infrastructure that deepens centralization and weakens. The possibilities of participation and accountability in the Arab scene are even when presented in public policy discourse, as a tool for modernization and development.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive analytical-theoretical approach based on a systematic review of the Arabic and foreign literature on artificial intelligence and democracy. Focusing on the work of the last decade of refereed periodicals and reports of research centers concerned with digital governance. The review deconstructs the conceptual structures of the literature by objectively classifying them and critically analyzing. Their normative assumptions, especially about participation, legitimacy, accountability, and algorithmic neutrality. The study will rely on the tools of qualitative analysis and the approach of analytical political theory, to connect concepts with technical developments, and build a coherent explanatory framework. This orientation combines political philosophy and technical reality in a balanced way. It also contributes to providing a normative basis, from which to proceed to subsequent empirical research.

4. The Evolution of Democratic Tools: From Traditional Polling to AI-Driven Governance

The development of technologies associated with democracy shows a structural transition from paper ballots to systems based on algorithms. Technology is no longer just a neutral tool, it has become an influential element in organizing elections, policymaking and shaping public space. This is clearly evident in Arab contexts, where digitization has sometimes been used as a means of modernization; however, it has raised questions of legitimacy. Therefore, this requirement traces the transition from traditional polling tools to invisible algorithmic structures, redistributing cognitive and political power.

4.1. The evolution of Polling Tools

Democratic systems relied on technical structures that enabled citizens to participate, from paper ballot boxes to mechanical voting machines and then electronic devices. The form of artificial

intelligence tools is associated with the intensity of participation, accessibility and confidence in political outcomes (Rattanasevee et al., 2024, p. 4). In many Arab countries, the controversy surrounding the introduction of "smart card" or "biometric fingerprint devices". It has gone beyond its technical competence to become a struggle over "who owns the keys to the box"; as it is feared that technical complexity will turn into a means of excluding less digitally familiar groups.

For instance, in Oman, in 2019, Shura Council elections were held via a full electronic voting system based on your voice device and biometric ID. It was promoted as a step towards greater transparency and reliability, although its closed technical structure made its independent assessment difficult (Shaikh et al., 2025, p. 44). In the same context, in Iraq introduction of electronic voting and counting devices in the 2018 elections, led to a wide wave of accusations of fraud and technical manipulation, which resulted in decisions to recount manually in several polling stations, which showed that digitization. In this absence of firm political trust, doubts may deepen doubts rather than dispel them (Nasrawi, 2018). In Jordan, plans are being put forward to use the national digital identity to verify voters in the upcoming elections in the context of an official speech on modernisation and good governance. However, human rights organizations and activists raise questions about the risks of concentrating sensitive electoral data in centralized digital platforms. That can be used for surveillance or political pressure (Macdonald, 2025). Thus, comparative studies have shown that each technological generation has redefined the standards of integrity: with paper cards, fears are focused on manual manipulation. While with electronic devices, they move to hacking and invisible interventions, becoming, in essence a debate about the legitimacy of the political system itself.

4.2. Digital Technology in Voting Process Administration

The technical component was no longer limited to the moment of voting, but extended to the political cycle: the production and distribution of information. The analysis of citizens ' data and their targeting with personalized messages, models for predicting voting behavior. In the pre-voting phase, artificial intelligence techniques are used to build predictive models and segment voters into segments targeted with tailored messages (Kefford et al., 2023, p. 3). Zakag points out that the online spaces in the Arab context are witnessing the rise of types of organized digital actors, such as "electronic committees" and automated accounts. Which employs algorithmic targeting techniques to intensify polarization within the social and political fields. This is done by creating closed communication paths

and feeding users with "information bubbles", that isolate them from competing discourses and arguments in the public space (zakag, 2023, P. 62). During voting, applications are manifested in the management of voter records, automated identity verification, detection of fraud attempts, and also put forward models of electronic voting systems based on blockchain (Peelam et al., 2025, p. 7). However, after voting, algorithms are employed to analyze the results, draw geopolitical maps and evaluate the effectiveness of policies.

This reveals the transformation of artificial intelligence into an infrastructure that covers the entire political cycle, reshaping the balances of cognitive power. At the same time, the major parties in the Western and Arab political scenes have their advanced digital platforms and companies specializing in data collection and analysis. Now, they possess a strategic vision and analytical capabilities that far exceed those available to the individual citizen. The average citizen finds himself reduced to a set of data points within algorithmic forecasting models, which portends a gradual erosion of his ability to comprehensively and critically understand the political process in which he is supposedly an actor.

4.3. Artificial Intelligence: From Enhanced Governance to Political Automation

Artificial intelligence applications drive beyond the electoral sphere to everyday governance: allocation of public resources, risk assessment, fraud detection, and design of social targeting programs. These systems are presented as ways to improve efficiency by automating sensitive decisions (König & Wenzelburger, 2020, p. 4). Zayani points out that some Arab digital transformation initiatives have assigned algorithms the tasks of "merit classification". In social support programs, the act of distributive justice. From open political and societal debate into a closed calculation equation, that may not accommodate complex social disparities (Zayani, 2024, P. 144–145).

For instance, the Takaful program in Jordan employs an algorithm based on proxy means testing to sort families from the least poor to the poorest. In order to determine the beneficiaries of cash transfers, Human Rights reports have documented cases of exclusion of poor families. Due to technical criteria that do not reflect the complexity of their actual situation. Similarly, the Takaful and Karama program in Egypt and the unified social register system in Morocco rely on mathematical equations to calculate the degree of entitlement. Based on a wide range of socio-economic indicators. This has been shown by evaluative studies to produce classification errors and unfair exclusion of some vulnerable groups. These cases illustrate how the question of distributive justice can turn from an open

political and societal debate. In a decision that looks technical and claims neutrality through its algorithm, however in reality, it carries deep values and implicit cognitive choices (Human Rights Watch, 2023; The North Africa Post, 2025; The World Bank, 2020).

Dependence on automation turns decisions of a political and ethical nature into complex algorithmic results that are difficult to understand or object to. This opens the question of how much it is consistent with the principles of Justice. However, despite these problems, artificial intelligence can contribute to raising the efficiency of government services in the Arab context, if it is designed impartially and subject to effective control. This is evident in some smart government models that have succeeded in automating services and reducing bureaucracy in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. However, these gains should not come at the expense of the principles of transparency and accountability.

The architecture of the digital system itself becomes a governing tool that determines what is politically and administratively possible. It has translated the rules of governance into software code that unconsciously governs the behavior of citizens (Yeung, 2018, p. 11). Participation is no longer limited to casting a vote, but includes the digital footprint and data produced, by individuals and turned into raw material for artificial intelligence models. In practice, a citizen unknowingly participates via data. That is extracted, analyzed, and then used in decision-making without an actual right to consent or refuse (Yeung, 2019, pp. 7–8). In emerging Arab and regional contexts, Al-Alawi points out that the" big data "extracted from government applications becomes a tool for" soft surveillance". Where the service function of technology overlaps with the function of political control, creating a pattern of one-way accountability. The state monitors the citizen while the algorithm remains outside the direct accountability circle (Al-Alawi, 2024, P. 21–22).

The overlapping of the roles of programmers, companies, and government agencies creates a serious ambiguity of responsibility in the event of an unfair decision by an algorithmic system. It then becomes difficult to determine who is to blame: is the flaw in the design, the data, or the institutional implementation? From Habermas’s perspective, this raises the question of whether the algorithmic public sphere allows rational, equal deliberation or instead produces filter bubbles that impede the formation of an informed public will (Habermas, 2006, p. 417). According to Wiener’s perspective, the question is whether these systems are designed in such a way as to allow the societal renegotiation of their norms, or whether they fix elitist preferences in an invisible structure, thereby enshrining certain patterns of

power. Thus, the shift from traditional polling tools to algorithmic models represents not just a technical development but a profound shift in the structure of democratic governance, in particular: the definition of participation, accountability, and legitimacy.

5. The contribution of artificial intelligence to strengthening democratic practice

The contemporary literature shows that (AI) has promising potential and, when employed within appropriate institutional frameworks. It could contribute to the consolidation and strengthening of the procedural rules of democracy. It can process massive amounts of data, opening up prospects for improving the quality of information available to citizens by expanding channels of public consultation and increasing the efficiency of governance. The realization of these opportunities depends on the normative conditions embedded. In the design of algorithmic systems and in the mechanisms of their accountability. In the Arab countries, these technologies also represent a possibility for developing administrative structures and improving public services. They are provided as integrated into a comprehensive vision of political and administrative reform.

5.1. Optimizing Information Quality

The most important potential contributions of artificial intelligence are its ability to improve citizens ' access to complex public information and reduce the knowledge gap between them and the elites. Danaher believes that systems based on natural language processing can summaries lengthy documents and policies and simplify legal texts. Enhancing the ability of individuals to understand the issues at hand and take more informed positions (Danaher, 2016, p. 251). According to the Caliph, this possibility is of particular importance in Arab countries, as the language used in laws. Regulations and bureaucratic procedures are characterized by historical inertia. That makes it difficult for the average citizen to understand, which opens the way for generative artificial intelligence to play the role of a "Democratic translator", that reintroduces policies in clearer formulations (caliph, 2023, P. 13).

Whereas some preliminary experiments in parliaments and governments show promising potential. They are using text summarization algorithms to help and provide the targeted summaries to citizens and civil society organizations. increasing the level of transparency of the process (Kitchin, 2021, pp. 5-6). The transformation of this potential into actual democratic gains presupposes. The integration of AI tools into clear corporate strategies of transparency and public disclosure.

5.2. Expanding Channels for Political Participation

Artificial intelligence is a tool capable of expanding channels of participation by systematically analyzing thousands of contributions to public consultations. Allowing decision makers to understand the public's concerns and limiting the dominance of organized voices, at the expense of individual contributions. In his field study, Hammoudi (2020) points to emerging Arab experiences of using digital platforms to collect youth proposals on development issues. A path that can be algorithmically developed to ensure a wider representation of geographically marginalized groups (P. 222). Recent decades have witnessed a significant transition from limited experiments to the use of digital platforms within actual political institutions. In Taiwan, the Polis platform was used as part of the (vTaiwan) initiative to engage citizens. In deliberations on sensitive issues such as the regulation of participatory transport services. It made it possible to reach consensus solutions (Biberman, 2021, p. 11). The municipality of Madrid has also developed the Consul platform for the management of public consultations and participatory budgets. It has received the United Nations Public Service Award. Barcelona and Helsinki have adopted the Decidim platform as an official digital sharing platform (Smith & Martín, 2022, p. 286). In Iceland, the Your Priorities platform has been used since 2010 for collective legislation via community engagement (Hansen & Lárusdóttir, 2020, p. 11). While parties and organizations in Europe have adopted the liquid feedback platform to apply liquid democracy models (Helbing et al., 2019, p. 74). By applying the models of liquid democracy within its organizational structures, through the mechanisms of digitally delegating votes and repeated voting on internal policies.

5.3. Normative Frameworks for Democratic Opportunities

Arab countries face multiple governance challenges ranging from poor institutional efficiency to difficulty in accurately targeting public policies. Artificial intelligence offers promising possibilities to overcome these problems by using predictive analysis techniques to improve government performance and rationalize public spending. Grossi and others believe that machine learning systems contribute to improving urban planning and accurately directing resources to the area’s most in need. Resulting in a significant reduction in bureaucratic waste (Grossi et al., 2024, p. 3).

This trend is reflected in the "smart government" initiatives implemented in the Arab Gulf countries. In particular, in the

United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have employed artificial intelligence technologies. As a key lever for comprehensive structural transformation. Through ambitious strategies such as " UAE Artificial Intelligence 2031 "and advanced digital platforms such as" Absher" and" istishrafq " (Ziani, 2024, P. 147). These states managed to widely automate sovereign services, which contributed to the neutralization of human intervention and the narrowing of outlets for administrative corruption. This has led to the emergence of what can be called the “legitimacy of technical achievement". Citizen confidence is increasingly derived from the efficiency of digital outputs and the quality of services. Rather than traditional mechanisms of accountability and political participation. This is what Mansouri considers a "procedural novelty" that essentially involves the reformulation of the foundations of legality. In addition, the relationship between citizen and state is mediated through high-speed technological mechanisms (Mansouri, 2021, P. 22).

In contrast, international experiments illustrate that algorithms have become a structural component of contemporary bureaucracies (Sunstein, 2018, p.12). But they have been accompanied by notable failures, especially in "predictive policing" models, where algorithms reproduce historical biases embedded in the data. Deepening inequalities rather than correcting them. Technical gains can translate into a real strengthening of trust in public institutions. They are provided with clear transparency about the parameters of the functioning of algorithms. Artificial intelligence may strengthen the "legitimacy of outputs". It may be provided that this does not come at the expense of the "legitimacy of processes" and the political agency of citizens (König, & Wenzelburger, 2020, p. 371).

5.4. Normative Controls for Democratic Opportunities

The effective transfer of this potential requires strict conditions, as most Arab countries lack clear legal frameworks governing the design and use of artificial intelligence systems in the public sector. It opens the way for their use in selective ways that serve narrow political agendas rather than the public interest. The absence of a culture of transparency and institutional accountability also makes it difficult to ensure the neutrality of these systems. An important part of the literature warns against slipping into a rhetoric of technical optimism that ignores the necessary normative conditions. Systems that summaries policies may turn into selective tools that reproduce the biases of the designer if they are not designed transparently. Busuioc believes that participatory platforms may create a false sense of political participation, unless they are supported by effective mechanisms, that

translate their outputs into realistic decisions within the decision-making process (Busuioc, 2021, P.826).

Richardson et al. (2019, p. 199) point out that in the absence of an institutional environment that guarantees the independence of algorithms, "digital sharing" platforms. It may turn into formalized interfaces that reproduce official speech in a modern technical language. Likewise, systems aimed at improving the allocation of resources can further obscure political responsibility for decisions. This may entrench the logic of algorithmic governance at the expense of open democratic dialogue. The political activation of this potential requires the construction of institutions capable of incorporating the principles of procedural transparency. Algorithmic interpretability and effective accountability, in addition to real involvement of citizens in the processes of technical design and selection of governing standards. Algorithmic systems should be viewed as a subject of public debate and constant modification, and not as fixed, unaccountable technical facts. It is only in this framework that artificial intelligence can contribute to deepening the procedural foundations of modern democracy. The goal is to empower citizens rather than let it become a tool for reproducing inequality and eroding citizens' democratic agency.

6. Artificial Intelligence and the Erosion of Institutional Trust

Despite the potential offered by artificial intelligence, the critical literature demonstrates that its integration into the political field carries large structural risks. However, this has undermined the cognitive and legitimate foundations of democratic practice. The rapid development of generative models and the spread of algorithmic surveillance open the door to new forms of digital authoritarianism. Through the transfer of power from the open public sphere to hidden, unaccountable technical structures. Abu Zayd (2022, P. 154) realizes the challenges resulting from the use of artificial intelligence in the Arab region are gaining existential dimensions. He noted that the integration of these technologies is carried out within traditional security and institutional structures. Consequently, this approach may divert the 'digital transformation' trajectory from its fundamental objectives of administrative modernisation and transparency. Instead, artificial intelligence is turning into a tool for consolidating 'digital authoritarianism'. In this process, technical competence serves as a cover for developing mechanisms of social and political control. This requirement addresses the most prominent of these challenges in three dimensions: generative misinformation, algorithmic surveillance, and the blurring of algorithms.

6.1. Impact of artificial intelligence on public freedoms

The Arab reality reveals a serious shift in the use of artificial intelligence technologies from potential tools of empowerment to actual tools of authoritarian control and restriction of freedoms. The human rights literature by Kamps-Weber et al. (2024, p. 83) documents multiple patterns of the use of surveillance technologies. Among these are tracking opponents, suppressing protests, and restricting the public sphere. In the Maghreb context, these studies display how facial recognition systems in Morocco and Tunisia were used during the COVID-19 pandemic for health purposes. Turned into a tool for monitoring protests and prosecuting activists after the crisis. This reflects what is identified as the phenomenon of "mission creep", where the uses of security technologies are expanding beyond their original goals. The "no room for protest" report adds that Tunisian authorities. It has used drones and surveillance cameras equipped with advanced algorithms during the 2021 protests. Finally, the police posted clips of the protests via Facebook to identify and target activists.

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (2025) document digital surveillance in the Gulf region. It has taken on more complex dimensions through penetrating digital platforms themselves. Specifically, the organization reveals that Saudi Arabia attempted to infiltrate Twitter. Once obtained, such internal access has been weaponized to identify and systematically target political critics This shift indicates a significant overreach of traditional government surveillance. As it has extended to penetrate the very digital infrastructures. The protection of anonymity has thus lost its value as a fundamental guarantee of freedom of expression. In the Iranian context, the authorities have used facial recognition technologies. As a strategy to enforce compliance with the mandatory hijab via networks of built-in smart cameras. Salha (2021, p. 11) argues that these mechanisms, which facilitate the monitoring of activists, control both the digital and physical spaces simultaneously. Represent administrative structures of control that operate at multiple levels. In the UAE, it has established an integrated artificial intelligence system known as "eyes" a unified system. That includes facial recognition, license plate identification and behavioral analysis technologies. Although it is marketed as a" wishful promotion", it creates a constant state of surveillance that fundamentally changes the citizen's relations with the state.

Human rights reports have revealed that advanced spyware has penetrated the phones of journalists and dissidents, under the guise of national security. These mechanisms will transform AI tools into

means to systematically reshape public space, and restrict the scope of citizen participation (Americans for democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, 2025). If surveillance threatens freedoms, generative artificial intelligence constitutes a direct threat to democracy's cognitive structure. Floridi argues that generative models compound the disinformation crisis through their ability to produce highly convincing content at low cost. Consequently, distinguishing truth from algorithmic fabrication becomes exceedingly difficult. This dynamic creates a state of generalized doubt (Floridi, 2019, p. 3).

This problem is manifested in the case of Iraq, where the political arena has witnessed severe crises resulting. These crises result from the spread of audio and video leaks attributed to influential political and leadership figures after 2003. The danger lies not only in the content. Rather, it has created a" liar's dilemma", where it is easy for any political actor to evade real recordings by claiming to be “artificial intelligence". On the other hand, it is difficult for the public and judicial institutions to confirm the authenticity of fabricated recordings (Al-Nashmi, 2024). This situation makes the truth difficult to prove and the untruth easy to believe and killing the fact-based political dialogue.

Aziz (2022) points out that the digital noise in Iraq has generated a state of cognitive exhaustion and a loss of trust in political institutions. The absence of independent digital forensic laboratories has turned leaked information into a tool for targeting political opponents. Consequently, this has deepened societal polarization. However, the citizen is experiencing a radical shift in attitudes: instead of being an active political actor. They have become a passive consumer of competing narratives without having mechanisms to distinguish between them. This reality restricts the ability of individuals to make informed political decisions. As a result, they are pushed towards withdrawing from political life or taking refuge in traditional loyalties. According to Habermas's perspective, these phenomena impoverish the public sphere of its cognitive basis instead of public opinion emerging from a transparent democratic dialogue. It has become the result of hidden algorithmic manipulations aimed at marginalizing opposition voices (Ismail and Zebari, 2022, p. 432).

6.2. Smart Surveillance Systems and Social Inequality

The development of algorithmic surveillance systems has raised serious concerns about privacy and individual

freedom. Especially, it has an increasing reliance of governments on machine learning models to monitor behavior contrary to their political orientations. These policies have, to some extent, contributed to the deepening of the concept of inequality, by reproducing historical prejudices. It can undermine the constitutional principle of equality before the law, particularly in the field of public freedoms (Danaher, 2016, p.255). Studies of "control capitalism" confirm that marginalized groups bear the heaviest burdens from coercive measures, based on biased predictive models (Sunstein, 2018, P.8). In Arab contexts, this risk extends to "protest prediction," where some AI algorithms analyze social media data to identify anticipated flashpoints and proactively arrest suspects. This practice is made impossible by a coercive social control mechanism that goes beyond judicial control (Omar, 2024). However, these dynamics also reveal a fundamental structural contradiction. While many Arab governments are adopting strategies in digital transformation and artificial intelligence under the names of modernisation and efficiency.

However, the same tools are being used to deepen control mechanisms and restrict civil liberties. The absence of legislative frameworks and the weakness of independent supervisory institutions, coupled with the fragility of civil society institutions, leads to the concentration of algorithmic power. This occurs in the hands of executive bodies. Indeed, the absence of such a fundamental transformation, concerns about the entrenchment of the "repressive algorithmic state" model in the Arab region remain legitimate and urgent.

6.3. Algorithmic Ambiguity and Citizen Distrust

The increasing dominance of “opaque algorithms” leads to a fundamental erosion of legitimacy. When discussion platforms are replaced by the outputs of complex models known as" black box". It has become more difficult to hold a decision accountable. The danger is evident in the fact that it touches on three layers: the "legitimacy of inputs" by excluding the citizen from participation in the development of software standards. The legitimacy of processes due to the ambiguity of algorithmic mechanisms, and the “legitimacy of outputs". Which has resulted in decisions that may be unfair. This ambiguity in the Arab region acquires an intense political and security character. Ali and Hijazi (2005, p. 42) note that invoking "national security" or "technical privacy" completely closes the door to any societal attempt. Such an invocation prevents understanding the criteria of algorithms that manage crucial files such as "digital security assessment" or "distribution of government support. From Habermas's perspective, this represents a

forced reduction of the communicative relationship. In this, the public's ability to demand that the authorities justify their choices is weakened. The authority does not seek to convince through argument. It only takes cover behind the alleged "neutrality of technology". This mechanism transforms the public space from an arena for rational discussion to a negative shadow. Moreover, it receives computational outputs without having an opinion or feedback.

These dynamics reveal a fundamental structural contradiction, while Arab governments are adopting ambitious strategies for digital transformation under the name of modernisation. Moreover, these governments use the same tools to deepen the mechanisms of control and restriction of freedoms. Therefore, the absence of legislative frameworks, weak independent regulatory institutions and the fragility of civil society contribute to the concentration of computational power without effective control. This turns AI from an opportunity for empowerment into a tool for reproducing authoritarian power structures. Under the pretext of technical and digital transformation. This reality necessitates reframing the debate on digital governance based on transparency, accountability and rights protection. To ensure that technology does not become a facade for the modernisation of authoritarianism. But a real lever for justice and political participation. In the absence of such a transformation, the concerns that the "repressive algorithmic state" model takes root in the Arab context remain legitimate and urgent.

7. Results and Discussion

This study, based on Habermas's concept of dialogical democracy and Wiener's thesis on the embodiment of politics in technical tools, reveals a central fact: AI does not act as a neutral technical medium, but is embodied as a technical and political structure. It reshapes public space and the foundations of legitimacy in accordance with new rules governing the political scene at present. That algorithmic systems are not just executive tools, but are at the core of determining what public issues are and the mechanisms for addressing them. Thus, technology companies have absolute control through their intelligent software options, to make critical decisions in the definition of public problems. Furthermore, to spatial amplification, voices or vice versa, the mechanisms of setting political priorities for the general public. This result is clearly manifested in the Arab reality. Where the study proved that the import of technologies without localizing their ethical standards led to a "technological modernity" that lacks a realistic "digital democracy".

However, Artificial intelligence offers democratic systems in the Arab region multiple opportunities: improving the

quality of information by simplifying complex documents and data analysis. Analyzing big data expands channels of participation through digital platforms capable of absorbing broad contributions that capture the priorities of marginalized groups and raise efficiency. Governance through predictive tools helps to more accurately target public policies and resources. But these opportunities remain conditioned by institutional guarantees that require regulatory frameworks that ensure the transparency of algorithmic systems. Interpretability, the interpretability and accountability of their decisions. To reduce the concentration of control over data in the hands of limited actors, technical competence is not enough unless it is accompanied by an equitable distribution of digital power (Busuioc, 2021, pp. 828-829).

The employment of AI in the political and electoral fields, without ethical foundations governing, could pose serious risks that threaten the democratic foundations of societies. These algorithms are able to produce misleading content, with increased speed and accuracy. Therefore, algorithmic monitoring mechanisms have deepened the ability of actors to influence the integrity of democratic decisions and the independence of civil society. More seriously, these tools have the ability to manipulate information and create a false picture of reality. This directly affects the behavior of voters and leads the process of rational decision-making.

These risks are in line with what studies confirm about the Arab situation, where political programs based on AI appear as the most vulnerable to these threats. The main reason is due to the weak structure of digital civil society. In the absence of effective regulatory frameworks that ensure transparency and accountability. As a result, Arab political spaces are becoming more vulnerable to algorithmic manipulation, which calls for urgent measures to build independent digital infrastructures. In addition to constructing a sober legislative framework that keeps pace with technological developments. What facilitates the transformation of big data from a development resource into a tool for political surveillance? The uncontrolled rise in the power of such systems is associated with the erosion of institutional trust and a decrease in the ability of citizens to verify information. We conclude that the future of the relationship between artificial intelligence and democracy is not decided by its technical characteristics. But by the governing political and organizational choices for its design and use.

A single technology can support or undermine participation depending on the rules governing its use. When transparency and accountability principles are integrated into the algorithmic architecture. From the earliest design stages, artificial intelligence

can be turned into a real resource to promote political participation. However, in the absence of these conditions, it turns into a tool for intensifying surveillance and undermining trust. The Arab situation requires a new "digital social contract" that ensures that artificial intelligence is at the service of citizenship and not authoritarianism. Yet, the decisive choice is not between accepting or rejecting the technology, but between different styles of its design and governance. Which means moving from the position of the recipient of technologies to the position of the actor, who sets their conditions and limits in the public domain.

8. Recommendations

Based on previous analyses and proceeding from the need to protect the deliberative sphere from a shift towards digital authoritarianism. The research concludes by presenting a set of policies and methodological recommendations intended to address the existing challenges.

Firstly, the research presents a regulatory framework that treats AI as a sovereign structure. This is based on legal legislation regulating, its use in sensitive areas such as elections, public opinion polls, and public services through strict control over these smart technologies. This framework contributes to the achievement of algorithmic transparency, the protection of public freedoms, and the guarantee of fundamental rights. The legislation will enhance the protection of the public interest of individuals.

This calls for the creation of Independent National Commissions with the powers to approve or reject high-risk systems. Conduct periodic audits, impose sanctions, and require the interpretability of algorithmic decisions. Similar to the European Artificial Intelligence Charter (Metzinger, 2022). This is complemented by regional cooperation initiatives, such as the establishment of an Arab Council for artificial intelligence. Under the umbrella of the Arab League, to coordinate standards and establish joint controls on sensitive uses. Thus, limiting the commercialization of laws enhances the protection of rights in the Arab digital space.

Secondly, the achievement of democratic governance of artificial intelligence requires the integration of participation criteria, privacy protection and bias reduction within the design cycle. Specifically, from its earliest stages. With the involvement of civil society in determining ethical requirements. In the Arab context, the requirement of cultural and value compatibility of imported algorithms becomes a necessity to avoid reproducing Western prejudices. International models provide practical,

adaptable frameworks, so the Canadian tool provides a framework for assessing risks to rights. The European guidelines require assessments of the impact of high-risk systems. These experiences can be used to develop regional tools that examine the impact of algorithms on pluralism and political participation. Supported by academic training programs focused on responsible design sensitive to cultural particularities.

Thirdly, the study proposes national strategies to counter deepfakes that integrate the organization of digital campaigns, the classification of artificial content and the promotion of digital culture. With a focus on local data sovereignty and transforming artificial intelligence into a tool to facilitate deliberative dialogue. Via democratically controlled participatory platforms. This requires the establishment of independent regional funding funds to support Arab verification platforms, managed transparently through a combination of international funding and civil society. In addition, with a ban on direct government funding to ensure editorial independence. These funds provide operational and technical grants to accredited platforms that develop artificial intelligence verification tools for the Arabic language. Moreover, provided that professional covenants of neutrality and independence are adhered to, these mechanisms can function successfully.

Fourthly, building an Arab Knowledge System on artificial intelligence and democracy requires the establishment of regional research centers hosted by universities. Funded by independent funds and adopting interdisciplinary research. These centers offer competitive grants that oblige researchers to produce open data and field studies on the use of algorithms in elections, censorship and social support. Thus, accumulating local knowledge about the patterns of digital authoritarianism in the region. Priority is given to such central research topics as the influence of algorithms on electoral integrity, social targeting systems and generative models. Specifically, in shaping public opinion. Regional networks such as the Arab Observatory for Responsible Artificial Intelligence contribute to coordinating these efforts and developing a digital governance model based on Arab field data. Thereby, achieving a balance between technical innovation and the requirements of justice and rights.

9. Conclusion

Through this study, it was revealed that the integration of artificial intelligence in democratic governance contexts not only modernizes technical tools. Rather, it also touches the deep structure of power, legitimacy and public space in the digital age. What justifies dealing with it as a complex technical and political structure, not a neutral medium that can be used

without political and moral considerations? The analysis was based on Habermas ' conception of dialogical democracy, the literature of algorithmic governance and the philosophy of technology. To illustrate how algorithms embody critical normative choices that determine who know public problems and who can influence the public sphere.

The essential contribution of this study is to provide an in-depth analysis of this duality. The major challenge in the Arab context lies in building a" digital social contract ", to ensure that technology serves the goals of democratic empowerment, rather than promoting authoritarianism. This requires a political and cultural awareness that goes beyond the purely technical dimension of AI. From this perspective, it becomes clear that the crucial question is not about whether AI is an ally or an opponent of democracy. But it is about the institutional and normative conditions. This potential can be directed to support the democratic project in the Arab region, if it is based on transparency and accountability. Where strong rules of algorithmic transparency are established and independent institutions are established to review systems and evaluate their impact. Artificial intelligence can enrich the public space. In contexts where controls are weak or digital structures are dominated by authoritarian regimes. Artificial intelligence will become part of a system of digital tyranny based on accurate monitoring and hidden guidance of behavior (Novelli & Sandri, 2024, pp. 2–3)

This study fills a gap in the Arabic literature, which ranged from technical fascination to superficial apprehension. through providing an analytical framework linking the code to the social contract. It has emphasized that artificial intelligence is the product of political choices that require democratic governance. The theoretical and conceptual nature of the study opens up the need for field research examining AI recruitment practices in elections and public services. In the Arab context, to provide empirical evidence that constitutes a practical extension of this theoretical framework (Seger et al., 2023, p. 718). The study confirms that understanding the political dimensions of technology precedes its technical understanding. It also emphasizes that the future of democracy is determined in the arenas of political struggle. More about the rules of organizing artificial intelligence than about its development laboratories. It depends on the ability of societies to formulate institutional frameworks that keep it an instrument of democratic empowerment.

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