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THE FUTURE IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND GULF STATES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how artificial intelligence (AI) and digital transformation are reshaping organizational culture, with particular attention to the Middle East and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, where state-led national visions have accelerated adoption. The objective is to identify the cultural mechanisms—values, leadership paradigms, trust, and ways of working—through which AI functions as both a catalyst and a conduit for adaptive change, and to assess how these mechanisms are expressed in a region undergoing rapid, top-down and bottom-up digitalization. Methodologically, the paper adopts an integrative review and synthesis design, combining a structured review of peer-reviewed literature (2021–2026) with documentary analysis of national AI strategies and regional human-capital and CEO surveys covering Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Oman. Evidence is organized within a socio-technical framework linking AI drivers to cultural mediators and organizational outcomes. Results indicate that AI adoption is associated with measurable shifts toward data-driven decision-making, agile and learning-oriented norms, and a heightened salience of ethics and governance, while regional evidence shows exceptionally high workforce engagement—only 6–7% of employees in Saudi Arabia and the UAE never use AI at work, versus 23% globally—and a strong upskilling appetite. Persistent tensions include skills shortages, uneven scaling beyond pilots, and the need to reconcile automation with human-centric values and workforce nationalization. The study concludes that cultural transformation is not a by-product but a prerequisite of successful AI integration, and that change capacity, trust, and inclusive leadership are decisive. The paper offers a consolidated framework and a regionally grounded evidence base for leaders steering culture through the AI transition.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Digital transformation; Organizational culture; Gulf Cooperation Council; Change management; Digital leadership.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and motivation

Artificial intelligence (AI) has moved beyond a narrow concern with operational efficiency to become a force that reshapes the internal architecture of organizations. As AI systems become embedded in decision-making, workforce management, and strategic planning, organizations are compelled to adapt not only their structures and workflows but also their cultural norms, values, and leadership paradigms. Recent scholarship frames AI as both a catalyst and a conduit for adaptive cultural change, reimagining the traditional contours of work, collaboration, trust, and human–machine interaction. This reframing distinguishes the current wave of change from earlier digital transformation, which centered on digitizing existing processes and business models; AI instead restructures decision-making, redistributes authority, and reorganizes work across human and algorithmic actors.

Culture—the shared assumptions, values, and practices that guide behavior—mediates whether technological investment translates into performance. A recurring finding across sectors is that AI investment does not automatically yield superior outcomes; rather, its impact is conditioned by an organization's change capacity, its data-driven culture, and its capacity for organizational learning. Where these cultural foundations are weak, organizations encounter resistance, stagnation, and the risk of obsolescence; where they are strong, AI accelerates innovation, agility, and resilience. The central problem this paper addresses is therefore not whether AI matters, but through which cultural mechanisms its impact is realized, and how those mechanisms behave under conditions of rapid, state-sponsored adoption.

1.2 Why the Middle East and Gulf States

The Middle East, and the GCC states in particular, provides an especially instructive setting for studying these dynamics. Driven by national visions such as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, the UAE's National AI Strategy 2031, and Qatar National Vision 2030, the region has pursued AI and digital transformation with unusual speed and state backing. This produces a rare convergence of top-down policy ambition and bottom-up workforce enthusiasm, making the region a natural laboratory for observing how cultural transformation unfolds under accelerated adoption. Yet the region also confronts distinctive tensions: acute skills shortages, reliance on expatriate talent alongside nationalization policies, and the challenge of scaling AI beyond pilots while preserving human-centric and culturally grounded values. Studying the Gulf thus enriches a literature that has been dominated by North American, European, and East Asian cases.

1.3 Research objectives and questions

This paper pursues four objectives. First, it synthesizes the mechanisms through which AI and digital transformation reshape organizational culture. Second, it evaluates how these mechanisms manifest in the Middle East and Gulf States, drawing on national strategies and regional survey evidence. Third, it proposes an integrative, socio-technical framework that links AI drivers to cultural mediators and organizational outcomes. Fourth, it derives practical implications for leaders and policymakers steering culture through the AI transition. Correspondingly, the study is guided by three questions: (RQ1) Through which cultural mechanisms do AI and digital transformation reshape organizational culture? (RQ2) How are these mechanisms expressed in the GCC context, and with what tensions? (RQ3) What framework best integrates the evidence to guide leadership practice?

1.4 Structure of the paper

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on organizational culture, digital transformation, AI-driven change, and the regional context, and states the study's propositions. Section 3 describes the materials and methods. Section 4 presents results and discussion across global mechanisms and the Gulf evidence, introducing the integrative framework. Section 5 draws out theoretical and practical implications. Section 6 addresses limitations and a future research agenda. Section 7 concludes.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Organizational culture: foundations

Organizational culture is commonly understood as a layered system of shared assumptions, espoused values, and observable artifacts that shape how members perceive, think, and act. Classic frameworks distinguish surface-level artifacts from deeper values and taken-for-granted assumptions, and typological models differentiate cultures oriented toward control, competition, collaboration, and creativity. Culture is consequential because it functions as an informal coordination mechanism: it channels attention, legitimizes certain behaviors, and constrains others. In the context of technological change, culture operates as both an enabler and a source of inertia—capable of accelerating adoption

where values align with experimentation and learning, and of blocking it where prevailing assumptions privilege stability and hierarchical control.

For the purposes of this study, three cultural attributes are especially salient: adaptability (the capacity to reconfigure norms in response to environmental change), data orientation (the extent to which evidence rather than hierarchy governs decisions), and psychological safety and trust (the conditions under which members experiment, voice dissent, and collaborate with automated systems). These attributes recur, under various labels, across the digital transformation and AI literatures, and they form the conceptual bridge between technology and outcomes developed later in the paper.

2.2 From digitization to digital transformation

The literature increasingly separates three phenomena. Digitization converts analog information into digital form. Digitalization applies digital technologies to existing processes to improve efficiency. Digital transformation, by contrast, denotes a deeper reconfiguration of business models, value propositions, and organizational logics enabled by digital technologies. A consistent theme is that digital transformation is less a technological project than an organizational and cultural one: the binding constraint is rarely the technology itself but the organization's ability to change how it works, decides, and learns. This insight anticipates the AI literature's emphasis on change capacity and data-driven culture as the true levers of value.

2.3 AI as a distinct driver of cultural change

A growing body of work argues that AI represents a qualitative break from prior digital transformation. Where earlier waves digitized processes, AI becomes constitutive of organizational structure: it restructures decision-making, redistributes authority and accountability between human and algorithmic actors, and reorganizes the division of labor. Empirical studies using managerial samples report that AI integration significantly affects communication, collaboration, core values, and decision-making, and that managers broadly perceive AI as a critical enabler of digital transformation when managerial support and strategic alignment are present. Reviews and case analyses converge on the claim that AI fosters agile, learning-oriented, and ethically conscious cultures—but only where organizations deliberately align adoption with cultural evolution rather than treating culture as a residual.

The mechanism linking AI to performance is increasingly modeled explicitly. Work employing structural equation modeling finds that AI-enabled dynamic capability improves firm performance both directly and indirectly, through a data-driven culture and organizational learning; and that the change capacity of the organization moderates the relationship between technological complexity and adoption. Complementary research on human–AI skills shows that AI augments human capabilities—enhancing sensing, anticipation, and creativity in decision-making—with a digital organizational culture moderating the translation of those skills into innovation. Taken together, these studies support treating culture as the mediating and moderating variable through which AI investment becomes organizational value.

2.4 Leadership, trust, and the ethics of AI adoption

The reviewed literature foregrounds leadership as the proximate lever of cultural change. A recurrent motif is a shift in the leadership paradigm from controlling systems to empowering people, and from directive authority to the orchestration of human–machine collaboration. Trust is a second pivotal construct: as decision rights migrate toward algorithmic systems, employees' willingness to rely on, contest, and collaborate with AI depends on transparency, perceived fairness, and the presence of human oversight. Ethics and governance therefore move from the periphery to the center of culture, with responsible-AI principles—accountability, explainability, and human-in-the-loop control—becoming cultural artifacts in their own right. This ethical turn is not merely normative; it is instrumental, since trust deficits are among the most cited barriers to scaling AI beyond isolated pilots.

2.5 The regional context: AI and digital transformation in the GCC

Scholarship and policy analysis on the Gulf describe an unusually state-driven trajectory. National AI strategies across the six GCC members articulate ambitions to diversify away from hydrocarbon dependence and to position the region as a global AI hub, backed by sovereign-wealth investment and dedicated institutions such as national data and AI authorities and specialized universities. Socio-technical audits of the region raise a central question of alignment: whether investments in compute infrastructure are matched by an equally robust build-out of skills, incentives, and governance. This framing is directly relevant to organizational culture, because it locates the region's challenge not in technology acquisition but in the human and institutional systems that determine whether technology is absorbed productively.

Practitioner evidence adds texture. Regional human-capital analyses describe Gulf organizations balancing stability and agility—sometimes labeled "stagility"—through structured change management, skills-based workforce models, and inclusive talent strategies, while shifting technology investment toward augmenting rather than replacing human capabilities. Surveys report exceptionally high AI engagement among Gulf employees and a strong willingness to invest

in AI training, alongside confident, action-oriented leadership sentiment. At the same time, analyses caution that adoption remains uneven across countries and sectors, that many organizations are still in pilot or exploration phases, and that nationalization policies interact with skills shortages to shape distinctive dual-talent strategies.

2.6 Synthesis and propositions

Integrating these strands yields a coherent expectation. AI and digital drivers act on organizational outcomes not directly but through cultural mediators—leadership and change capacity; skills and data-driven culture; and trust, ethics, and governance. The Gulf context intensifies the drivers (through state-led investment and high workforce receptivity) while sharpening the mediating challenges (skills, scaling, and nationalization). On this basis the study advances three propositions. P1: AI adoption is associated with cultural shifts toward data orientation, agility, and learning. P2: The strength of cultural mediators, rather than the intensity of technological investment, governs whether adoption yields innovation and performance. P3: In the GCC, strong drivers and high receptivity coexist with mediating bottlenecks—skills, scaling, and talent nationalization—that condition outcomes. These propositions structure the analysis in Section 4.

3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

3.1 Research design

The study adopts an integrative review and synthesis design, appropriate for consolidating a fragmented, multidisciplinary evidence base and for generating a conceptual framework. Integrative review methods permit the combination of empirical and theoretical sources and the inclusion of diverse research designs, which suits a field spanning management, information systems, and public policy. The design proceeds in four stages: (i) a structured review of peer-reviewed literature; (ii) documentary analysis of national AI strategies and regional practitioner evidence; (iii) thematic coding against an a priori socio-technical scheme; and (iv) synthesis into an integrative framework and testable propositions.

3.2 Data sources and search strategy

Peer-reviewed sources were identified through academic databases and publisher platforms for the period 2021–2026, using combinations of the terms “artificial intelligence,” “digital transformation,” “organizational culture,” “data-driven culture,” “digital leadership,” and “change capacity.” For the regional component, the search was extended with “Gulf Cooperation Council,” “GCC,” “Middle East,” and the names of the six member states. Documentary sources comprised national AI strategies and government programs, together with regional human-capital and CEO surveys published by established professional-services and research organizations. Reference lists of key sources were screened to identify additional material (backward snowballing).

3.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Sources were included if they addressed the intersection of AI or digital transformation with organizational culture, workforce, or leadership; regional sources additionally had to provide evidence specific to one or more Middle Eastern or Gulf states. Sources were excluded if they treated AI in purely technical terms without organizational implications, if they lacked methodological transparency, or if they duplicated evidence already captured by a more authoritative source. Where practitioner surveys were used, preference was given to those reporting sample size, geography, and method.

3.4 Analytical framework and coding

Evidence was organized using a socio-technical systems perspective, which treats technology and the social organization of work as mutually shaping. Within this perspective, the analysis distinguished AI and digital drivers (national visions, investment, and tools), cultural mediators (leadership and change capacity; skills and data-driven culture; trust, ethics, and governance), and organizational outcomes (innovation, agility, resilience, and performance). Two rounds of coding were applied: first, sources were assigned to driver, mediator, or outcome categories; second, recurring relationships among categories were extracted to construct the framework in Figure 3. Coding was guided by the propositions stated in Section 2.6.

3.5 Rigor, reflexivity, and ethics

To enhance rigor, findings were triangulated across academic and practitioner sources, and quantitative claims were cross-checked against at least two independent sources where possible. The synthesis is interpretive, and the author’s practitioner vantage point in human-resources leadership is acknowledged as a source of both insight and potential bias; this is mitigated by anchoring claims in cited evidence and by reporting disconfirming signals (for example, uneven adoption and cautious sectors). Because the study synthesizes secondary evidence rather than collecting primary

human-subject data, it did not require ethical approval. Findings are reported with attention to the limitations of the underlying sources, including heterogeneity in sampling and measurement across surveys, discussed further in Section 6.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 AI as a driver of cultural change (RQ1, P1–P2)

Across the reviewed literature, a consistent picture emerges: AI reshapes organizational culture by altering communication, collaboration, core values, and decision-making, while fostering a culture oriented toward learning and innovation. Empirical work using managerial samples finds that AI integration significantly affects organizational culture and that managers broadly perceive AI as a critical enabler of digital transformation, provided that managerial support and strategic alignment are present. This supports proposition P1. Importantly, the transformation is qualitatively different from prior digitalization: rather than remaining an external tool, AI becomes constitutive of organizational structures, redistributing authority and accountability across human and algorithmic actors.

The evidence also clarifies why technology alone is insufficient, supporting proposition P2. Studies employing structural equation modeling show that AI-enabled dynamic capability improves firm performance both directly and indirectly, through a data-driven culture and organizational learning, and that change capacity moderates the relationship between technological complexity and successful adoption. Research on human–AI skills similarly shows that a digital organizational culture moderates whether AI-augmented capabilities translate into innovation. Culture is thus the mechanism that converts AI investment into performance—a finding that reframes cultural evolution as the heartbeat of digital transformation rather than its by-product.

4.2 The Middle East and Gulf States in focus (RQ2, P3)

The Gulf provides striking evidence of accelerated, state-led transformation. National visions have translated into concrete macro-economic expectations: AI is projected to contribute close to 14% of GDP in the UAE and about 12.4% in Saudi Arabia by 2030, with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar expected to gain roughly US$45.9bn, or 8.2% of their combined GDP (Table 1, Figure 1). These projections are backed by substantial sovereign investment and by institution-building such as national data and AI authorities and dedicated universities. Figure 5 situates these developments on a decade-long policy timeline, illustrating the compressed pace from vision launch to operational deployment.

Table 1: National AI strategies and projected AI value in the Gulf States by 2030.

Country	Flagship strategy / vision	Projected AI value by 2030
Saudi Arabia	Vision 2030; Digital Transformation Program; SDAIA / Humain	~12.4% of GDP (US$135.2bn)
United Arab Emirates	National AI Strategy 2031; AI Cabinet adviser (2026)	~14% of GDP
Qatar	Qatar National Vision 2030; national AI strategy	Part of ~8.2% combined-GDP bloc
Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar (combined)	Sector AI programs in finance, health, logistics	~US$45.9bn (8.2% combined GDP)

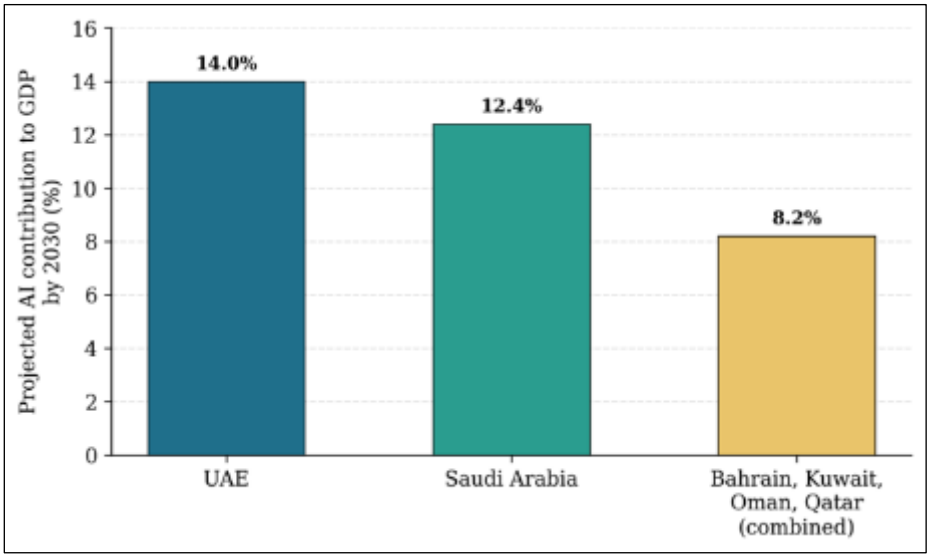

Figure 1: Projected contribution of AI to GDP by 2030 across the Gulf States, expressed as a share of national or combined GDP.

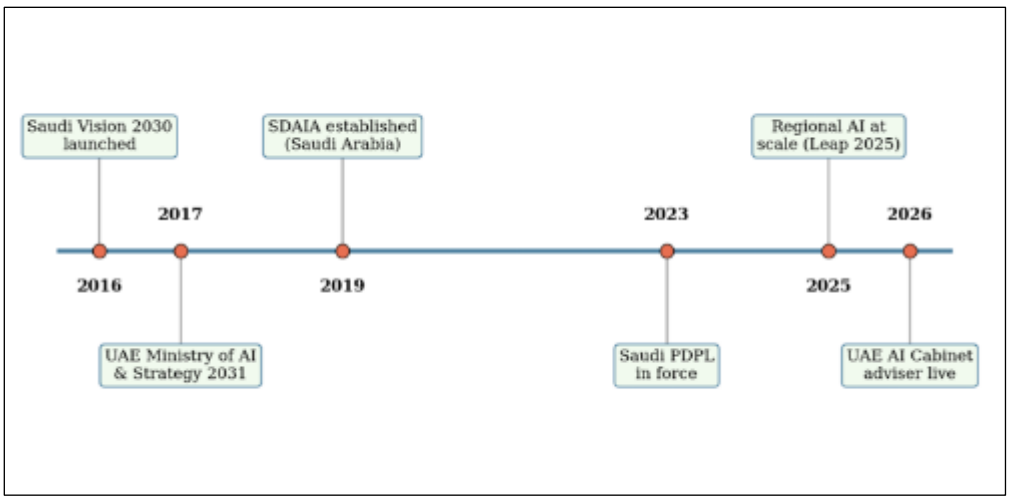

Figure 2: Illustrative timeline of selected AI and digital-transformation milestones across the Gulf States (2016–2026).

What distinguishes the region culturally is the convergence of top-down ambition and bottom-up enthusiasm. Workforce engagement is exceptionally high: only about 7% of UAE employees and 6% in Saudi Arabia report never using AI at work, compared with roughly 23% globally, and around two-thirds of workers in the UAE and 70% in Saudi Arabia indicate they would accept lower pay in exchange for robust AI training (Figure 2). This appetite for upskilling signals a learning-oriented culture unusually receptive to AI, giving leaders a foundation on which to build and lending strong support to proposition P1 in the regional setting.

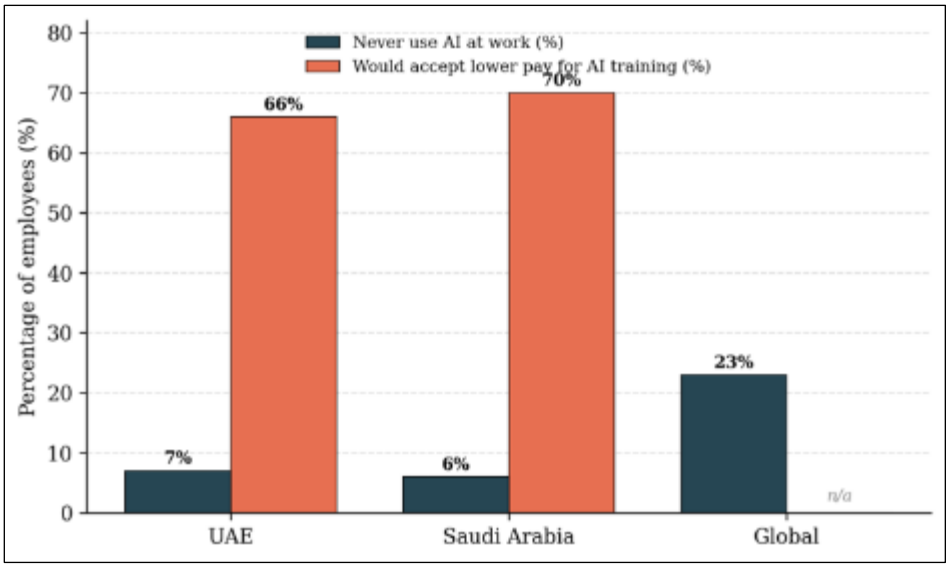

Figure 3: Workforce AI engagement in the Gulf compared with the global baseline: employees who never use AI at work, and willingness to trade pay for AI training. The global training figure was not reported in the source.

At the same time, regional evidence reveals the mediating bottlenecks anticipated in proposition P3. Adoption remains uneven: while a minority of organizations—around one in five in the UAE—use AI across multiple functions, many across the GCC remain in pilot or exploration phases, and financial services in particular display a more cautious trajectory (Figure 4). Skills shortages are acute, prompting reliance on expatriate talent even as nationalization policies such as Saudization seek to expand local employment; organizations increasingly adopt dual-talent strategies that blend local and foreign expertise. Leadership sentiment, however, is confident and action-oriented: a large majority of Saudi CEOs express readiness to deploy AI responsibly, above global averages, supported by national governance initiatives (Table 2).

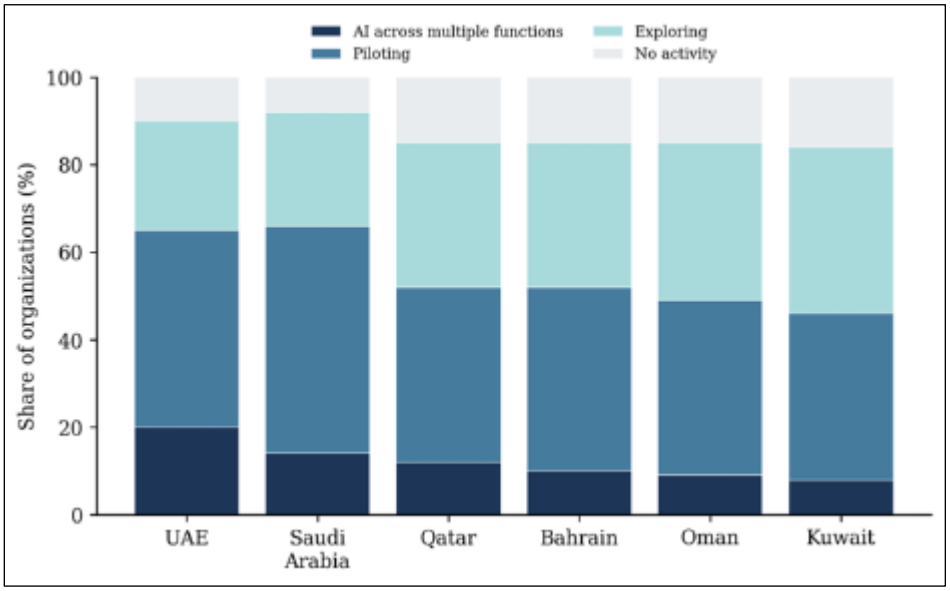

Figure 4: Illustrative distribution of AI-adoption maturity across GCC states, synthesized from regional reporting; values are indicative rather than precise measurements.

Table 2: Cultural mediators of AI-driven transformation and their regional signals.

Cultural mediator	Observed shift under AI	Regional (GCC) signal
Leadership & change capacity	From controlling systems to empowering people; change capacity moderates adoption	84% of Saudi CEOs report readiness to deploy AI responsibly
Skills & data-driven culture	Rising demand for data, coding, and adaptive soft skills; learning orientation	~66% (UAE) and 70% (KSA) would trade pay for AI training
Trust, ethics & governance	Heightened salience of responsible AI, transparency, human-in-the-loop	Data-protection laws and national AI authorities established

4.3 A comparative view across GCC states

Although the GCC is often treated as a bloc, meaningful variation exists across members (Table 3). The UAE stands out for more advanced deployment and for institutional experimentation, including the introduction of an AI advisory member to its Cabinet. Saudi Arabia, by contrast, presents the largest absolute base of organizations, with many in pilot or exploration phases reflecting the breadth of transformation under Vision 2030, and with acute attention to reconciling a skills gap with Saudization. Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and Kuwait exhibit more measured adoption profiles, emphasizing sector-specific applications in finance, healthcare, and logistics. This heterogeneity matters for culture: the dominant cultural challenge shifts from scaling beyond leading firms (UAE) to closing skills and talent-localization gaps (Saudi Arabia) to building pipelines at a measured pace (smaller states).

Table 3: Comparative snapshot of AI adoption and cultural tensions across the Gulf States.

Dimension	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait
Strategic anchor	AI Strategy 2031; AI Cabinet adviser	Vision 2030; Humain; SDAIA	National visions; sectoral AI programs
Adoption maturity	~20% use AI across multiple functions	Large base in pilot/exploration; scaling fast	More measured adoption profiles
Workforce signal	7% never use AI; ~66% trade pay for training	6% never use AI; ~70% trade pay for training	Rising demand for digital and soft skills
Key tension	Scaling beyond leading firms	Skills gap; Saudization vs. expatriate talent	Talent pipelines; measured pace

4.4 An integrative framework (RQ3)

Synthesizing the evidence yields the socio-technical pathway depicted in Figure 3. AI and digital drivers—national visions, investment, and accessible tools—do not act on performance directly. Their effects are channeled through three cultural mediators: leadership and change capacity; skills and a data-driven culture; and trust, ethics, and governance. Where these mediators are well developed, organizations realize outcomes of innovation, agility, resilience, and improved performance; where they are weak, the same drivers produce resistance and stalled pilots. The Gulf evidence maps cleanly onto this framework: strong drivers and high workforce receptivity are being matched, with varying success, by investments in leadership, skills, and governance.

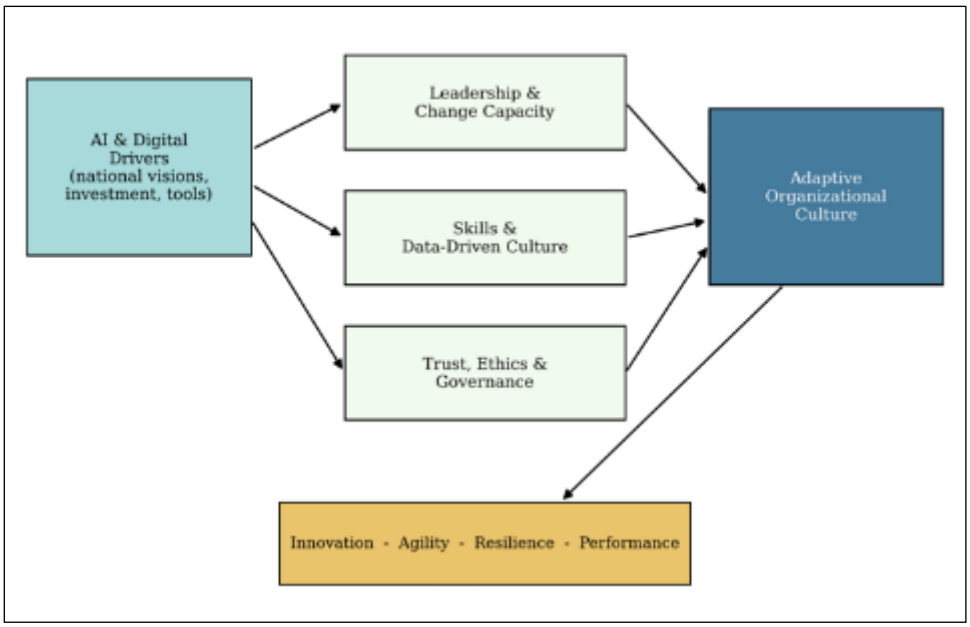

Figure 5: An integrative socio-technical framework linking AI and digital drivers to organizational outcomes through cultural mediators.

4.5 Discussion: reconciling ambition with capability

The results collectively suggest that the Gulf's distinctive advantage—an unusual convergence of state ambition and workforce receptivity—does not by itself guarantee transformation. The same evidence that shows near-universal AI engagement also shows that most organizations remain short of scaled, multi-function deployment, and that cautious sectors lag. This is precisely what the framework predicts: drivers are necessary but not sufficient, and outcomes hinge on the mediators. The policy implication is that the marginal return to further compute or tool investment is likely lower than the return to strengthening leadership, skills, and governance—the human and institutional systems that absorb technology. For culturally grounded organizations in the region, the additional task is to reconcile automation with human-centric values and with nationalization objectives, so that efficiency gains do not erode the social legitimacy on which sustained adoption depends.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Theoretical implications

The synthesis reinforces a shift in how the field should treat culture: not as a soft residual but as the explanatory core of AI value creation. By positioning leadership and change capacity, skills and data-driven culture, and trust, ethics, and governance as mediators between drivers and outcomes, the framework offers a parsimonious structure that can be operationalized and tested. It also contributes a regional extension: the Gulf case demonstrates that even under exceptionally favorable drivers, mediating capabilities remain decisive, suggesting that the mediator-centric view generalizes beyond the Western contexts in which it was largely developed.

5.2 Practical implications for leaders

For practitioners—particularly human-resources and transformation leaders in the Gulf operating under compressed timelines—the priority is to convert high workforce enthusiasm into durable capability. Four actions follow from the analysis: invest in inclusive, empowering leadership that orchestrates human–machine collaboration rather than merely directing it; institutionalize structured change management so that pilots scale into multi-function deployment; build data-driven and learning-oriented norms through sustained upskilling that meets the region's evident appetite for training; and embed responsible-AI governance—transparency, fairness, and human-in-the-loop oversight—as visible cultural artifacts that build the trust required for scaling.

5.3 Policy implications

For policymakers, the evidence argues for rebalancing attention from infrastructure toward the human and institutional systems that absorb it. Coordinated investment in skills pipelines, incentives that reward experimentation, and coherent governance regimes will likely yield higher returns than further compute alone. Reconciling nationalization objectives

with acute skills shortages calls for dual-talent strategies that pair local capability-building with selective expatriate expertise and knowledge transfer, so that localization strengthens rather than constrains transformation.

6 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Several limitations qualify the findings. First, the study synthesizes secondary and largely cross-sectional evidence with heterogeneous sampling and measurement; practitioner surveys in particular vary in method and geography, so quantitative figures should be read as indicative rather than definitive, and Figures 4 and 5 are illustrative syntheses rather than precise measurements. Second, the integrative design, while suited to framework-building, does not establish causal effects. Third, the regional focus, though a strength, limits generalization to other emerging contexts. Fourth, the author's practitioner vantage point, though mitigated through triangulation, introduces interpretive bias.

These limitations define a future research agenda. Priority should be given to longitudinal, sector-specific, and primary studies within individual Gulf states that measure the mediating pathways directly—operationalizing change capacity, data-driven culture, and trust, and linking them to scaled adoption and performance. Comparative designs across GCC members would test the heterogeneity documented here, and studies of nationalization–automation trade-offs would illuminate a tension distinctive to the region. Experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations of leadership and governance interventions would move the field from association toward causal guidance.

7 CONCLUSION

This study set out to clarify how AI and digital transformation are reshaping organizational culture and to ground that analysis in the distinctive context of the Middle East and Gulf States. The synthesis shows that AI is not merely a tool bolted onto existing organizations but a force that reconfigures values, leadership, decision-making, and the distribution of authority. Its benefits are realized only when mediated by a receptive culture: change capacity, a data-driven and learning orientation, and trust anchored in ethics and governance determine whether investment becomes innovation or stalls in resistance.

The Gulf evidence is instructive precisely because it combines exceptional ambition with exceptional receptivity. National visions have produced large projected economic gains and near-universal workforce engagement with AI, alongside a strong appetite for upskilling. Yet the region also illustrates the limits of enthusiasm without capability: uneven scaling, skills shortages, and the need to align automation with human-centric and nationalization objectives. The proposed socio-technical framework offers a consolidated way to read these dynamics and to guide intervention, and the comparative view shows that the dominant cultural challenge differs meaningfully across GCC members.

The significance of the study lies in reframing cultural transformation as a prerequisite rather than a consequence of successful AI integration, and in assembling a regionally grounded evidence base that has been largely fragmented. For leaders steering culture through the AI transition, the message is clear: the decisive investments are in people, leadership, and governance—the cultural mediators that turn technological ambition into durable organizational value.

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