Knowledge is the Key

Internet access, utilization and opinions in Grenada, West Indies

A Minor Field Study conducted in Grenada 2006
by Jenny Haagman

Acknowledgement

Abstract

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Information and knowledge contributes to growth and development through empowering individuals and communities, creating opportunities to improve their living conditions. Technology is advancing rapidly and the Information and Communication Technology, ICT, provides new ways to attain information. Especially the Internet is regarded to be a source of information and knowledge. However, there are still many places in the world where Internet access is not yet available to everyone. The consequences are that people in developing countries do not get the opportunity to benefit from the new technology and the possibilities it brings.

The research for this thesis was carried out in Grenada during November and December 2006. Grenada is a small independent island in the English speaking Caribbean, where only a small percentage of the population has Internet access. The purpose of the study is to examine if a selection of young individuals in Grenada can obtain enhanced knowledge through using the Internet. Furthermore, the study intends to depict what attitudes and opinions can be found among the youths, focusing on the possibilities as well as the negative effects of the Internet.

This study was conducted trough a qualitative orientated methodological perspective with strategically selected respondents between 11 and 35 years old. Qualitative interviews were being made with nine individuals who were using the Internet regularly.

The conclusion of this thesis is that organized strategies and projects are required, with the aim to create motives for the young generation of Grenada to obtain enhanced knowledge through Internet usage. The access and availability in itself is not enough, because seeking information and knowledge is not the main purpose when the youths are using the Internet. Nevertheless, the respondents stated that the Internet is considered to be a source of information and knowledge and that they know where and how to find information when using the Internet, *if they wanted to*. The result also reveals an overall positive attitude towards the Internet and the future among the youths, yet still well aware of the negative consequences. The respondents expressed a desire to be able to keep up with the technology and wished for increased and improved accessibility and connectivity in Grenada.

Another interesting conclusion this research generated is the confirmation of the digital divide as a matter of global stratification, rather than differences between countries. Regardless of the country of origin, people with Internet access will have advantages in life and benefit from the technology, unlike those who have no access and hence, will fall even further behind.

Keywords: ICT, Internet, Internet usage, attitudes, youths, information, knowledge, developing countries, qualitative research, interviews, Sida, Minor Field Study, MFS, Grenada, the Caribbean.

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APPENDIX 1 – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Introduction

This initial section presents the area of investigation which underlies this thesis and explains the choice of the overriding purpose as well as the research questions.

1.1 Knowledge and development

Information and knowledge are two important factors in the development process because they contribute to poverty reduction. Knowledge empowers individuals and communities and provides them with the opportunity to improve their livelihood by making their own informed choices. Equal access to information and knowledge can lead to a better education, employment, improved influence and control of their own life, change in values and ideals etc. Knowledge is the key.

There is an evident connection between knowledge and Information and Communication Technologies, ICT. Knowledge can be shared in many different ways; verbally, by listening to the radio or watching TV, by reading books and newspapers. The ICT presents new ways of providing access to information and knowledge. ICT are now a standard operating tool in the information society of today.[1]

ICT such as radio, television, telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet can provide access to information and knowledge which enables the poor to improve their quality of life. However, there are still a lot of people in the world who can not benefit from these technologies. The digital divide is found not only between industrialized and developing countries, but also within developing countries. This aggravates inequities between men and women, the literate and non-literate and urban and rural populations – and leads to "information and knowledge poverty". The various social groups mentioned above must have equal access to ICT in order to make a positive impact on the development. If not, ICT can aggravate inequity, leaving disadvantaged groups even further behind. However, if the people in the developing countries were given the ability to access, utilize and disseminate information and knowledge it could contribute to socio-economic development, reduction of poverty and bridging the digital divide.[2]

ICT is widely known as an instrument for development purposes; for poverty reduction, promotion of education and health as well as democracy and human rights. Organizations all around the world are working hard to achieve equality in ICT accessibility, trying to bridge the digital divide and make ICT available for everyone, including the people in the developing countries. Many studies have been carried out, especially by organizations, governments and other aid contributors because they require confirmation of progress being made due to their investments and programs. Therefore, most reports and evaluations on the subject tend to be using quantitative research methods and are carried out through an outside perspective. As a contrast to former research it is of special interest to get an inside view with a qualitative perspective.

A research carried out in Sweden by Mats B. Andersson, *"Ubiquitous knowledge"* aims to describe how websites are being used as a source of knowledge seeking. Andersson states that the

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[1] (CIDA, www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/ict#pdf)
[2] Ibid.

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web as an informal support for knowledge is a relatively unexplored field. He calls for more studies about utilization to be carried out, with the aim of providing a better understanding about the variety of attitudes that presumably exists. Andersson also suggests that research should not only focus on individuals with a lot of experience from using the Internet, but also those who are less familiar with the technology. [3]

It would be interesting to know if the Internet is seen as a tool for development, from the perspective of those people in developing countries who actually do have access to and are using the new technology. Do they value the Internet as a source of information and knowledge?

The prospect of this field study is to describe the access, utilization and attitudes towards the Internet as a tool to obtain enhanced knowledge, from the perspective of the young generations in Grenada. The information and communication technology have a great deal of impact on *what* people are learning and *how* they get access to the knowledge. The citizens of Grenada can not choose whether to follow the development of technology or not. However, they can have an influence on, and affect the result of the progress. By knowing how the Internet affects the progression of a developing country, and the people living there, it might be possible to take that into consideration when planning for development strategies. Hopefully this study will contribute to better understanding of what impact the Internet has, as an addition to the former research in this field. Furthermore, the study is of importance because it could be the basis for further quantitative studies, which could be carried out with more resources in terms of money and a longer period of time.

Given that this study is carried out within the field of media and communication, it appeared interesting to examine how information and communication technology such as the Internet can contribute to development and poverty reduction. ICT have in the industrial world proved to have enormous potential and great impact on the development. Therefore it would be very exciting to explore in what ways the youths of Grenada are using the new technology. What possibilities and difficulties do they believe the Internet could lead to? What can they learn from the Internet? How are they communicating with the surrounding world? How can the Internet contribute to an enhanced knowledge and better opportunities for themselves and for their nation?

1.2 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of nine sections, the first part being this introduction. The second chapter, the theoretical orientation, is set out to account for some of the most important concepts in this field of study. The third chapter will give an overview on former research and what previous results have been presented. In order to give the reader a better understanding of this study, the fourth section will present the country in which the research was carried out. The purpose and research questions are being specified in the fifth chapter. The sixth section contains a description of the method and material with motivations of the chosen course of action as well as evaluation of the quality of the study. I will then reveal the empirical results in the seventh chapter, followed by a discussion and analysis in the eighth section. Finally, the ninth chapter consists of a list of references used for the study.

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[3] Andersson 2005

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical orientation will give an account for some of the most important concepts which enact the basis for this thesis.

2.1 Information and Communication Technology

Information Technology, IT, is an umbrella term for the technological possibilities created through the computer technology and telecommunication. Information and Communication Technology, ICT, covers all technologies intended to access and spread information; radio, telephones, television, cell phone, computers and the Internet. The Internet is a world wide computer network through which computers can exchange information. As a result of military research and development attempts in the 1970s the information technology has rapidly advanced. These days it is even possible to get connected to the Internet through cell phones.[4]

2.1.1 ICT as a tool for development

If used wisely, ICT present great opportunities for development, and is an important tool for poverty reduction. Information and Communication Technologies for Development, ICT4D, is a new field of development cooperation. ICT4D is the general term used when referring to ICT in development programmes which are trying to reduce poverty in developing countries. ICT4D is helping poor societies to use the potential of ICT in order to improve their quality of lives.[5]

There are many organisations and authorities around the world today working with ICT for development, for example the World Bank, United Nations and Global Knowledge Partnership, GKP. The World Bank facilitates a project called infoDev, Information for Development Program, which is an international program working to promote better understanding and effective use of ICTs as tools of poverty reduction.[6] United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, is the global development network of the United Nations. They strive to connect countries to knowledge, experience and resources.[7] GKP is a world embracing informal network of different organizations working with knowledge development in developing countries, focusing on the use of information technologies.[8] On a national level, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, believes that ICT is a powerful tool for economic growth and hence poverty reduction.

> *"The rapid development of mobile telephony and the global expansion of the Internet show that ICTs have a significant role to play in developing countries. ICTs have the potential to be effective tools in support of poverty reduction. These tools may address problems in health, education and livelihoods. In addition, they can enable people's empowerment and ultimately strengthen democracy and human rights."*[9]

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[4] Nationalencyklopedin, www.ne.se, SPIDER, www.spidercenter.org
[5] SPIDER, www.spidercenter.org
[6] infoDev, www.infodev.org
[7] UNDP, www.undp.org
[8] GKP, www.globalknowledge.org
[9] Sida, http://sida.se/shared/jsp/download.jsp?f=SIDA4944en+web.pdf&a=3611

2.2 Digital divide

The digital divide is the gap separating those who have access to computers and Internet from those who do not. According to the most recent report from UN Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD, there is a vast digital divide between developing and developed countries. The report stated that a person living in a wealthy country is over 22 times more likely to be an Internet user than someone in a poor country, in spite of the increasing connectivity in the world.[10] However, according to the International Telecommunication Union, ITU, which is a United Nation specialized agency, states that the digital divide has been decreasing over the last ten years, in terms of numbers of fixed phone lines, cell phone subscribers and Internet users.[11]

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC, argue that the digital divide has two different dimensions; the international divide and the domestic divide. When discussing the digital divide, a distinction has to be drawn between the two. The international divide concerns the slow diffusion of technology to the developing parts of the world and the importance of catching up and not fall too far behind. The second dimension, the domestic divide, is of major importance in Latin America and Caribbean societies due to their harsh social and economic inequalities. The discussion is about universal inclusion and prevention of the emergence of another form of exclusion.[12]

2.3 The Information Age

Manuel Castells, professor in sociology and communication, is widely known for his trilogy *"Information Age – economy, society and culture"*. Volume I *"The Rise of the Network Society"* is an account of the economic and social dynamics of the new age of information. Based on research in the USA, Asia, Latin America and Europe, Castells aims to formulate a systematic theory of the information society. The global technology is characterized by an instant flow and exchange of information, capital and cultural communication.[13]

One of the central aspects in the book treats the fact that there are still large areas and many people who are excluded from the new technology, despite the dissemination of new information technology all over the world since early 1970s. The differences in access and technical abilities are one of the reasons to why the equality is unsatisfactory between populations, nations and regions, according to Castells.[14]

2.4 Knowledge society

The instant availability of the never-ending resources of information increases the need to know. Knowledge has become the most important capital in the present age, and therefore the success of any society lies in being able to control it. Knowledge is expected to be helpful because it is singling out the risks of decision and action. The concept of "knowledge society" emphasizes the problems and strategies of making sense of information and the term is usually used generically denoting a comprehensive social change. The knowledge society focuses on the impact of

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[10] UNCTAD, http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/iteipc20065_en.pdf

[11] ITU, http://itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/ict/index.html

[12] ECLAC, http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/xml/0/12900/lcg2195i.pdf

[13] Castells 1999

[14] Ibid.

technological change as well as on the monetary and cultural investments of corporate and individual agencies in developing and using new knowledge.[15]

Hargreaves considers the knowledge society to be a learning society, which is depending on advanced information and communication technological infrastructure. The knowledge is a flexible, floating, constantly expanding and perpetually varying resource in this changeable and self creative informational society. Knowledge, creativity and inventiveness permeate everything and become the central form of work and production. More and more educated people works with ideas, communication, marketing, counselling and consulting.[16]

Knowledge societies do not need to be restricted by geographical boundaries due to the advanced technologies nowadays. However, Castells shows that prioritize being electronically connected to the knowledge society is just as important for the developing countries.[17]

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[15] Smelser & Baltes 2001
[16] Hargreaves 2004
[17] Castells 1999

3. Former research

The following section will give an overview of the former research related to this field study, and what results have been presented earlier. Since no former research carried out in Grenada could be found, this section will instead relate to studies concerning the role of the Internet, viewpoints of the future and Internet usage in general.

3.1 Internets role in everyday life

"What's the Use? - Internet and Information Behaviour in Everyday Life" is a study conducted in Sweden by Anders Hektor. The purpose of the study is to examine the use of information systems, such as the Internet, in everyday life in terms of how actual use may be described. Hektor aspires to contribute to the understanding of information behaviour in the presence of computers and the Internet. Hektor explores the use of ICT and the usefulness of the same through a qualitative oriented standpoint, where ten respondents are being interviewed. The empirical material also includes diaries written by the interviewees. The result of this study reveals that access to the Internet in every day life changes some of the habits and practises of information activities for the respondents. The respondents make use of the Internet as an information resource when it is considered to be the most convenient source of information. For example, the respondents were using the Internet to maintain social relations over email, searching for information about products and services or making occasional purchases. Most of the activities mentioned by the respondents had social connotations. Hektor concludes that access to the Internet and the usage of it makes a difference in the everyday life of the respondents. However, the Internet is considered to play a modest role in their lives due to the fact that it has become an "everyday thing".[18]

Tobias Olsson critically investigates the widespread claims about computers and the Internet's potential to empower democracy in his qualitative research *"Much ado about nothing: how the computer and the Internet miss their plight as tools of the citizen"*. The study disclose that the computer and the Internet can only be considered as "marginal phenomena in everyday life of the Swedish working class, for these tools are barley used, and further are perceived as difficult to operate".[19]

The results of Olsson's study hold an opposing view from Hektor when it comes to *why* the Internet plays a small part in people's every day life. While Olsson concludes the cause being the complexity of operating the computers and the Internet – Hektor believes this is caused by the Internet becoming a commonly used device in everyday life.

3.2 Internet and the future

Internet tends to generate many questions and thoughts about how the world will change due to the new technology. Michael Dertouzos, professor and head of Laboratory for Computer Science at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), is the author of the book *"What will be"*.[20] The

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[18] Hektor 2001
[19] Olsson 2002
[20] Dertouzos 1997

book is not based on what is normally called justified, genuine research, but Michael Dertouzos has been the head of MIT Laboratory for Computer Science for more than twenty years. He has always been "the odd man out" when it comes to predictions about the future, according to Bill Gates, but Dertouzos earlier prognoses have been "right on the spot-predictions". In 1981, when Dertouzos described the information market as the 21st century village market where people can buy, sell and freely exchange information and information services. It is a pretty good depiction of the Internet, fifteen years before it became reality.[21]

Dertouzos describes a vision of what the future will look like in the next hundred years, due to the information revolution. According to his book the world will go through significant changes and our lives will become very different. To mention a few examples; our health will improve since the computer will be able to read and control our physical condition. Our clothes, leisure time, houses and cars will be customized to fit our specific needs and the keyboards will be replaced by a program that understands the human language. Dertouzos predicts that the information revolution will be just as thorough and radical as the industrial revolution. New electronically weapons will transform the warfare and make online terrorism a dangerous weapon. He also states that the new technology will increase the gap between developing and developed countries. As the wealthy countries get wealthier they will also be able to profit from the information technology, and thereby enhance the economic growth. At the same time the developing countries hardly even have a chance to get started on their economic growth, since they can not afford to take advantage of the resources brought by the information technology. Dertouzos comes to the conclusion that the benefits of the information technology will unlikely spontaneously be provided to the developing countries. Special initiatives and strategies must therefore be set into motion. The wealthy countries must assist the developing countries to get access to, and be able to use, the new technology. Because, as Dertouzos states, without this kind of contributions the gap between rich and poor will expand, with unpleasant and perhaps catastrophic consequences.[22]

The book *"What will be"* is written in 1997. Ten years later, we already know more of what can be expected from the information revolution. Some things, like voice-activated technology, have already come true in a way. Still, we are just in the beginning of the 21st century and who knows what the new technology will bring for us in the future? Maybe Dertouzos have a second sight, although some of the visions he presents in the book seems somewhat unlikely. As Bill Gates points out in the introduction of the book:

   "One can not agree with every detail of how the new world will develop and affect us /.../
   More important is that the people receive more information, to be able to contribute with
   their own understanding and ideas concerning the coming changes."

The quote above leads to one of the questions that I am interested in within my field of research. When people get access to information and knowledge through the Internet, how do they use it and what are their attitudes towards the technology? What possibilities or threats do the young individuals believe Internet will bring about for themselves? And in a wider perspective, what are their thoughts regarding the Internet as a tool for development in Grenada and the rest of the world?

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[21] Dertouzos 1997
[22] Ibid.

Stig Hagström, a Swedish professor and university chancellor, is commenting the Swedish translation of the book *"What will be"*. Hagström is saying that the visions presented is an aid for people in decision-making positions, and also a help for those who want to have an influence on the decision-making people so that "What will be" becomes "what we want it to be". Hagström is also interested in the transition to the new society, which he labels the "knowledge society" since knowledge is an essential element of this change. He believes that when a new society evolves it does not replace the prior ones. Instead he describes the entrance into a new society as establishing a new dimension into the social development. By this he implies that the industrial society did not replace the agricultural society. Instead they are a complement to each other. Hagström argues that we have now passed through the Information society and going into the knowledge society, where the holistic view and quality are two concepts. The information society gave us the technical means and the access to global electronically networks make the geographical location less important. The information and communication technology gives us the opportunity to not only break geographical barriers, but also, the human right to education can in the knowledge society become a reality. Yet, the realization of the knowledge society does not imply a discard of the previous societies, as Hagström points out. He says that the new knowledge society should be built on the foundation of agriculture, industry and information technology.[23]

3.3 Internet usage

Finally, I will present the results of the very interesting qualitative study carried out in Sweden 2005 by Mats B. Andersson of the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. It is called *"Ubiquitous knowledge"* and aims to describe how websites are being used, and can be used, as a resource for seeking knowledge.

Andersson declare that studies of Internet usage has been done before, though most of them have been carried out with a quantitative orientated perspective. In order to go beyond the figures and the statistics with an intention to really understand what the Internet signifies, the qualitative method is more suitable. According to Andersson this type of studies are sought after, because the research is limited when it comes to knowing what people are using the Internet for and what needs and interest the new technology satisfies. Some questions are as follows: What type of information are they looking for? Do they learn new things by using the Internet? Are they able to make use of everything that the Internet offers? Do they find what they are looking for?[24]

"Ubiquitous knowledge" examines how frequent users of the web (17-26 years old) are using the Internet. Furthermore, their relationship to the medium is explored. The results demonstrate that the interviewees used the web as a source of knowledge in different ways. Some examples mentioned in the study were; doing errands without distance limitations, being updated and getting the big picture, checking facts and use it as a key, taking part in communities. Andersson argue that the conditions of being an individual in a digitalized world have changed. The network society requires that people knows how to obtain knowledge, at the same time as it offers new opportunities to do so. One of the conclusions of the study is that if the interviewees were provided support in using the medium, they would be able to derive more out of their Internet usage.[25]

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[23] Hagström 1995
[24] Andersson 2005
[25] Ibid.

4. Background

The background will give the reader a better understanding of the special circumstances due to this research, starting with a depiction of the country where the study is carried out.

4.1 Grenada

The tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique in the eastern Caribbean, a former British colony, gained its independence in 1974. The total land mass is 344 square kilometers and in the year of 2006 the population was estimated to be approximately 100 000. There has been an extensive emigration from Grenada, during a long period of time, mainly to England and USA. Furthermore, half of the population in Grenada is very young (younger than 22 years), which is common for developing countries.[26] Grenada is also known as 'the spice island' for its centuries-old spice plantations and the abundance of nutmeg trees. Saint George's is the capital of Grenada and the official language is English.[27] Grenada is a developing country and poverty is a great concern. Statistics indicate that 32 % of the inhabitants of Grenada are below the poverty line and 12.9 % of the population is extremely poor.[28]

4.1.1 Economy

Agriculture and tourism is of great importance for the Grenadian economy. Besides the beautiful nature, the fertile soil and the forest, the natural resources are minimal and the industry is undeveloped. Grenada is dependent on their exports of agricultural products (especially nutmeg) and is vulnerable for changes in the world market. In the end of the 1990's there was a growth in the economy on account of increased incomes from the nutmeg export. At the same time, the unemployment decreased from 26 to 12 percent. However, in 2001 - 2002 Grenada was one of many countries to be affected by the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The island experienced a dramatic cease in the tourism market causing its overall development to significantly decline. Another contributor to the shrinking economy was the decreasing world market price on nutmeg and a reduction in agricultural production. In 2003 the tourism started to improve and the economy rise again.[29]

The climate of Grenada is tropical and the island is located in the outer edge of an area where many hurricanes pass during the hurricane season. Hurricane Ivan completely devastated the Grenadian economy in September 2004 causing damages estimated at 2,4 billion EC$ (equal to 7 billion SEK), which is more than twice the nation's GDP. With 90 percent of the infrastructure totally destroyed, more than 30 deaths and the country in shambles the government of Grenada together with help from many organizations started to rebuild its infrastructure and production capacity. The hurricane also caused massive destruction to the nutmeg plantations, which threatens the future production and export since it takes over a decade for a nutmeg tree to grow. Many people lost their homes and their jobs.[30]

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[26] CIA, https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gj.html
[27] Landguiden, www.landguiden.se
[28] CIA, https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gj.html
[29] Landguiden, www.landguiden.se
[30] OECS, 2004

4.1.2 Education

Schooling is compulsory and free of charge for all children between five and sixteen years old. The system resembles the British school system. When it comes to higher education there is a technical school, teacher training and a higher education of agriculture. Furthermore, the American owned institution of higher education, St. George's University, offers education at the school of medicin – but the majority of their students are from USA. Many of those Grenadians who can afford to study at universities, choose go abroad and study at universities in England, Jamaica, Cuba and USA.[31]

4.1.3 History

Grenada's history from 1650 till 1983 has been one of conflicts, either between local groups and classes or between rival imperial cultures. The first conflict arose in the pre-Columbian era (before 1492) between peaceful Arawak Indians and the hostile Caribs. By the time Columbus arrived, Grenada was firmly under Carib control. The second conflict was between the native Caribs and the French settlers during the period of 1651-54. The result was almost total destruction of Grenada's Caribs. The period of French rule followed until 1763 when Grenada was ceded to England at the Treaty of Paris – the Treaty which ended the Seven Years War. Subsequently, two rival groups and two rival cultures emerged in Grenada. One Anglo-Saxon, the other Francophone – one Protestant and the other Roman Catholic. This conflict between the French and the British community prevailed for the next 30 years until it was finally settled in 1795-96. The English in Grenada continued to be the dominant group. Emancipation came in 1834-38 and the black section of the population, previously kept under the degrading bondage of slavery, was freed. The class conflict that followed grew and developed, and exploded violently in 1951 with the rise of Eric Matthew Gairy and the coming of the social revolution and the struggle for independence. During the next 28 years Gairy ruled Grenada dictatorially, violating the principles of the democratic revolution, and exploiting and destroying the very people. The voice of dissent was virtually stifled and inevitably this situation generated its own conflicts, and opposition grew. In the early 1970s the opposition became organized into a mass political movement – the New Jewel Movement. The struggle between the Gairy's regime and those opposed to it was settled violently when, on 13 March 1979, the Gairy government was overthrown in an armed seizure of power by the New Jewel Movement. This marked the beginning of the Grenadian left wing revolution. The revolution came to a violent end four years later, in October 1983 when a conflict resulted in the execution of the then Prime Minister, Maurice Bishop, three of his ministers and many supporters. Six days later the island was invaded by US forces. Free elections were reinstituted the following year and have continued since that time. There has been a peaceful, stabilized, democratic development in Grenada during the last twenty years, though a big portion of the inhabitants are marginalized and do not take part in democratic processes.[32]

4.1.4 Telecommunication in Grenada

The telecommunications in Grenada are regulated by the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority, ECTEL. Cable & Wireless is the major telecommunication provider of fixed and mobile telephones, as well as Internet services. However, Digicel brought competition to the local mobile

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[31] Landguiden, www.landguiden.se
[32] Brizan 1998

market in 2003. Through promotion and low rates Digicel made cell phone usage increase radically in Grenada.

According to ECTEL a new marine cable is planned to be laid and start providing services, increasing bandwidth and quality of service in the Eastern Caribbean, before the end of 2007.[33]

4.1.5 Statistics on phone lines, cell phones, computers and Internet users

The United Nations specialized agency for telecommunications, ITU declares that there are major discrepancies in international Internet bandwidth. Denmark, which is a small country in Scandinavia, has more than twice the bandwidth than the whole of Latin American and the Caribbean combined.[34]

Telephone Lines 32.700	Telephone Lines per 100 hab. 31.9	(Sweden 71,5)
Mobile phones 43.300	Mobile phones per 100 hab. 42.3	(Sweden 93,3)
No of computers 16,000	Computers per 100 hab. 15.6	(Sweden 76,1)
Internet Users 19,000	Internet Users per 100 hab. 18.6	(Sweden 75,4)

Source: ITU, World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database, 2005

The statistics above demonstrates the number of telephone lines, cell phone subscribers, computers and Internet users in Grenada in the year of 2005. The Swedish figures are intended for comparison, as Sweden being one of the countries in the world with highest, and rapidly increasing, figures of Internet usage.

4.2 Grenada ICT strategy 2006-2010

The government of Grenada is well aware of the benefits and advantages that ICT could bring for their nation. The first ICT Strategy was developed in the beginning of the 21st century, with a vision to enable Grenada to become a knowledge based society by 2010. This plan was renewed in 2006. Despite that Grenada had to focus on rebuilding its national infrastructure after Hurricane Ivan 2004, they have also managed to advance in setting up an ICT infrastructure. A new Central Information Management Agency, CIMA, was created to overview and implement the strategy.[35]

The three following quotes are extracts from the ICT Strategy.[36] The government of Grenada recognizes the novel and effective tool the ICT offers, to help advance sustainable development in Grenada.

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[33] Cable & Wireless, www.cw.com
[34] ITU, http://itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/ict/index.html
[35] ICT Strategy and Action plan for Grenada 2006 – 2010, Government office, Grenada
[36] ICT Strategy and Action plan for Grenada 2006 – 2010, Government office, Grenada

"This Strategy and Action Plan represents Grenada's approach to capturing the potentials of these technologies and to utilizing them for sustainable development and the fight against poverty."

"ICT's allow faster delivery of change in a variety of sectors including distance education, telemedicine, environmental management, trade, and in strengthening the participation of social groups and the creation of new livelihoods. ICT facilitates the reaching and embracing of more people being involved and interacting with greater numbers of the citizens."

"ICT opens up access to information sources worldwide, promotes networking that transcends the limitations of being a small island. ICT can foster the empowerment of communities, women, youths and socially disadvantaged groups, and helps spread knowledge about "best practices" and experiences."

5. Purpose and research questions

5.1 Purpose
The aim of this field study is to carry out a research concerning the young generations in a developing country and their utilization of the Internet as a tool to obtain enhanced knowledge, as well as their opinions and thoughts regarding the new information and communication technology.

More specific, the purpose of this Bachelor thesis is to study if a selection of individuals of the young generations in Grenada can obtain enhanced knowledge through the Internet. Secondly, the study intends to depict what attitudes can be found towards the Internet, focusing on possibilities and negative effects, both in a constricted and broad perspective.

A descriptive report of the utilization and the various opinions, attitudes and thoughts about the Internet, from the perspective of the young generations in Grenada, will hopefully be a contributor towards a holistic understanding of the impact that ICT constitutes in Grenada, as well as in other developing countries.

5.2 Research questions
The following questions will be examined

A) Access and utilization

1. Where, and to what extent, do the selection of young individuals access and utilize the Internet?
2. With what purposes and motives are they using the Internet?
3. What do the young individuals consider being enhanced knowledge, which they believe they obtained through their use of the Internet?

B) Opinions and attitudes towards the Internet

1. What possibilities do the young individuals believe the Internet will bring about for themselves?
2. What negative effects do they believe the Internet will bring about for themselves?
3. In a wider perspective, what are the attitudes among the young individuals towards the Internet?

5.3 Limitations and initial position
This study focuses only on young individuals, living in Grenada, who are familiarized with, and are using the Internet. Through various sources I have reached a pre-understanding about ICT as a contributor to development. The Internet is being the most mentioned tool to obtain information and knowledge, so this is my point of departure for this thesis.

6. Method and material

The following section will give an account for the research method and material, which includes explanations of the choice of qualitative research, the selection of respondents and construction of the interview schedules. The execution and coding of the empirical result is carefully presented and a discussion is being held considering the validity, reliability and quality of the study as well as the problems and obstacles that occurred whilst conducting this thesis. The aim is to provide the reader with a detailed depiction of the method and openly evaluate the quality of this research. Firstly, I will describe the choice of focus.

6.1 Choice of focus

According to Holme & Solvang[37] there can be many reasons to why we are wondering about a phenomenon. Our own expectations and prerequisites of social and educational character are fundamental because they form the pre-understanding and experiences we have of the phenomenon. I had a little pre-understanding of the Internet use in Grenada from the time when I spent over a year living in the island in 2003/2004. The fact that more and more people in a developing country like Grenada were introduced to the Internet was one of the reasons to why I found the topic exciting. Research from various sources confirms that the information and communication technology have great impact on our everyday life. The Internet is seen as a key to easy access of information and knowledge, and furthermore as a tool to reduce poverty. This led me to wonder if the young people in Grenada could obtain enhanced knowledge through using the Internet. I was also interested in their attitudes towards, and thoughts about, the new technology.

Moreover, studies within the field of media and communication suggest that research concerning the Internet should be carried out to a greater extent, especially qualitative interviews with different types of respondents, even those who are not yet familiar with the new technology. During my information retrieval I found quantitative research regarding the Internet access in every region of the world, which is mapped by the International Telecommunication Union, ITU. However, former research concerning Internet usage was more difficult to find. A few studies have been carried out in Sweden, but little research was specified on how young people are using the Internet. In view of the fact that there was no former research to be found about Internet access and utilization in Grenada, this thesis will be the foundation for future research. The study focuses on the younger generations of Grenada today because they are the first to grow up and live their lives in the information society. The majority of them have passed through eleven years of compulsory school. Some of them also studied three more years in college or even university; hence they are all literate (which is a necessity to be able to use the Internet). Moreover the young generations of Grenada is the future of the nation and will be a part of the development.

Finally, many organisations and authorities around the world work with "ICT for development", such as the World Bank, United Nations, Global Knowledge Partnership and Sida etc. They all stress the importance of developing countries being able to benefit from the new technology; hence

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[37] Holme & Solvang 1997

this thesis focuses on enhanced knowledge and development and in elongation poverty reduction through the information and communication technology.

According to Backman[38] there are three levels in which a thesis can be presented. The first level is being called "topic" which contains a well defined descriptive aspect of the thesis. Secondly, a higher and more general level is the "argumentation", where the content is concentrated around one or more statements which are being discussed. This strategy is being used when trying to proof a theory or established facts wrong. The last stage implies that the thesis is being held on a "thematic" level, meaning that more general theories and concepts are being used with a purpose to present generalized results. This study aimed to reach the first level, a descriptive aspect of the thesis.

6.2 Qualitative research method

The research method is determined by the purpose of the study and the research questions.[39] A qualitative research method aspires to describe or explain how the human being perceives and interpret the reality surrounding her.[40] The researcher constitutes an instrument and the respondents are selected with the intention to gain an enhanced understanding and deeper insight to the selected field of study. The alternative would be to conduct a quantitative study with hypothesis testing, experiments, questionnaires and numerical observations which are possible to generalize.[41] The prospect of this study was to describe how some of the young people in Grenada are accessing and utilizing the Internet, as well as to depict their attitudes and opinions about the new technology. Therefore, a qualitative study was required because of the need to get thorough knowledge and a more profound understanding.

A qualitative method can be used as a preparatory study for a quantitative research.[42] There were no studies to be found on the subject of Internet access and utilization carried out in Grenada, probably because of the small percentage of the population that actually accessing it on a regular basis at the moment. However, as the Internet access increases throughout the island it would be interesting to conduct a quantitative research, and then this field study could be the basis for those future studies, as been pointed out before.

The aim was to fully understand the respondents from their point of view, and see the world through the perspective of the young people in Grenada. To be able to understand their opinions, attitudes, perceptions, values, ideals, interpretations and experiences I found the qualitative interviews to be the most appropriate method to meet the purpose of this study. The strength of the qualitative interview is its similarity to an everyday conversation.[43] Esaiasson believes that unexpected answers are possible to obtain during qualitative interviews. He also mentions the ability to ask complimentary questions when necessary.[44] The single biggest thing distinguishing a questionnaire from a qualitative interview is the possible interaction between the researcher and

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[38] Backman 2006
[39] Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[40] Esaiasson 2004 and Backman 2006
[41] Backman 2006
[42] Holme & Solvang 1997
[43] Ibid.
[44] Esaiasson 2004

the interviewee. One disadvantage is that the number of respondents being interviewed is limited by this demanding form of collecting the material.[45]

There are various types of interviews; unstructured, semi structured and structured. The difference is to what extent the questions have been defined and structure in advance.[46] I chose to define and structure my questions in advance, leaving space for complementary questions to be asked when needed. The interviews were very flexible and the answers could therefore be quite open.

6.3 Selection of respondents

When using a qualitative research method it is not a main concern to achieve any statistical generalizations, but the selection of respondents is of great importance for the outcome of the study. The selection must be made from consciously formulated criterias.[47] The respondents for this thesis are strategically selected and were chosen according to following criterias:
- they have access to and are using the Internet on a regular basis
- they are between 11 – 35 years old
- they are citizens of Grenada

Furthermore, the respondents do not necessarily need to have Internet at home, as long as they are accessing it somewhere else. Moreover, I aimed at strategically select male and females with diverse backgrounds, from different social and economic backgrounds, dissimilar family status and with various occupations. The interviews took place in the town St. George´s, which is the capital of Grenada. However, some of the respondents lived in another parish. If this thesis would have been a quantitative study with an attempt to generalize the results, it would have been of greater significance to do a selection of respondents living in the different parishes of Grenada. The Internet is probably more accessible in the south part, where St. George's is located, because it's more developed with infrastructure etc. On the other hand, it is of no importance in this thesis which parish the respondents resides, because I would only select individuals who use the Internet anyway.

There is no in advance given limit for how many individuals that must be interviewed for the research. Experience has shown that with a well thought out selection of respondents it's enough to interview approximately ten people in order to create an interesting analysis. An advisory statement of the number of interviews is fifteen, plus minus ten.[48] At the outset I intended to interview ten individuals, but only nine was accomplished. The last one never showed up for the time of appointment. Despite this I consider the nine interviews to be enough to deliver interesting results.

The big challenge is to avoid the "pre-manufactured" politically correct answers and try to get close to the interviewees in order to really grasp their inner thoughts, the "real" answers. Three advises is given by Grant Mc Cracken in *"Metodpraktikan"* when selecting the respondents; choose strangers, very few and those who are not "subjective" experts.[49] The interviewees

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[45] Holme & Solvang 1997
[46] Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[47] Holme & Solvang 1997
[48] Esaiasson 2004
[49] Ibid.

selected for this study consists of people that I knew from before, though they are not my closest friends. So it was never a problem for me to ask any detailed questions. On the contrary I believe it was an advantage, since they respected my intentions of doing a scientific research in their country. Regarding the fact that I am coming from a rich country to a developing country to conduct a research about new technology – people who did not know of me from before would perhaps be unwilling to participate in the study, or give me answers they believe I might want to hear. Holme & Solvang believe that strategically selection of interviewees presupposes extensive knowledge of the population from where we are choosing the respondents.[50] This was achieved since I had previous knowledge about the country and the people living there.

Every strategic selection is based on the principle of intensity, and the interviewees are chosen because they are expected to possess copious knowledge with reference to the purpose of this field study.[51] The respondents participating in this thesis were selected based on the fact that they are using the Internet on a regular basis, but also because of their willingness to participate in the study and their ability to express themselves. This could constitute a problem because individuals who are mindful and reflect over their situation are able to deform the reality and give distorted, yet convincing descriptions. As long as the interviewer is aware of this dilemma, these individuals can be valuable interviewees.[52]

Holme & Solvang distinguish informants from respondents. Respondents are the individuals who are a part of the phenomenon which is being examined. Informants are the persons who can provide information about the phenomenon, but are not as a participant.[53] In this thesis the individuals interviewed will consequently be defined as respondents, as they are the ones who are using the Internet providing me with their knowledge and opinions about the technology.

6.4 Interview schedule

The questions for the interviews (Appendix 1) were constructed in relation to the purpose of the thesis and the frame of questions. I wanted to have open questions so as to create a relaxed conversation and to get as broad answers as possible. Trial interviews are important in order to create a dynamically functioning interview schedule, according to Esaiasson.[54] Before I started my interviews I conducted two trial interviews which led to revision of the questions. A few questions were unnecessarily complicated and had to be simplified, some questions needed to be better defined and put into a logical order. The basic principle to follow when constructing questions is that they should be easy to understand, short and free from academically jargons.[55] Perhaps it was particularly important to create uncomplicated, comprehensible questions given that two of the respondents were quite young children.

The questions asked were divided into two sections, the first one involving questions about the respondents Internet access and utilization. The second part included questions concerning the interviewee's opinions and attitudes towards the Internet.

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[50] Holme & Solvang 1997
[51] Esaiasson 2004
[52] Holme & Solvang 1997
[53] Ibid.
[54] Esaiasson 2004
[55] Ibid.

I began each interview with a few warm-up questions. The purpose of those initial questions is to establish a good contact with the interviewee. [56] Every interview was also rounded off with a question about the interviewee's thoughts about the Internet in the future. The finishing question was "is there anything else you would like to add?" which is desirable in case the interviewee wanted to clarify something or add something that was not brought up during the interview. I always expressed appreciation to the respondent for taking the time and effort to participate in the study.

6.5 Execution and coding

Holme & Solvang highlight the fact that the environment in which the interviews are taken place is of great significance. The special circumstances such as time, place, preparations and technical devices influence the atmosphere during the interview.[57] As mentioned earlier this thesis was conducted in St. George's, Grenada, during November and December 2006. According to Esaiasson the interviews should idealistically be held in calm and peaceful places where the respondents are feeling secure.[58] The time and places varied for the interviews being conducted for this thesis, some were held in the morning, some in the afternoon or evening. Most of the interviews where held in the home of the respondent, but in those cases where this was not practicable the interviews where held at a restaurant, in an office or inside a shop. I strived at locate the interviews to quiet places where the interviewees would feel comfortable and where there was as little interruptions as possible. Unfortunately, the desired circumstances were not the case at all times. First of all, there are not many places in Grenada with total quietness and calmness, not even inside the respondent's home. There are always lots of people everywhere, talking and shouting, music playing, dogs barking and roosters crowing. It is just a part of the Grenadian life. Secondly, I believe the sometimes vivid environment did probably bother me more than it was of any inconvenience for the interviewee's, since they are accustomed to it. This is nevertheless something that I have been aware of while analyzing the material.

During a qualitative interview it is important to document what is being said, but only with permission from the interviewee. A recorded interview can be dealt with differently, compared to if only notes where taken, and is especially useful if it is transcribed into writing. Additionally, a voice recorder simplifies the interview because the researcher is able to focus on the conversation, formulate and ask related questions.[59] The duration of the interviews varied from 40 to 80 minutes. I used a voice recorder, after consent from the interviewee, in order to document the whole interview. This enabled me to fully concentrate on the respondent. Furthermore it allowed me to ask complementary questions when needed during the interviews. Some people might feel uncomfortable being recorded, but I only got positive reactions to the voice recorder. Most of the interviewee's were curios about the tiny technical gadget and wanted to touch it, try it and as soon as the interview was completed they wanted to listen to themselves. However, I am aware of the fact that the voice recorder could affect the interviewee's and their answers. As Östbye mentions, the voice recorder and the particular situation could have a negative effect on the material created through the conversation.[60]

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[56] Esaiasson 2004
[57] Holme & Solvang 1997
[58] Esaiasson 2004
[59] Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[60] Ibid.

Every interview was transcribed into writing as soon as possible after the time of the recording. Widerberg is arguing the benefits of a detailed transcription in contrast to only summarize each interview. A detailed transcription makes it possible to evaluate to what extent the interviewee is being affected by the interviewer, which should be taken into consideration when assessing the material. Furthermore, the detailed text is presenting an opportunity to analyze language, expressions, interruptions and moments of silence. On the other hand, a summarized interview provides a holistic depiction of the researchers interpretations of the interview, can be written down rather quick and subsequently used almost immediately. In case of a limited timetable, a summarization might be preferable, since a detailed transcription of the interviews constitutes a considerable amount of work.[61] I chose to transcribe the interviews in detail, so as to conceive an accurate depiction of the words of the respondent.

As a researcher it is essential to present a trustful image of oneself, with the intention of getting the respondents to confide in you. Choice of clothing and behavior can play a decisive role for the information that is being obtained through the interviews.[62] The ideal is to create a dialogue with the respondent and to have a normal conversation with the interviewee.[63] My goal was to converse with the respondents as if we had a normal everyday conversation. I tried to balance between keeping the interviewee to speak freely and making sure every question in the interview schedule was covered.

There is a risk which has to be taken into careful consideration when performing qualitative interviews, the so-called "effect of the interviewer". This means that the answers can be different depending on who is asking the questions. A middle aged professor might get more customized answers than a young student.[64] In view of the fact that I belong to the same young generations as the respondents was perhaps an advantage because the respondents felt that I was on the same level as them. This might reduce some of the "effect of the interviewer", although I am aware of the possibility of receiving modified and tailored answers still remain.

The respondent must be informed about the purpose of the study and the meaning of their participation. This is a basic condition, according to Holme & Solvang, to be able to build up the required confidence which is needed in order for the interview to become the engaging, knowledge based and awareness making process it should be.[65] Before I began the interviews I always made sure that the purpose of the interview was clearly presented to the respondent. I also promised them anonymity because Ejvegård recommends assuring the respondents that the material will be handled confidentially and guarantee their anonymity, as this will encourage the respondent to openly disclose information.[66]

6.6 Quality evaluation of the study

When assessing the quality of a research it is common to discuss the following three aspects: generalization, validity and reliability. Generalization has to do with to what extent the analysed

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[61] Widerberg 2002
[62] Esaiasson 2004
[63] Holme & Solvang 1997 and Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[64] Esaiasson 2004
[65] Holme & Solvang 1997
[66] Ejvegård 2003

results can be transferred to individuals who are not included in the study. Validity refers to the fact that the researcher examined what he or she set out to examine. Reliability is determined by the way we execute the research and implies that the same result should be achieved regardless of who is conducting the study or when it is taken place. Even though the validity and reliability are important to the handling of the collected data, it has been discussed if the concepts of generalization, validity and reliability are relevant when it comes to assessing qualitative methods, simply because they are not applicable in a purely statistical sense.[67] These three above mentioned concepts derive from the perspective of quantitative methods assuming there is always an objective reality, which is not the case within the tradition of qualitative research. The concept of generalization is based on the use of quantitative methods of measurement and foremost a question about statistical generalization. This is only possible with a randomized selection of respondents, in contrast to qualitative research when the respondents are chosen strategically, aiming to increase the understanding of a phenomenon.[68] Due to the qualitative character of this thesis, there is no sufficient ground for generalizations.

6.6.1 Validity and reliability

By recording the interviews instead of only taking notes, the methodological reliability is strengthened.[69] I used a voice recorder to enhance the reliability of the study. The recordings made it possible for me to go back and listen to the exact words of the interviewee's. Nonetheless, as I mentioned above I transcribed every interview into writing which was helpful when analyzing the material and for the reason that I was able to easily quote some of the answers from respondents when required.

The above mentioned risk of using a voice recorder could on the other hand decrease the validity of the study, since the answers given by the respondents could perhaps differ from the reality. This problem is described as the "ecological validity" and is due to the fact that the respondents might fabricate answers according to what they believe the researcher wants to hear. However, being aware of this phenomenon would hopefully help diminish the possible negative effect on the results. The voice recorder I used was very tiny, looked more or less like a typical cell phone and when put on the table barley noticeable. The interviewees did not seem to react negatively to the fact that I was recording the conversations; on the contrary they found the technical device to be interesting and did not act uncomfortable around it at all.

To further strengthen the reliability of this study the same results should be achievable regardless of who was conducting the research or when it was carried out, according to Holme & Solvang.[70] This would probably be unattainable given that Grenada is a developing country and the Internet are developing rapidly, hence the unique data collected and the results presented in this thesis would unlikely be obtained once again.

The previous understanding one have about a phenomenon is called pre-understanding, which have been received through own experience, education etc. Prejudices are socially founded subjective opinions about a phenomenon. It is impossible to liberate oneself from these subjective frames of

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[67] Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[68] Enochsson 2001
[69] Östbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003
[70] Holme & Solvang 1997

references, both in everyday life and during research.[71] Considering that every human being have dissimilar pre-understanding and prejudices the outcome of this thesis would in all probability not be the same if another researcher would carry out the same type of study. I do believe that in contrast to a researcher who never been to Grenada before I have some advantage when conducting this study because I spent time in the island before gaining knowledge about the culture and the people living there.

The language itself could have resulted in decreased reliability and validity for a researcher who did not understand the special English dialect which is spoken in Grenada. From the time when I lived in the country I learned to understand the way they speak and even to speak the dialect myself. So instead of an obstacle, the fact that I knew the language well contributed to a larger acceptance of me as a researcher coming from abroad. However, the Grenadian culture being different from the one I grew up with could be a somewhat invisible impediment. We always study other cultures through the perspective of our own.[72]

6.6.2 Criticism of the study

Me being the only researcher and hence the only interpreter of the material might constitute a problem because the researchers understanding of the situation could be incorrect.[73] The result would most likely be somewhat different if two researchers were conducting this study together. Working alone restricted me from seeing other perspectives than my own. I purposely chose to carry out this thesis unaccompanied to test my ability to execute a project on my own, but it was not always easy to work alone with little supervision. Every day life in Grenada is also very different from living in Sweden. Even though I was prepared for the cultural differences it still takes some time to adjust. Most of the time things do not happen the way they are planned, which can be a source of frustration.

Another problem was due to the fact that I guaranteed the respondents anonymity. This became a limitation because I could not present any information in the result which could reveal the identity of the respondents. Esaiasson is giving a fair warning about promising anonymity, precisely for this reason.[74] Then again, it would probably be much more difficult to find interviewees willing to participate in the study otherwise.

Furthermore, this study would probably benefit from having the interviews presented in full text as an appendix, but due to the promise of the respondent's anonymity I have chosen not to include this documented material as an additional appendix. Nevertheless, the original recordings and transcribed interviews are filed and preserved.

6.6.3 Criticism of the interview schedule

Even though I conducted two trial interviews, each one followed by revision, two questions did not work out the way I planned. Question number 5.C in the first part of the interview schedule was superfluous and the respondent had to repeat what's already been said earlier during the interview. In some cases I noticed that this was somewhat annoying to the respondent. In other cases the

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[71] Holme & Solvang 1997
[72] Samovar 2004
[73] Holme & Solvang 1997
[74] Esaiasson 2004

respondent took the opportunity to go over the main points and summarize the previous answers once again.

The other inadequate question belonged to the second part of the interview schedule, number 5. This was just not applicable on most of the respondents; hence they did not fully understand what I was asking. Even when I reformulated the question and explained it to the respondents they could not respond satisfactorily. This question was not at all essential for the outcome of this thesis and was not even related to the specific purpose of this study. This was a mistake I did not discover at first, but when analyzing the results this question was not included.

7. Empirical result

The results presented below are structured on the basis of the frame of questions. The access and utilization is being depicted followed by a description of the opinions and attitudes of the young generations towards the Internet. To begin with, I will provide the reader with a short presentation of the respondents.

7.1 Presentation of respondents

Nine individuals were interviewed, five females and four males; three of whom was children aged from 11 to 17 and six individuals aged from 22 to 35. Some of them lived in the city and some resided in the countryside. Their family status differed from single, committed or married, and two of them had children of their own. The respondents were coming from different social and economical backgrounds. Besides the children who still attended school, the interviewee's had various occupations: teacher, government employee, adult student, accountant and lab technician. One respondent was unemployed. It is worth mentioning that all of the respondents had many friends and relatives living abroad. It is well known that many Grenadians emigrate, for the most part to England, Canada and USA.

Five of the respondents had a computer with Internet access at home, to a cost ranging from 99-160 EC$ per month (approximately 300-480 SEK) depending on the speed and usage limitations. All of the interviewees owned a cell phone and had access to a house phone and a television at home. The majority of them usually browse through the local newspapers, even though some of the respondents criticized the articles for not being especially informative or enlightening. Most of the adult respondents first heard about the Internet in the late 80's or early 90's, but did not actually use it until the beginning of the 21st century. Their very first reactions regarding the Internet varied from not impressed at all to being amazed by the new technology.

> Respondent: *"To me back then it was no big deal, because we didn't have any computer at home. It was like... ok, that's another "thing". Nothing too big or nothing..."*

> Respondent: *"Yeah, it was amazing, believe it or not. World Wide Web... Just push a button."*

7.2 Access and utilization

The following section will illustrate where, how often and why the respondents are using the Internet. Furthermore it will present what is considered being enhanced knowledge, according to the young generations.

7.2.1 Where, when and to what extent

The respondents were using the Internet at various places: at home, by friends, at work or in school. Not so often at Internet cafes, though. Each one of the interviewees stated that they would prefer to have Internet access at home with the main reasons being privacy and the flexibility of

being able to go online when ever they want to. Another reason mentioned was saving money by making Internet calls instead of phone calls.

> Respondent: *"The kind of things that I would do on the Internet... I need my privacy. So having Internet at home gives me that. For example communicating with my future wife, who is not here right now because she is studying abroad. And using certain programmes which save me money, you know, instead of calling by the phone and have to pay a big bill. I am already paying for the Internet and I can make Internet calls, and that is very convenient. And I need music, I want to listen to music and Internet at home gives me that. I don't have to buy CD's... I can always get the music right there. And a lot more... It's just convenient to have Internet at home."*

The only reason for not using Internet at home would be if they were sceptical about opening a suspect document possibly containing viruses. Internet was used on a daily basis by those who had Internet access at home. Some of them stated that they never turn off their computer, constantly staying connected with the Internet running in the background, even if they were not using the computer at all times.

> Respondent: *"I use the Internet every single day... I don't ever disconnect my Internet from the modem."*

The ones who did not have a computer with Internet access at home stated that they used the Internet at least once a week, from 30 minutes up to a few hours each time.

Cost alone constitutes a hindrance for having Internet at home. Hurricane Ivan caused total devastation in 2004 which led to a massive setback for the Grenadian economy, hence the economy of the inhabitants were affected as well. Many people are still trying to rebuild their houses; subsequently a computer with Internet access is not being prioritized.

> Respondent: *"I can not afford a computer at the moment, but once I get it at home again I will use the Internet a lot more, especially for entertainment. I had one (computer) before, but I didn't used to use it. And after Ivan it got destroyed. Now I really see how much I miss the computer. The computer becomes a part of people's lives. I know people who are using the Internet for 12 hours, and I don't know what they are doing... maybe I am missing out on a lot?!"*

7.2.2 Purposes and motives

If the respondent had Internet access at home, naturally they would use it for more things than those who had to go by a friend's house or using it at work. Limited by the availability their main use of the Internet was to communicate by sending and receiving emails. The more availability the more activities were performed on the Internet, mostly for entertainment or communication such as using the MSN Messenger or Skype, playing games, downloading music or films and search for information within their area of interest; for example finding recipes, reading song lyrics, follow up on soap operas, sports and coming events. The children stated that they used the Internet do to homework, researching and to look up words in a dictionary or thesaurus. Two of the employed respondents replied that they used the Internet to search for information, in order to perform their

work. They were also depending on the Internet to keep in touch with colleges at work on a regular basis.

Most of the interviewees stated that they would manage with out the Internet. However, they said that the Internet makes life a little easier, and in some cases even less expensive. Especially the children using the Internet for school work said life would be much more complicated. It would not be as easy for them to find information and it would take them longer time to find what they were looking for. According to the children, having Internet access was a huge advantage in contrast to the children who did not have access to the Internet, especially when doing homework.

> Respondent: *"I find that they have more work to do and that they don't always get as much information as I... and that it would take longer for them to find information .Or sometimes they just don't..."*

Nevertheless, despite the fact that many respondents claimed that they would manage without the Internet, one person said that he is truly depending on the Internet and that his life would be immensely affected in a negative way if he weren't able to access the Internet.

> Respondent: *"That would be major disappointment to me. It would affect me in a big way, because I rely on the Internet actually. I can't do without the Internet now. I would not be able to communicate, and that is terrible because I'm in a long distance relationship. It would cost me a lot because I would have to be using the phone all the time. Then I would not be able to work as sufficient at [respondents work place], and I don't know if I would be making all the money that I make now. And not making the money and then still having to pay a bigger bill... Believe me; I can not imagine a world without the Internet now. I don't know what I would do."*

Very few of the respondents used the Internet to search for news, neither local nor global, unless something really major took place in the world. One person stated that once she signs in at work, the homepage always shows the latest news, but that she never really searched for news. Another interviewee said that he would look for news every now and then.

> Respondent: *"I might be listening to BBC from the Internet, or reading from BBC... although I have a television, but sometimes there is a specific headline that you want to check out and you can do that on the Internet. Also news about technology and new stuff that may have come out, for example mp3 players, I-pods... Every time these things come out, they have stories on them."*

A few respondents would use the Internet to check the weather, especially during the hurricane season.

> Respondent: *"In the hurricane season I can actually track the hurricane using the Internet, and know exactly where it is, how strong it may be etc."*

To communicate through emails, instant messaging and Internet calls was the most common usage of the Internet, throughout all the interviews. The interviewee's stated that they rarely wrote letters

to friends and family living abroad anymore, because it would take weeks for it to reach. Sending an email or instant messages was being considered as much more efficient. Secondly, the Internet was used for entertainment, and last of all purposes as a source of information and knowledge.

7.2.3 Enhanced knowledge obtained through using the Internet

If the Internet were to disappear the respondents informed me that they would replace it with house phone to call friends and family and they said they would have to go back to writing letters instead of sending emails. The children said they would have to go to the library to find the information needed for their homework, use a dictionary more often or ask their parents. This was not really an alternative for them, though.

> Respondent: *"Well, if Internet disappeared now, I'd have to go back and using the dictionary, and go back to not understanding. Instead of talking on MSN I could talk on the phone... and I would have to go to the library, which could be difficult since I don't know where the library is...! So I think it would be pretty harsh."*

A few of the respondents said that they would have to go back to not knowing, if the Internet were to disappear. One interviewee claimed that everything is to be found somewhere else, for example at the library, prior to the publication on the Internet. It was only a matter of taking the time to look it up. Nevertheless, the respondents mentioned many advantages with surfing the Internet, mainly the fast, instant and updated information the Internet provides.

Each and every one of the respondents stated that they normally found what they were looking for, when they searched the Internet. They said that if one knows how to search for it, and what to type in the search engine, then the information will become available.

> Respondent: *"Well once you know what to type in, because as I said the best thing on the Internet is the search engines. Just type in the correct text and it will give you everything."*

> Respondent: *"Very easy, just click and you will get through. Once you know what you are looking for... You can not be to vague, you have to zoom in on what you want, because if you go too vague you might get all different things that you are not looking for. So you have to zoom in what you are looking for."*

Evaluation of sources was not prioritized by most of the interviewees; they confirmed that they would trust the information found on the Internet without much reservation. Some of them mentioned that they would probably rely on the information if the source was well known. Others stated that if they found the same information through various sources it would be more believable. A few stated that they actually did not really reflect much about the reliability of the information.

> Respondent: *"I thought about it at one time, when I wasn't sure if that was right, because it didn't sound too right. But then it was there... so I guess maybe I trust it a lot but... most of the times I think it's the truth, I guess. I'm not sure, but I rather go with that."*

Respondent: *"Well, I tend to think that the Internet is accurate. So, yeah, I see something and I tend to believe it. It depends on what, though. Like probably if I'm looking for a recipe or something like that, or a baby name or the meaning of something... if I get it on the Internet, then I'll think it is the most accurate account they could give me of the stuff, so yeah I will believe it."*

All of the respondents were convinced that they would gain more knowledge through using the Internet, than if they weren't. However, some of them was not sure on how and in what ways.

Respondent: *"I've become a brighter boy! Haha... There is a lot more I can do now having the Internet. It makes life a lot easier."*

Respondent: *"If I didn't use the Internet I wouldn't get to learn stuff, like building my own websites which was cool, and so... I learn a lot of stuff on the Internet. I don't know how it's going to help me in some ways, but..."*

One interviewee replied that he, as a laboratory technician teacher, preparing for experiments for the students in school, was looking for previous experiments being carried out, specific experiments that were only to be found on the Internet. Another person said that people are expected to know certain things in life as they are getting older, and might hesitate to ask people around them for simple things.

Respondent: *"The Internet makes it possible to find out things at every stage of your life, and the Internet will not laugh at you."*

Another interviewee mentioned the fact that while browsing the Internet you would be exposed to random things by coincidence, more so than when you manually look through books at the library. Then again, it was pointed out that experiencing and knowing are two different things. One of the children compared going to the library with using the Internet and concluded that the Internet provided an easy access to updated information, and also pictures, which are not always available in books at the library.

Respondent: *"I suppose you could find out everything in a library, but I don't really go to a library to know. You could probably find everything in a library, but not as easy... and you don't always find... like, on the Internet you can also look at pictures."*

Internet was regarded, by the respondents, as a great source of information and knowledge for those who wanted to use it for that purpose.

Respondent: *"It depends on the way, and the things I'm using the Internet for. My main purpose of using the Internet is for the music. But if I would use it to keep up to date with current affairs I probably would learn more about, like... I would know what is going on in the world. Because, if you would ask me something about what's going on in America or in Iraq, I probably wouldn't know. But if I would use the Internet I probably would. But I don't really use it for that purpose."*

One interviewee's was also aware about the advantages the Internet provides for those who are accessing the technology – and the disadvantage for those who don't. They expressed a wish for Internet accessibility available to everyone.

> Respondent: *"A lot of the people who are not using the Internet… I am sure that they are having a pretty hard life, as in comparison to mine. Their life must be really hard because the Internet is the thing of this age… it is the thing of this age. If you're not Internet literate then you should try to become. Because a lot of information that you need, it would take you a day to find that, and it would take me an hour. So it actually saves time."*

> Respondent: *"People are quick to say that they don't like the Internet if they don't know how to use it, but if you learn how to use it – you will love it!"*

7.3 Opinions and attitudes towards the Internet

This second part of the results will describe the opinions and attitudes towards the Internet, which can be found among some of the people of the young generations.

7.3.1 Possibilities and opportunities for the youths

The persons interviewed expressed that their life had changed to a certain extent, since they started to use the Internet. Not drastically, in a sense that it contributed to any major differences, but still, being able to easily communicate with people over seas instead of making an expensive phone call now and then, or download music instead of buying CD's, made a slight change in people's lives. However, the youngest respondents pointed out that they more or less grew up using the Internet; hence it did not bring much change into their lives.

> Respondent: *"My life has not changed to an extreme extent, because it does not play that big role, not like the TV. However, it does make life a little bit easier, in a big way… because I can easily communicate with my family living abroad, and I don't have to wait so long for mail and to see pictures."*

> Respondent: *"I get answers quickly, although I don't have enough time to use it but when I have time to use it I accessing information faster than before."*

Every one thought of the Internet as a positive technological innovation, even though most of the respondents could not really identify any opportunities provided especially for them, as individuals, at least not beyond what had already been mentioned, which was communication, entertainment and source of information. A few of them mentioned education and the fact that it was possible to study online from universities abroad, which could enhance their value on the labour market. One of the respondents was actually considering applying for online studies at the time of the interview.

7.3.2 Negative effects for the youths

When it came to the negative effects and bad impact on which the Internet might have on the respondents as individuals, one person mentioned illegal downloading of music, but since this is very common in Grenada (and all over the world) it is not really seen as a criminal act. Another

interviewee talked about the addiction that came with the Internet usage. The feeling of being addicted to the Internet could be a problem.

> Respondent: *"I m addicted to the Internet... if it goes away I don't know what I am going to do. And that could be problem, because I have no back up plan right now. I've relied so much on the Internet; I would not know what to do."*

The addiction becomes an issue, especially when the Internet access is not reliable and thus available at all times, even if one has a computer at home and paying for the Internet services. Cable & Wireless, being the only Internet provider in Grenada, is not always able to provide satisfactory service. Paying a large amount of money for an insufficient Internet service (for example speed of delivery and quality of the services) was mentioned as a problem, especially by those who lived in the countryside.

Further problems declared by one of the interviewee were the inability to get updated information about what is going on in Grenada.

> Respondent: *"It's difficult to find something in particular about Grenada... about what is going on ... and if I do find information it's not updated. I know the government have a website, but you can't really use it to follow up on Grenada, because it's not being updated."*

Additionally, one person looked at the Internet as an uncontrolled source of information, where anyone can find out personal things about any person which can lead to unpleasant incidents and even for criminal purposes.

> Respondent: *"People say they finding out about other people on the Internet. This is something I don't really like. I think it's not private enough. You can go on the Internet and get history about people and all those things... Anybody can access it, even medical history, which I don't think people should know."*

7.3.3 Attitudes towards the Internet in a wider perspective

All of the respondents referred to the positive aspect of the Internet as a chance to advertise and promote the "the isle of spice" as a travel destination, the tourism sector being one of the largest sources of foreign income for Grenada. Some interviewee's believed that Grenadians could use the Internet to create opportunities for themselves. They said that gradually more and more Grenadians would get access to the Internet, and when people start to use the Internet to inform themselves and educate themselves it could lead to enhanced knowledge which in the long run might contribute to the development of the island.

> Respondent: *"...because we have a lot of people... a lot don't really understand what the Internet is, and don't really know how to use it. Young and old and in between and so... And I also think that when you use the Internet you could look up about other places and you can find pictures about places... It's never as good as actually going to the place itself, because I mean, you're there! But it is something... it's better than nothing."*

One person doubted that this development would happen anytime soon though, because according to her everything happened extremely slow in Grenada.

> Respondent: *"Grenada is a very sweet, loving, peaceful... it's a good island. But not to live. I mean, if you want to retire: Come to Grenada! Haha... Grenada is a retirement home."*

Even though the respondents regarded the Internet to be an overall positive technological innovation, in a sense of the opportunities being presented, they were also aware of the negative effects. Some of the respondents thought that the positive side would conquer the negative usage of the Internet, such as pornography, perverts and paedophiles, illegal downloading, spreading of viruses, hackers and terrorism.

> Respondent: *"I'd say it's positive because of how people might use it, which is talking online, playing games or downloading things or getting research, that it's positive because it's helps us, or it's fun – and fun is good!"*

Others believed that there has to be a balance in everything and that there will always be people using the Internet for the wrong purposes.

> Respondent: *"Generally I would say that... like everything to exist it has to have a balance. It has two sides and it would be in some ways proved to be positive and in some ways proved to be negative, at the same time. The most obvious is that the dangers it opposed to young children... and positive in a sense of the sharing of information, and the communication level where you can communicate with a vast amount of people simultaneously, that is definitely an advantage. But as of the other side... Yeah... it has it's ups and downs. One of the other things that oppose a threat is the ability to get hold of any type of information, given that you have the right skills. That is a positive and a negative thing. Given if it falls into the wrong hands... a lot of things are going on, like identity theft, scandals, fraud and propaganda... So the conclusion of that answer is that it has it ups and downs."*

When asked about the future, all respondents believed that the Internet would develop even more and become more accessible to everyone. A few respondents talked about being connected all the time, through the cell phone. Every one was certain that their Internet usage would increase in the future, perhaps somewhat different from now.

> Respondent: *"Well, I believe the whole country, because of the awareness of the Internet now... that we, the people on the whole, will use it more. Because more and more people will want to have computers at home, for... even for the children, to give their children a chance to experience the Internet and the positive things it could bring."*

There is a desire among the respondents to be able keep up with the advancement of technology. They expressed a desire to access and use the Internet even more in the future, being connected anywhere and more easily than today.

> Respondent: *"In the future I am hoping that I can use the Internet in a different way, I am hoping that, you know… I can probably just be walking around with my little phone and be able to download everything. I mean, as it is now, it is possible to use your cell phone and so forth, to surf the Internet. But it's not as easy as handling the computer at home. And I would like for it to be that way, even with a tiny device. So I can be anywhere and use the Internet."*

> Respondent: *"Everybody should have access to the Internet. I know that I would be using the Internet even more often in the future because so much new things are coming out, so much advancement are being made in technology. And I would like to know about them. The Internet is a place for knowledge. Whether its knowledge about good things or bad things; the Internet has it all. The World Wide Web!"*

8. Discussion and analysis of the results

This last section will discuss and analyse the empirical results. This is where the interpretations, evaluations and conclusions are being made. Finally, I will give some suggestions for further research within this field of study.

8.1 Discussion

According to the results, having a computer with Internet access at home was something all the respondents would prefer, the main reasons being privacy, flexibility and last, but not least, the possibility to save money. Many Grenadians are living abroad, and making over seas phone calls to those relatives are rather expensive. Instead, making Internet calls and communicating through emails and instant messaging are cheaper alternatives. Of course the Internet service is not for free, but if you are already paying for it, you might as well use it for phone calls over seas and sending emails, which consequently will save some money from the phone bill. Downloading music instead of buying CD's is another money saving benefit. On the other hand, Internet services are quite expensive in Grenada today, in comparison to more developed countries (Sweden for example).

Cost alone is in all probability one of the reasons to why only a small percentage of the population in Grenada can afford Internet access. Computers and accessories are available for purchasing in the island, but still relatively costly. Cable & Wireless, the only Internet provider, cover nearly every part of Grenada, so the infrastructure allows almost anyone to get connected. However, Cable & Wireless could use some competition from another Internet provider, in order to lower the costs to a reasonable level for the Grenadians. Because, considering that a typical skilled Grenadian worker's income is around 1,000 – 1,500 EC$ a month and an Internet service costs 99 – 160 EC$ per month it is quite expensive, about 10 % of an income. In Sweden we would not like to spend 1,400 SEK monthly on Internet services when the normal rate is around 300 SEK per month. The inequality of internet access and so many people being excluded from the new technology is essential aspects in Castells "The rise of the network society". Despite more than 30 years of dissemination of information technology there are still many problems to be solved before the Internet becomes available to everyone. [75] Less expensive computers and lower costs of Internet services as well as improved connectivity is crucial to this development.

Now, only five of the respondents had Internet access at home, and logically they were using the Internet to a greater extent than those who only accessed it by a friend, at work or in school. The difference in accessibility affects the usage in a sense that those who don not have much access to the Internet limits their usage to mostly communicating through the Internet, sending and receiving emails. Those who have unlimited access used the Internet mostly for entertainment. The last field of application was searching for information on the Internet, except for the children who was still attending school; they often used the Internet in order to do their homework. Having an assignment or a problem to solve provides the children with a motive, a reason to search for information which many of the other respondents were lacking. The two respondents who needed the Internet to be able to perform well at work also had a motive to search for information.

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[75] Castells 1999

I believe that this is what is required; an organized strategy on how to get people to obtain enhanced knowledge through the Internet in the developing countries. The access and availability in itself is not enough. It is a necessity, but not enough for obtaining enhanced knowledge. Without an organized strategy the Internet is not a given tool for development. The theory demonstrates that the ICT is seen as a tool to support poverty reduction and that many organisations are working with ICT4D in different ways (Section 2.1.1, page 3). Additionally, Dertouzoz declares that special initiatives and strategies must be set into motion and that the wealthy countries must assist the developing countries to get access to, and be able to use, the new technology.[76] This study confirms the need for organized initiatives.

Some of the respondents stated that they always letting the Internet run in the background. Being constantly available was something that came with the introduction of the cell phone. As the society develops you are expected to answer your phone at all times, no matter where you are. There is no longer any need to plan ahead, because you are never more than a phone call away. Now, being connected to the Internet and online all the time is what is expected, or at least to have an email address where people can reach you. This is a part of the development, and could constitute a problem for those who are not able to keep up with the rapid advancement of technology. The digital divide is already a fact between countries, but will also increase within countries. There are people in Grenada with unlimited Internet access, and there are those who never touched a computer yet. Those who have Internet access in Grenada and using it a lot are most likely at the same level (or perhaps even more advanced) as those in well developed countries using the Internet. And the opposite; there are people in developed countries who are not using the Internet and will, just as a Grenadian not using the Internet, fall behind.

I believe the digital divide is a matter of global stratification, regardless of the country of residence. The theory presents statistical facts showing that the digital divide is immense, despite of the increasing connectivity in the world (Section 2.2, page 4). At the same time, during the past then years the divide has been reduced, when it comes to numbers of phone lines, cell phone subscribers and Internet users. This constitutes a different type of digital divide. ECLAC presents a second dimension to the digital divide, the domestic divide, which refers to the inequalities within a country. As written above, the differences in accessibility will no longer be between countries but *within* countries.

The differences in availability starts already in school, where some children have Internet access and some don not. The children I interviewed were fully aware of the advantage they had, compared to the children who had no access to the Internet at all. Each and every one of the respondents stated that the Internet makes their life easier. Some of them said they could manage without the Internet, even though it would be a huge setback for them. Some said they could not even imagine a world without the Internet. This shows that the more you use the Internet the more you become dependent on the technology. It gradually changes your life. Because, we all know that people used to manage to live without a cell phone, without a house phone and even without a television. But once you start to use it, you become addicted to it. You start to rely on it.

If the Internet was to disappear, the respondents said they would replace it with telephones, letters and library to mention a few substitutes, but the fact remains that Internet provides fast and instant

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[76] Dertouzoz 1997

communication as well as easy, accessible information, and is therefore preferred as a source of information and knowledge. The library was not even an alternative for most of the respondents. Especially the children seemed to be very accustomed searching for information on the Internet, and one of them did not even know *where* the library was located.

A few respondents said that they would have to go back to not knowing and not understanding, if they could not access the Internet again. This implies that they consider the Internet to be a source of information and knowledge, which they cannot obtain somewhere else. However, one respondent claimed that everything is to be found somewhere else prior to the publication on the Internet, and that is was just a matter of taking the time to look it up. Then again, time is an important factor, which can not be overlooked. It is possible to access updated and instant information, and even recently taken pictures, on the Internet which could take hours or even days to find elsewhere, if ever found at all, as one respondent uttered. As long as you know how to search the Internet, and all the respondents claimed that this was very easy, you will get the specific information you were looking for. This requires computer literacy as well as Internet literacy, which is a necessity for those who want to use the Internet. It also calls for some kind of evaluation of sources which was not really much reflected on by some of the respondents. It could be quite problematic to rely on what is published on the Internet, without any reservations.

All of the respondents regarded the Internet as a source of information and knowledge and every one replied that they believed enhanced knowledge was being obtained through using the Internet. They also stated that they were able to do more things when having the Internet, which made life a little easier. The awareness of the advantages the Internet presented for those who had access to it were clearly expressed and all the interviewee's knew where and how to find the information they needed. The conclusion of this is that *if they wanted to* they are able to obtain information and knowledge through the Internet. However, that is *not the main purpose* of their Internet usage. The possibility is presented, for anyone who has access to the Internet to take advantage of. Even older people who would normally hesitate to ask certain things (because they are expected to know already) could use the Internet to enhance their knowledge. Another benefit mentioned when it comes to obtaining knowledge through using the Internet was while surfing the net one would be exposed to random information by coincidence. Browsing for information would therefore be an entrance to information, other than you set out to search for in the first place. Although, being exposed to something and knowing something is not the same, but again at least the opportunity to learn is presented.

The combination of many young Grenadians having a cell phone and possibly even an mp3 player at the same time as they don't have tap water, a fridge or a washing machine is somewhat confusing. Almost like they are living in the year of 1907 but actually using the newest technology of the year 2007. This is however not strange at all, because a cell phone is a lot less expensive than a fridge. A few years ago, when the cell phones where introduced to a larger section of the population in Grenada, cell phones were handed out for free. Nowadays "everyone" has a cell phone, even if they don't have any credit on it to be able to make any phone calls. This implies that if there was an organized will, then basic Internet technology could be distributed almost for free as well.

Just like the introduction of cell phones, the Internet has not left anyone unaffected. All of the respondents declared that their life has changed, some said "not drastically" and others said it affected them "in a big way". Even those who did not use the Internet to a large extent could acknowledge the benefits it provides. However, when asked about what opportunities the Internet provides for them as individuals, it was rather difficult for them to identify any specific advantages, besides the general fields of applications already mentioned; communication, entertainment and searching for information. A few mentioned the possibility to study online as an international student at universities abroad.

The inability of getting updated information about Grenada online made me reflect over the lack of possible positive usage of the Internet. I consider the shortage of updated local Grenadian news on the Internet to actually constitute an issue of dysfunctional democracy, because every citizen should have the right to know what is going on in his or her country. Most of the respondents stated that they did not search for news on the Internet, and were only briefly browsing through the local newspapers, because the articles were not informative enough. Why is the news not appealing to them? I believe there might be a need for *updated news*. The local newspapers are only published once a week and there is only a few websites with information about Grenada, and they are not updated very often. Now, since I did not explore this area more due to the restrictions and limitations of this thesis concerning the Internet usage I am not informed about the usage of television and radio as a source of information. It is therefore very likely that people are using the TV and the radio in order to stay updated with the local news. The fact still remains though; if the government would develop their website with new updated information more people would probably search for information about Grenada there. This could also be a gateway for the government to be able to reach more people and promote a better capacity building.

The respondents were also aware of the negative aspects of Internet usage affecting them in different ways. Perhaps it was easier for them to identify the negative affects as they mentioned quite a few; actually being criminal when downloading music illegally, becoming addicted to the Internet, paying for services not provided and finally the uncontrolled spreading of information on the Internet leading to personal information being exposed to anyone having the right skills to find it and use it for the wrong purposes.

Despite some negative aspects the Internet could bring for the respondents as individuals, they stated that they regarded the Internet to be a generally positive technological innovation in a wider perspective. Two main positive affects was mentioned; the ability for the nation to advertise and promote Grenada as a tourism destination on the Internet as well as people being able to create opportunities for themselves, and thus contribute to the development of Grenada. Perhaps it would take some time before Grenada actually starts to benefit from the opportunities presented by the Internet, as one respondent expressed her concern about, since development in the island come about quite slowly. Furthermore, there will always be people who are using the new technology for the wrong purposes; the respondents mentioned pornography, paedophiles, spreading of viruses and terrorism etc.

There was an overall positive attitude towards the Internet and the future among the respondents. They expect to be using the Internet even more in the future as a result of the increasing accessibility. The respondents declared that they want to be able to keep up with the new

technology as it is progressing, also wishing for everyone in Grenada to have Internet access in the future because, as one respondent expressed it: "the Internet is a place for knowledge". According to the theory, knowledge is an important capital for every nation who wishes for development (Section 2.4, page 4). The government of Grenada has a vision of the island becoming a knowledge based society by 2010. Sharing and receiving information with the intention of gaining more knowledge in the process is a way for Grenada to develop, since having a well educated population will contribute the progress of the nation.

8.2 Conclusions

The main purpose of this thesis was to study if a selection of the young generations in Grenada could obtain enhanced knowledge through using the Internet. Secondly, the study intended to depict what attitudes could be found towards the Internet among the youths, both for them as individuals and in a wider perspective.

The results of this study show that Internet access and availability alone is not enough to obtain enhanced knowledge because it does not empower anyone on its own. The Internet is being regarded as a great source of information and knowledge and the respondents stated that they knew how to search for information and where to look for it. Many of them declared that their life had change for the better when they started to use the Internet; it was actually making life easier. Some said that they would have to go back to not knowing and not understanding if the Internet would disappear. Internet is therefore considered being a source of information and knowledge which can not be obtained as easily elsewhere.

According to the interviews being made the respondents stated that *if they wanted to* they would be able to obtain enhanced knowledge through using the Internet. This was however not the main purpose of their Internet usage. Instead, the respondents were using the Internet mostly for communication and entertainment. To ensure increasing knowledge among youths in Grenada an organized strategy has to be implemented. This will give the people a motive to use the Internet for the purpose of obtaining enhanced knowledge, which is crucial to every nation since well educated citizens contributes to the development. The Internet in itself is a necessity, but not enough to constitute a tool for development or poverty reduction.

The Internet has not left anyone unaffected. According to the empirical results the attitudes among the youths towards the Internet were generally positive, as they regarded it to be a useful and valuable technological innovation.

> *"The Internet is a place for knowledge"*

The quote above was made by one of the interviewed youths. It is quite notable that each and every one of the respondents was well aware of what a great source of information and knowledge the Internet constitutes, yet primarily used it for communicating purposes and entertainment.

All of the respondents were also being aware of the negative affects the Internet could bring. This however, did not prevent the youths from having good faith in the future as they wished for more accessibility for the people in Grenada. They also wanted to be able to use the Internet to a larger extent, keeping up with the technological advancement being made. The desirable future for

Grenada includes more people being able to afford having computers with Internet access at home, Internet service provider(s) who can offer satisfying service to its customers at affordable rates and finally a follow-up on the national ICT Strategy produced by the government of Grenada.

8.3 Further research

This thesis is only focusing on the young people in Grenada who are using the Internet, conducted as a qualitative study. It would be interesting to carry out a more thorough research in order to map out accessibility and utilization in a broader perspective, with a large sample of a population and with an intention to draw generalized conclusions from the results. This study will then constitute a valuable foundation for further research about Internet usage in Grenada.

Furthermore, considering the rapid advancement of the technology it would be exciting to conduct a comparative study, similar to this research a few years from now, to see if and how the Internet usage have changed. Or, as the above mentioned advancements are taking place, conduct a study on the importance of the extended accessibility the cell phone constitutes. Considering the extensive diffusion of cell phones in Grenada: what would obtaining information through the cell phone mean to the people?

Additionally, since the government of Grenada have produced an ICT Strategy to enable Grenada to become a knowledge based society by 2010, it would also be interesting to do a follow up on how the strategy was implemented.

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Appendix 1 – Interview schedule

Opening questions

- Name
- Age
- Family status (single, married, family)
- Address
- Living situation (alone/with family, urban/rural)
- Occupation/School
- Education
- Interests
- Family/friends living abroad?

Part 1: Access and utilization

Introduction phase:

- Do you have house phone, cell phone, tv, reading newspapers/magazines/books?

- Can you tell me about when you heard about the Internet for the very first time?

- When did you use the Internet for the first time?
  - when, where and what did you do? Can you remember your first reactions/impressions?

1. A. Where do you use Internet?

   B. Do you have Internet at home?
   - If you do not have Internet at home, why? What are the hindrances? Would you like to have Internet at home?
   - If you do have Internet at home, why? For how long? What is the cost?

   C. Can you give me three reasons to why you would prefer to use the Internet at home - instead of in school/work or in public at an Internet café? And three reasons why you would prefer to use the Internet at school/work/internet cafe instead of at home?

2. A. How often do you use the Internet?
   - everyday, week, month?

   B. How long are you online each time, approximately?
   - minutes, for hours, all day, no limit?

3. A. What are you doing when you are using the Internet?

   B. Do you normally find what you are looking for when you are using the Internet?

4. A. Imagine that the Internet disappears, how would it affect you? Could you manage without the Internet? What would you miss and what would the consequences be? How did you manage without Internet before you had access to it?

B. How would you replace it?

5. A. What is the main purpose to why you are using the Internet instead of other sources of information? For what reasons?

B. Do you believe that you gain more knowledge through using the internet, than if you weren't using it? What kind of knowledge (can you give any recent examples)? Could you have found the same information somewhere else or was it as a result of using the Internet?

C. What do you believe is the real use of the Internet, that you can not easily replace with library, magazines and tv?

6. Do you believe everything that you find on the Internet? How do you value the information that you find?

Part 2: Opinions and attitudes

1. Do you feel that your life have changed since you started to use the Internet? If so, in what ways?

2. Can you see that the Internet provides you, as an individual, with any opportunities? Give examples?

3. Can you see that the Internet brings any negative effects or threats for you as an individual? Give examples?

4. What can the Internet do in reference to the development of Grenada, according to you?

5. The Grenada ICT strategy has been developed by the government to enable Grenada to become a knowledge based society at 2010.

   ▪ Do you feel like a citizen in an knowledge based society?
   ▪ Do you feel that you can share knowledge with other individuals, in Grenada and in the world, when you are using the internet?

6. If you did not have access to the Internet would you feel excluded from the technological development?

7. A. Do you considering it being "high status" to use the Internet?

B. What do you think about those who are not using the Internet?

8. From a wider perspective - would you say that the Internet is generally a positive or negative technological innovation? Why?

9. What do you expect from the future? Will you use Internet more or less, in a different way, for what? Why? Positive or negative thoughts?

10. Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you very much for participating!