

Political attitudes and participation among young Arab workers: a comparison of formal and informal workers in five Arab countries

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Plan

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Literature review
- 3 Data description
- 4 Empirical results
- 5 Conclusion



Motivations

- 1 High informality in Arab countries (50% of the total labour force (Keyrouz, 2016))
- 2 Informal workers needs and expectations still misunderstood by governments.
- 3 The importance of political participation for democracy transition.
- 4 Research gap in highlighting informal worker political participation/attitude.



Determinants of informality

- Dualist view of the labor market showing the "deep" segmentation of labor markets between the formal and informal sector (Do Soto 1970 Harris and Todaro 1970)
- Whether informality is a voluntary choice or a strategy of last resort (Gunther et al. 2012 Merouani et al 2018)
- Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of informal/formal sector workers (Ghalianni and Weinschelbaum 2011 Shehu and Nilsson 2014)
- Albadawi et al, (2008): Analysis of the informal labor its causes and consequences in arab countries.



Informality and politics

- Rudra (2002): The impact of informal labour on social security development and democratic politics in low or middle-income countries (India, Egypt, and Jordan)
- Campbell (2002): Senior citizens political participation.
- Thornton (2000): Informality and political participation for the case of Mexico.



Are Informal Workers Willing to Participate to Politics?



The survey instrument

Representative surveys covering 5 Arab countries

2000 Households in each of Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia (covering youth 16-29 years old)

- Focuses on youth workers political participation.
- Variables about socio-economic situation, behaviors and values.



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The first dependant variable: Involvement

Could you tell me if you belong to one of political party/Political movements that is not a political party ?

- ① Yes, as a sympathizer
- ② Yes, as a participant
- ③ Yes, as a donor
- ④ Yes, performing voluntary work
- ⑤ No
- ⑥ Never



The second dependant variable: Participation

How often did you participate in political party meetings or activities/electoral campaigns/politics via internet during the last 12 months?

- ① Every day
- ② More than once a week
- ③ About once a week
- ④ About once a month
- ⑤ A few times a year
- ⑥ Never



The third dependant variable: Talk politics

How often do you speak about the national political affairs/international political affairs/economic issues with parents, siblings, friends and colleagues?

- ① Regularly
- ② Often
- ③ Sometimes
- ④ Rarely
- ⑤ Never

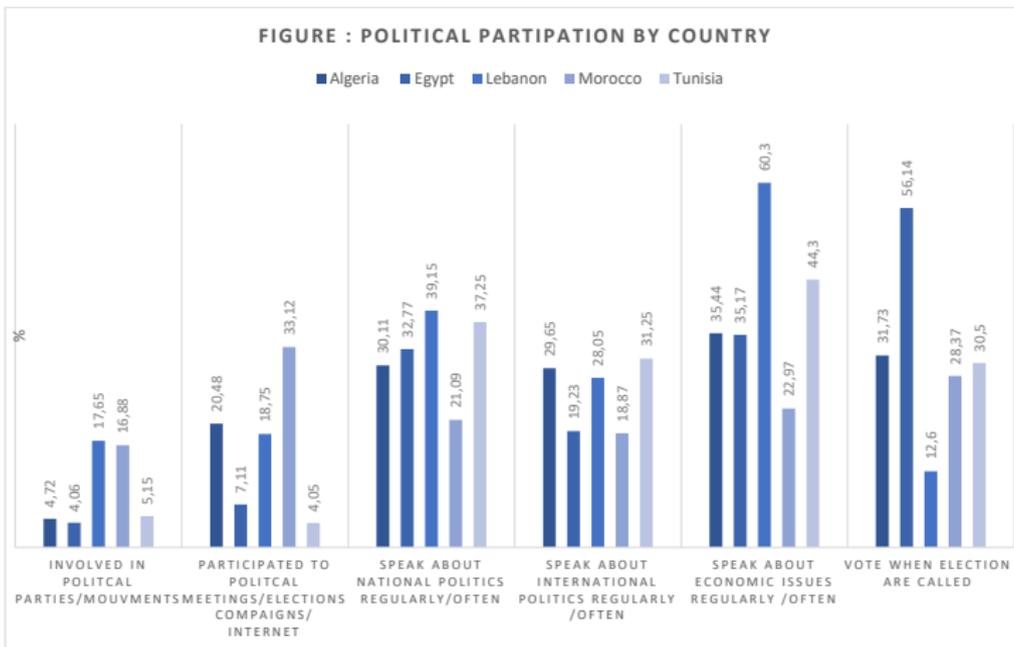
The forth dependant variable: Voting

Do you vote when elections are called?

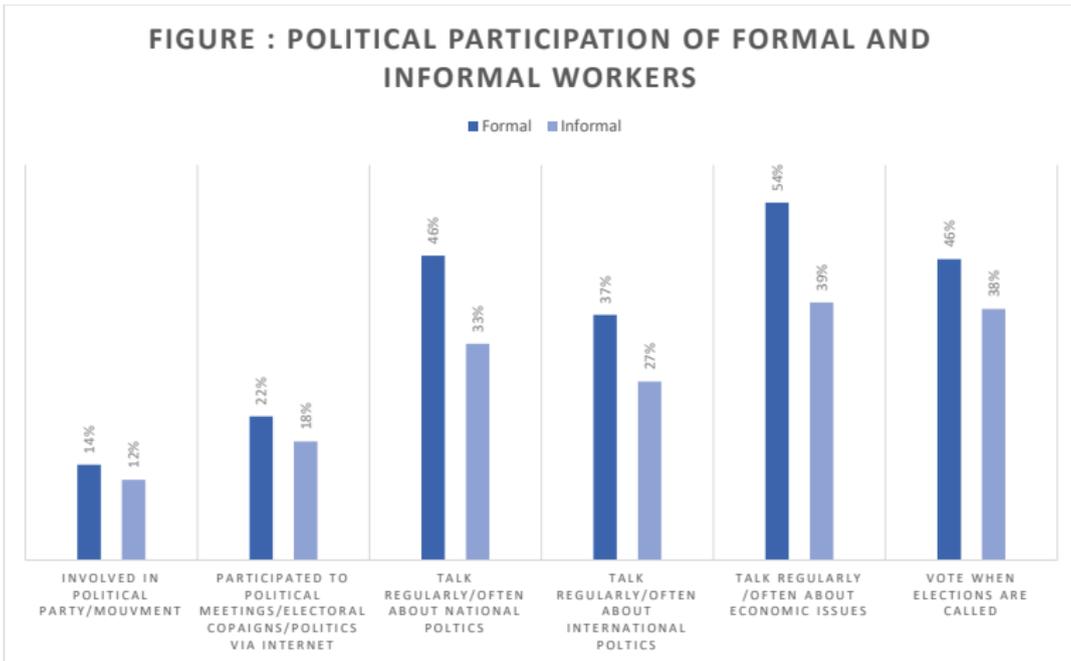
- ① Always
- ② Often
- ③ Sometimes
- ④ Rarely
- ⑤ Never



Summary results



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Econometric analysis



Econometric models (Weighted logit)

$$PP_i = \alpha * INF_i + \beta * JS_i + \gamma * CG_i + \delta * SD_i + \varepsilon_i$$

- PP: Political participation indexes
- INF: Informal worker
- JS: Job Satisfaction
- CG: Confidence in government
- SD: Socio demographics

The result of the logit model

Variables	Model A Involvement	Model B Participation	Model C Talk politics	Model D Voting
Informal	-	-	-	-
Job Satis- faction	N/A	-	0	-
Confidence in govern- ment	+	+	+	+
Male	0	+	+	+
Age	N/A	0	+	+
Education	+	N/A	+	N/A



0, +, /, - means positive impact of particular variable on probability of PP, while '0' indicates insignificant while 'N/A' indicates unavailable



The result of the logit model

Variables	Model A Involvement	Model B Participation	Model C Talk politics	Model D Voting
Married	N/A	0	+	+
Unemployed (Ref=emp)	0	+	0	-
Students	+	+	+	-
Inactive	0	+	0	-
Employee (ref=self- Emp)	-	-	-	0
Urban	+	+	+	-
Private sec- tor	+	N/A	+	N/A



0, '+', '-' means positive impact of particular variable on probability of PP, while '0' indicates insignificant while 'N/A' indicates unavailable



Discussion

- Challenging understudied, sensitive topic.
- Political participation should be made easy to women and to youth.
- Providing the needed information and removing the eventual barriers toward political participation
- Reminding people, especially informal workers, about the importance of political participation for democracy and good governance.
- Voting behavior should be treated separately from other political activities.



Comments very much appreciated!

