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The Scholarly Divide: Insights from the AIS Well-being Project

Ryan T. Wright
McIntire School of Commerce
University of Virginia
ryan.wright@virginia.edu

Carol Saunders
Department of Management
University of Central Florida
University of Pretoria
South Africa

Saonee Sarker
Department of Informatics
Lund University
Sweden

Atreyi Kankanhalli
Department of Information Systems and Analytics
School of Computing
National University of Singapore

Edgar A. Whitley
Department of Management
London School of Economics and Political Science
United Kingdom

Virpi Kristiina Tuunainen
Aalto University School of Business
Aalto University
Finland

Helle Zinner Henriksen
Department of Digitalization
Copenhagen Business School
Denmark

Abstract:

This article provides an overview of the findings from the Information Systems (IS) Well-Being Project that was started in the fall of 2020. There were two goals of this project: 1) understand the physical, mental, social, and financial well-being of IS academics during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2) theorize the downstream effects of the pandemic on the health of the IS research ecosystem. This investigation surfaced a troubling phenomenon that we coined "the IS scholarly divide". This editorial develops the theoretical underpinnings for the scholarly divide and posits the taxonomy of the divide. Finally, we explore the effects and forward some possible remedies.

Keywords: well-being, AIS, COVID pandemic, digital divide, faculty well-being, scholarly divide.

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1 Introduction

In the spring of 2020, the world changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fall of 2020, a group of IS scholars worldwide formed the IS Well-Being Project to better assess the pandemic's potential and current impact on the Information Systems (IS) academic community's physical, financial, social, and psychological/mental well-being. This was the first examination of well-being in the IS community to our knowledge. The specific objectives of this project were two-fold.

First, and foremost, we wanted to understand the perceptions of physical, mental, social, and financial well-being of IS academics during the COVID-19 pandemic through a multi-wave survey and disseminate this information. Second, drawing on the data and results from the above, the objective was also to theorize the downstream effects of the pandemic on the health of the IS research ecosystem, mediated by the digital transformation and divide that accelerated during this period. We draw on the concept of the "digital divide" to not only inform our current pandemic situation, but also form a basis for improving well-being post-pandemic.

Our project incorporated a survey designed to measure the well-being of IS academics during the pandemic and to explore the factors that influenced it. It gained sponsorship from the Association for Information Systems (see: https://aisnet.org/wellbeing) and the survey was sent out to IS academics around the world through several avenues, including AIS-affiliated channels. Recognizing that much has changed in our work in this period, the focus of this data collection was to understand the pandemic's impact on research, teaching, and service activities. As per our objectives, the survey also assessed members' well-being related questions, drawing on the multidimensionality of the well-being construct (e.g., Ponting et al. 2020).

We found evidence that was troubling, but not surprising. For example, our findings indicate that people with caring responsibilities typically have less time for research than those who don't. Clearly, the pandemic introduced additional stresses (especially homeschooling) that heightened our awareness of the context situation where we can support our colleagues. Unexpectedly, we also garnered evidence that the pandemic exacerbated an insidious divide that is embedded within academic institutions. We have coined this phenomenon the scholarly divide.

In summary, our research program focused on: 1) understanding the academic and personal contextual factors that influence IS academics' well-being, 2) uncovering interventions that can improve well-being and mitigate the scholarly divide at the local/institution level, and 3) proposing interventions that can help future-proof the IS discipline's research enterprise against other shocks.

In this editorial, we first define and conceptualize the idea of the scholarly divide. Subsequently, we formulate and describe a stage model for the scholarly divide, which outlines the impacts it has not only on well-being, but also on economic disparity, and on the IS research field at each stage. Last, we propose interventions to mitigate the scholarly divide at each stage, both at the local level and at the IS disciplinary level. Through these efforts, we aim to contribute to the discourse on the salient divides relevant to IS research, and academia as a whole, that was especially exacerbated during the pandemic.

2 The Science of Divides

Today, access to digital technology has arguably become a necessity for economic and human development. It enables the delivery of essential services including education and healthcare and offers opportunities for development, sustainability, and better governance (Mühleisen 2018). However, adoption and utilization of digital technology is still very uneven, for instance only ~35% of the population in developing countries have access to the Internet versus ~80% in advanced economies (World Bank 2021), leading to severe concerns surrounding the digital divide. Consequently, the concept of the digital divide has also received attention from IS researchers (Dewan and Riggins 2005; Wei et al. 2011). The digital divide has had additional implications during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, as telehealth solutions have increasingly been deployed due to mobility and distancing restrictions, the "have nots" of the digital divide are also the most susceptible to poor health outcomes related to COVID-19 (Ramsetty and Adams 2020).

At the same time, within the academic arena, we have increasingly seen discussions about other kinds of divides. With respect to academic research, there have been ongoing debates about the research versus

policy or practice divide (Lockhart and Stablein 2002), the related rigor versus relevance divide (Gulati 2007), and the quantitative versus qualitative research divide (Venkatesh et al. 2013), among others. At the institutional level, various divides between teaching versus research universities, also reflected in the concept of academic drift (Gonzales 2013), and tenure-track versus educator or clinical/practice track (Goez, 2021; Heskett 2005; Kezar, Holcombe and Maxey 2016) have surfaced. Several of these divides have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the economic impacts and resource constraints of the pandemic have had negative consequences on research activities and faculty hiring (Radecki and Schonfeld 2020). This has led to several other negative consequences such as psychological distress amongst academics in general (e.g., Al Miskry et al. 2021), and IS academics in particular. The need to move courses to an online platform (especially, technical courses that a typical IS academic teaches), shortage of faculty due to hiring freezes, restrictions on research-related travel, more protocols and administrative hurdles in universities, and the added challenges of caregiving, balancing home life and work-life within a confined space (owing to lockdowns) has led to concerns surrounding general well-being, as well as an inability to devote quality time to research activities (The Lancet 2020).

With this backdrop, the goal of the project pivoted to specifically investigate how the pandemic and resulting changes in the use of digital technology have impacted the well-being and scholarly activities of IS academics. A salient finding from this study was a new form of the divide, which we term as “scholarly divide”, i.e., grouping amongst academics with respect to their scholarly activities (mainly research). While this divide has not been created as a result of the pandemic, our study shows that this divide has been accentuated due to it.

3 AIS Well-Being Project Method and Findings

In the study, we asked questions about the AIS members’ pre-pandemic situation (academic and personal), members’ pandemic situation, region, high-level demographic information, and well-being on October 1, 2020, and kept this open for three weeks. The researchers chose not to collect any personally identifiable information. We made this decision to encourage honest and true feedback. There was a total of 35 questions that took students a median time of 9.05 minutes to answer. For the complete survey instrument, please see Appendix A. The AIS well-being study was vetted by the institutional review board at the University of Virginia (UVA IRB-SBS #3966)

3.1 What is Well-being?

The concept of well-being has evolved from related constructs in the IS literature e.g., technostress, burnout (Ayyagari et al. 2011), as well as in the broader literature (Topp et al. 2015). IS academic well-being in our study differs from other types of well-being related to work, most notably occupational well-being. Occupational well-being is restricted to how employees experience their work and workplace-related conditions (Mudrak et al. 2018). It encompasses affect (e.g., job satisfaction), job attitudes (e.g., job engagement), job performance attitudes (e.g., job accomplishment), social work relationships (e.g., meaningfulness), and psychological cognitions (e.g., stress and burnout) (Robertson and Cooper, 2011). In contrast, IS academic well-being as we see it, extends beyond work and the workplace to other aspects of academics’ life and environment (including crises, such as the pandemic) that also impact their research and productivity.

Past research has viewed well-being as a multi-dimensional construct composed of concepts such as economic (e.g., income) to health-related to social and leisure activities. Consequently, we assessed it on four first-order dimensions: physical, psychological/mental, social, and financial (Tuzovic and Kabadayi 2020). In addition, we captured a question on the overall "feeling" of the member, which can be seen as the fifth dimension of well-being (see Figure 1). Finally, we measured job security as an important dependent variable.

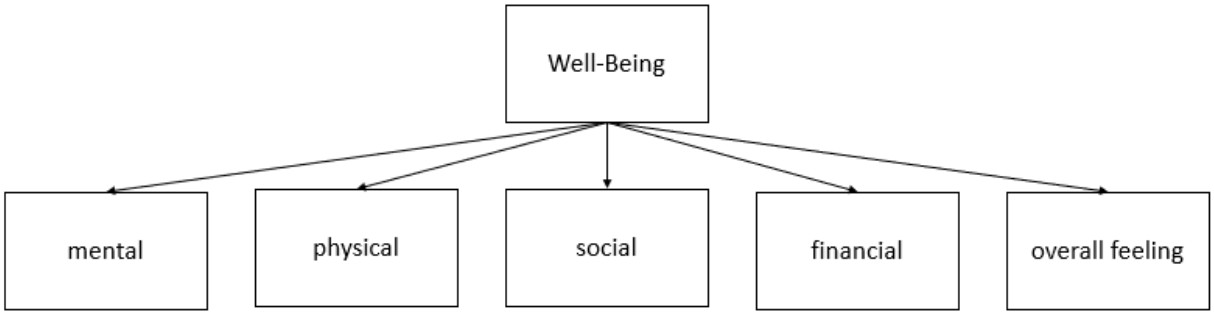

Figure 1. Dimensions of Well-Being (adapted from Tuzovic and Kabadayi 2020)

The findings from our study (shown next) clearly indicate that well-being is a multi-dimensional concept. Further the concept of well-being is related to academic and personal contextual factors, and ultimately effects members' work efforts. While the primary focus of our research commentary will be on offering insights and study approaches for the scholarly divide, we will also draw from our study's findings to support IS researchers such that their well-being is addressed.

3.2 Empirical Investigation

The AIS well-being survey was broadcast via multiple mailing groups and sites including the AIS email list service, the AIS website, AIS newsletter (AIS InSider), and to leadership in all special interest groups (SIGs) and colleagues. Between September 16, 2020, and October 23rd, 2020, we received 421 responses, which constitutes 9% of the AIS membership (AIS 2021). Out of the 421 recipients, seven did not consent to participate in the study, 73 did not complete past the first page, and 2 had significant data runs (See Table 1 for the descriptive statistics).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Years in Rank	0.01	35.0	6.2	6.1
Years at Institution	0.01	49.0	10.1	9.2
Hours of week caregiving	0	168	22.7	26.7
Age	25	76	45.7	12.1
	Survey	AIS Membership*		
Females	43.8%	N/A		
Region 1	39.2%	39.1%		
Region 2	37.9%	37.4%		
Region 3	22.9%	23.4%		
Ph.D. Students	18.2%	33.3%		
* AIS Region Summary September 2020				

We first investigated if there were significant differences before and during the pandemic with respect to the three aspects of members' academic work efforts (i.e., research, teaching, and service). To calculate this change, we executed a t-test between the reported percentage of their efforts towards research, teaching, and service at pre-pandemic times and their current efforts measured in Sept-Oct of 2020. We found that both members' research and service efforts as a percentage of total effort were significantly lower during the pandemic than before the pandemic, but teaching efforts remained statistically similar during these periods (see Table 2).

Table 2. Results of Effort Difference

	Pre-Pandemic % of Effort (Mean | Std.Dev)	Pandemic % of Effort (Mean | Std.Dev)	Mean Diff.	p-value
Teaching	32.3 | 19.3	34.1 | 27.2	1.8	.11
Research	40.6 | 22.1	38.2 | 28.3	-2.4	.02
Service	12.5 | 11.1	11.3 | 10.9	-1.2	.02

We also wanted to examine how the academic and personal factors (including differences in effort) related to the different aspects of AIS members' well-being. To this end, we estimated the relationships between IS academic and personal contextual factors with the various dimensions of well-being using a general linear model in SPSS 27.0. The contextual factors included academic factors, such as self-reported

decrease in their research productivity and service activities (efforts) due to the pandemic, and an ordinal measure of members' rank (e.g., Ph.D. student to chaired professor). We also captured personal contextual factors, such as the number of hours spent caring for family members per week, gender, and age. We also categorized individuals into high research effort (50%+) and lower research effort (less than 50%), to observe any differences in well-being between the groups. See Table 3 for the results.

Table 3. Regression Results

I.V.	D.V.	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	I.V.	D.V.	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Hours Caregiving	Feeling	1.28	0.26		Diff in % of Research Effort	Feeling	4.86	0.03	0.03
	Physical	1.28	0.26			Physical	1.38	0.24	
	Mental	4.34	0.04	0.02		Mental	6.40	0.01	0.04
	Social	0.30	0.58			Social	1.54	0.22	
	Financial	3.18	0.08			Financial	0.18	0.67	
	Job Security	0.42	0.52			Job Security	0.24	0.63	
Age	Feeling	0.02	0.89		Diff in % of Service Effort	Feeling	0.00	0.98	
	Physical	1.97	0.16			Physical	1.05	0.31	
	Mental	0.04	0.84			Mental	0.31	0.58	
	Social	0.02	0.88			Social	0.32	0.57	
	Financial	1.41	0.24			Financial	1.28	0.26	
	Job Security	0.69	0.41			Job Security	1.01	0.32	
Rank	Feeling	0.05	0.82		High / Low Research % Effort (Categorized)	Feeling	0.38	0.54	
	Physical	0.73	0.40			Physical	1.79	0.18	
	Mental	0.70	0.40			Mental	4.90	0.03	0.03
	Social	0.07	0.80			Social	0.80	0.37	
	Financial	1.37	0.24			Financial	0.00	0.95	
	Job Security	2.98	0.09			Job Security	2.18	0.14	
Gender	Feeling	6.15	0.00	0.07	Note: Gray highlighted cells indicate significant differences at $p < .05$				
	Physical	0.56	0.57						
	Mental	1.31	0.27						
	Social	2.38	0.10						
	Financial	0.81	0.45						
	Job	2.60	0.08						

We found that among personal contextual factors, the number of hours of caregiving was significantly related to mental well-being ($F = 4.34$, $p < 0.05$) meaning that the more caregiving you have to do, the poorer you report your well-being. Implicitly, caring for others doesn't improve your well-being. We also found evidence that gender was related to overall feelings of well-being ($F = 6.15$, $p < 0.01$), while age or rank were not associated with the well-being dimensions. The academic contextual factors that were significantly related to the well-being dimensions included the change in percent of research effort (with overall well-being feeling $F = 4.86$, $p<0.05$; and mental well-being $F=6.40$, $p<0.05$). The change in service effort had no significant relationship with the dimensions of well-being.

Lastly, the difference between high research effort and lower effort groups was associated with well-being. Specifically, mental well-being was statistically significant ($F = 4.90$, $p < 0.05$) for this IV. We investigated this result further using a pairwise comparison between the two groups (with high and low percent of effort research) and found that the mean difference between them in mental well-being was 0.87 ($p < 0.05$).

3.3 Findings Summary

We provide preliminary evidence that members' research productivity/effort was affected as a whole by the pandemic, but this was very different for those who are research-focused and those who are not. We find that mental and overall well-being were associated with research efforts, but also moderated by personal factors of hours spent in caregiving and gender. In sum, there is evidence that the pandemic has disadvantaged in terms of reported well-being those that are unable to expend a high percentage of their effort in research. This highlights the salient divide between the groups, which we refer to as the "scholarly divide".

Our discussions till now suggest a meta-model for the scholarly divide, which has been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resultant digitalization of work and other activities (see Figure 2). The pandemic created situations that cultivated lower well-being (e.g., lockdowns, restrictions, and numerous challenges). To respond to the challenges and restrictions, people, businesses and educational institutions increasingly relied on the digitalization of work to find alternatives to face-to-face collaborations using online meeting systems such as zoom; to adopt online teaching technologies with such alacrity that stress and frustration levels were heightened; and, to use the technology to handle daily chores such as online shopping and food delivery. While there are many benefits associated with pandemic-related digitalization of work, it also served to widen the Scholarly Divide and depress well-being.

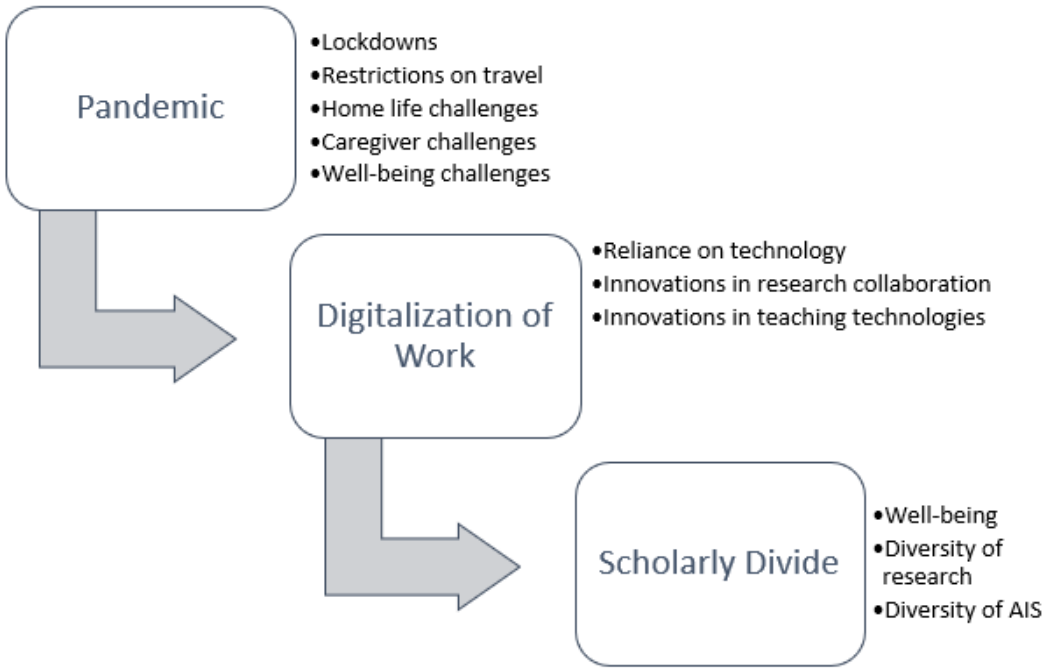

Figure 2. Scholarly Divide Meta Model

4 What is the Scholarly Divide?

4.1 Definition of Scholarly Divide

As we worked on defining the scholarly divide, we drew inspiration from Nielsen's (2006) notion of the digital divide, which refers to the "fact that certain parts of the population have substantially better opportunities to benefit from the new economy than other parts of the population." We recognize that the concept of the "digital divide" does not fully address the multifaceted and compounded nature of factors underlying digital inequalities manifested during the pandemic (Zheng and Walsham, 2021), as well as well-being in our post-pandemic world. Hence, we adopt an intersectional perspective to understand the impact of these factors including faculty roles, gender, race, ethnicity, and education. This view suggests that the interactions of social markers, such as gender and age, shape an individual's or group's experience (Collins, 2015). For example, in our findings, the intersectional perspective is useful to

understand the associations of gender and care giving with well-being, since women were the main care givers during the pandemic (e.g., Reese, Harris-Tyron, Gill and Banaszynski, 2021; Skinner, Betancourt and Wolff-Eisenberg, 2021). Specifically, Collins et al. (2020) found that gender gap in hours worked has increased by 20-50 percent during the pandemic. Within our own IS discipline Van Osch et al. (2020) editorial in the Journal of the AIS (JAIS) reported that the number of submissions to JAIS had decreased 23% from the previous year, which is to be expected. Further, they found that this impact was more prevalent for females than males.

> *"The number of female first authors during the early lockdown period (between March and June 2020) is 43% lower than that between the same months of the previous year (between March and June 2019). The number of male first authors during the same three months is 13% lower in 2020 than in 2019." (pg. 1372).*

Our focus in this project has specifically been on IS academics' scholarship-related activities, and thus we define the scholarly divide as *the gap/divide that might result in an IS academics' scholarly activities (primarily research) that was exacerbated by unequal effects of the pandemic on their well-being.* We believe that this inequity in well-being (both positive and negative) will likely impact the IS research footprint in years to come.

Based on the results from our survey, we develop a framework surrounding the stages of the scholarly divide, its impacts, and outcomes. Our framework is influenced by Nielsen's (2006) discussion of the consequences of the digital divide. Particularly, Nielsen alerts us to three different stages of this divide: economic, usability, and empowerment. He further cautions that the inherent focus is always on the economic divide, but that the usability and empowerment divides can have many long-lasting impacts. This view is endorsed by other researchers as well e.g., van Deursen and van Dijk (2019). Consequently, our model outlines three main stages of inequity (see Table 4).

4.2 Stages of the Scholarly Divide

Below and elaborated in Table 4, we describe the three stages of the scholarly divide, their relationship with well-being, and their effects on economic disparity as well as on the IS research discipline.

Stage 1: Economic Stage – This stage is characterized by the economic consequences of IS academics being able (or unable) to conduct and publish peer-reviewed research in high-quality journals. During the pandemic, academics had to operate under conditions of scarce time and space resources. With work-from-home becoming the norm due to lockdowns, members had to juggle multiple facets of their lives (work, caregiving, other responsibilities) in constrained spaces, and with conflicting schedules (Sarker et al. 2021). The word clouds in Appendix A indicate the salience of work and family issues during this period. Also, as our findings indicate, that resource scarcity disproportionately affected women who took on more family caregiving duties and was associated with lower overall well-being. The findings also show the disparity of research efforts (low versus high research productivity groups) being related to the mental well-being of respondents. This gap has downstream consequences of aggravating economic disparity and impacting the IS research discipline, as summarized in Table 4.

Stage 2: Usability Stage – As the resource constraints persist over time, disadvantaged IS academics may start falling behind in terms of research skills and knowledge. The lack of time can make it challenging to keep up with advances in research methods and tools. With travel restrictions and virtual conferences during the pandemic, access to collaborators and peers with complementary skills in research methods and domains is also restricted. This not only impacts existing collaborations but also limits the start of new research collaboration projects. It is the informal mechanisms of collaboration that are difficult to replicate in a virtual setting that hamper both current, but particularly new, collaborations. Further, the inability to maintain research literacy is a major concern in the usability stage, which can be a source of frustration and anxiety for IS academics.

Stage 3: Empowerment Stage – In the final stage, both the resource constraints and literacy gaps are further compounded. With the gap widening in terms of research productivity, power and voice will start to rest on a small group. Our investigation has also pointed to psychological impacts of lack of empowerment, where not having a voice can lead to resentment, anger, and feelings of burnout. It is well acknowledged that the IS discipline represents a diversity of scholars, who bring a wide range of paradigmatical perspectives, theoretical preferences and methodological skills and interests. With the dominance of a few scholars, the IS discipline would lose the benefits of such diversity, which will lead to

the discipline depending on a select few to drive its research agenda, resulting in the empowerment divide. This divide is likely to be the most challenging to bridge.

Table 4. Stage Model for the Scholarly Divide

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Name	**Economic Divide**	**Usability Divide**	**Empowerment Divide**
Description	The AIS Well-being project has already identified that the COVID-19 pandemic has either provided IS academics more time to research (the "haves") or considerably less time to research (the "have nots"). In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research divide has occurred in teaching vs. doctoral granting universities… and more recently in tenure track vs. non-tenure track (clinical) faculty.	As the economic outcomes persist, the ones who have been disadvantaged by the pandemic will not have the time to access the resources, leading to their falling further behind.	The final stage is empowerment where the power will rest in the hands of the productivity- privileged, and those who have suffered during the pandemic will be outsiders.
Effects on Well Being	Our survey indicates that the pandemic has increased research productivity in some scholars while also decreasing the amount of time others have to allocate to research. Those with less time available for research might experience psychological distress due to their lack of productivity.	The ones who have been disadvantaged by the pandemic might not being able to access resources. This results in their being less aware of opportunities for research collaborations and networking. Thus, they will fall behind in getting integrated into the research communities and might become frustrated about the need to maintain an unsatisfactory status quo.	Communities might grow through academic nepotism rather than through egalitarianism. Those who are in the "out" groups might become angry and resentful with those who are advancing through 'nepotism'. Due to their lack of power and voice, they could alternatively feel powerless and experience burnout in relation to doing research.
Effects on Economic Disparity	Those who are not able to focus on research productivity will over time suffer from less pay raises, less research support, less ability to change to better paying jobs, and also less job security.	Without access to research communities there will be less promise of academic mobility. The ones who might still be considering tenure, might find it difficult to secure appropriate tenure letter writers, which can have additional detrimental effects on the tenure process.	The IS discipline will have a smaller footprint which limits its impact within the host unit (business school). Analytics has driven the growth in the IS discipline which further concentrates the economic disparity for those employing traditional techniques.
Effects to IS Research Discipline	The number of submissions might stay the same but there will be a smaller group of highly productive people submitting more research. There will be increased inequity in publications; certain world regions which already suffer from inequity issues, and perhaps have been more negatively affected by the pandemic, will fall further behind, resulting in inequity in representations of authors, editorial review board members, etc. in journals.	Research communities will become more concentrated with a select few. Editorial boards and academic leaders will become less diverse as well.	The diversity of IS research will shrink as there will be centers of power excellence that drive research agendas. The productivity - disadvantaged will feel a lack of belongingness. The belonging literature (e.g., Yuval-Davis 2006) draws attention to the "participatory character of citizenship" being at the core of belonging. Given the lack of participation, the have-nots will likely be disillusioned, resulting in a fragmented IS community, and therefore less diversity of thought and innovation.

5 What is the Scholarly Divide?

The COVID-19 pandemic magnified an already-existing scholarly divide -- an insidious divide that is embedded within academic institutions. Now that we are more aware of this divide, we, as members of AIS and the broader academic community, can be motivated to challenge long-standing institutional traditions and policies that propagate it. While trying to narrow the divide will be challenging, through multipronged interventions and systematic, sustained efforts, we can stem the flow of bright minds (e.g., caregivers, faculty burnt out from the increased pandemic-induced academic requirements) out of academia, encourage greater participation in research of members of our community, and enhance their well-being. The interventions should enhance our research by allowing us to draw from multiple perspectives to increase the innovation in and quality of our research, while at the same time increasing members' well-being along its various dimensions (mental, physical, social, and financial).

Well-being literature highlights the importance of community well-being to provide a "positive" environment for an individual (Hayworth and Hart 2007). Lee, Kim, and Philips (2015) view community well-being as being composed of community development and community economic development and highlight the bi-directional relationship between individual and community well-being. They further view community well-being as an important element of its growth and sustainability. Thus, for the IS discipline to thrive and sustain itself in the long run, it is important to ensure the discipline's well-being which includes the well-being of its members.

5.1 Guiding Principles

Below we propose possible interventions to narrow the scholarly divide. These interventions are based on the following guiding principles.

1. Every aspect of diversity (cultural, methodological, ethnic, gender, field, training, and so on) makes the IS discipline stronger and more robust to changing tides.
2. The creation of interventions should reflect the complexity that is created from the intersectionality of diversity aspects.
3. Explicit interventions are needed to lessen the effects of the pandemic and the widening scholarly divide.
4. Interventions at the local and discipline level are needed to foster a healthy and resilient research community.

5.2 Possible Interventions

The well-being of individual researchers needs to be addressed in a holistic and systematic way. Below are some possible interventions that could be undertaken at both the local institutional and discipline levels across the three stages of the scholarly divide (i.e., economic, usability, and empowerment) – see Table 5.

Table 5. Interventions to mitigate scholarly divide.

	Stage 1 - Economic	Stage 2 - Usability	Stage 3 - Empowerment
Local	Create communities of practice for those struggling to find the time. Offer virtual co-working sessions to help motivate faculty to work in the "virtual" presence of other peers. Offer Well-being Awareness / Training Recognize in host units that as a community that caregivers are being impacted negatively while others have accelerated their careers during the pandemic.	Have specific and targeted ways of reaching out to those falling behind. Offer publishing workshops for non-tenure track faculty and faculty in teaching universities.	Offer Listening Sessions for the "have-nots;" integrate their ideas and suggestions within the community so they feel a sense of belongingness. Organize structure "meet and greets" at the disciplinary conferences to enable a platform for networking. Invite speakers offering a broad range (and seldom heard) perspectives to speak virtually at their universities.

	Use this recognition to temporarily lessen the requirements for tenure and job-related decisions or even automatically delay tenure decisions for a short period of time.		
Discipline-Wide	Recognize the value of different types of research (e.g., teaching cases are of great value to faculty in teaching universities) Develop list of target journals for non-tenure track (clinical) faculty Make well-being and diversity core within the messaging and the academic meetings. Consider having regular creches for children of all ages at all major conferences.	Organize pre-conference workshops and more paper-a-thon sessions to increase productivity. Keep offering virtual and hybrid conferences that specifically target access to a wider set of academics who don't have the means or ability to participate. This is different than the full-hybrid experience which is costly. Have panels at conferences with carefully selected panelists who can share stories of their challenges of balancing scholarship and well-being during the pandemic to help convey that "no one is alone." Editors should develop strategies to encourage more Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in editorials, commentaries, and empirical submissions.	Start a "professional buddy" program where COVID-induced disadvantaged researchers can each be paired up with a researcher who has been more productive to re-energize their research programs and make them feel that their concerns and challenges are being heard by the community. Promote team science to facilitate increased productivity, synergistic research and continued momentum for individuals lacking in some methodologies or with caregiving responsibilities (Reese et al, 2021). Recognize different forms of academic contribution in research papers (e.g. using the Credit system https://credit.niso.org/)

5.2.1 Local Level

At the local level such as in our own universities, there are manifold opportunities to respond to the challenges created by the scholarly divide. In terms of helping others with their publications, in the economic stage, communities of practice could be created such as having parent mentorship teams led by colleagues (male and female) who have successfully navigated parenthood and academic demands. Such mentorship teams could provide support and guidance to those struggling to overcome time constraints. Further, research universities could create mentoring programs between their tenure- and non-tenure- track faculty to increase publishing opportunities for the non-tenure track faculty, while non-tenure track faculty could open doors to practitioner organizations for their tenure-track colleagues. Virtual co-working could provide motivation to peers who work better around others –albeit virtually -- and Well-being awareness /training programs could provide strategies for those who need to take better care of themselves.

We need to work within our universities (as well as more broadly in our discipline) to recognize that caregivers are being impacted negatively, while others have accelerated their careers during the pandemic. This recognition could be used to temporarily lessen the requirements for tenure and job-related decisions or even automatically delay tenure decisions for a short period of time. For example, the National Alliance for Inclusive and Diverse STEM Faculty (ASPIRE) produced a guide, "Supporting Faculty During & After COVID-19: Don't Let Go of Equity," to allay short-term inequitable effects of the pandemic by recommending that expectations for research publications be explicitly changed to reflect the current environment (Skinner et al., 2021). Many schools automatically deferred the review of pre-tenured faculty by one year, without them having the burden of requesting the deferment (Skinner et al., 2021).

In the usability stage, specific interventions could be implemented to target those who typically are not publishing. For example, in the Summer of 2017, the Northern Arizona University (NAU) offered a "Get

Published" weeklong workshop on strategies that non-tenure track faculty could adopt to publish in practitioner, teaching, and case study journals -- outlets that had been conjointly and formally recognized to be highly valued within their role (Van Slyke, Saunders and Trainer, 2018). Other universities are also focusing on ways to acknowledge publications in FT50 practitioner journals for those faculty who are not on a pure research track.

In the empowerment stage, the time and space for listening sessions/town halls could be made available to allow those on the disadvantaged side of the scholarly divide to voice their opinions, suggestions, and concerns. Further, the pandemic has opened the door to virtual presentations. Research faculty could be invited to give presentations at institutions that normally could not afford to have them visit. In contrast, it would be greatly empowering if faculty from universities with less funding could be invited to give virtual presentations at research institutions to share their varying methodological, cultural, and regional perspectives on a variety of relevant topics. Virtual presentation opportunities alleviate some of the burden of travel on caregivers and will enable them to become more visible by accepting more speaking engagements (Reese et al., 2021).

5.2.2 Discipline-Wide

Discipline-wide efforts should be undertaken to narrow, if not eradicate, the scholarly divide. The challenge of discipline-wide interventions as compared to more local ones is that they must overcome deeply embedded structural behaviors and traditions across diverse locations. Nonetheless, our community should learn to value all types of research. For example, non-research track faculty can make considerable contributions in terms of case studies, teaching advice and practitioner-oriented articles. As part of the economic stage, a concerted discipline-wide effort should be made to establish a culture which duly recognizes and economically rewards their scholarly contributions. To demonstrate the importance of the diverse contributions, AIS could undertake efforts to establish a list of quality journals for teaching, research and practitioners similar to the SIG lists. Such lists would provide a publication target for the non-tenure faculty to guide their scholarly efforts, reinforce the importance of their contribution and serve as the basis for economic rewards. An AIS task force for this purpose should be primarily composed of administrators such as deans, associate deans and department chairs (past and current) and non-research track faculty. An additional economic stage intervention would be to continue efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion at conferences.

Relatedly, as part of the usability stage, pre-conference workshops and more paper-a-thon sessions should be organized to increase productivity of those on the disadvantaged side of the scholarly divide. Hybrid conferences should continue in a post-pandemic world, even though they are not easy or inexpensive to offer. Hybrid conferences would greatly benefit the faculty who do not have the funding or who are caregivers and could not otherwise attend. Our word cloud (for Question 9) suggests that online/virtual conferences would be the most useful action that AIS could take to support them during the pandemic. In addition, this stage can involve the organization of panels and sessions where research and non-research track faculty can share their journeys, stories, and challenges so that others can feel that "they are not alone" as well as learn from others' paths.

Interventions such as MISQ's Scholarly Academy should be applauded. This Academy has been initiated to:

> *"help scholars who are systematically disadvantaged from producing the finest scholarship because they are suffering disproportionately in the emotional toll of an academic life. Our goal is to identify segments of our scholarly field who are disadvantaged (both in general and also due to COVID-19) and offer a program to help them. Over time, we hope to address many deserving segments of the field, e.g., those who suffer from gender biases, racial or ethnic biases, physical disability biases, and so forth" (Burton-Jones and Stein, 2021, pg. xii).*

While there are many different segments of our community that could benefit from such an Academy, MISQ has chosen to start with gender bias and adopt an intersectional approach with their annual consortium that offers suggestions for the participants' papers and career development. Other venues could adopt similar interventions for other disadvantaged segments, which are sometimes difficult to identify and reach. To this end, other editors should encourage the development and submission of editorials, commentaries, and empirical research that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). It is critical that as a discipline we reflect, as well as self-reflect, on opportunities and shortcomings regarding DEI that might impact the proliferation of the scholarly divide.

For the *empowerment stage*, we propose two discipline-wide interventions. First, we suggest a type of mentorship. Sometimes the hardest part about publishing is taking the first step. To motivate that first step, we propose a "professional buddy|" program where a COVID-induced disadvantaged researcher could be paired up with one who has been more productive. The disadvantaged faculty could gain insights about publishing, as well as realize that their concerns and challenges are being heard by the community.

Second, we suggest promoting team science across our discipline and others. Team science can facilitate increased productivity, synergistic research, and continued momentum for individuals lacking in some methodologies or with caregiving responsibilities (Reese et al, 2021). Often a team member has the ability to contribute to a project but does not have the methodological or language expertise to complete the project alone. This is especially salient for solving today's complex problems, which require in-depth expertise in multiple disciplines. Teamwork could also benefit those with caregiving responsibilities. It is important to recognize researchers who participate in team science. For instance, since the number of co-authors will be greater on team science papers, a researcher's contribution should not be recognized as having lesser value or being of little import. Another possible intervention is the AIS's development of a directory of people willing to participate in team projects which includes not only their contact information and areas of expertise.

These suggested interventions will require a substantial amount of volunteered effort. Further, they may be viewed as disproportionally helping one target group while leaving others behind. Thus, they should be carefully planned and aim for quality. The best way of knowing if a quality intervention has been offered is to first establish standards and related metrics, along with regular evaluations to ensure that the standards have been adhered to and the intervention metrics fall within an appropriate range. The evaluators would most likely be AIS task forces that are representative of our entire community. To ensure that certain disadvantaged groups have not been left behind, a transactional approach should be adopted that addresses multiple types of diversity on some type of timeline/schedule. The interventions should be intersectional where possible to aid as many target groups as possible. The timeline would help ensure that no target group would be left behind and instill confidence that the efforts are wide-reaching and impactful.

Even though the interventions will require considerable effort, we think that they will result in manifold benefits to our members, and in so doing make our community healthier, happier and more productive, while also making our research more innovative, and impactful. Let's go ahead and take the first step!

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Appendix A: Well-Being Project Instrument

(Please note that sample sizes vary across the questions, since respondents may have missed answering questions)

Q1: Which do you best identify with in the last month?

The majority of my work is done remotely (232; 69.5%)

I normally split my time between home and office, but now I'm only working remotely (22;6.6%)

I normally work in the office but I'm now working remotely (31; 9.2%)

I am still working on-site (49; 14.7%)

Q2: PRE-PANDEMIC: Please allocate the percentage of work time you typically spent on the following academic activities BEFORE the COVID crisis (must add up to 100).

Q3: Please allocate the percentage of work time you typically spend on the following academic activities in the last month (must add up to 100).

Table A1. Question 3

Category	Q2: Mean before Pandemic	Q3: Mean during	Q2: S.D before Pandemic	Q3: S.D. during
Teaching	32.26	34.08	19.64	27.32
Research	40.36	38.07	22.24	28.31
Service	12.40	11.22	11.06	10.87
University Admin	12.09	13.06	16.62	19.42
Other	2.89	3.57	12.70	13.52

Q4: In which location are you currently working (show AIS region map)?

Table A2. Question 4

Region	Currently working	Department/institution located
Region 1 – North America	35.0%	+0.3%
Region 1 – Latin America	3.2%	No change
Region 2 – Europe	31.4%	No change
Region 2 – Middle East	0.00%	No change
Region 2 – Africa	3.0%	-0.3%
Region 3 – South and South East Asia	4.4%	-0.3%
Region 3 – Oceania (Australasia, Polynesia)	12.1%	+1.78%
Region 3 – East Asia	10.1%	-1.48%
N	338	

Q5: Approximately, how many of the following students do you typically teach in a year?

Table A3. Question 5

Category	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Undergrad	0	2000	146.33	230.0
Masters	0	800	78.97	99.48
Ph.D.	0	70	5.76	8.66
Others	0	400	20.50	66.85

Q6: How have you been feeling over the last month? (1 = Terrible to 7 = great)

Table A3. Question 6

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
334	1	7	4.00	1.53

Q7: What made you feel this way (open answer)?

PROFESSIONALLY: Word Cloud for (low feeling population which were 1-3 from question 7)

Figure A1. Word Cloud for Professionally Low Feeling

Note: The Qualtrics Word Cloud tool was used to create these. The word cloud tool counts the repeated words from these questions and increases the size of words based on how many times they occurred. This tool uses lemmatization to similar words word be classified together. For example, “teach”, “teaching”, and “taught” are all classified as “teaching”.

PROFESSIONALLY: Word Cloud for (high feeling population which were 4-7 from question 7)

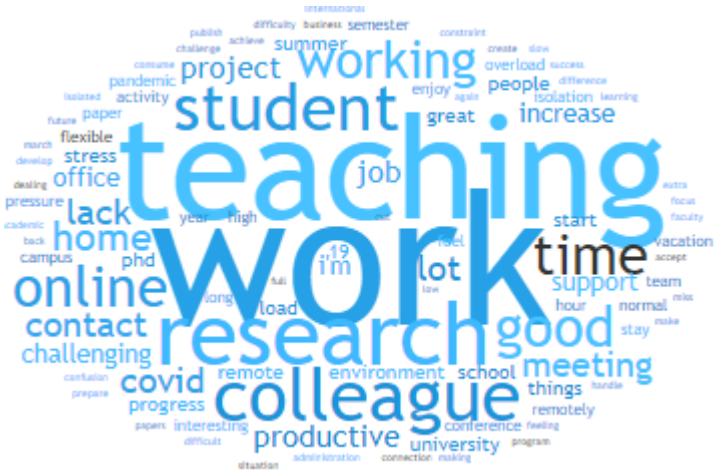

Figure A2. Word Cloud for Professionally High Feeling

PERSONALLY: Word Cloud for (low feeling population which were 1-3 from question 7)

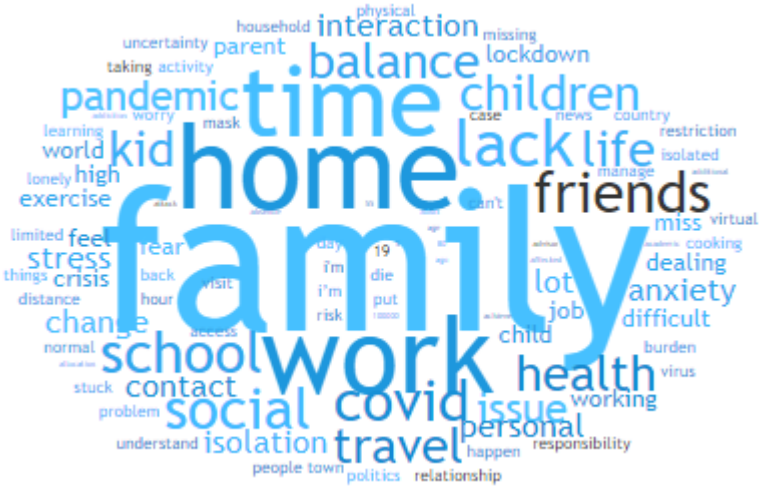

Figure A3. Word Cloud for Personally Low Feeling

PERSONALLY: Word Cloud for (high feeling population which were 4-7 from question 7)

Figure A4. Word Cloud for Personally High Feeling

Q8: Rate your [well-being category] health over this last month compared to before the pandemic. (1= Much Worse; 4 = About the Same; 7 = Much Better)

Table A3. Question 8

Question	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Rate your physical health over this last month compared to before the pandemic.	1	7	4.01	1.29
Rate your mental health over this last month compared to before the pandemic.	1	7	3.54	1.25
Social well-being is an end state in which basic human needs are met and people are able to coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities for advancement. Rate your social well being over this last month compared to before the pandemic.	1	7	3.12	1.28
Rate your financial well being over this last month compared to before the pandemic.	1	7	4.13	1.15
Pre-Pandemic: Rate your sense of job security before the COVID-19 crisis.	1	7	5.57	2.09
Rate your sense of your current job security over this last month compared to before the pandemic.	1	7	3.64	1.29
The pandemic has affected my research.	1	7	5.34	1.46

The pandemic has affected the quality	1	7	4.84	1.56
The pandemic has affected the amount.	1	7	4.65	1.64
The pandemic has affected my family.	1	7	5.50	1.35
The pandemic has affected my institution.	1	7	6.16	1.11

Q9: What action, if any, could the AIS take that would have the most positive impact on your situation?

Figure A5. Word Cloud for AIS Actions

Q10: What best describes your workload this month? (1 = Well above capacity to 7 = well below capacity)

Table A3. Question 10

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
264	1	5	2.12	0.923

Q11: How satisfied are you with your institution's efforts to maintain a safe environment for faculty/students on campus? (1 = not satisfied at all to 7 = extremely satisfied 8 = I don't know)

Table A3. Question 11

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	"I don't know"
259	1	5	3.89	1.923	N = 0

Q12: What is your current rank?

Table A3. Question 12

Rank	Freq.	Percent
Ph.D. Student	58	18.5%
Non-Tenure Track Full-Time	17	5.4%
Non-Tenure Track Part-Time	0	0.0%
Associate Professor / Reader - Tenured	70	22.3%
Post Doc	11	3.5%
Assistant Professor / Lecturer - Tenure Track	58	18.5%
Full Professor	65	20.7%
Chaired Professor	20	6.4%
Other	15	4.8%
Total	314	100.00

Q13: Time in current rank

Table A3. Question 13

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
302	1	35	6.08	5.97

Q14: Time at your current institution in years

Table A3. Question 14

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
308	1	49	10.05	9.21

Q15: Administrative duties

Table A3. Question 15

Admin Duty	Freq.	Percent
None	171	57.6%
Department Chair	35	11.8%
Assistant Dean	6	2.0%
Associate Dean	6	2.0%
Dean	2	0.7%
Other (program director = 25)	77	25.9%
Total	297	100.0%

Q16: Age

Table A3. Question 16

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
220	25	76	45.84	12.17

Q17: Sex

Table A3. Question 17

Male	Female	Nonbinary	Prefer Not to answer / missing	Total
137	111	1	28	277

Q18: Marital status

Table A3. Question 18

Status	Freq.	Percent
Married	174	62.8%
Widowed	1	0.4%
Divorced	9	3.2%
Separated	4	1.4%
Never	45	16.2%
Prefer Not to Answer / Missing	44	15.9%
Total	277	100.0%

Q19: How many people live at your current address?

Table A3. Question 19

N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
255	1	6	2.80	1.338

About the Authors

Ryan T. Wright is the C. Coleman McGehee Professor and the Senior Associate Dean of Faculty and Research in the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia. Professor Wright's research interests include IT security and privacy, and the diffusion of IT innovations. He has over 70 peer reviewed publications and has garnered funding from the National Science Foundation, the State of Massachusetts, and the State of Virginia. His research has been featured in the Harvard Business Review; The Washington Post; Forbes Magazine; USA Today and many other outlets. He has presented his research at events including TEDx, Salesforce, Personifest, and Association for Finance and Technology.

Carol Saunders is an Extraordinary Professor, University of Pretoria and Professor Emerita, University of Central Florida. Carol has received the LEO award in the Information Systems (IS) discipline and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Organization Communication and Information Systems (OCIS) Division of the Academy of Management. She also is an Association for Information Systems (AIS) Fellow and a Schoeller Senior Fellow. She served on a number of editorial boards, including a three-year term as Editor-in-Chief of *MIS Quarterly*. She was the General Conference Chair of ICIS 1999, Program Co-chair of AMCIS 2015, and AIS Vice President of Publications from 2016-2019. She helped found the OCIS (now Communication, Digital Technology and Organization) division of the Academy of Management and served as its program chair and division chair. She was the Distinguished Fulbright Scholar at the Wirtschafts Universitaet – Wien (WU) in Austria and held a Professional Fulbright with the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute. She has held research chairs in Germany, New Zealand, Singapore, and the Netherlands. Her research is published in top-ranked Management, IS, Computer Science and Communication journals.

Atreyi Kankanhalli is Provost's Chair Professor in the Department of Information Systems and Analytics at the National University of Singapore. She has had visiting stints at UC Berkeley, London School of Economics, and ESSEC Business School. Her research interests are in the areas of online communities and digital collaboration (including man-machine collaboration), digital transformation and innovation (particularly in government and healthcare sectors). Her work has appeared in premium journals, such as *MIS Quarterly, Information Systems Research, Research Policy, PNAS,* and *Journal of Management Information Systems*. She has over 180 publications, which have been highly cited. She has received the ACM-SIGMIS Best Doctoral Dissertation award, IBM Faculty Award, and several best paper awards. She is serving or has served on the boards of ISR (Associate Editor), MISQ (Senior Editor, Associate Editor), JAIS (Senior Editor) and Information and Management (Associate Editor). She has also been Program Chair for ICIS 2021, ICEGOV 2018, PACIS 2015, and BDAH 2014. She is the Doctoral Consortium Chair for ICIS 2026 and AMCIS 2023. She was recently recognized as an AIS Fellow for her contributions to IS academia.

Saonee Sarker is Professor of Informatics at Lund University, Sweden and Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, UK. Prior to that she served as the Senior Associate Dean and was also the Rolls-Royce Commonwealth Commerce Professor at the McIntire School of Commerce, University of Virginia. Her research focuses on human-AI hybrids, globally distributed software development, Green IS, and implications of IT in healthcare. Her publications have appeared in outlets such as *MIS Quarterly*, *Information Systems Research*, *Journal of Management Information Systems*, *Journal of the Association of Information Systems*, *Decision Sciences Journal*, *European Journal of Information Systems*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Information Systems Journal*, and *MIS Quarterly Executive*, among others, and she recently published a Palgrave-Macmillan book titled *Navigating Work and Life Boundaries: Insights for Distributed Knowledge Professionals*. She is Senior Editor (Emeritus) and the inaugural Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at *MIS Quarterly*. She is also a Senior Editor at the *Journal of the AIS*. Starting July 1, 2023 she will serve as the Dean of the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech, USA.

Edgar Whitley is an Associate Professor in the Department of Management at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He has a BSc (Econ) and PhD in Information Systems, both from the LSE. He is the co–editor of Information Technology and People, Senior Editor for the Journal of Information Technology and the AIS Transactions of Replication Research and an editorial review board member for Information Systems Research. He has served as research co-chair for the European Conference on Information Systems, track co-chair for the International Conference on Information Systems and was previously an associate editor for the European Journal of Information Systems and

MIS Quarterly. Edgar is an AIS distinguished member cum laude and a recipient of the 2021 AIS Impact award as well as an AIS ATLAS award (2021). He received an AIS Community Service Award in 2017 and the AIS Sandra Slaughter Award, also in 2017.

Virpi Kristiina Tuunainen is Professor of Information Systems Science and the Associate Dean of research and international cooperation at Aalto University School of Business. She's a past VP of Publications of the AIS, a past Chair of AIS SIG Services and she received the AIS Fellow award in 2016. Her current research focuses on platform economy and AI based services. Her work has appeared in journals, such as, MIS Quarterly, European Journal of Information Systems, Information Systems Journal, and Information & Management

Helle Zinner Henriksen is Professor (WSR) at Department of Digitalization at Copenhagen Business School. She has a degree in law from University of Copenhagen and a PhD in MIS from Copenhagen Business School. Her research has focused on uptake and use of digital technologies in public sector, with particular focus on digital services that are legally enforced on citizens and businesses. Her work primarily focuses on the Danish context where she applies qualitative research methods, more recently with a particular focus on critical perspectives to digitalization. She has served as the AIS VP of member services in 2019-2022. Her work has appeared in IS journals including Journal of the Association of Information Systems, European Journal of Information Systems, Information Systems Journal, Journal of Strategic Information Systems, Journal of Information Technology, Communications of the Association of Information Systems , and e-government journals including Government Information Quarterly, International Journal of Public Administration, and Information Polity.