



Date:
11-12
September 2024

Venue:
Humanities Graduate Centre,
University of Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, South Africa

THEME.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF DIGITALIZED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON AFRICAN ELECTIONS AND SOCIOECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY

One of the determinants of well-functioning democracy are fair and inclusive elections, which play a crucial role in shaping a country's political landscape and determining its destiny. Elections are critical components of the core principles of democracy, which exert thoughtful influence on the effectiveness and integrity of a country. Elections not only empower citizens and accountability, but stimulate transparency, thus impacting on the country's overall development and governance. The utility-value of elections go beyond mere vote casting, but includes deeper democratic ideals, rule of law, social inclusiveness, economic advancement, and respect for fundamental human rights. Electoral participation through active social inclusion combats marginalization, inequality, prejudice and enhance essential human rights such as freedom of association, speech, access to education, and right to peaceful assembly.

Across democratic societies fair and credible elections are critical and sacred for the selection and appointment of leaders, thus equitable and free and fair elections are indispensable to the functioning of democratic governance. Fair and credible elections enable electorates to exercise authority in selecting their representatives and leaders and at the same time holding them accountable while in office. Electoral mal-practices and spoilt electoral system have always enthroned mediocre and authoritarian leaders in Africa. This is because electoral guidelines and mechanisms governing elections as well as procedures and principles underpinning elections in Africa largely deviate from established standards. This deviation, often, result in practices such as violence, lawlessness, nullification of elections and the determination of winners of election by the court instead of the people. Consequently, making African politicians to collude with judges and justices in the law courts to steal the people's mandate. This has severe implication for the continent's persistence instability and political turmoil, which in the long impugned on the continent's socio-economic development.

In Africa, elections are hardly fair, credible, and inclusive. Voters' engagement and turnout, which are critical to the integrity of elections and serve as cornerstone of decision-making in contemporary democracies are also limited on the continent. In addition, the continent's elections also suffer from the tactics of voters' suppression, harassment, rigging, and deliberate political polarization, which in the long run impede free and fair credible elections. To tackle the growing trends of electoral frauds and improve electoral integrity in Africa, artificial intelligence (AI) has been recognized as a potential means to mitigate these mal-practices. Artificial intelligence is a digitalized controlled-computer robots that perform tasks associated with human beings intelligent. Evidence across democratic societies, where AI has been utilized for election, continues to highlight that AI can revolutionize the way governments engage with voters and enhance voter participation in democratic elections.

AI has capacities, which includes ability to accredit voters, predict voters' behaviour, real-time information dissemination, voters' registration, monitoring of fake news and social media sentiments, reduction of voter suppression, significantly contribute to fair, inclusive, and integrity of elections in Africa. With rapid technological advancement, AI is expected to promote Africa's electoral integrity by ensuring that every eligible voter actively participate and have their voice

heard in Africa. While studies on electoral integrity have been more focused on e-voting and the use of other digital devices such as bimodal voters accreditation system (BVAS), research is scanty on the utility-value of AI in the administration of election in Africa. This call for papers specifically aimed at contributions from different academic disciplines on how AI can revolutionize the integrity of Africa's elections through fair and social inclusion. Given this, articles are expected from the following themes, but not limited to only the themes below.

1. Artificial Intelligence and electoral frauds in Africa
2. Theoretical underpinnings of digitalized elections in Africa
3. Artificial Intelligence and social inclusion and representatives in general elections in Africa
4. Measuring the role of AI in the prevention of electoral mal-practices in Africa
5. Enhancing free, fair, and credible elections through AI in Africa
6. Electoral Administration and the utilization of AI
7. Electoral bodies and the use of AI in the conduct of elections in Africa
8. Implications of the use of AI to administer elections in Africa
9. AI and electoral violence in Africa
10. Mitigating incessant electoral court tribunals after general elections in Africa.

Submission guidelines:

Interested presenters should please send abstracts of no more than 250 words along with a short bio of 100 words to glotanresearchservices@gmail.com. Contributors should state the subtheme that best suits their submission. Upon acceptance of abstracts, presenters are expected to send 10-page slides and a well-researched manuscript of between 6,000 and 8,000 words.

Publishing opportunities

Authors whose papers are presented at the conference as well as those who might be unable to attend have the option of submitting their full papers for peer review and publication in any of the four accredited journals listed below including in an edited book coordinated by Prof. Victor Ojatorotu and Dr. Samuel Agunyai.

- African Renaissance
- Journal of African Affairs
- AYIKA: Journal of Environment and Politics in Africa
- Africa and Global Issues Quarterly

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Important dates:

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 30 June 2024

Announcement of decisions on abstracts: 15 July 2024

Submission of full papers: 30 August 2024

Conference registration: 1 – 10 September 2024

Conference: 11 – 12 September 2024

Conference fees: R5000 (students – R3500)

Conference conveners:

Prof V Ojatorotu, North West University, Mahikeng, South Africa

Prof P Mashau, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

Prof TJ Mudau, Institute of Gender & Youth Studies, University of Venda, South Africa

Prof K Eesuola, Institute of African & Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria

Prof P Marumo, School of Philosophy, North West University, Mahikeng, South Africa

Confirmed keynote speaker:**Professor Michael Esiefarienrhe**

Professor of Computer Sciences and Information Systems, North West University, Mafikeng, South Africa

For further details: <http://www.glotanresearch.com>

