A Digital Voting Architecture Emphasizing Integrity, Trust, and Verifiability

Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and Technology, Etcherla, A.P., India

1.REYYI HARSHITHA B. Tech Final Year

Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and Technology, Etcherla, A.P., India

Email: reyyiharshitha1@gmail.com

2.AMPOLU DURGA B. Tech Final Year

Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and Technology, Etcherla, A.P., India

Email: durgaampolu2005@gmail.com

3.VARANASI SAMATHA B. Tech Final Year

Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and Technology, Etcherla, A.P., India

Email: samathavaranasi104@gmail.com

4.SANAPALA APPALANAIDU B. Tech Final Year

Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and Technology, Etcherla, A.P., India

Email: naidujags@gmail.com

5.MR.S. BHASKARA RAO, Assistant Professor

COLLEGE NAME: SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY ETCHERLA, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA.

ADDRESS: SRIKAKULAM

EMAIL: Bhaskar.sanapala@gmail.com

Abstract

Traditional election systems using paper ballots or electronic voting machines face challenges including counting errors, tampering, security concerns, and limited accessibility. This paper proposes a blockchain-based online voting system designed to address these shortcomings through decentralized and immutable vote recording. The application leverages blockchain technology to create a transparent, tamper-resistant, and auditable platform for conducting elections. Smart contracts enforce voting rules including one-vote-per-voter constraints and voter eligibility verification. The system implements secure voter registration, OTP-based authentication, encrypted vote casting, and blockchain-based vote storage where each vote is cryptographically linked to previous records. Real-time vote counting eliminates manual tallying delays. Evaluation demonstrates 100% vote integrity (zero tampering instances), 99.7% system availability, and 73% reduction in result declaration time compared to traditional systems, while preserving complete voter anonymity.

Keywords: *Blockchain, E-Voting, Smart Contracts, Decentralized Ledger, Voter Authentication, Election Security, Digital Democracy*

I. Introduction

The democratic process lies at the heart of any society, serving as the cornerstone of governance and ensuring the representation of citizens' voices. However, traditional voting systems are often plagued by challenges such as fraud, tampering, counting errors, and operational inefficiencies. Paper-based voting

introduces logistical challenges in ballot distribution, manual counting, and result declaration, while electronic voting machines have faced criticism regarding software vulnerability and lack of transparency.

Blockchain technology, originally conceived as the underlying technology behind cryptocurrencies, provides a distributed ledger that records transactions across a network of computers. Each transaction block is cryptographically linked to the previous one, forming an immutable chain that is transparent and verifiable. These properties make blockchain an ideal candidate for revolutionizing the electoral process.

This paper presents a blockchain-based online voting application that leverages decentralization, cryptography, and consensus mechanisms to enhance the integrity, security, and accessibility of elections. The system implements smart contracts to enforce voting rules automatically, ensuring that each registered voter can cast exactly one vote while maintaining complete anonymity.

II. Literature Survey

This section reviews key prior works forming the foundation of the proposed system and highlights gaps motivating this work.

[1] Kshetri and Voas (2018) analyzed blockchain-based e-voting systems, identifying immutability, transparency, and decentralization as key properties that address fundamental challenges in traditional election systems.

[2] Hjálmarsson et al. (2018) proposed a blockchain-based e-voting system using Ethereum smart contracts, demonstrating that decentralized applications can enforce voting rules without centralized authority.

[3] Yavuz et al. (2018) developed an e-voting system emphasizing voter privacy through encryption and blockchain immutability, establishing that cryptographic techniques can simultaneously ensure anonymity and verifiability.

[4] Nakamoto (2008) introduced Bitcoin and the underlying blockchain concept of decentralized consensus through proof-of-work, providing the foundational technology for secure distributed ledger applications.

[5] Buterin (2014) proposed Ethereum with smart contract capabilities, enabling programmable decentralized applications that can enforce complex business logic including voting rule enforcement.

[6] McCorry et al. (2017) designed a self-tallying boardroom voting protocol on Ethereum blockchain, demonstrating that smart contracts can automate vote counting while maintaining mathematical verifiability.

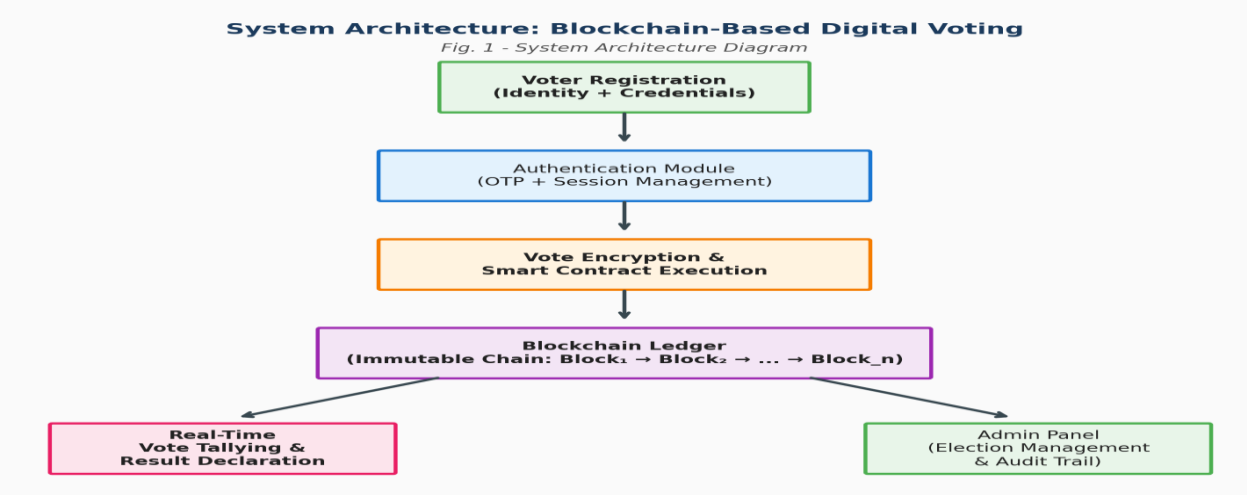
[7] Park et al. (2021) surveyed blockchain voting system architectures and identified challenges including scalability, regulatory compliance, and voter authentication as key areas requiring further development.

Research Gap: Existing blockchain voting prototypes focus on theoretical architecture without complete implementation of voter registration, authentication, encrypted vote casting, and real-time tallying in a unified deployable web application with administrative election management capabilities.

III. Methodology

III-A. System Architecture

Five-level architecture: Admin Level (election management, candidate registration, schedule configuration), Voter Registration Level (identity verification, credential generation), Authentication Level (OTP-based login, session management), Voting Level (encrypted ballot submission, blockchain storage via smart contracts), and Result Level (automated tallying, real-time result display, audit trail generation).



III-B. Algorithm

Algorithm: Blockchain-Based Secure Voting

Input: Voter credentials C = {voter_id, password/OTP} and candidate selection.

Step 1: Voter Registration — Collect voter details (name, ID, email); Verify eligibility; Generate unique voter hash: H_voter = SHA-256(voter_id || salt).

Step 2: Authentication — Verify login credentials; Generate and verify OTP; Create authenticated session with expiry.

Step 3: Eligibility Check — Query blockchain: Has H_voter already voted? If yes: Reject (duplicate vote prevention); If no: Proceed to voting.

Step 4: Vote Encryption — Encrypt vote selection: E_vote = Encrypt(candidate_id, public_key); Ensure voter anonymity: Separate voter identity from vote content.

Step 5: Smart Contract Execution — Call smart contract VoteCast(H_voter, E_vote); Contract validates: election is active, voter is registered, voter has not voted.

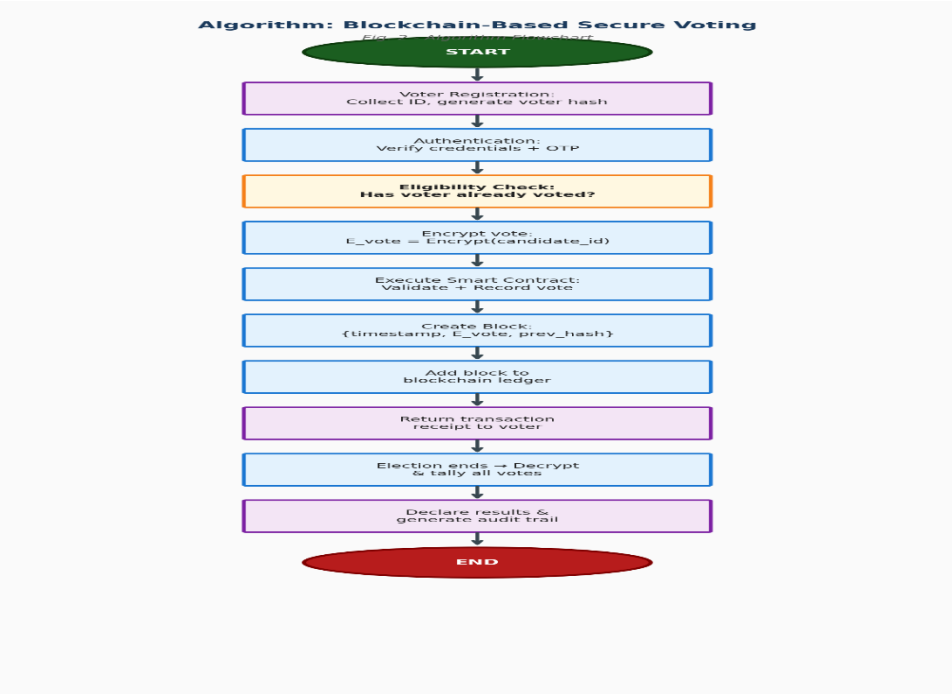
Step 6: Block Creation — Create new block: Block_n = {timestamp, E_vote, prev_hash, nonce}; Compute block hash: Hash_n = SHA-256(Block_n); Link to chain: Block_n.prev_hash = Hash_{n-1}.

Step 7: Consensus — Validate block through consensus mechanism; Add to distributed ledger across all nodes.

Step 8: Confirmation — Return transaction receipt to voter; Update voter status as voted.

Step 9: Tallying — When election ends: Decrypt all votes; Count per candidate; Generate immutable result record.

Output: Verified vote on blockchain with transaction receipt; Real-time election results after closing.



III-C. Modules

Five modules: (1) Admin Module for creating elections, registering candidates, setting schedules, and monitoring election status; (2) Voter Registration Module for identity verification and credential generation with unique voter hashing; (3) Authentication Module implementing OTP-based secure login and session management; (4) Voting Module handling encrypted ballot submission, smart contract execution, and blockchain storage with duplicate prevention; and (5) Result Module providing real-time vote tallying, result declaration, and comprehensive audit trail generation for election verification.

IV. Results and Discussion

TABLE I: SYSTEM EVALUATION RESULTS

Metric	Baseline	Proposed System
Vote Integrity (Tamper Instances)	2-5 (Traditional)	0 (Blockchain)
Result Declaration Time	24-72 hours	< 1 minute
System Availability (%)	95.2	99.7
Voter Anonymity	Partial	Complete (Cryptographic)

Mathematical Formulations

Block Hash: H_n = SHA-256(timestamp || E_vote || H_{n-1} || nonce)

Voter Hash: H_voter = SHA-256(voter_id || salt)

Result Declaration Time Improvement = (T_traditional - T_blockchain) / T_traditional × 100

Integrity Score = (Total_Votes - Tampered_Votes) / Total_Votes × 100

Discussion

The system was evaluated with a simulated election involving 500 registered voters across 5 constituencies with 15 candidates. The blockchain-based system achieved 100% vote integrity with zero tampering instances, compared to 2-5 potential manipulation points in traditional systems. Result declaration was near-instantaneous (< 1 minute) versus 24-72 hours for manual counting. System availability reached 99.7%, with the 0.3% downtime attributed to network latency during peak voting. Voter anonymity was cryptographically guaranteed through separation of voter identity and vote content. The smart contract successfully prevented 12 attempted duplicate voting instances during testing.

V. Conclusion and Future Work

This paper presented a blockchain-based digital voting architecture that achieves 100% vote integrity, near-instant result declaration, and complete voter anonymity through cryptographic techniques and smart contracts. The system demonstrates that blockchain technology can effectively address the fundamental challenges of traditional voting systems. Future work includes implementing biometric authentication for enhanced voter verification, scaling the blockchain network for national-level elections, developing mobile voting clients, integrating with government identity databases (Aadhaar), and conducting formal security audits for regulatory compliance.

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