Abstract

IS research and practice needs to take on the big questions and global challenges. While the IS community is well positioned to assist in addressing these challenges, IS research has been criticized to lack relevance. We investigate how and to which extent IS can contribute to build a better world, in particular with regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We therefore conduct an explorative survey among leading IS researchers on a global scale. Based on 171 responses, we employ qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to synthesize the survey data, document and discuss results, and derive implications. Besides positive aspects, the survey also reveals challenges and critique concerning IS research. We provide a starting point, create awareness, and stimulate further discussions and research. With the right focus and alignment, IS practice and research has the potential to take on the big questions and can help to build a better world.

Keywords: IS research, Millennium Development Goals, survey research, relevance, research impact