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Certain Knowledge of Administrative Decisions Issued by Artificial Intelligence Systems in the Public Sector: a Comparative Analysis³

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Abstract

This paper aims to elucidate the matter of certain knowledge pertaining to administrative decisions, those issued by artificial intelligence. It also clarifies the position of the administrative judiciary with regard to the adoption of this presumption and through a comparative analysis of administrative judicial applications in Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco. The text addresses the most significant evidence for achieving certain knowledge of an administrative decision – and thereby initiating the appeal period against the appellant. The question at hand is whether the administrative judiciary applies the traditional theory of certain knowledge to its counterpart issued by artificial intelligence systems, especially after its inclusion in Jordanian Administrative Judiciary Law No. 27 of 2014. This paper is based on a comparative descriptive analytical methodology exploring the Jordanian, Egyptian and Moroccan laws.

Keywords: certain knowledge, artificial intelligence, administrative decision, public sector.

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Parę uwag o decyzjach administracyjnych wydawanych przez systemy sztucznej inteligencji w sektorze publicznym: Analiza porównawcza⁴

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu wyjaśnienie kwestii pewnej wiedzy odnoszącej się do decyzji administracyjnych wydawanych przez sztuczną inteligencję. Wyjaśnia również stanowisko sądownictwa administracyjnego w odniesieniu do przyjęcia tego domniemania oraz poprzez analizę porównawczą wniosków sądownictwa administracyjnego w Jordanii, Egipcie i Maroku. Tekst odnosi się do najważniejszych dowodów pozwalających na uzyskanie pewnej wiedzy o decyzji administracyjnej – a tym samym na rozpoczęcie okresu odwoławczego przeciwko skarżącemu. Pytanie brzmi, czy sądownictwo administracyjne stosuje tradycyjną teorię pewnej wiedzy do jej odpowiednika wydanego przez systemy sztucznej inteligencji, zwłaszcza po włączeniu jej do jordańskiej ustawy o sądownictwie administracyjnym nr 27 z 2014 roku. Niniejszy artykuł opiera się na porównawczej opisowej metodologii analitycznej badającej przepisy jordańskie, egipskie i marokańskie.

Słowa kluczowe: pewna wiedza, sztuczna inteligencja, decyzja administracyjna, sektor publiczny.

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Badania wykorzystane w artykule nie zostały sfinansowane przez żadną instytucję.

Introduction

After transitioning to electronic administration, the Jordanian administration began adopting algorithmic processing systems that were integrated with administrative activity. This led to the development of algorithmic – or intelligent – administrative decision-making, which is made using an automated system called "administrative decision-making programme". This programme is designed to process data entered by a technical employee who monitors the programme. The decision is then issued based on the data provided. The automated administrative decision--making is one of the most important tools available to the administration because it has legally binding force and can impact the rights and freedoms of individuals. Therefore, it is essential for individuals to have knowledge of these decisions to understand their legal position. The development of technology has affected the two means of access to this knowledge – publishing and reporting, and has also impacted the way knowledge is acquired. Since knowledge is acquired through personal effort and without interference from the administration, it is important to have a clear understanding of the automated administrative decision-making that is processed by an automated system.

The concept of certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions and its conditions

This matter is divided into two sections. Firstly, the definition of certain knowledge and its content. Secondly, conditions for certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions.

Defining certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions and its content

In defining certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions and its content, it should be noted that this knowledge can be applied to all means of enforcing administrative decisions, such as reporting, publishing, and certain knowledge. The purpose of announcing a decision is to achieve certain knowledge of it. However, it is not the broad meaning of certain knowledge that the authors are referring

to here. Rather, the authors mean knowledge that is achieved through evidence, and evidence that the judiciary decides is sufficient to achieve conclusive knowledge of the content of the decision and its contents.⁵ The goal of communicating and publishing the decision is to ensure that the concerned party understands the content of the decision.

There are several definitions of certain knowledge in legal and administrative practice. The addressee of the decision must have knowledge of it with certainty and without any doubt or suspicion. This knowledge must include all the elements of the administrative decision that would affect the concerned person's position. It should also be proven at a specific date.⁶

According to Raed Asfour, the term "conclusively proving" refers to proving that the person concerned was aware of the content and implications of the administrative decision, through evidence that verifies their knowledge, such as publication or notification. The relevant administrative authorities are responsible for verifying the adequacy of the evidence, which then leads to the expiration of the deadline for appealing the decision⁷.

According to Suleiman Al-Tamawi⁸, the term "notification" refers to the process by which a decision is conveyed to individuals in a manner other than through administration. Meanwhile, Abdullah Talbah⁹ defined "notification" as the act of providing conclusive evidence that the decision has been communicated to the concerned party, using means other than publication and announcement.

After analysing the definitions, the authors can infer that they all revolve around the same meaning, which is that having certain knowledge of an administrative decision grants the right to appeal it, even if the person wasn't informed or the decision wasn't published. According to researchers, certain knowledge of an automated administrative decision implies that the concerned party is aware of all the aspects and content of the decision issued by the automated system - and this affects their legal status in a real and definitive way without any ambiguity and leads to the start of the appeal period.

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M. Al-Qurashi, General Rules for Determining the Date of a Cancellation Suit, Arab Center for Publishing,

A. Moneim Khalifa, Evidence before the Administrative Court, 1st edition, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Jami'i, 2008, p. 163. See also M. Atallah, Proof by Evidence in Administrative Law and Islamic Law, PhD dissertation, Zagazig University, Egypt 2018, p. 283. See also M. Nuwaiji, The Certain Science of Administrative Decision, 1st edition, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya, Egypt 2008, p. 192.

R. Asfour, The Theory of Certain Knowledge of Administrative Decisions and Its Application in the Palestinian Administrative Judiciary, Master's Thesis, Islamic University, Palestine 2019, p. 44.

S. Al-Tamawi, The General Theory of Administrative Decisions, 1st edition, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Egypt 1957, p. 440.

A. Talbah, *Administrative Law*, 2nd edition, Damascus University Press, Syria 1980, p. 237.

At the legislative level, comparative laws state that administrative decisions must be published and announced to ensure that the concerned parties have knowledge of them. In Morocco, Article 23 of Law 90-41 for the Moroccan administrative courts stipulates that "requests to annul decisions issued by the authorities must be submitted within a period of sixty days starting from the publication or notification of the decision requested to be annulled to the person concerned...". Meanwhile, in Jordan, the Administrative Judiciary Law No. 27 of 2014 added the presumption of certain knowledge in the ruling on notification, contrary to the previous Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice law, which only specified the means of publication and notification.

Some argue that this method of determining certain knowledge may not be consistent with regulating appeals, as it may waste the rights of individuals if the decision is not published or notified. However, the authors agree with the adoption of certain knowledge, as it helps the administrative judiciary, and the legislator did not specify the means of proving it, leaving administrative judges to determine the appropriate method.

On the judicial level, the Jordanian administrative judiciary defined certain knowledge as "...the knowledge of the concerned party about the content of the decision and its reasons..., and it must be real, not speculative or hypothetical." 11

One of the benefits of this theory is that the knowledge of a contested automated administrative decision can be used to calculate the deadline for filing an administrative lawsuit instead of relying on publication or announcement. If the concerned party doesn't have access to publication or announcement, the deadline for filing the lawsuit will remain open until they have conclusive knowledge of the decision and its contents.¹²

Conditions for certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions

In order for certain knowledge to be taken into account in calculating the time limit for appealing an administrative decision, the Jordanian administrative judiciary made sure that three conditions have to be met.¹³

R. Muhammad Saim Ahmed, Management Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Administrative Decision Making, Master's Thesis, Middle East University, Jordan 2022, p. 113.

Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, No. 221, 1989, Qararak Publications.

H. Al-Kasasbeh, Means of Evidence before the Administrative Judiciary, PhD dissertation, Cairo University, Egypt 2019, p. 149. See also R. Fouda, The Legal System for the Appointment in the Cancellation Case, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya, Egypt 2011, p. 124.

Decision of the Supreme Court of Justice, No. 223, year 2002, Journal of the Jordanian Bar Association, issues 3, 2, 1, 2003, p. 115.

FIRST: The knowledge of the decision must be real, not speculative or hypothetical

It is crucial to prove beyond any doubt, assumption or negative probability that the concerned party has knowledge of the smart administrative decision issued. This condition has been confirmed by the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court:14 "...and that the certain knowledge that takes the place of reporting must be certain, conclusive and real knowledge, not speculative or hypothetical, and that the knowledge on which the Administrative Court based its contested ruling was based on mere conjecture and assumption and is not considered certain knowledge..."15

It is crucial that the individual concerned gains knowledge of the decision themselves. In other words, if anyone else is aware of the decision, it cannot be considered the individual's knowledge, even if the third party in question is close to the individual. This was asserted by the Jordanian administrative judiciary, emphasising the importance of personal knowledge of decisions: "... the plaintiff's son is an employee in the Ministry of Agriculture and is informed regarding authorisation decisions, it is not sufficient to consider the petitioner personally aware of the decision with certainty, because the notification or certain knowledge must be real and not speculative or hypothetical..."¹⁶

SECOND: Knowledge of the administrative decision must be comprehensive

In order for a concerned party to fully understand their legal status, they must have comprehensive knowledge of all the elements of a decision, including its form, jurisdiction, location, reason, and purpose. It is not acceptable to only know parts of the decision or certain paragraphs, ¹⁷ as this is insufficient. In order for the appeal period to begin, the concerned party must be aware of the entirety of the administrative decision and its contents.¹⁸

The Jordanian administrative judiciary held that "...if there is conclusive evidence, in accordance with the requirements of the circumstances and nature of the dispute, that the concerned party knew of the decision with certainty and not hypothetically,

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S. Sadiq, Time to File the Cancellation Suit, 1st edition, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Egypt 1969, pp 137-139. See also K. Kashkish, The date of the annulment lawsuit in the judiciary of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, Yarmouk Research Journal, Humanities and Social Sciences Series, Yarmouk University, 2006, pp. 643 et seg. See also Y. Al-Mutairi, Certain Knowledge of Administrative Decisions, "Judicial Research Summaries Series, Saudi Arabia" 2016, 13, pp. 17 et seq.

The court's decision Jordanian Higher Administrative Administration, No. 200, of 2018.

Decision of the Supreme Court of Justice, No. 89, year 1979.

R. Al-Adwan, Enforcement of Administrative Decisions against Individuals, Master's Thesis, Middle East University, Jordan 2012, p. 61.

A. Musa, The Theory of Evidence in Administrative Law, PhD dissertation, Cairo University, 1976, p. 439.

so that it includes all the contents of the decision and its meaning, then in this case the appeal period must be calculated from the date of this knowledge."¹⁹

The Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court argued that "...the appellant submitted a summons requesting a copy of the decision including the removal of his name from the union's records. This is not considered certain knowledge that negates ignorance, as certain knowledge requires knowledge of all the contents of the decision, its inclusions, elements, and reasons that called for its issuance, so that he can determine its location or its legal status with regard to the decision is final..."

The Moroccan administrative judiciary believes that a decision cannot be considered complete if it contains incorrect information or if there is any ambiguity or doubt about the intended person. The decision must be free from any kind of error and should clearly address all the basic elements of the case.²¹

THIRD: It must be proven that certain knowledge occurred at a specific time

It is important to precisely specify the date of knowledge in order to calculate the start of the appeal period.²² This requirement exists because certain knowledge might not become a material fact, and hence its effect may not be considered in force. Therefore, it is crucial to prove the date of the appeal on a specific date. If this condition is not met, it leads to the administration's inability to defend itself against the non-acceptance of the case simply because it was filed after the deadline for its legal basis had passed.²³

The Rabat Administrative Court of Appeal confirmed this in its ruling, which stated: "...but contrary to what the appellant party maintains, what is proven from the file documents confirms the appellant's certain knowledge of the contested decision, its content, and the party that issued it in a way that eliminates all ignorance of its elements and components since 11/5/2005 The date on which he obtained an exact copy of the decision, which makes his claim submitted on 6/18/2007 outside the legal deadline, which is what the appealed ruling correctly noted, so it was necessary to uphold it..."²⁴

Supreme Court of Justice Decision, No. 4, 1979, Journal of the Jordanian Bar Association, No. 2, 1980, p. 279.

²⁰ Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 307, 2018.

Decision of the Moroccan Supreme Council, No. 218, dated 6/29/1989.

F. Al-Shawabkeh, The Theory of Certain Knowledge in the Judgment of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, "Notebooks of Politics and Law" 2013, 9, University of Kasdi Ouargla, pp. 301–302.

²³ Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 47736, session 11/23/1997.

Ruling of the Administrative Court of Appeal in Rabat, No. 1872, 9/16/2009.

The position of the administrative judiciary and jurisprudence regarding the application of certain knowledge to smart administrative decisions

The position of the administrative judiciary on adopting certain knowledge

There are different views about the nature of scientific research in the Arab world. Some consider it as a necessary step towards developing a clear and legally recognised body of knowledge, while others view it as a transition between theoretical knowledge and official knowledge that is only recognised through publication or notification²⁵. Additionally, some believe that the Arab Council tends to favour official knowledge over semi-official scientific reporting when making decisions.²⁶

The Egyptian Council of State has been using the presumption of certain knowledge as a way to calculate the deadline for appeal, by equating it with publication and announcement, since its establishment.²⁷ Meanwhile, it continues to apply the presumption of certain knowledge widely, but in a strict manner.²⁸

Dr. Suleiman Al-Tamawi commented regarding the strictness of the Egyptian State Council that "anyone who follows the judiciary of the Egyptian State Council, whether before or after the establishment of the Supreme Administrative Court, notices the extreme strictness with which the State Council surrounds the presumption of certain knowledge. The administrative judiciary has refused to take this approach if any doubt arises." It cannot be assumed that the appellant had knowledge of the promotion decision simply because it was published in a newspaper. The possibility of his knowledge is strong, but not certain. The fact that it was published does not lead to suspicion of his knowledge as he may not have seen the newspapers, or the decision may have been hidden from him. Therefore, it is not definite that he knew about it on a specific date. As a result, it is reasonable to consider this as a principle for the validity of a promise made to him.²⁹

One of the applications that confirmed this was the Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court, which went on to say, "... however, it serves as a substitute for an announcement, even if this announcement did not actually occur. However, the knowledge on which this effect can be arranged in terms of the validity of the

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A. Al-Jawhari, Law and Administrative Decision in the Period Between Issuance and Month, PhD dissertation, Cairo University, 1988, p. 68. See also A. Muhammad Effendi, The role of the administrative judge in evidence (PhD dissertation), Assiut University, Egypt 2015, p. 498.

K. Al-Zubaidi, The Theory of Certain Science in Jurisprudence and Administrative Judiciary, "Journal of Sharia and Law Studies" 2017, 34(1).

M. Nasr Mohamed, Al-Wafi on the authority of proof by evidence and its applications in administrative law, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Arabiyya, Egypt 2014, p. 631.

²⁸ Ruling of the Egyptian Administrative Court, session of December 6, 1953, Group S8, p. 191.

S. Al-Tamawi, The Administrative Judiciary, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Egypt, 1976, p. 596.

deadline set for filing the cancellation lawsuit must be definite knowledge, not speculative or hypothetical, and that it should include all the elements on the basis of which the concerned party can determine his legal position in relation to this decision... The deadline shall not apply to him except from the day on which it is proven that this certain knowledge has been established..."³⁰

In another ruling, "...the theory of certain knowledge is a theory created by the administrative judiciary, and its meaning is that if the concerned party knows the content of the administrative decision and its contents with real and certain knowledge, it takes the place of publication and announcement, and from the date of proving that knowledge, the deadline for appealing the cancellation begins..."³¹

Moroccan jurisprudence has followed the same path as the Egyptian administrative judiciary in adopting this presumption. The Administrative Court of Casablanca has provided examples of this: "...certain knowledge of the content of the decision and the body that issued it, takes the place of notification, in calculating The deadline for appealing the cancellation..." (Ruling of the Casablanca Administrative Court, No. 04/18, 2010, unpublished).

The Moroccan Supreme Council also supported this presumption in one of its rulings, stating that "...certain knowledge of the administrative decision takes the place of its notification and produces the same effects, and can be inferred from any fact or presumption that denies ignorance of it, provided that this knowledge is focused on the content of the decision, its elements, and its source..."³²

The administrative judiciary in Jordan adopted the same practice as the Moroccan and Egyptian judiciary. Its judiciary approved the adoption of this method, and the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice said: "...decisions are not announced or published, so the deadline does not apply to the appellant unless he knows with certainty about the decision." ³³

It also ruled, "...the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court has established that certain knowledge of the contested decision is considered a means that takes the place of notification with regard to the beginning of the deadline for appeal by cancellation, given that notification is a means of knowledge, and if knowledge of something else is achieved, knowledge takes its place..."³⁴

The Supreme Administrative Court was established in accordance with Administrative Judiciary Law No. 27 of 2014. It followed the precedent set by the previous

³⁰ Supreme Administrative Court Egyptian, No. 1113, 1965, Collection of Ahkam, year 10, p. 619.

The Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 70, 1966.

Decision of the Moroccan Supreme Council in its Administrative Chamber, No. 530, dated 4/7/1996, Administrative File No. 844/5/1/95).

³³ Supreme Court of Justice Decision, No. 13, 1964, Jordanian Bar Association Journal, First Issue, 1965, p. 3.

Decision of the Court of Justice Jordanian Supreme Court, No. 69, 2006.

Supreme Court of Justice by applying certain knowledge: "...it becomes clear that the period for appealing the administrative decision is sixty days, starting from the day following the date of notification." This decision, and that the appellant's knowledge of the administrative decision is considered as a notification with certainty..."³⁵

Were previously recognized administrative judiciary positions created with the explicit intention that they fell under the purview of administrative rulings delivered by artificial intelligence?

The researcher believes that it is permissible and acceptable to apply the theory of certain knowledge to intelligent administrative decisions as there are no known barriers to its application. This is especially true since the Jordanian Administrative Judiciary Law has included an explicit text regarding certain knowledge at the level of notification and that the text was general in nature.

Jurisprudential trends regarding the adoption of the presumption of certain knowledge in smart administrative decisions

As for the jurisprudential opinion regarding this theory, it is divided into two parts:

FIRST: The opinion opposing the presumption of certain knowledge

The theory of intelligent administrative decision-making has been criticised by the jurisprudence. It is believed that the application of this theory, either to traditional or intelligent administrative decision, is a departure from the legal text, and it does not serve the interest of the state of law.³⁶ Proponents of this opinion have presented several arguments that contain many drawbacks.³⁷

- 1. The theory in question is deemed illegitimate because it exceeds the court's jurisdictional limits and fails to guarantee the right to a fair trial. However, it was created by the judiciary, which is a recognised source of the principle of legality. Dismissing it would mean disregarding all other theories as well. Despite this, some may argue that these theories are illegal. Nevertheless, the right to a fair trial is protected by the judiciary through strict evaluation and verification of evidence, and parties involved can refute any claims made against them.³⁸
- 2. In order to determine whether a concerned party has knowledge or not about a smart administrative decision, an administrative judge relies on certain

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Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 187, 2016.

³⁶ H. Al-Kasasbeh, *Means of Evidence before...*, p. 455.

N. Al-Khatib, The Directions of the Supreme Court of Justice in the Timeline for Appealing annulment, "Mu'tah Journal for Research and Studies" 1986, 1(2), p. 141.

³⁸ K. Al-Zubaidi, The Theory of Certain Science in Jurisprudence and Administrative Judiciary, 2007, pp. 152–153.

- evidence. However, judicial jurisprudence is often hesitant to consider this evidence, which leads to inconsistent rulings. It's important to note that knowledge of publishing or advertising also relies on evidence.³⁹
- 3. The knowledge of an individual about a smart administrative decision is considered equivalent to publication or notification. However, since this knowledge comes through the individual's efforts and not through the activity of administrative authorities, it is considered hypothetical rather than real. ⁴⁰ An administrative judge can verify if the concerned party meets the conditions for possessing certain knowledge, thus making the knowledge real. In my opinion, once artificial intelligence is used to make administrative decisions, the concerned party can receive the knowledge through dedicated websites or text messages. ⁴¹
- 4. It would be beneficial not to rely on the theory of certain knowledge. Doing so would save time in the administrative judiciary's examination of whether certain knowledge exists against the plaintiff or not. It would also alleviate the severity of the slowness of judicial procedures and the difficulty of its proof and history. However, the deadline for appealing decisions must remain open, which leads to instability of legal centres.⁴²
- 5. The theory applied in this context results in the lack of effective methods for an amicable solution to be reached between the administration and the affected individuals. This is primarily because grievances are viewed as mere excuses for individuals' knowledge of the administrative decision, which in turn triggers the enforcement of the deadline for appealing against the decision, depriving the administration of its power to negotiate with the individuals concerned regarding the decision they have issued. However, it should be noted that an administrative grievance does not necessarily deprive the individual of their right to resort to the administrative judiciary for filing an annulment lawsuit. In fact, the grievance itself serves as positive evidence of the individual's knowledge of the decision they complained about on the part of the administration.⁴³

F. Al-Shawabkeh, The Theory of Certain Knowledge in the Judgment of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, "Notebooks of Politics and Law" 2013, 9, University of Kasdi Ouargla, p. 301.

M. Al-Sanari's, Enforcement of Administrative Decisions, PhD dissertation, Ain University, Egypt 1981, pp. 112–122 et seq.

⁴¹ K. Al-Zubaidi, The Theory of Certain Science..., p. 152.

⁴² A. Al-Ghuwairi, *The Judiciary of Abolition in Jordan*, Al-Dustour Commercial Press, Jordan 1989, p. 280.

⁴³ M. Nuwaiji, The Certain Science..., p. 59.

Some argue that knowledge is typically based on evidence, and that this evidence may not be significant enough to warrant an announcement. Additionally, introducing a new fact at the beginning of the timeframe, which is not specified by law, conflicts with the Council's policy of granting individuals relief and providing them with excuses to delay the start of the timeframe. It is believed by some legal scholars that the timeframe should be as long as possible, and this is often attributed to practical reasons, such as the widespread availability of publishing and advertising mediums that have replaced other methods.⁴⁴

SECOND: The opinion supporting the presumption of certain knowledge

Despite facing criticism, some still support the theory of certain knowledge due to its advantages. As Mohamed Atallah argues, here are the reasons why:⁴⁵

- 1. This theory provides excellent protection for individual rights by stabilising legal positions and avoiding suspension for an indefinite period. By adopting this theory, there is a specific start date for the deadline to appeal the cancellation, and this right expires at the end of the deadline.⁴⁶
- 2. The aforementioned theory can also be extended to apply to administrative decisions in addition to individuals, where the theory is applied only within the narrow limits required by the public interest. In this regard, the period for appealing the cancellation of an administrative decision starts from the day the decision is received by the administration. Moreover, it is permissible to provide evidence in support of this claim through any means of proof.⁴⁷

Some jurists opine that "the approach of the Egyptian Council of State in this matter is sound. The Egyptian Council of State applies the idea of certain knowledge precisely and flexibly without setting a rigid standard for the means of this knowledge, and is satisfied with its application whenever it is proven with certainty the knowledge of the addressee." It is better to make a decision based on its actual content and knowledge rather than assuming or presuming that the authors know everything about it. For instance, the authors cannot rely solely on publishing or announcing a registered letter sent to the recipient's home country, as it may not reach them personally.⁴⁸

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⁴⁴ S. Al-Tamawi, *The Administrative Judiciary*, p. 630.

⁴⁵ M. Atallah, Proof by Evidence..., p. 622.

⁴⁶ K. Al-Zubaidi, The Theory of Certain Science..., p. 153. See also S. Al-Husseini, The role of certain knowledge in proof before the administrative judiciary, "Kufa Journal of Legal Studies" 2019, 42, University of Kufa, p. 390.

⁴⁷ H. Al-Kasasbeh, *Means of Evidence...*, p. 455.

⁴⁸ M. Helmy, *Administrative Judiciary*, 1st edition, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Cairo 1974, p. 330.

Others comment, "I support the approach of the Egyptian State Council and the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice by adopting the theory of certain knowledge, and this is in line with sound logic. Otherwise, what is the solution if an individual challenges a decision that the administration implemented against him without publishing this decision or announcing it? Will the judiciary reject it?" The appeal has been accepted, and it will remain open even if the concerned party is aware of the decision with certainty, under the pretext of not publishing or announcing it. It is not reasonable to keep the decision under threat of appeal indefinitely. An administrative decision must be legally protected to safeguard the public interest and the stability of legal centres.⁴⁹

Some individuals claim that the authors act in line with the trend that supports the theory of certain science. By relying on it within specified conditions, and in addition to what was previously mentioned, it leads to achieving administrative justice and adding positivity to judicial practice. This is because judges rely on what is truly established in their conscience and what they learn from the circumstances to issue rulings. This leads to achieving legitimacy that everyone seeks. It is noteworthy that some judicial trends have expanded its adoption and even considered it part of public order. Therefore, in most traditions of jurisprudence, a decision that has not been notified and published would be null or legally void. In this case, the judge has the authority to address the issue at their discretion (also called "ex officio"), independent of any party bringing it forth, this is because proper notification or publication is often considered a matter of public order.⁵⁰

It is argued that having a theory of certain knowledge is crucial for making smart administrative decisions. This is because there may be cases where an administrative decision is not publicly announced, but the concerned party has knowledge of it. Without this presumption, the door for appealing the decision would remain open indefinitely, causing a burden on the judge in terms of time and effort. Moreover, it would lead to an imbalance and injustice between the parties involved in the administrative case. By deducing from the circumstances and indications of certain knowledge, the administrative judge can achieve the principle of legality, showcasing their positive role in the process. This is why most administrative judiciaries support the notion of certain knowledge in making smart administrative decisions.

⁴⁹ A. Youssef Alwan, Enforcement and validity of administrative decisions against individuals in Jordan, PhD dissertation, Amman Arab University, 2005, p. 65.

H. Al-Kasasbeh, Means of Evidence..., p. 455.

Proving certain knowledge in automated administrative decisions or those issued by artificial intelligence systems

When it comes to proving certain knowledge, questions arise regarding who bears the burden of proof and what methods can be used by the administrative judiciary.

FIRST: the burden of proving certain knowledge

Proving certain knowledge is crucial, especially when it comes to legal matters. This is because it has legal implications, such as enforcing an intelligent administrative decision against the concerned party and determining the deadline for appealing the cancellation. If the appeal is made outside the country and after the deadline specified by law, the lawsuit is formally rejected. Therefore, both jurisprudence and administrative jurisprudence have unanimously agreed that the burden of proof for certain knowledge falls on the administration. This is in accordance with the fundamental rule of proof, which states that evidence lies with whoever makes the claim. This is because the administration is often the party that claims the occurrence of this knowledge, while the appellant usually claims not to be aware of the decision.⁵¹

To challenge the legality of a decision by the administration, the appellant must come with evidence for their arguments. But with the submission of adequate evidence by the appellant, the administration may be compelled to defend the legality of its decision. If they are unable to do so, the knowledge becomes worthless and the time to challenge the decision remains open indefinitely for stakeholders. Often, an administrative authority will refute the claims of an individual by raising the issue of inadmissibility of appeal. They do this by arguing that the appellant was fully aware of the decision but failed to appeal it within a period of 60 days 73. For instance, the Administrative Chamber of the Moroccan Supreme Council may reject such claims and implement the conditions for certain knowledge "...that the administration did not present any argument confirming that the appellant had certain knowledge of this decision at the specified time, being content with hypotheses,

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⁵¹ Z. Kamel, The burden of proving certain knowledge, "Babylon University Journal of Educational and Human Sciences" 2019, 43, University of Babylon, Iraq, p. 1171. See also E. Javadi, Judicial evidence and its validity in proving an administrative case, "Notebook of Politics and Law" 2014, 10, University of Kasdi-Merbah Ouargla, p. 142.

⁵² S. Sadiq, *Time to File...*, pp. 147–148. See also N. Ahdidou, *A condition for filing an annulment lawsuit in light of judicial jurisprudence*, "Al-Manara Journal for Legal and Administrative Studies" 2014, Morocco, p. 109.

A. Al-Rashidi, *The trend of regulating the burden of proof in administrative disputes*, "Al-Manara Journal for Legal and Administrative Studies", special issue, Morocco 2014, p. 276.

and the case is that the appellant denies that he was informed of the aforementioned decision."⁵⁴

The Administrative Court in Rabat followed the same line, ruling "...since the principle was to notify the administrative decision of the start of the deadline for judicial appeal, and certain knowledge of the content of the decision was merely an exception to the aforementioned rule, the burden of proving knowledge of the content of the decision, its references, its reasons, and the person issuing it falls on the administration." ⁵⁵

The Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice went on to say: "...the deadline runs from the date of certain knowledge, and since the Public Prosecution did not prove that the decision was communicated to the plaintiffs or published it or that they knew of it with certainty, the lawsuit must be filed within a deadline..." The lawsuit was dismissed because it was submitted after the deadline for certain knowledge to occur, according to a defence raised by the Administrative Public Prosecution. The ruling stated that the Assistant Head of the Administrative Public Prosecution argued that the plaintiffs' lawsuit was filed after the expiration of the legal period. It was also established that the plaintiffs had definite knowledge of the disputed decision several years before the lawsuit was filed. Therefore, the Administrative Public Prosecution's defence was a valid one, and the lawsuit was rejected.⁵⁷

SECOND: means of proving certain knowledge

The administrative judiciary has not determined a particular method for proving knowledge in automated administrative decisions. Knowledge can be proven through any presumption, fact or document that indicates the concerned party's knowledge of the administrative decision ⁵⁸. To clarify this, the authors need to examine the means of proving certain knowledge. The most important means of proof on which the administrative judiciaries compared as part of this study have unanimously agreed are as follows:

SECTION ONE: the appellant's admission

Acknowledgement made by the appellant regarding his knowledge of the contested decision, along with the date of the acknowledgement, is considered evidence and proof of it. However, such acknowledgement is rare due to the unreasonable risk

⁵⁴ Decision of the Administrative Chamber of the Moroccan Supreme Council, No. 51, dated 2/14/1991.

⁵⁵ Decision of the Administrative Court in Rabat, File No. 408-5-2012, dated 2013, unpublished.

Decision of the Court of Justice the Supreme Court, No. 172, 1984, Journal of the Jordanian Bar Association, 1985, p. 1713.

Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, No. 519, year 2000.

Decision of the Administrative Court in Rabat, Administrative File No. 586/96, 1997.

it poses to the appellant's lawsuit. If the appellant acknowledges the decision, he may lose the lawsuit, leading to its dismissal.⁵⁹ Explicit admission, in writing, by the plaintiff employee regarding the knowledge of the decision's content is the rarest form of acknowledgement. The Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice took this into account and established that certain knowledge occurred, so it ruled that "…if a decision is issued to dispense with the employee's services, and the employee acknowledges in writing that he knew of the issuance of the decision to dispense with his services, then the period for appealing the decision begins from the date of the recognition."⁶⁰ The court did not accept the case due to the appellant's statement in the Anwal newspaper, which indicated her prior knowledge of the decision and fell outside the deadline.⁶¹

Implicit acknowledgement is the predominant type of acknowledgement in which an administrative judge infers its occurrence from any evidence or presumption. The Jordanian and comparative administrative judiciary has identified certain forms of implicit acknowledgement, such as correspondence between the administration and individuals, submitting an administrative grievance, and taking judicial procedures precedent.

In Egypt, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled in this regard that "...as long as the date of the plaintiff's knowledge of the contested decision is not proven from the documents, it is presumed that he knew from the date of the grievance." 62

The Egyptian administrative judiciary considers the correspondence between individuals and the administration as an implicit acknowledgement of the existence of certain knowledge of the decision. This was stated in a ruling by the Supreme Administrative Court, where the appellant had requested a certificate of dismissal from the college, to release him, and to hand over his papers to be submitted to another college. The issuance of this certificate was seen as an indication of his knowledge of the decision to dismiss him from the college. Alternatively, referring to the decision and its contents in a letter addressed to the administrative body can also be seen as an acknowledgement of the individual's knowledge of the decision.

In Morocco, administrative courts at various levels use a specific method to determine the starting point of the deadline for appealing an annulment. The judiciary

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Noman Al-Khatib, The Directions of the Supreme Court..., p. 139. See also Hisham Kasasbeh, Means of Evidence..., p 167.

⁶⁰ Decision of the Supreme Court of Justice, No. 32, year 1961, Journal of the Jordanian Bar Association, 1961, p. 458.

Ruling of the Administrative Court of Meknes, File No. 13-94-3, dated 11/3/1994, unpublished.

⁶² Decision of the Supreme Administrative Court, No. 1235, 1975, Hamdi Okasha.

Decision of the Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 1454, of 1992.

Decision of the Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court, session 5/24/1958, Collection of rulings of the Supreme Administrative Court, Q3, p. 1376.

refuses to consider a case if there is any doubt about whether the person involved knows about the decision and its contents. Therefore, filing a grievance is considered an admission of knowledge. This was confirmed by the Administrative Court in Oujda: "...it is proven that the plaintiff was aware of the decision with certainty on October 29, the day on which he submitted his grievance against the aforementioned decision, indicating its date and content, and such certain knowledge takes the place of notification..."65 It was further stated in a ruling by the Moroccan Court of Cassation that, "the appellant admitted that he returned to work after recovering from his illness and his condition improved. However, he was informed that his wages would be deducted. The appellant was aware of the decision and its justifications, but did not object to it in his means..."66

As for the presumption of filing a lawsuit, which is considered an acknowledgement by the appellant of knowledge of the intelligent decision with certainty, a ruling by the Moroccan Court of Cassation confirmed the following: "...and the implication of this is that the appellant was aware with complete certainty of the contested decision, its content, and the body that issued it since the date of submitting the reform article." The current appeal is outside the legal deadline because the aforementioned did not submit its article until 27 April 1999, and as long as certain knowledge replaces reporting as established by judicial jurisprudence.⁶⁷

The Moroccan administrative judiciary went further by considering that filing a lawsuit before another judicial body, even if it was an ordinary one, implies knowledge of the decision, amounting to certain knowledge.⁶⁸

The administrative judge seemed to have taken into account the correspondence exchanged between the appellant and the administration, which contained all the relevant information regarding the subject of the dispute. The judge considered this correspondence as evidence of the appellant's implicit acknowledgement of certain facts. The court of cassation has commented on this matter as follows: "... Based on the attached correspondence dated 10/12/2004 and 10/22/2005, it is established that the appellants were aware of the two decisions being appealed and their content, yet they failed to file the appeal for four years. As a result, the appeal is considered inadmissible..."

The Jordanian administrative judiciary has acknowledged the possibility of proving whether or not an individual had knowledge of an administrative decision.

ruling of the Administrative Court in Oujda No. 88, 2005.

⁶⁶ Decision of the Moroccan Court of Cassation (Administrative Chamber), No. 57, 2014.

⁶⁷ Decision of the Moroccan Court of Cassation (Administrative Chamber), No. 384, 2008.

⁶⁸ Decision of the Moroccan Supreme Council, No. 1077, dated 6/19/1997, Administrative File No. 908/ 5/1/1996.

⁶⁹ Decision of the Moroccan Court of Cassation (Administrative Chamber), No. 166, 2012.

This applies to both traditional and intelligent decisions and can be proven through various pieces of evidence. The judge may consider the submission of a summons from the appellant before the decision was made as evidence that the individual did not have prior knowledge of the decision. The Supreme Court of Justice has issued a ruling on this matter: "...the summons submitted by the plaintiff before the date of issuance of the contested decision containing his grievance against the grievance engineer assigning him to comply with the legal recusal does not indicate his knowledge of the decision with certainty..."⁷⁰

The Jordanian Administrative Court held that "on 2/7/2016, the plaintiff filed an objection to the decision complained of before the administration. However, this objection was not subject to challenge, as was proven from the summons submitted by the plaintiff with a grievance against the defendant. This information has been preserved in the plaintiff's evidence, and it is regarded as certain and conclusive knowledge from that date. Therefore, this certain knowledge of the objection takes the place of notification."⁷¹

Regarding the presumption of correspondence between individuals and administration, Jordanian administrative judiciary has adopted this idea in its practice. An example of this is the statement made by the Supreme Court of Justice, "...the petitioner's submission of a request to re-register him in the register of trainee lawyers indicates conclusively that the petitioner was aware of the content of the decision to cancel his registration on the date of submitting the request."⁷² The Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court stated, "...the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation appointed the appellant as an adviser on May 28, 2018. On June 10th, 2018, the appellant submitted an internal memorandum requesting an amendment to the monthly bonus, effective from the date of their appointment as a consultant. This indicates that the appellant was aware of the administrative decision and its contents with certainty..."⁷³

The judge took into account that the act of filing the lawsuit itself was a clear indication of the plaintiff's understanding and acknowledgement of the decision. This was particularly important considering that Article 8/B of the Administrative Judiciary Law had already made it clear that such an act would be taken as an implicit acknowledgement of knowledge of the decision. As a result, the Supreme Administrative Court concluded that the case could proceed., "... the party appellant in the present appeal would have known certainly, not speculatively, based

⁷⁰ Ruling of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, No. 89, 1979.

Decision of the Jordanian Administrative Court, No. 211, 2016.

Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Court of Justice, No. 526, year 2003, Journal of the Jordanian Bar Association, No. 1-3, 2004, p. 75.

⁷³ Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 57, 2019.

on the appealed decision on the date of their filing of Case No. (163/2017), which is the date of 4/19/2017, in which the ruling to dismiss it in form was issued on 10/15/2017. Whereas the appellant party filed Case No. (99/2018) on 27 /2/2018, it will be submitted after the expiration of the period stipulated in (8/a) of the Administrative Judiciary Law, since certain knowledge according to the text of Article (8/b) of the Administrative Judiciary Law takes the place of notification..."⁷⁴

The Supreme Court of Justice went on to say: "...the plaintiff's knowledge of the decision being complained about with certainty on the date of filing his previous claim, which was rejected due to the lack of validity of the agency under which the claim was submitted, means that the current claim filed after more than sixty days from the date of learning about the decision is binding and is considered to have expired."⁷⁵

SECTION TWO: implementing administrative decisions

Jordanian and similar administrative judiciary rulings have established that implementing an administrative decision, including a smart decision, is an act of force against the appellant, if they were not notified or made aware of the decision prior to its implementation. Additionally, the appellant must have certain knowledge of the decision and its content. The date of implementation of the decision is considered the start date for the period in which the appellant can appeal for annulment.⁷⁶

In the context of the Egyptian Administrative Judiciary, the implementation of a decision to deduct fifteen days from a plaintiff's salary is considered as evidence of their knowledge of the decision, as per the Decision of the Administrative Judicial Court, No. 465 of 1953. However, in another ruling, it was stated that the enforcement of a decision is no longer considered as evidence of the concerned party's knowledge of it. The plaintiff must have certain knowledge of the contested decision, which means that they should be aware of the reasons that led to its issuance and its contents. This knowledge negates ignorance and enables the plaintiff to determine their position regarding the decision, whether to accept it or challenge it. It is not permissible to invoke the date of the plaintiff's arrest to say that the deadline for filing the annulment lawsuit runs from this date unless there is evidence that the plaintiff was informed of the decision on that date with certain knowledge of its contents.

This principle was affirmed in the Egyptian Supreme Administrative Court's Decision No. 663 of 1994, which stated that when a decision is implemented with conscription, the person in respect of whom the decision was issued is deemed to

Decision of the Supreme Administrative Court Jordanian, No. 328, 2018.

⁷⁵ Supreme Court, No. 406, 1996.

Khaled Al-Zubaidi, *The Theory of Certain Science...*, p. 158. See also M. Al-Issa, *Date of the lawsuit to cancel the administrative decision in the Saudi system*, 1st edition, Saudi Arabia 2017, p. 153.

have certain knowledge of it, and the date for appealing the cancellation shall apply from the date of its confirmation.⁷⁷

The authors agree with the previous decision of the Supreme Administrative Court in Egypt. Simply enforcing a decision regarding the concerned party may not ensure that all the conditions for certain knowledge have been met. The administration may use its authority to enforce the decision without verifying if those conditions have actually been met. This can lead to situations where the rights of individuals vis-à-vis the administration may be compromised. In such cases, the administration may be acting in bad faith by enforcing the decision with the intention of considering it as the individual's knowledge and thereby shifting the responsibility of their negligence onto the individual concerned.

The Moroccan administrative judiciary has taken a similar approach to other courts in considering that the enforcement of a decision, whether made traditionally or by artificial intelligence, indicates an understanding of that decision. For instance, the Rabat Administrative Court ruled that stopping an appellant's monthly salary demonstrated their knowledge of the decision "... it is evident from the file documents that the dismissal decision was made by the Disciplinary Council on June 11, 1997, leading to the suspension of the appellant's monthly salary. This implies that the appellant had knowledge of the dismissal decision. However, the grievance was not submitted until February 6, 2006, which was beyond the legal deadline. Therefore, based on the aforementioned facts, the application cannot be accepted."⁷⁸

Among the applications of the Jordanian administrative judiciary, the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court ruled that "...the decision was implemented and the appellant's salary was corrected by deducting the excess amount he received and recovering the increase he was previously given. This means that the appellant was aware of the correction made to his job status from the start of the deduction from his salary. He knew that he would recover the increase he received from the date of his first salary after the correction. The appellant filed a complaint with the Administrative Court on 1/6/2015, more than 14 days after he became aware of the decision. As a result, payment will be subject to the contested ruling, and the lawsuit must be dismissed." 79, or the plaintiff will receive a salary without taking into account the bonuses that the administration decided to reduce. 80

The Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court also ruled by arguing that "... according to the notification ruling, the appellant is considered to have knowledge

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Appeal No. 1720, s. 6, session 23/3/1963, Collection of Rulings of the Supreme Administrative Court, year 8, p. 874.

Decision of the Administrative Court in Rabat, No. 1197, 2007.

Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 189, 2015.

⁸⁰ Jordanian Supreme Court, No. 51, 1996.

of the contested decision with certainty. As the authors have found that the decision in question was issued on 6/18/2017, and the appellant submitted her statement of claim to the Administrative Court on 4/29/2019, her claim must be rejected as it was submitted after the legal period had expired. Furthermore, it is evident that the appellant was aware of the decision in question as she was forcibly prevented from entering the Radio and Television Corporation. This is confirmed by her acknowledgement in summoning the lawsuit submitted by her to the Administrative Court, as well as the fact that her salary was stopped from the date of her consideration. As a result, she has lost her job..."81

Conclusion

In this study, the authors examined one of the key theories of administrative law, which is the origin of the administrative judiciary. Specifically, the authors analysed a number of similar administrative judiciaries' stance on the two most significant instances of proof of obtaining certain knowledge of intelligent administrative decisions: the approval of the appellant and the enforcement of an administrative decision. Our analysis led to several conclusions:

- The administrative judiciaries compared in the study have established various conditions to ensure that the knowledge regarding administrative decisions is equivalent to that of traditional or intelligent ones. These conditions are strictly applied, but there are differences in judicial interpretation, particularly with respect to these conditions.
- 2. In some legal and administrative systems, certain knowledge has been intertwined with other methods of decision-making, such as reporting and publishing. Although publishing and reporting can help to reach a certain level of knowledge, they should not be considered as independent means of decision-making. There is a significant difference between these methods, and knowledge should be regarded as a distinct and independent means of decision-making.
- There is a disagreement in jurisprudence regarding the adoption of certain knowledge from smart administrative decisions. Two opinions exist: supportive and opposing.

⁸¹ Decision of the Jordanian Supreme Administrative Court, No. 260, 2019.

Recommendations

- 1. The Jordanian administrative judiciary should adopt a stricter approach, similar to that of the Moroccan and Egyptian administrative judiciary in terms of establishing certain knowledge of the administrative decision. Decisions issued by artificial intelligence should also be taken into consideration and the methods of proving their legitimacy should be established. This is important because practical experience reveals a clear difference from time to time.
- 2. It is important to have a unified judicial jurisprudence when it comes to applying the theory of certain science and not have differences in it. This is especially important for knowledge of smart administrative decisions as it affects the rights and interests of individuals. The Jordanian legislator has already stipulated this in the Administrative Judiciary Law No. 27 of 2014.

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