

THE FEASIBILITY OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT AUTOMATION IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

This study investigated the feasibility of election management automation in Nigeria, focusing on challenges and potential solutions. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through online questionnaires from 11,994 voters and key informant interviews with sixteen election stakeholders. Findings revealed significant challenges hindering the deployment of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in election management in the country, including political interference, operational and technical issues, infrastructure inadequacies, and cybersecurity threats. Despite these challenges, the study identified key strategies to enhance the integration of ICT in Nigeria's electoral processes. These include strengthening institutional frameworks to mitigate political interference, improving technical capacity through comprehensive training programs, addressing infrastructure gaps through public-private partnerships, and implementing robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard electoral systems. The study underscored the importance of fostering public trust and confidence in ICT-based electoral processes through transparent communication and stakeholder engagement. Ultimately, by embracing innovation and collaborative governance, Nigeria could leverage ICT to enhance electoral integrity, uphold democratic principles, and ensure the credibility of future elections.

Keywords: Election, Election Management Body (EMB), ICT, Voting