

Development informatics

Current status and future
prospects

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Some academic work to date in the IS field

Ten IFIP working group 9.4 conferences on 'social implications of computers in developing countries' starting in Delhi in 1988

Specialist journals e.g. *Information Technology for Development*,
Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries,
Information Technologies and International Development

Papers in mainstream journals e.g. Special issue papers in *MIS Quarterly* in 2007

Focus of most of IS academic work to date

As subset of IS discipline

Discussing 'IS in developing countries'

Aimed mostly at other IS academics or local level practitioners

Often focused on particular computing technologies such as telecentres or e-government systems

Future Challenge One:

**Explicit focus on
the D for development in ICT4D**

Focusing on development

[Heeks 2006, Brown and Grant 2010]

Need to distinguish research on ICT in developing countries and research on ICT for development

Need to theorise the meaning of 'development' e.g. through Sen's work, livelihood frameworks ...

Future Challenge Two:

Working with other disciplines



Multidisciplinary ICT4D

Everybody is interested in ICT4D these days:

- Development studies people
- Geographers
- Anthropologists
- Economists
- Political scientists
- Computer scientists

Need multidisciplinary approaches to intervention (Parmar 2009)

Can we do multidisciplinary work?

Draw on theory from multiple disciplines

Interact at conferences

Carry out joint research studies

But there are some publishing issues ...

Future Challenge Three:

Working at the strategic policy level

Policy-oriented research

[Thompson and Walsham 2010]

Need for strategic development focus

And engagement with policy makers

As a complement rather than a substitute for the more common approach of implementation studies

African strategic research agenda

To build infrastructure e.g. HISP on health (Braa et al 2007)

To promote social justice e.g. 'SMS uprising: mobile activism in Africa' (Ekine 2010)

To support economic activity for the poor e.g. M-PESA in Kenya (Moraczynski 2009)

To provide access to global markets and resources e.g. Jordan's approach to ICT-led development (Al-Jaghoub and Westrup 2003)



Future Challenge Four:

**Recognising the importance
of new IT-enabled models**



New IT-enabled models

Development 2.0 (Thompson 2008)

New IT-enabled models that can transform the processes and structures of development (Heeks 2010)

- Connecting the excluded e.g. job adverts via SMS
- Digital production e.g. text translation into local languages via mobile phone crowdsourcing
- Social enterprise e.g. poor women in Kerala, India doing state government data entry, digitization etc.

‘African Women and ICTs’ (Buskens and Webb 2009)



Opportunity

Explicit focus on the D for development

Multidisciplinary working

Carrying out strategic policy-oriented research

Understanding new IT-enabled models of development



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Thank you for your attention