



Digital Democracy: Possibilities and Risks

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Abstract

Democracy maintains its power with its characteristics dating back to ancient Greece, renewed with the emergence of modern industrial societies, and still remaining the most legitimate system of government. Discussions on democracy and new pursuits are also affected by changes in the world. The 3rd industrial revolution, which was based on information-communication technologies, rapidly impacted all areas of life through computers, the internet and new communication technologies. The fact that the concept of the 4th industrial revolution started to be used in the 2010s shows that a new stage based on artificial intelligence has been reached. This study focuses on the political sphere in a rapidly digitalizing world. How does digitalization affect the political sphere? Can digital democracy overcome the loss of legitimacy in citizens' belief in classical democracy? Is digital democracy a form of direct democracy or does digitalization dominate the world through new technologies? Digital democracy claims to be an interactive, fast, potentially open, transparent, auditable, inexpensive democratic alternative that can function online and offline, made possible through media and digital tools. On the one hand, digital democracy is egalitarian, libertarian, and a transfer of power towards citizens, a system where the public can directly access decision-making mechanisms. However, it has risks such as digital divide and digital monitoring, as well as difficulties in establishing its legitimacy in the minds of the public. This study argues that digital democracy or public participation in the political system can be realized through digital tools and devices. However, in order for digital democracy to transfer power and authority to the people, it needs to overcome obstacles such as a secure cryptographic system, the legitimacy of digital voting in social life, widespread access to technology, and the reduction of economic inequalities. This study discusses the possible new situations that democracy will encounter in a digitalized world and the advantages and disadvantages of digital democracy versus representative democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, Digital Democracy, E-democracy, Digital Society, Electronic Party

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