

ICT4D Research Priorities

Richard Heeks

Centre for Development Informatics, IDPM

University of Manchester, UK

<http://www.cdi.manchester.ac.uk>

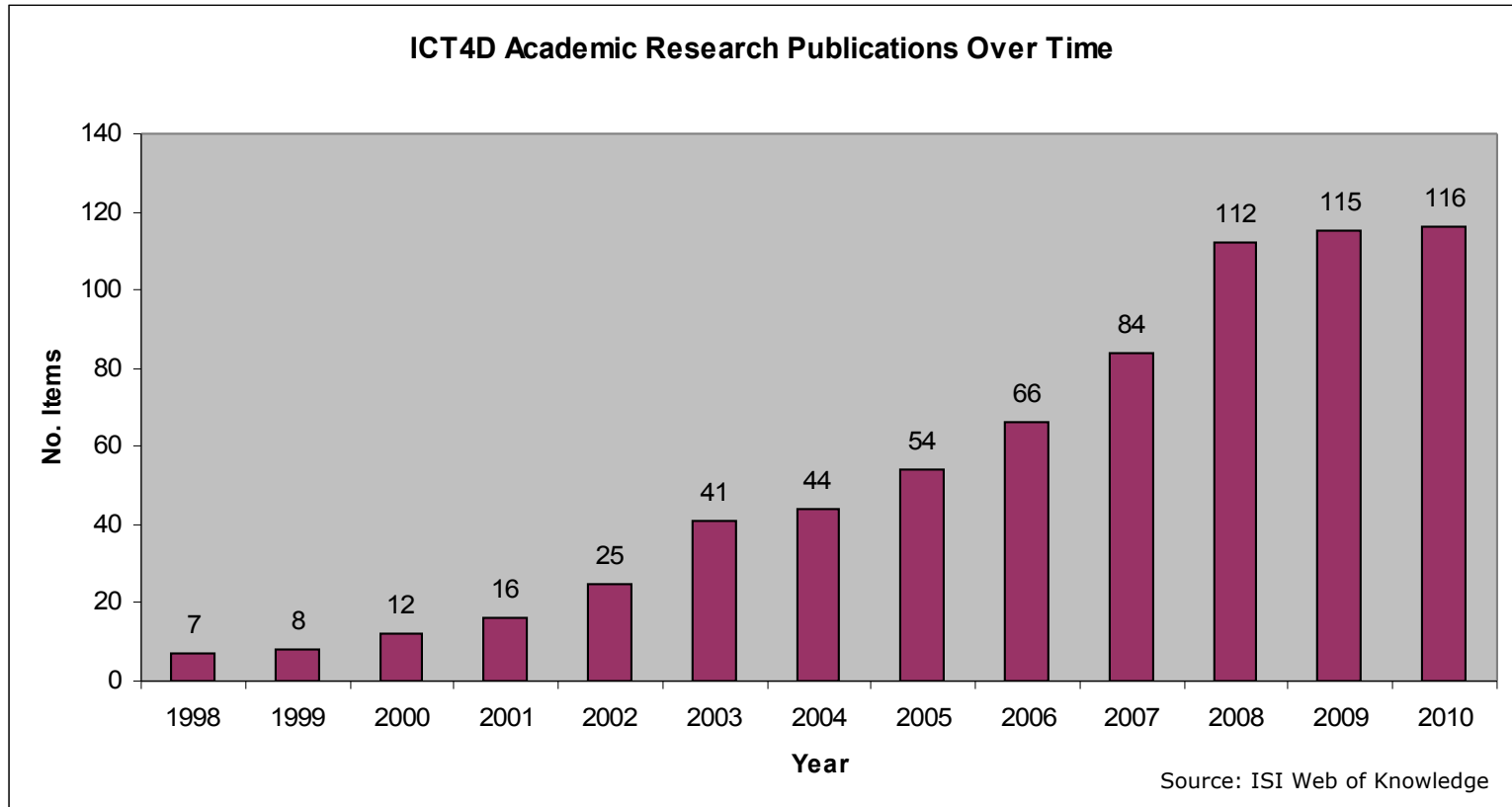


Lots of ICT4D Research Outlets

	Journal	2005 Score	2008 Score	Overall Score
1	Information Technologies and International Development	2.61	2.08	2.35
2	Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries	3.62	1	2.31
3	Information Technology for Development	2.94	1.35	2.15
4	African Journal of Information and Communication	1.09	0.4	0.75
5	International Journal of Education and Development Using Information and Communication Technology	1.01	0.4	0.71
6	Asian Journal of Communication	1.16	0.23	0.70
7	Journal of Health Informatics in Developing Countries	n/a	0.43	0.43
8	Information Development	0.35	0.25	0.30
9	International Journal on Advances in ICT for Emerging Regions	n/a	0.26	0.26
10	African Journal of Information & Communication Technology	0.25	0.04	0.15
11	South African Journal of Information Management	0.28	0	0.14
12	African Journal of Information Systems	n/a	0.05	0.05
13	International Journal of Information Communication Technologies and Human Development	n/a	0.01	0.01
14	Asian Journal of Information Technology	0.01	0	0.01
15	Asian Journal of Information Management	n/a	0	0.00
-	International Journal of ICT Research and Development in Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a

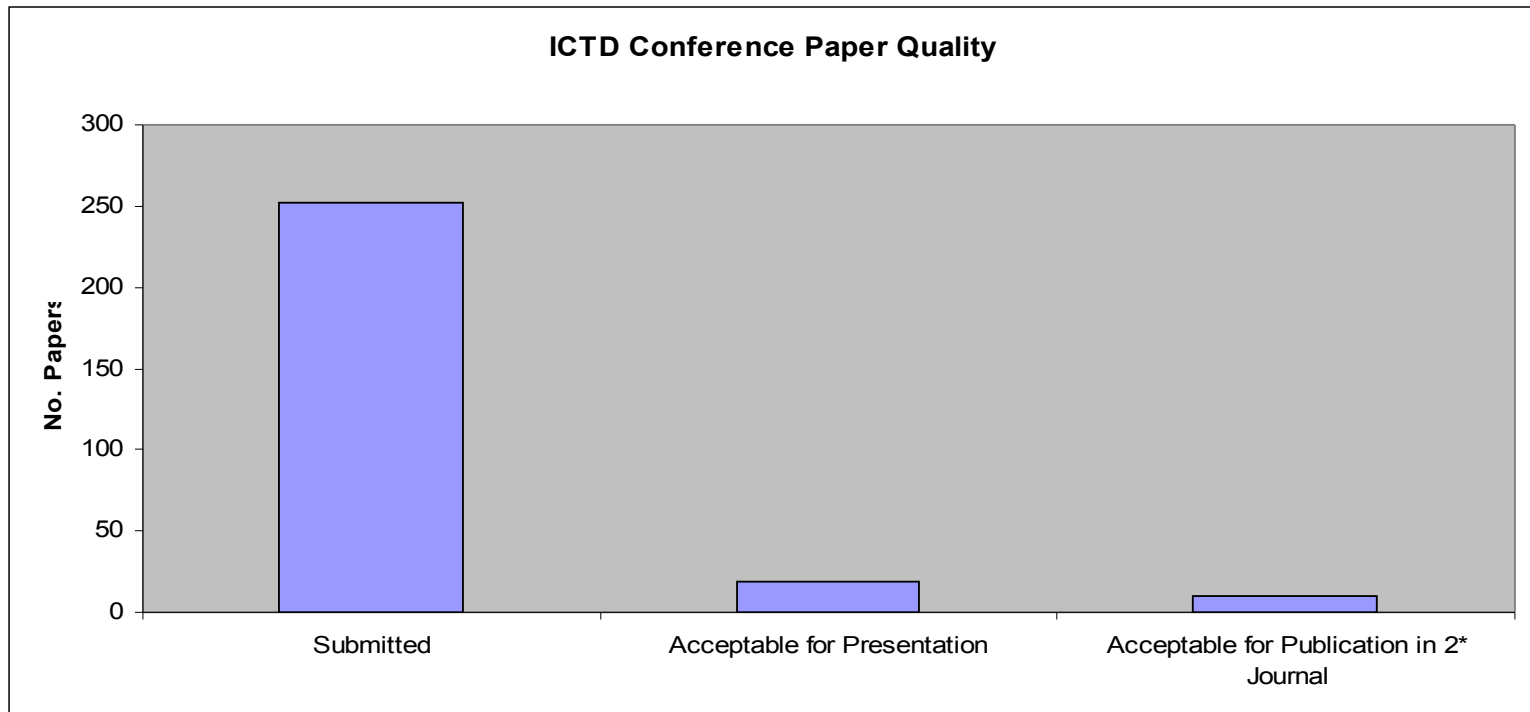


Increasing Amounts of ICT4D Research



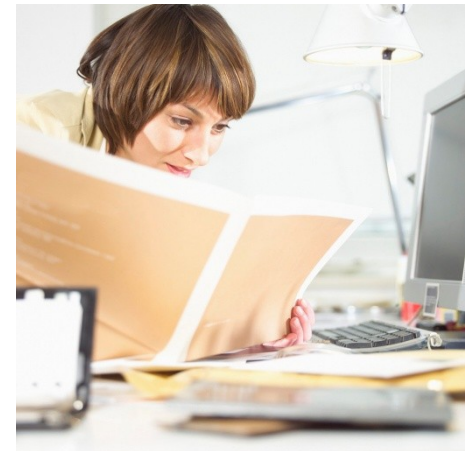
Most ICT4D Research is Crap

- EJISDC Journal: 70% of papers never cited
- Most ICT4D research is not publishable:



Implications of ICT4D Research State-of-Play

- **Is new, primary research needed? What about a secondary review?**



- **We need to improve ICT4D research quality**



Priorities for Good ICT4D Research

Good ICT4D Research is:

- **Significant**
- **Rigorous**
- **Original**



Priority 1 (Significance): Identify Audience and Knowledge Gap

**Who is the audience for
our research?**



**What do they want (or
need) to know?**



How do we reach them?



Priority 2 (Significance): Make a Connection

Connecting with development (studies)



Research that advocates



Priority 3 (Rigour): Sound Research Methods

Baskerville & Myers/Special Issue Foreword



SPECIAL ISSUE ON ACTION RESEARCH IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS: MAKING IS RESEARCH RELEVANT TO PRACTICE—FOREWORD

By: Richard Baskerville
Senior Editor, Special Issue

Michael D. Myers
Senior Editor, Special Issue

This special issue of *MIS Quarterly* is devoted to the subject of action research in information systems. The senior editors of this Special Issue were Richard Baskerville and Michael D. Myers. The deadline for submission was September 30, 2002.

A total of 29 manuscripts were submitted. Of these, six made it through two or more review cycles. These six are presented in this issue. Another two manuscripts are still in the review process, but the disposition of these had not been determined by the publication deadline for this issue. If one or both of these manuscripts are accepted, they will appear in a future issue of *MIS Quarterly*.

Before we describe the articles in this issue, we will first explain our rationale for publishing a special issue on action research in information systems.

Why Action Research and Information Systems?

There have been frequent calls for IS researchers to make their research more relevant to practice (Zmud 1998), yet it seems IS researchers continue to struggle to make excellent research practically relevant. We believe action research methods provide one potential avenue to improve the practical relevance of IS research. Action research has been accepted as a valid research method in other applied fields such as organization development and education. (e.g., Carr and Kemmis 1998; Eiden and Chisholm 1993; Van Eynde and Bledsoe 1990). It has been described as "the touchstone of most good organizational development practice" and "remains the primary methodology for the practice of organizational development" (Van Eynde and Bledsoe 1990, p. 27). We see no reason why action research should not be accepted in the field of information systems.

Action research aims to solve current practical problems while expanding scientific knowledge. Unlike other research methods, where the researcher seeks to study organizational phenomena but not to change them, the action researcher is concerned to create organizational change and

MIS Quarterly Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 329-335/September 2004 329

Braa et al./Sustainable Health Information Systems



NETWORKS OF ACTION: SUSTAINABLE HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS ACROSS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES¹

By: Jørn Braa
Department of Informatics
University of Oslo
Oslo
NORWAY
jbraa@ifi.uio.no

Eric Monteiro
Department of Computer Information
Science
Norwegian University of Science and
Technology
Trondheim
NORWAY
ericm@idi.ntnu.no

Sundeep Sahay
Department of Informatics
University of Oslo
Oslo
NORWAY
ssahay@ifi.uio.no

¹Michael Myers was the accepting senior editor for this paper.

Abstract

Our paper is motivated by one simple question: Why do so many action research efforts fail to persist over time? We approach this question, the problem of sustainability, building on a perspective on action research identifying the pivotal importance of networks. More precisely, local action research interventions need to be conceptualized and approached as but one element in a larger network of action in order to ensure sustainability. A vital aspect of our perspective is that local interventions depend heavily on the support of similar action research efforts in other locations. This is essential for the necessary processes of learning and experience sharing. We suggest that the scaling (i.e., spreading) of intervention is a prerequisite, not a luxury, for sustainable action research. Empirically, we base our analysis on an ongoing, large-scale action research project within the health care sector (called HISP) in a number of developing countries. HISP provides a fruitful occasion to investigate key criteria for our approach to action research, namely sustainability, scalability, and capacity to be politically relevant to the participants. We contribute to three discourses: (1) models of action research, (2) lessons for health information systems in developing countries, and (3) more generally, IS implementations that are dispersed, large-scale, and have scarce resources.

MIS Quarterly Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 337-362/September 2004 337



Priority 4 (Rigour): Have a Conceptual Framework



Development Studies:

- Livelihoods
- Capabilities

Sociology:

- GEM
- Institutionalism

Information Systems:

- Technology acceptance model
- Design—reality gap model

Economics:

- Cost/benefit analysis
- Information economics

Development Informatics

Working Paper Series

The Development Informatics working paper series discusses the broad issues surrounding information, knowledge, information systems, and information and communication technologies in the process of socio-economic development

Paper No. 36

Impact Assessment of ICT-for-Development Projects: A Compendium of Approaches

RICHARD HEEKS & ALEMAYEHU MOLLA

2009

Produced with the support of:



<http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/publications/wp/di/>



Centre for Development Informatics

Priority 5 (Originality): Which “ICT”?

Technology- vs. Cutting-Edge In-Use



Priority 6 (Originality): Which "4D"?

Development- vs. Cutting-Edge In-Use



- Climate change
- Cities
- Growth
- Innovation

¿Development 2.0?



High-Priority ICT4D Research: Example

Jensen's Kerala Research:

- Audience Focus and Dissemination
- Connecting with Development
- Rigorous Quantitative Methods
- Conceptual Foundation
- Researches New Technology-In-Use
- Original Research on Development-In-Use

Now Let's Go And Do It . . .



Centre for Development
Informatics

THE
QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF ECONOMICS

Vol. CXXII August 2007 Issue 3

THE DIGITAL PROVIDE: INFORMATION (TECHNOLOGY),
MARKET PERFORMANCE, AND WELFARE IN THE
SOUTH INDIAN FISHERIES SECTOR*

ROBERT JENSEN

When information is limited or costly, agents are unable to engage in optimal arbitrage. Excess price dispersion across markets can arise, and goods may not be allocated efficiently. In this setting, information technologies may improve market performance and increase welfare. Between 1997 and 2001, mobile phone service was introduced throughout Kerala, a state in India with a large fishing industry. Using microlevel survey data, we show that the adoption of mobile phones by fishermen and wholesalers was associated with a dramatic reduction in price dispersion, the complete elimination of waste, and near-perfect adherence to the Law of One Price. Both consumer and producer welfare increased.

I. INTRODUCTION

How do improvements in information impact market performance and welfare? Economists have long emphasized that information is critical for the efficient functioning of markets. For example, two of the most well-known results in economics, the First Fundamental Theorem of Welfare Economics (i.e., competitive equilibria are Pareto efficient) and the "Law of One Price" (LOP) (i.e., the price of a good should not differ between any two markets by more than the transport cost between them) rely heavily on the assumption that agents have the necessary price information to engage in optimal trade or arbitrage. These results

* I thank two anonymous referees, Reuben Abraham, Christopher Avery, Satish Babu, Suzanne Cooper, Peter Cherian, Thomas DeLeire, Edward Glaeser, Sebastian James, C. M. Jolly, X. Joseph, Nolan Miller, C. K. Muhammad, Prakash Nair, Mai Nguyen, M. Philip, P. Philip, Lant Pritchett, V. Rajan, T. K. Sidhique, Joseph Thomas, and Richard Zeckhauser for valuable comments.

© 2007 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Quarterly Journal of Economics, August 2007

Resources for ICT4D Researchers

Reflections on ICT4D Research:

<http://ict4dblog.wordpress.com/tag/researching-ict4d/>

ICT4D Research Frameworks & Guide on Researching ICT Enterprises:

<http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/publications/wp/di/>

Guides to Researching Women's ICT Enterprises:

<http://www.womenictenterprise.org/publications.htm>

15-Credit Postgraduate Module on "Research Methods" by Distance Learning:

richard.heeks@manchester.ac.uk

