

# Impact of E-Democracy on Ecowas Nations and its Citizens

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**Abstract**— The act of coming into view of the computer and its related software, ICT has become one of the most prevalent tools applicable to governance everywhere in the world today. Currently, almost every state now incorporates this system of governance in one way or the other. This research is geared towards the implications of electronic governance in developing an electronic democracy in Africa. At the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva 2003, there was a plan of Action that requires all countries should aim to connect all local and central government departments and establish websites and email addresses. WSIS (16-18 Nov.2005). “World Summit on the Information Society: Tunis Agenda for the Information Society”.

In view of this, E-governance is applications and use of electronic gadgets, (software, and hardware) and the technical expertise in administering a group of people to improve upon our democracy. E-governance plays an important role in administering e-democratic process in the world.

The government of Ghana has made a great effort to transform the e-Governance Process, the platform has been created to educate the public, create awareness and enhance citizens.

## I. IMPACT OF E-DEMOCRACY

This study will contribute to the literature in the area of local governance and how ICT impacts on good governance in the world in general and Africa in particular.

The study will also help information users to appreciate the benefits of ICT in local governance as it will examine the effect of ICT on their efficiency and effectiveness.

It will further help understand and appreciate the use and benefits of ICT in a developing country, as most studies on local governance and ICT are done in developed countries like Ghana, Nigeria, and Zambia etc., [1] according to the experts at the E-governance agenda in Africa We are now able to dialogue about electronic governance, or e-governance. E-governance is on the program in Africa, as in other continents and this is a crucial aspect for achieving the MDGs, through its contribution to encouraging and consolidating democratic governance processes. Generally, going by the questions posed to governments at various global summits, particularly at the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005), it is very much a concern of civil society as well. It is therefore important to approach e-governance by focusing on the main stakeholders, the citizens, and their effective participation in decision-making processes.

## II. BENEFITS OF E-DEMOCRACY

This study will make use of survey method on which data will be collected once across the population through sampling.

The study used descriptive research methods to assess the impact of Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) on the performance (Operational and Financial) of Local government institutions. The rationale behind the use of the descriptive research method helps the researcher to obtain first-hand data from respondents in order to describe what exists. This technique gives valuable insight into the question under study. [2] On regular across the continent, Africans support democracy as a preferred type of political government. Large majorities also discard alternative authoritarian rules such as presidential dictatorship, military rule, and one-party government. Smaller sizes agree on all four of these aspects of democratic predilection, an index we call “demand for democracy.” ♣ Large cross-national alterations exist in demand for democracy. For example, while three in four respondents in Mauritius are steady, committed democrats, fewer than one in 10 Mozambicans merit the same description. The research will be used as a case study approach and due to the descriptive nature of the study qualitative technique would be considered. The qualitative research was based on an in-depth interview with respondents.

## III. LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE WITH E-DEMOCRACY

This research study is carried out in order to explore how a government organization, specifically, a local authority is designed and constructed to achieve better efficiency and effectiveness in achieving good local governance, through the use of ICT. In particular, this study is directed towards the initiatives taken by the local authorities to incorporate ICT in its local governance, how ICT accommodates the current trends in its local governance and the factors that drive the capabilities of the local authority to incorporate ICT into the governance process [3] as says by Julie Simon, Theo Bass, Victoria Boelman and Geoff Mulgan

February 2017 In their research, that in order to nurture and enter the conventional of processes which support parliaments, governments and political parties in their work, digital democracy must address a number of trials which it still faces. We conclude our report with replications on these - from developing a more nuanced understanding of what we mean by ‘participation’ and tackling the digital divide, to improving our understanding of what inspires people to partake and how we can balance aims with the reality of what is possible, to minimize the dangers of further cynicism, and make digital democracy a ‘new normal’.

#### IV. WHY THE NEED FOR E-DEMOCRACY

There have been several criticisms of local authorities in Ghana for their inability to provide excellently and kindly services to their communities, corruption, late delivery of service, delayed response to complaints, delayed response to audit queries are some of the weaknesses of the local Assemblies in Ghana.

Nyambola said that, politics-social-media-Africa/ shows how social media offers citizens a path through which to engage their governments in new and effective ways. Especially when traditional media offers government-sanitized update, social media — including Twitter — make it possible for citizens to challenge governments narratives and react to unfolding events in real time [4].

Why countries are moving closer to its people. Countries are moving with so much speed to its citizens, using smart phones, tablets or computers. Many other digital devices could create a strong connection between citizens from different countries; if its properly used it could enhance the ECOWAS (Economic community of West African States) or AU (African Union) countries, democratic process along with trust in Ecowas nations [5] the BBC last year, in a news bulletin with the title, Technology and elections, according to the BBC news bulletin said that,

Political transition through systematic elections is among the criteria for judging whether a country is a democracy or not.

Some countries like Ghana, Nigeria and so on have even adopted technology to make the polls credible and responsible but in most cases, this has done little to dispel anxieties.

"Many African countries are trying to use technology to building trust in elections and that's not going to work," Nanjala Nyabola, author of Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics, told the BBC.

She gave the example of Kenya's 2017 elections which, despite the use of biometric technology to verify voters as way of rejecting ghost voters and ballot stuffing, and also using an electronic results communication system, failed to win voters' confidence.

"Another problem is that we have countries conducting elections that are legal but are illegitimate," Godwin Murunga from the University of Nairobi, told the BBC.

"There's this notion that democracy in Africa should have different standards," he adds, pointing at the international community's acceptance of the fresh elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

E-Democracy, it's so important, or will be of outmost importance to all countries in the African continent, because it will provide or will allow citizens to be able to voice out their concerns of their countries using smart devices. It allows citizens to have the chance to get involved in the democratic process or situations.

#### V. FUTURE OF E-DEMOCRACY.

E-democracy offers citizens the power the voice. [6] according to Dirk Holemans & Kati Van de Velde, (W) E-DEMOCRACY, the digitization of our society moves Along with the digitalisation of our society we can witness an increase of electronic data gathering: through social media, bank dealings, online shopping, GPS tracking, or cameras with technology to recognise a license plate or even a face.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

The educational knowledge of information and communication are so essential and at the core of human progress, these endeavours a well-being. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have an vast impact on virtually all especially in our democratic dispensation and other aspects of our lives. The rapid progress of these technologies opens completely new opportunities to attain sophisticated levels of development. The capacity of these

technologies to reduce many outdated obstacles, especially those of time and distance, for the first time many decades in history makes it possible to use the potential of these technologies for the benefit of millions of people in all corners of the world.

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