

# Chapter 7

## Omani Public Governance in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter explores AI's transformative potential in public governance in Oman, focusing on enhancing efficiency, transparency, and citizen participation as part of Vision 2040. It examines grassroots AI initiatives within government departments, their impact on governance and service delivery, and challenges such as ethical issues and data privacy. Key objectives include assessing current AI applications, their effects on decision-making, barriers to adoption, and identifying best practices for sustained integration. The central research question addresses how AI can improve Omani governance in its unique socio-political context. Utilizing a descriptive research design and secondary data, the chapter aims to provide insights for policymakers on effectively tailoring AI applications to Oman's needs, ultimately enhancing citizen services and engagement.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

While public governance is changing, artificial intelligence has emerged as one of the key drivers that visibly changes the dimensions of government operation, citizen engagement, and service delivery. As AI technologies develop further, they have the potential to introduce efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement into the realm of governance in ways that have never been experienced before. The role of AI in public governance cannot be described modestly. It offers avenues for better decision-making, allows streamlined processes, and builds a culture of accountability. Governments all over the world are using data analytics, machine learning, and automation to pioneer new routes toward better service delivery and enhanced administrative efficiency. For Oman, the integration of AI goes hand in hand with its Vision 2040 and puts a premium on an ambitious digital transformation program designed to thrust the nation into a new era of governance and public service (Zuiderwijk, Chen & Salem, 2021)

The socio-political context is different in Oman; it merges tradition with modernization. At the center of it all, Oman stands at the junction: a nation prizing its cultural heritage and progressive aspirations alike. The government's undertaking in integrating AI into public governance reflects a bigger vision, one

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-9286-7.ch007

relating not only to modernizing its administrative framework but also to inclusivity and sustainability of the growth trajectory. This section shall explore the status of ongoing AI initiatives across Omani government departments and leverage some of the successful use cases and pilots that showcase the country's commitment to leveraging technology for the public good (Telecom, 2023). Various initiatives with differing complexity related to AI adoption in Oman were analyzed with a view to studying the impact on governance practices. Key objectives included assessing how AI influences decision-making processes, highlighting challenges-like ethical considerations and data privacy-and seeing opportunities that AI will offer for innovation in the public service. This chapter enables the extraction of actionable insight in ways both policymakers and scholars, as well as practitioners, can use in developing a more effective and responsive public sector by way of best practices of integrating AI into governance (Abdelfattah et al., 2024).

Understanding the role of AI in shaping the future of governance-a future progressively pervaded by technology-is imperative. The State of Oman: This chapter undertakes a critical examination of the government's journey toward an AI-driven future, signaling not just challenges lying ahead but also huge potential for positive transformation in public governance. We have tried, with this report, to add a little something in the area of deepened insights, so that by deep analysis together with recommendations, Oman can catch up with the technological revolution and make the governance framework sound, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of its citizens (Yigitcanlar et al., 2024). Artificial Intelligence perhaps is one of the most transformational forces that has swept almost all other sectors in the shortest duration. It really shapes the contours of public governance. Its potentials in data analysis, predictive modeling, and automation provide governments with the capacity for improving efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement. This would also mean that with AI, decision-making processes at the level of public institutions will be considerably streamlined and, furthermore, with a greater optimization of resources for the most effective service delivery and meeting complex social challenges (Zuiderwijk Chen & Salem, 2021). From this perspective, Oman represents a different socio-political environment that shapes the use of AI for governance. Literally situated at the juncture of tradition and modernity, Oman showcases a rich tapestry of cultural heritage and a commitment to stability with abiding interest in sustainable development. The Sultanate's model of governance focuses on inclusivity in the largest sense and community engagement. This provides something of a double-edged sword regarding opportunities and challenges with respect to integrating AI into its public systems. As modernization proceeds, Oman needs to understand how AI can be aligned with unique values and priorities going forward for the pursuit of effective governance and development of its people's well-being (UNCTAD, 2014).

The importance of this chapter lies in its response to the urgent need for governments worldwide to adopt modern technologies while upholding ethical standards and nurturing public trust. Focusing on Oman, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how AI can adapt to and integrate with the country's unique socio-political context, thereby enabling decision-makers to formulate evidence-informed policy decisions. It is hoped that these findings will serve as a valuable reference for government officials, relevant stakeholders, and scholars interested in technology and governance, contributing to a more efficient and responsive public sector in Oman.

The methodology employed in this chapter is descriptive; data will be drawn from an extensive literature review, articles, and reports. This chapter seeks to create a nuanced understanding of how AI is integrated into governance by reviewing existing literature. By compiling best practices, challenges, and opportunities, the chapter aims to draw insights that will inform future initiatives, particularly those

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