Ethics and Data Governance in Tunisian Societies: An Ethnographic Exploration of AI Ethics

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Abstract

The field of African Studies has increasingly recognised the importance of ethical considerations in data governance, particularly within the context of artificial intelligence (AI). In Tunisia, where AI is rapidly integrating into various sectors including healthcare and education, there is a need to explore how local communities perceive and respond to these technologies. The research employs ethnographic methods, including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. Data collection took place across multiple Tunisian cities over a period of six months, ensuring diversity in sample representation. Findings indicate that while there is significant interest in AI applications, particularly for improving healthcare outcomes, there are concerns about privacy violations and the potential misuse of personal data. Participants highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability in AI systems. The study concludes that fostering a culture of ethical AI use requires collaboration between technologists, policymakers, and community leaders to develop guidelines that respect local cultural norms and technological capabilities. Recommendations include establishing clear data protection regulations and promoting public education campaigns about the benefits and risks associated with AI technologies in Tunisia. Additionally, it is suggested that more research be conducted to understand how different societal groups perceive AI ethics. AI Ethics, Data Governance, Tunisian Society, Ethnography

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