

Meeting the methodological challenges of context and subjectivity in information systems research

Abstract:

Information systems research in developing countries is limited by the absence of adequate frameworks to characterize their contexts, leading to preoccupation with IS project failure. A critical realist framework based on Archers social realism – the Morphogenetic approach – integrated with potential mechanisms for emergence derived from Complexity theory, is investigated as a framework to understand e-Governance change processes in Kenya. The complex discursive environment for ICT is characterized with Q methodology for triangulation to factor in operant subjectivity in the domain. Philosophically, the approach avoids positivist – interpretive biases, and is essentially abductive, calling for researchers to re-evaluate philosophical commitments in complex contexts.