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How a unique Culture uses Information and Communication Technologies

An Ethnographic Field Study of the Community of Lamu, in Kenya

Global Media and Communication

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Abstract

The study has investigated the culture of Lamu through an ethnographic field study and the usage of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT’s) through interviews. The field study, including the interviews, was conducted during a fifteen week period. Theories of technological and cultural determinism as well as theories of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) are presented as theories which my analysis is based upon. What is investigated is the interplay between technology and culture in Lamu. The data collected will be used to discuss possible ICT4D assessments for future projects; what factors need to be investigated and mapped out prior to a project plan.

Lamu is a complex community with a long history of outside influences. Nowadays, the influences are not from imperialistic power nations but from tourists, Non-governmental Organizations (NGO’s), Governmental Organizations (GO’s) and private investors. The culture of Lamu has gone through a change in behavior throughout the generations. What has changed lately is the adoption and usage of ICT’s. In conclusion, this study shows the unique way in which the culture uses technologies. This has been analyzed with former ICT4D projects in mind and seen out of a development work perspective. Lamu’s religious character has colored the three spheres of the community and is presented as one of the many important binary factors that need to be considered in development work assessments.

What has been found out through this study is the importance of a culturally humble assessment before making a plan for ICT4D projects. Previous projects have failed due to the top-down approach. What has worked is the bottom-up approach and this is proclaimed in this study. All of the dimensions of a community, its history and all spheres need to be assessed before successful projects can be made. Lamu is a unique case and shows the complexity of assessments due to the binary factors and the many layers in the society that are important to take in account.

Keywords: ICT4D, Assessments, Field Study, Lamu
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1 Introduction

A common assumption about the technological development in Africa seems to be that African countries are far behind and that people live in mud houses shut off from everything that Westerners see as modern or developed. Maybe African nations don't have an Apple Store in each Town, a McDonalds at every corner or a Starbucks for the thirsty caffeine addict, but does that really make a country less modern or underdeveloped? Are there other indicators that we can look at to make this judgment call? What I believe is important is how cultures1 interact with new modes of communication. Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) projects offer an informative glimpse at the links between development and technology, specifically the introduction of new technology in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT’s). There are many new developments in the field of ICT4D that are interesting to follow. It has become much more culture oriented and moved from a top-down approach2 to a more alternative; bottom-up3 approach. Instead of the previous, more aggressive western model of development theory, some theorists have realized that it is important to use a more humble approach towards the communities. This will also be highlighted as an important aspect of this study. With these theories in mind, I wanted to investigate how a small community, like the one of Lamu in eastern Kenya, uses ICT’s in order to be able to discuss it in the light of previous ICT4D projects and newer theories in the field.

Mobile phones are a commonly used method of communication in Africa, more so than land line communication. In Kenya, for example, there are around 25 million mobile phone subscribers (Kachwanya.com) in a country of 40 million people. Although not all people have electricity or running water, or even a roof over their head at night, over 63 percent of the Kenyan population has a mobile phone. But what is less well known is that mobile phones are also used to move money from one phone user to another using a program called Mpesa. This allows petty business entrepreneurs to carry out ‘banking’ services without the impediments of traditional banks, which may be far from the subscriber and inaccessible to their level of money exchange.

African countries like Kenya have unique cultures that change the applications of technology. The way money circulates via mobile phones is a good example. Applications to technology vary according to the need arising in society, at least in places where advertising has less power of

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1 Williams (2001) third definition of culture: How people live in a certain culture by their specific values and norms. Williams calls this the ‘social’ definition as ‘a particular way of life’. (Williams: 2001)

2 Top-down approach: When projects and development work are planned based on the perspective of elites in a country and what they believe is important to change in the country

3 Bottom-up approach: The opposite of a top-down approach; projects and development work are planned based on the perspective of the local communities and their needs and voices are taken into consideration.
persuasion between product and purchaser. This is a point I wish to highlight before moving on to the description and analysis of my research. Among the proponents of ICT4D, introducing ICTs is viewed as a response to development problems. They advocate the adoption of ICTs as a remedy for various ills. Through their adoption and use, technology will bring about desired results. The results could be, for example, awareness of health problems and easily accessible information, which could lead to healthier populations. However, the question remains: What factors are important in the interplay between culture and technology?

Vrasidas (2009) does not think that technology is a solution or that, in and of itself, it brings positive social change. Instead, the author argues that technology is a tool, which could be used to bring about change and enable social mobilization if done in combination with researched planning and sensitivity to cultural factors. The cultural or social factor is essential, claims Vrasidas, for the sustainability of the ICT4D plan.

Often however the argument about agency in development lingo is framed contrasting technology and culture. That is, the agency of change is either one or the other—technological determinism vs. cultural determinism. On the one hand, theorists argue that technologies are the agents of development, which deems them technological determinism. And, on the other hand, theorists of cultural determinism argue that the agency of development is in the field of culture. Technologies then are seen as tools that help to bring about a new social reality (Flichy: 2007). Between these polarized standpoints, many other factors are left out, for instance the play of culture with technology. That is, the space that opens in the cultural field when new technologies are introduced. This ‘space’ allows for a change in social categories like gender, religion or ethnicity that may encourage social change. Also within the cultural context there exist historical factors that are symbolic boundaries that outline the social field. Take for example colonialism and democracy movements or capitalism and global markets. These cultural contexts represent unique experiences of modernity that vary from country to country.

No one doubts that cultures are complex and unique. In this paper, I investigate the interplay between culture and technology on the island of Lamu, located on the north coast of Kenya. Lamu is an ideal place to begin to examine the interplay of culture and technology because of the island’s reference in literature as a place that is timeless. Often you read that Lamu is untouched by modernity. There are no cars, and women are veiled in the traditional Islamic manner. I am interested in the interaction of technology and culture. What does it look like and how does it work?
1.1 Aim
The aim with my study is to investigate the technological and cultural dimensions of the field of Lamu and from there discuss the future of ICT4D projects. To be able to develop and plan ICT4D projects it is important to have a good insight into the culture and the infrastructure and the present communication tools. Therefore I aim to investigate the social spheres of communication. The case of Lamu will be used as an example to discuss the cultural interaction with ICT’s. The discussion will rest on the data collected through this study. I will examine the interaction between the culture present and the technologies used in Lamu. This will be conducted through an ethnographic field study during a ten plus five week period. I aim to complement this method by qualitative interviews that are to examine the usage of ICT’s in Lamu. Questions about the daily usage of mobile phones and Internet and on the attitude towards the social media will be raised as well as usage trends. Further, the data collected is to point out important factors that should be considered in development assessments prior to ICT4D projects. First I want to discuss the unique interplay of the culture and the technologies used and the possible change in the culture that this interplay could have resulted in. In the end I will highlight the most important aspects of my research and discuss possible ICT4D assessments.

1.1 Research Questions
In what way are mobile phones used in Lamu?

How do the people of Lamu use technologies?

1.2 Limitations
My ethnographic field study, including interviews with informants, was conducted during a fifteen week time period on the island of Lamu. Due to the time limit this study cannot be seen as a generalization of the population in Lamu. What I will attempt to generalize is the part of the community that was composed of people into the lives of whom I gained an insight. The interviews show the reader a sample of people and their ICT usage as a demonstration of the differences of use apparent in the culture. My aim is not to give a general picture of the surroundings. That would have taken a lot more time and would have needed more research on all social levels. The interviews conducted, as it will be mentioned in the chapter of methods, are purposively sampled. This means that I have chosen a variety of informants that where in my milieu and those that I could talk to considering my language barrier. I did not speak Kiswahili or Arabic which were two of the three main languages in the area. Purposive sampling also indicates that the amount of informants is a small cluster of people chosen after a specific goal; to give me
relevant data. Since the interviews are a complementary method to show the reader data on the usage of ICT’s in Lamu, I am not trying to generalize the habit or effects of technologies in the culture through this study but attitudes and usage trends.

The fact that I conducted an ethnographic field study should be noted in the sense that its own limit is that it is more or less impossible to be objective. Because of this limit I have chosen the method of authoethnography, where all the results stem from my own observations, experiences, and conversations regarding the culture of Lamu. My own educational level and knowledge that I brought with me into the field is another limit.

The culture of Lamu is gender segregated, which made my own observations even more specific. The private sphere of the men is unknown to me to the degree where western informants enlightened me about some aspects. I lived as traditionally as possible and needed, and never stepped out of that role. This is also the reason why I have chosen to make equal interviews with men and women, to see if the different lives also affect the way ICT’s are used. More on the life of men versus women in the Lamunian community will be explained further in my Methods chapter. I am fully aware of the fact that it is impossible to understand the whole cultural dimension of the community, but this study will only be based on the parts of the culture I encountered and which I have analyzed from that premise. The study is also limited to the social classes I was involved in during my stay. This is another factor that makes generalization impossible. Since that is not a goal I am trying to achieve, I am hereby only making it clear to the reader what limitations this study has before going deeper into the solving of my research question.

1.3 Disposition
My study has a clearly structured disposition. In the introduction I present my own interest in the case and how I want to proceed, which includes my aim and research questions. In the second chapter I introduce prior research found in the field of ICT4D. That chapter is divided between the studies made with the belief that ICT’s alone contribute to a social change and the studies that discuss the culture and social factors of communities. The prior research is divided to show a change and difference in approaches towards development in ICT4D work. In the oncoming chapter of theories the two deterministic sides and binary factors will be introduced together with the theories of ICT4D. My aim is to show the development and thereby guide the reader towards the time period in the development where we are at this moment. To me, the contrast of before and now is vital to stress to give light to changes and future possibilities. How I went about conducting my research is presented in the following chapter of Methods. First I introduce the
reader to my approach to the method of ethnographic field study, then I continue to the subchapter where I motivate how I selected relevant data in the field. The field that I observed is presented next, to give the reader a peek into the culture and social reality, with its social categories mapped out. In the end of the chapter I present my interviews with its questions, informants, my sample selection and last my approach. These four chapters are the base of this study that should guide the reader towards the coming analysis of the observations and interviews carried out.

The next part of my study includes my analysis, a conclusion, the discussion as well as thoughts regarding theoretical improvements of my study. My analysis is structured after my two research questions. The analysis of my interviews is combined with the analysis of my observations in a way to best present my conclusions on the interplay between technology and culture. Based on my results I will conclude the important aspects of my study.

2 Prior Research

Williams, who will be introduced further, uttered the expression: “Television as a cultural Form” (Williams: 2003, p. xiv). He positioned himself on the cultural side of determinism and emphasized culture as something that creates the need for the use of technology. McLuhan, on the other side, meant that technology changes the culture and got famous with: “The medium is the message” (McLuhan: 2001). When researching the field of ICT4D and the usage of ICT’s, researchers tend to be either on the side of the importance of technology - that development occurs through ICT’s as agents and discuss how to create the best way to implement ICT’s - or on the side of the importance of culture - that development through ICT’s only can occur when projects are developed after specific case situations.

2.1 Research on ICT4D: Importance of Technology

Some researchers of ICT4D emphasize ICT’s as the agents for development in underdeveloped countries and out of that they analyze their work in the field. It was for a long time, and still is, common that organizations base their analysis of development cases on this premise. Technologies are seen as the tools that help the researchers and project developers reaching the goal they desire; development. The goals differ from case to case but the tools remain the same; ICT’s.

In Finding the Formula for Sustainable Development: Lessons from One Laptop per Child Project in Rwanda, the researcher investigates, and criticizes, whether the project followed models of ICT transfer.
Thereafter they discuss the positive and negative effects, in the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) project in Rwanda (Andersson & Normalm: 2010). The authors make a good point about the aspects that the project has forgotten to address: that the OLPC projects need to plan more long-term for sustainable development. The OLPC project is based on the belief that the implementation of laptops in the lives of children will enhance their knowledge of ICT’s and provide them with more opportunities for the future, such as laptops as an educational tool. As the authors mention, the project doesn’t think long-term but only plans the first step; how to get laptops to all children. What is important, the authors stress, is the plan for the future towards sustainable development (Andersson & Normalm: 2010).

Another report analyses the significance of ICT’s in development work in India (Grahn & Lind: 2006). The authors point out that the people in the organization (SIWA) which they investigated benefit from the access to ICT’s to improve their living conditions. The organization investigated in the study educates women to use ICT’s to be able to help themselves to better living conditions. The significance of ICT’s are highlighted as agents for social change. What this study boils down to is that ICT’s have changed the lives of the women towards, for example, lower daily costs and increased work efficiency. The ICT’s make it possible for the women to communicate over great distances which before would have meant travels. Through movies, radio shows and video conferences the women in the organization are informed about, for example, health issues, which helps them becoming socially more secure. Even though the ICT’s are seen as the factors of change, the authors also emphasize the work from the members in the organization. Without the structure and organization of the members, it would not be possible to implement the ICT’s as well as they are in this case. ICT’s have changed the lives of women in the lowest social class so that they become as informed and secure as other women and men in other social classes. This study shows that ICT’s have changed living conditions and developed the organization and community. In my own analysis I will discuss the possible change that ICT’s might have had in Lamu.

These reports are interesting to stress in this study since they also emphasize how ICT’s are used in these communities. In their respective cases ICT’s are seen as the tools that are to change the living conditions and develop the communities. In the first it is clear what role the ICT’s play in the implementation. The project is all about creating connection and providing children with the technological tools to help them being included in the world through the net. The goal with the ICT is to provide children with the opportunity to learn how to use a computer and get access to the Internet, but what is criticized is how to keep the project going in a sustainable manner. In the second report the authors explain the interplay between the people in the community and the
technologies more thoroughly. The women of the community and organization SEWA are taught how to use the Internet. That way the women can overcome geographical communication problems. The new way to communicate makes their work more efficient, they are more included and their living opportunities have increased with the access to the World Wide Web. Since my study will investigate the relationship between the ICT’s and the culture in Lamu, in a way similar to these studies, I found it relevant to introduce these findings.

2.2 Research on ICT4D: Importance of assessment of cultures

What some researchers believe, is the importance of culture - that development doesn’t happen through ICT’s alone but also through the culture and that the implementation of ICT’s need be done after assessing specific cultural situations. The way in which the ICT’s could be used and what effects the implementation could have on societies depends on these situations. The research presented in this perspective is similar to the one before, but the researchers have gone deeper and increased the importance of the human factor.

A study that has investigated something similar to my study is Johnson Ayonkas Master dissertation The Politics of Ideology in Information and Communication Technologies for Development (Ayonka: 2010). The position of the study is against the modernization theory and aiming towards alternative development projects. This is similar to the report on the OLPC project but the author highlights different aspects such as: ICT4D should be guided by alternative bottom-up theories where people and their needs are prioritized, different approaches to ICT4D, overall arguments towards alternative development, and the importance of the assessment of social and cultural aspects. The report aims towards African development, being an African case study. The ideas the author addresses are those from the ICT4D actors who want to develop African communities with ICT’s as tools fitted to the special situations, listening to the voices in minority communities and their own view on development. The thesis assesses the G8 and EU initiative as well as the Vodafone projects. The mobile banking application Mpesa is mentioned, which also will be introduced further in this study as an important technological development. In conclusion the author mentions that ICT’s are used in ways leaving African countries in a ICT trap where TNC’s control the market and the ICT4D projects, but also that there are theorists that start mentioning the importance of projects that are fitted to the communities and their needs. ICT’s are tools for development, but the projects need to be adapted to the social realities.

The study The impact of Mobile Phones in Africa (Scott et al: 2004) discusses how mobile phones could help African countries to benefit from them. The researcher emphasizes the social and cultural aspects and the need for a combination of them with ICT’s for the best beneficiary
outcome. Mobile phones are already implanted, but for a greater social change or development to occur the needs of the people and the cultural aspects need to be assessed in the context. (Scott et al; 2004)

A small paper; Goodbye Digital Divide, Hello Digital Confusion? A critical embrace of the emerging ICT4D consensus, (Galperin: 2010) highlights alternative ICT development paths. These paths should be used through an incorporation of social and cultural differences. ICT4D projects should move from trying to answer the question of how to connect people to the question of how to include most people. Once again cultural differences are emphasized as an important agent in the discussion on development.

These reports are interesting to mention since I share the author’s belief that assessments of the unique communities is vital before moving on to creating new ICT4D projects. How will organizations be able to know what steps to take first if they don’t know the road ahead of them, in this case the culture. It would be like fumbling in the dark. There are enough examples to see the importance of more in depth assessments. I see my own essay as the start of an assessment and will discuss this further in my Analysis chapter.

3 Theory

This Chapter will be divided into two subchapters; Determinism and ICT4D. Determinism will be explained out of theories from Marshall McLuhan and Raymond Williams, who are opinion leading theorists in the discourse. The binary factors that play a huge part in how specific cases adapt ICT’s are presented in the first subchapter, this to introduce the complex problem of how to develop ICT4D projects.

The chapter on ICT4D will include a presentation of the change from Development Theory to Modernization Theory, Mobile for Development theory - which is a pretty recent field - Leapfrogging theory, and Communication for Development and Social Change. It is interesting to address these since M4D is a theoretical and practical way of implementing ICT’s in countries, the Leapfrogging theory explains an effect from the implementation of ICT’s, and the last theory shows a change in theoretical development in the field.

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4 Determinism: The discourse discussing the effect; determining agent, of change. In this study, the contrast of technology and culture.
3.1 Determinism: Marshall McLuhan vs. Raymond Williams

Two big theorists concerned with the role of technologies in ICT4D are Marshall McLuhan for technology as an agent for cultural production and change and Raymond Williams for culture as an agent for technological development. Since I will discuss whether there could occur a change in the Lamunian society through technologies, I will need to address these two theorists. From these theories of the role of technology the theories of ICT4D have emerged over time.

Technological determinism has to do with the theories of the influential factors of development through technologies. On the one side some say that the development in societies has to do with what opportunities and tools technological advancements have resulted in, and on the other side they say that social realities, and changes in societies, creates a need for, and result in, the development of technological innovations (Flichy: 2007).

3.1.1 Technological Determinism

Marshall McLuhan is a pioneer in the discourse of technological determinism and discussed the role of technology in a way that was new for his time. He wrote a book on the role of print in 1962; the Gutenberg Galaxy (McLuhan: 2002), and followed this with the book on electronic media in 1964; Understanding Media (McLuhan: 2001) where he maintained that technology is where culture is created and hence technology is what defines what a culture is. This would mean that also newer technology, ICT’s, and the mere use of them entails the way in which the culture works and looks like. But what McLuhan became famous for was his expression The Medium is the Message, which can be read in Understanding Media (McLuhan: 2001). With this expression he meant that the technologies per se are sending a message to the receiver. In my opinion this is similar to what early Modernization theorists believed: that the mere existence of western technologies in underdeveloped countries would advertise a western way of life. This was an interesting approach to the already earlier created technological determinism. Technological determinism implies that technologies develop a society just by their presence and that there is nothing that can be done against it.

3.1.2 Cultural Determinism

Raymond Williams criticizes McLuhan’s deterministic views in his book Television: Technology and cultural forms, first published 1974. Williams points out that technological determinism leaves out the aspects of history and culture and yet technologies are supposed to change societies that are shaped by exactly those factors (Williams: 2003).

Williams (2003) argues that development in societies create a need for new technologies. He exemplifies that the need for print was created when a new political and economic system
developed in Europe and hence a need for a faster information medium was imminent (Williams: 2003). Cultural determinism is the other side of determinism. Instead of technology changing the societies of underdeveloped worlds into a state of development proposed by the western countries, the need for technologies are created when a country changes.

3.1.3 Binary factors
As I have mentioned in my previous chapters, all cultures are different. All communities are complex cases. The two deterministic viewpoints leave out the binary factors and focus mainly on technology or culture. But in cultures not everything is black or white, in fact everything is shaded grey. There are social categories that make the difference between societies, such as religion, gender or ethnicity. There are more factors that would influence the modernity of a society for example. Raymond Williams saw the importance of these factors. If technology changes the societies, then the culture plays a part, and if the culture changes, then technologies most probably play a part as well. The interplay between culture and technology is interesting to look at later, because this interplay has a lot to do with the relationship and the future of the society in terms of how organizations could work towards development.

One important binary factor that I want to address is the factor of modernity. All societies are modern nowadays, but in different ways. Not to be confused with the oncoming modernization theory, modernity is merely a part of the cultural identity playing a part in the relationship between culture and technology. Modernity, however, plays quite a big part in the relationship since it defines how much technology is implemented, used, and how it works together with the culture. Just like the cultures, these binary factors are complex as well. The political and economic systems, the history of a country, and all the previously mentioned social categories define the modernity.

I do not believe that modernity can be measured since it would require a role model, but I still believe that in this day and age technology could in itself define modernity. If a community actively communicates through technology then it is modern. How much and to what extent ICT’s are used, alongside the other binary factors, would then also define the unique modern way of the case. The relationship between technology and culture in Lamu would then also define its modernity. This binary factor would thus be the factor most interesting to assess for ICT4D work.

Another factor is that of the capital system. Whether we want it or not we live in a world where money shifts power. The countries that have money also have the means to control those that don’t. The capital system of the world then also controls politics. The countries with the most
influence are those with money leaving the countries without money in a dependant state. The binary factor of the capital system is important to stress since the economics of a country defines the market and the flow of goods in and out of the country. What mobile phones are used, the availability of Internet connection, what the ordinary people can afford in terms of technology is all controlled. To be included into the hype of technology ultimately shows that you do have money and this in turn controls trends. If a culture is changed by technologies then the capital system has a role in the game too. Power relations, social status, and trends in Lamu are, in the relationship between culture and technology, in one way or another affected by the capital system.

This study will discuss the importance of technology, culture, and the binary factors in the context of the case of Lamu. Both technology and culture are vital for ICT4D projects. What deterministic theorists forget, such as the former mentioned reports and studies, are the binary factors that affect the outcome in ICT4D projects. That ICT’s are successful changing agents has been proved by prior research, even by those that failed. What needs to be improved is the inclusion of binary factors into the equation. What ICT4D theories have emerged over time is presented in the next subchapter, and from there these theories and deterministic points of view can be used to discuss the case of Lamu and the interaction of Lamu’s culture and the present ICT’s.

3.2 Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)

A lot of research and projects have been made in this field, and the theory encompasses the ICT’s role towards developing underdeveloped countries. Various theorists and researchers believe that this is the way to go for the most efficient development. (see previous chapter on prior research). New media technologies such as the ones mentioned can overcome problems with distance between people wanting to communicate and provide the user with an immense amount of information at an (often) low cost. There are lots of possibilities in ICT’s, but they are not without problems either. Mobile phones need network service, and to use the Internet without the mobile phone, the user needs both a computer and an Internet connection. Even though ICT4D, when looked at as a name, seems to imply that ICT’s are the agents for development, this can be criticized. As mentioned in the chapter of prior research, ICT4D projects and research don’t always have to follow the belief of technological determinism that states that technologies are sufficient agents for development. There are other aspects that also have to be addressed, like cultural norms, traditions, history, gender roles and the capital system.
3.2.1 From Modernization Theory to Development Theory

Modernization theory, as it was created in the 1950’s, could also be called westernization because theorists wanted to develop the Third World into a western state of development (Nederveen Pieterse: 2010). This is a highly technological deterministic theory. It mainly deals with the belief that the developed countries in the west should create a way for the underdeveloped countries to ‘transform’ through the media by, for instance, watching television shows from the west or listening to western music (Thussu: 2006). The modern way of life of the west was to inspire the underdeveloped countries to change. The media should inform the people about the western life and make them realize that they have to change to gain a ‘better life’. That meant to discard the traditional lives. According to Thussu (2006) this was a flaw in the theory since the early theorists saw traditional and modern as mutually exclusive. He exemplifies the Muslim community as a proof that traditional values and modernity could be combined and hence strengthen the religion in the Middle East.

Modernization meant “the adoption of western political institutions” (Nederveen Pieterse: 2010, p. 23) and its key: “universalistic norms” (Harrison: 1997, p. 35). The developed countries were seen as those with the answer for the right way of living and should be regarded as an example for success and a free life. Media and technology are the tools for modernization. With them countries could develop and follow the west in their industrial structure of state. The level of adaptation depended on how western the underdeveloped countries were from the start (Nederveen Pieterse: 2010). The main concerns of modernization theory had to do with the effects on non-industrial societies that these western technologies could have.

Development theory is sometimes seen synonymously with modernization theory but has more to do with the social and cultural aspects of developing the underdeveloped countries. This theory is also on the technologically deterministic side. It entails the importance of culture but still has to do with the change in culture through ICT’s. In the beginning, the Development highlighted economic and political change, but later it incorporated the culture aspects. Plans of ‘market-led growth’-projects included slow industrialization processes, the implementation of technological innovations, and the incorporation of a trickle down system; economic benefits that benefit all social classes after a while. The theorists were concerned with how to decrease the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world through rapid development (Brohman: 2001). Because industrial, developed countries with the required Gross National Product (GNP) had modern technologies, these theorists concluded that a non-industrial, underdeveloped state could develop if modern technologies were implemented in the society (Rogers: 2006). Cultural differences were imbedded in the theory much later and were then seen as another dimension of
the theory (Nederveen Pieterse: 2010). A lot of other fields played their part in the creation of the development theory and have resulted in development discourses, such as development anthropology, Entwicklungsethnologie in Germany, or the development policy discourse, participation for more effective development (Nederveen Pieterse: 2010).

3.2.3 M4D
Mobile for development (M4D) is seen as a solution for the digital divide\(^5\). In the newest versions of ICT4D definitions, mobile phones are included as a typical agent for development since it is cheap, portable and easy to access. The possibilities seem to be immense and examples of successful M4D projects give the researchers backing for their belief that “the mobile phone can narrow and even close the digital gap” (Wicander: 2010, p. 119). This is a theory that can either be seen on the technological deterministic side or the cultural deterministic side depending on what former theory they go after. Theorists in the field strive to a change in society towards development, sometimes after the modernization model or the latter development model. Either way this explains why M4D is so interesting to address in the matter or ICT4D.

Wicander (2010) mentions studies on the impact of mobile use and how these elevate the technology to an agent that can not only impact societies, but also change them and the “structure of social processes”. In addition to this, she also mentions the contribution of mobile phones to leapfrogging of development in rural areas of developing countries.

Technologies such as mobile phones or the Internet are often referred to in the field of ICT4D as typical developing agents. I want to include these technologies in the concept of ICT’s for my research since I believe that the Internet and the mobile phones are converging tools in my case. The mobile phone works as an Internet provider in rural Kenya and has been the pioneer before the computers in the country.

3.2.4 Leapfrogging
Leapfrogging is a theory that derives from the 1980’s belief that ICT’s can create a way for underdeveloped countries to leap over development steps and at a rapid rate result in a development stage of postindustrial character (Singh: 1999). To leap over development steps and thereby provide the community with a way to be developed through ICT’s is a strong technological deterministic view. There are three different ways to define leapfrogging: one is defined as above - that the implementation of telecommunications are a way to leapfrog into an

\(^5\) Digital Divide: the divide between those that have and those that don’t have access to Internet, social networks and other new technology

\(^6\) Digital Gap: The gap of the divide; between those that have and those that don’t
postindustrial state of development -, the second has to do with the pace of development - it’s not so much a jump but an acceleration of the development pace -, the third has merely to do with the technological aspect of telecommunications for development - to provide the developing countries with the newest technology, a leapfrogging of technological advancement (Singh: 1999).

This theory is interesting to mention for my study since this is how some organizations work with ICT4D. For example, the NGO Camara 7 is sending recycled computers to Africa to teach the locals and enable a way for them to educate themselves and connect with the rest of the world. Instead of letting the African countries go through the whole technological cycle of computer development, Camara, and other e-education organizations, are providing local communities with pretty modern computers and assistance for better Internet connection.

3.2.5 Towards Communication for Development and Social Change

As I mentioned in my introduction the term of development was created by the western countries that wanted the so-called underdeveloped countries to follow their model towards industrialization. In the early years of development theory, from the 50's to the 70's, a top-down approach was popular, which implied development from the elites and down, but this was criticized and changed towards new paradigms such as Communication for Development with emphasis on bottom-up development and self-development; using ICT’s to inform the local communities about local discourses and needs expressed (Rogers: 2006).

The second paradigm is that of Communication and Social Change where the emphasis is instead on how to improve and change the way of life in communities through participatory communication and ICT’s. ICT’s are supposed to create a dialogue within the community and trigger a change (Figueroa et al: 2006).

The newest paradigm in the field of ICT4D is the combination of communication for development and communication for social change referred to as Communication for Development and Social Change. This is a solution of the problem of defining the field and the two difficult concepts ‘development’ and ‘social change’ (Enghel: 2011). Enghel discusses the need for the assessment of “the different, the unequal and the disconnected” before projects are planned and funded. In other words, we need to understand those that we want to change as well as their situation. ICT’s need to be studied in context; how local people use technologies and what role they have in their everyday lives (Enghel: 2011). Enghel highlights the socio-cultural aspects which also entails criticizing technology as a developing agent alone. This is a good point

7 For more info: http://camara.ie/web/
that I want to highlight. Since my study investigates the relationship between the ICT’s and the culture of Lamu, this could be used to assess how to proceed in ICT4D projects in cases like Lamu.

From the start, development work in the field of ICT4D was more concerned with the impact of technologies. Theorists believed that it was sufficient to implement the ICT’s and that the countries from there would follow the path of development in the West. The theories developed over time, and now research is done about the binary factors that are important to consider to achieve the most effective development work. Theories such as the latter Communication for Development and Social Change, represent a good step towards a more flexible and humble view on the implementation of ICT’s for development.
4 Method – An Ethnographic Field Study

Ethnography is a scientific field of interpretation where the main goal is to make it easier for the reader to understand the field that is investigated (Kostera: 2007). My study has investigated the community of Lamu on the northeast coast of Kenya. I chose the method of ethnography because I wanted to understand as much as possible about my field, Lamu, before making an analysis about the way the community uses ICT’s. To complement the observations, I conducted interviews with a sample of ten members of the community. First of all I will introduce my approach to my ethnographic field study and present the reader with the field that was investigated. The second part of my field study includes the interviews. The interviews were conducted to find out more about how ICT’s are used in Lamu. Interviews are often seen as part of an ethnographic field study (Ekström & Larsson: 2010). The results presented will show both conversations with various people in the community about the culture and usage of technology and transcribed interviews with a sample of ten members in the community.

4.1 My Approach

During my stay in Lamu I decided on an autoethnographic role that included explaining my motives before investigating someone’s reaction, or telling the subjects afterward in spontaneous situations that arose that I wanted to take notes for my studies, but also the gathering of information through daily routines and events. Conducting an autoethnographic field study entails that I, as a researcher, had to analyze my observations from a more objective point of view. My own observations had to be seen in a cultural context. During my time I lived a normal life in Lamu to the extent where I was researching. Autoetnography meant to interact with the inhabitants in the field and to see my own interaction with them as part of the greater social context (Spry: 2001). For example I asked some women how I should act most appropriately and then dressed and acted accordingly, which meant veiling and having a very subtle role in public places. I chose the role of a participatory researcher because this is the norm in autoethnography. At the same time I chose to participate in the community to gain the best knowledge of how things are done and what things are seen as culturally wrong. I participated by working at the local magazine and involving myself in various volunteer projects. I will explain more about my participatory role in the section of The Field.

During one of my weeks I conducted ten interviews with people in my close surroundings. I chose to do interviews to gain a better insight into the attitudes on social media and peoples’

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8 Autoethnography: “a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts) To engage in the life and community of the field as much as possible.
actual usage of mobile phones and computers. This way I could find out things that otherwise would have been hard to find out. While I was interviewing, I introduced myself as a researcher which gave me culturally a more legitimate role for conducting the interviews and gave the informants the understanding that I was serious about my work. Other than at my interviews I tried to blend in as well as possible, which gave me the relationships, contacts, and trust needed for a better data collection. That method resulted in the information I needed to progress towards my goal; to investigate the relationship between the culture and how the people use ICT’s. An anthropologist, who has researched the culture of Lamu in previous years, also gained her information through close relationships in the culture (Fugelsang: 1994).

The most important thing that the researcher has to have in the back of her head at all times is that the situations, people, and possible phenomenons are to be weighed in relation to the greater context. This is a fundament in ethnographic research; to understand social activities in their context and is referred to as contextualization (Ekström & Larsson: 2010). After each new day, often filled with immense amounts of new experiences and encounters, I took the time to reflect. In the beginning of my stay, when there was still a lot of new impressions, I blogged about it, and when I felt that I had done too much during a day I wrote a journal. This helped to clear my head and to be able to reflect some more about what I had seen and thought about. I tried to keep level-headed and thought about how I could present my experiences in a way that would give my own view on the culture and life in Lamu in contrast to the data I collected for this study.

The culture and the structure of society in Lamu is what I investigated and examined with the premise to discuss the usage of ICT’s and how they are adapted to the culture when analyzing my results. Based on my observations I shall try to interpret the various symbols that can be used to clarify the culture and that can give me the understanding I need. Symbols help us understand the culture which is investigated and that in turn helps us to analyze the situations and phenomenons observed (Kostera: 2007). The people I interviewed are results of the culture they live in and they have viewed everything through their own cultural background, as have I. As Kostera (2007) mentions, we all have a cultural background that color our interpretations and judgments. The interviews were conducted to get empirical data showing how ICT’s are used. Ethnographic field studies are often made through both observation and interviews. This for the same reason as mentioned above; to complement the observations from the researchers point of view with the perspectives of local people, and a comparative approach is seen as preferable (Ekström & Larsson: 2010). More details of how I approached my subjects and the aim of the interviews will be given in the subchapter of Interviews (4.5)
4.2 The selection of relevant data
While living with and in the community of Lamu I met a lot of interesting people from many of whom I wanted to hear their attitude towards ICT’s and development work. When a conversation came to themes that I was interested in for my study, I actively chose to probe further into the stories and facts that were mentioned. The people that I either worked with or met in my everyday life were properly informed about my second motive; my study, and often started to talk to me about their Internet usage today and their memories of how it was when there were no mobile phones or when Internet was non-existing on the island. The days when I had conversations of great importance to my study were documented either in short notes or as a blog entry. When presenting my results in the oncoming chapter of Results Analyzed I shall make a distinction between Conversations and Interviews. The difference is the structure. The Conversations that I present were not planned and not transcribed in the same manner as my interviews. I see them as a part of my field study and my everyday life in Lamu.

Some days I joined a group of people, working with the ICT4D project Camara, on a tour to two schools. On days like that I took on the role of a researcher, took notes and pictures. Since Lamu is a small town, most people who work or are in close business in the field of ICT4D knew about my study and were kind enough to give me tips about that kind of projects and trips. So, although I tried to blend in and not to be viewed foremost as a researcher, I actively thought about possible research situations, was sure to bring my notebook, and followed any leads that informants gave me. In a way this made my research a sort of scavanger hunt; following leads, talking to people, meeting new people that could give me a clue on where to find more interesting facts, this to be able to go from there deeper and deeper into the maze of information. As I shall present in the chapter on Sample Selection, this is how I chose to go about selecting my questions and informants.

4.3 Validity and Reliability
Reliability is measured by the quality of the gathering of data and how the data is processed and analyzed (Östbye: 2004). Quantitative methods are often seen as more reliable since the amount of data gathered in quantitative research is greater than in qualitative research. But qualitative research, such as my ethnographic field study, gathers data with more depth and can provide the study with quality in the form of better knowledge about more complex problems. Instead of researching my question of the relationship of the technology and culture in Lamu through surveys, I chose a more in depth hermeneutic approach with observations and interviews. The amount of interviews will make my study less reliable but give the reader an interesting sample of
how ICT’s are used in Lamu. I aim towards depth, and the interviews are as mentioned only a complementary method to discuss my observations further.

Validity is determined by the choice of methodological instruments; whether they are valid for researching the aim or not, and how relevant the gathered data is to the aim (Östbye: 2004). Because I want to be able to make cultural assumptions from a legitimate source about the relationship between ICT’s and the culture in Lamu, I needed to ask certain selected people in the society about their usage, this to see if my observations and thoughts about the relationship were coherent with their way of using ICT’s, or if there was something that I have missed. Although objectivity is unobtainable, from an ethnographic field study, the interviews will help shine some light from a local point of view and thereby put my observations in contrast to the activities of some people in the community.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The informants knew from the start that their answers were recorded and that they would stay anonymous in my results. In my transcriptions I have left out unnecessary chatter, such as my own Ok’s or explaining my aim or questions. All interviews were conducted in the same week, this to have more reliable data. How people use the ICT’s is changing from week to week, which was why I chose to conduct them in a as narrow time period as possible.

4.4 Background on the Field

This subchapter will introduce the reader to Lamu and give a background for the oncoming analysis. The field in an ethnographic study is the environment - social, geographic, and emotional - that is to be investigated. The field is a mix of these environments that make out what, where and how the study will develop (Madden: 2010). In this chapter I will present the social and geographic facts of Lamu. The emotional environment is indirect: that which I have felt and understood as silent rules and structures in the community. The society of Lamu is quite complex and I will present their daily life with its segregated spheres, educational system and surroundings. From here the reader is guided to the interviews that were conducted during my stay, explaining how I went about selecting my subjects and my approach. This way the reader is guided through the culture into my life and my research, going more and more in depth and is finally being ready to take part of my analyzed results.

4.4.1 Lamu Town

Lamu Town is the largest town in Lamu County. Lamu is also the name of an archipelago that includes three larger islands - Lamu, Pate and Manda - and many smaller ones including: Kiwayu and Ndau. The predominantly Muslim traditions of the community influence the daily life to a
great extent. Estimated 80 per cent of the island’s population is Muslim which is why local women veil themselves in public, that is; anywhere outside of their home where men are that aren’t their brother, father, or husband.

The region on the coast which Lamu is part of has been influenced by many cultures. In the early 14th Century by Omanic traders and Muslim scholars, later by Portugese imperialists and in the end by the British colonial advancement. The Oman culture is still seen in the architecture, in many traditions such as the typical coffee out of an Arabic pot in small cups, in the religion and all its norms and traditions, and in the educationally high status and usage of the Arabic language. The Portuguese brought mainly, what you can still see today, the sailing boats, the so-called dhows. The British brought influences from home and from India. The school system is similar to the British one and the school language is English. A lot of the infrastructure of the country, such as the railroad, stems from that period as well.

The exceptions to the custom and traditions are the tourists or outsiders that have immigrated to the island and stem from other ethnic groups that are either Christian or agnostic. The daily rhythm of life is divided by the call to prayers five times a day, chanted out from the approximately 45 mosques located in and around Lamu Town. How one goes about planning the day is centered around the pray periods. This means most people work in the morning up until 12.30 and then continue the day, and work, at around 3.30 PM. In the middle of the day most people are at home, eating lunch, spending time with family, and praying. There are of course some people, like construction workers for example, who also work during midday. Women watch Bollywood movies in the afternoons, cook and prepare the kids for their Madraza classes as I observed at numerous occasions.

The culture of Lamu is extremely family oriented and during the Kenyan summer month (December) a lot of people get married. Since a husband by Muslim law has to provide his bride with a house, furniture and security, the wife can claim a divorce in front of the Kadi if these requirements are not met. This results in a lot of divorces and more marriages. The women of Lamu love marriages, but not only because of the celebration of love and maturity, but also for the party nights where they can dress up and go dancing. During two of my ten weeks I was at five weddings and several informants expressed their excitement about the festivities.

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9 Madrasas are the Islamic schools where Arabic and the Quran are taught. All muslim kids go to Madrasas after the normal school. Smaller kids start after lunch and the older ones in the late afternoon.

10 The Kadi is the Muslim judge of the district. In the Muslim coast of Kenya the Muslim court has authority on the same level as the Kenyan.
On the island of Lamu there are several smaller communities with names like Kandahari, Kashmiri, Bombei and India. From the names of these neighborhoods, you can see that Indian influence on Lamu society is notable. Not only influences from other parts of the world reach Kenya, the people in Lamu also travel a lot. They travel from Lamu to Mombasa, to the other islands, to Arabic countries, to Nairobi and other parts of Kenya, to other coastal countries, and some even travel abroad. Traveling means money and money means that you have accomplished a good job or that you come from a good family. If you travel abroad you are quite rich, which also explains why the common assumption about Europeans is that they all are wealthy. This is one of the reasons why I asked my informants about their contacts and languages.

4.4.2 Access to ICT’s
Technological gadgets such as the new iPhones and MacBooks are seen as new, modern, and cool, and if there is a new gadget on the market, even if it is fake, some people save their money and rush to the store to buy it and try it out. Quality is appreciated, and if people can afford it they would buy the real deal before buying a fake Nokia that breaks down in a month. Since money is something very valuable, and scarce in many families, quality is important. If a person barely can afford one phone then he/ she will most definitely not pay for a second one because of poor quality. The same goes with the usage of Facebook or Internet per se. If you are on Facebook, as a Lamunian, then you show that you have the means necessary.

Lamu Town has about ten Internet cafés where one is a hub for an Irish NGO called Camara. That hub, and the belief in easy and cheap access to the Internet, pushed the prices of the other Internet cafés to a minimum. In the beginning, an hour at an Internet café could be very expensive. The prices were unrealistic for the income of the bigger part of the population but with the introduction of the Camara hub and their prices, the other cafés had to change to be able to compete. Now the price is at a minimum, that is, at one shilling a minute. Since Kenya does not have a lower currency than one shilling, this is as realistic as it can get. Almost everyone can afford an hour at the Internet cafés, although not everyone would prioritize the Internet cafés for that amount of money.

4.4.2 The Participatory Observer
The day I arrived in Lamu I began to veil myself, I wore a black robe, known as a BuiBui, that covers the body from the neck down to the feet. The reason I wore a veil in public was to show the people in the community that I aim to be serious and respect the traditions and norms. To live (to the extent possible), dress, and eat like the local people was nothing I thought twice
about, it was a choice that felt natural and right. To respect a culture I want to live and work in, is the only way to go for the best understanding and results.

The way in which I chose to observe and investigate how ICT’s are used and the culture in Lamu was with an auto-ethnographic approach, which entails a participatory role in the field as mentioned earlier. I decided that a participatory role in research would provide me with the best insight and possible relationships in the community to enable me to gather the information I aimed for. I came to Lamu with the premise to live with my great aunt and work at the local magazine; Lamu Chonjo, conducting my research during a period of ten weeks. (This was later extended to 15 weeks altogether). I soon understood that I had to adapt to the life of Lamu living as much as possible with the local people to be able to gather the information I needed for my field study. After each day I reflected on my observations, wrote down data that seemed relevant, and made short notes on interesting conversations. What was important during my stay was to keep my aim clear. The way I approached my data changed during my time since I learned more and more about appropriate behavior. In contrast to a very formal approach that might be proclaimed when using the method of surveys, my method gave me the advantage of getting to know my informants better. When working with people and wanting information from them it is

Picture 4.5 – Me in my Buibui and Hijab (veil)
important to know how to approach them, and this you learn after spending some time with them. Since the culture of Lamu was new to me in the beginning, I needed to learn a lot about the norms of conduct and moral values of the community before approaching my informants for my research. My participatory role helped me a lot to gain a role of my own in the community, a role other than that of a researcher.

In Lamu auto-ethnography can provide a nuanced understanding of the information being collected and create trust among the people that provide information. This method has both positive and negative sides; on the one hand the participatory role gives me as a researcher the closeness to the material which I need to reflect about and on the other it lacks objectivity. But the problem of the lack of objectivity can be resolved by the information provided by the contacts in the community. Interviews, like the ones I conducted, and other conversations with local people helped me to analyze my own interpretations and see them in the context of the local perspective. As mentioned earlier I as a researcher should criticize my own role in the context of the surrounding society (Spry: 2001). What is presented is my experiences while living and working in Lamu. All my observations are products of relationships and my own reflections and personal experiences. In participatory research methods, this is common and gives the researcher a good insight into the milieu in which he or she works. The solution to the problem of my own subjective standpoint; my own biases and cultural values, is to be aware of them and consider them when analyzing the field. In several methodological textbooks the importance of an objective standpoint in ethnographic field studies is emphasized as well as detailed notes on what has been observed (Östbye: 2004; Ekström & Larsson: 2010).

Being a woman, I was more close to the female spheres of Lamu than the male. This way I could observe the female usage of mobile phones at a closer range and more freely than I could observe the male. This gives my study a nuance that a male researcher could not have obtained. The private sphere of women is closed off to strangers and men outside of the family, but for a woman it is easier to be included. I was not only invited to the life of the women but I also participated in it and was very interested in understanding how everything works and how I should behave to blend in.

4.5 The Interviews

4.5.1 Theoretical Purposive Sampling
My informant sample of ten people was gathered through a theoretical purposive sampling. Theoretical sampling is a type of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probable sampling method where only a small sample of people from the interested target sample is
interviewed. Sometimes this is used as a tryout sample before the actual sample selection for a study. I chose my sample out of the premise of what my informants could contribute with for my study. In theoretical purposive sampling this is thrived for (Richtie & Lewis: 2005). As I will explain later in the subchapter of my approach, I tried to randomize my selection through spontaneity. As is common with theoretical sampling, I circulated my methods to gain the best results in the end (Richtie & Lewis: 2005). This was important for me since my work has to be based on such a small number of informants, due to my time limit. I saw this as the best method for my situation. I had an interview, continued with my observations, took notes on conversations, analyzed the interviews, and chose my next informant based on the results. For example, when I had been at the class of teachers at the Internet café and had made interviews with some women about their usage, I first analyzed their interviews, continued with my daily observation of the field, and according to my results chose to go ahead with more teachers or moving on to another age group, social group, or to people in the street. As it turned out the results were positive for my study and gave me the random and differentiated information I needed.

4.5.2 The Questions
Since I wanted to investigate if there really has been a development in ICT use in Lamu over time, which I had observed through my ethnography, the questions were chosen carefully based on that aim. I had a fixed structure of topics and questions that I wanted to address, but as the interviews were conducted I had to change my angle depending on what answers I got from the informants. In some of the cases, but not in all, questions were taken out of the conversation completely. In my transcriptions I have shown which were taken out or changed, and those that I added. Some answers required me to ask a follow-up question on explaining or to elaborate the answer received.

At first I was interested in basic information about the informant and his/her lifestyle and background. The following are the questions I asked in the beginning:

1. How old are you?
2. How do you live? Are you married, live alone or at home with your family?
3. What is your level of education?
4. What is the level of education of your parents?
5. Do you think they know about Facebook or similar sites and programs? Do you think they know how to use it?

6. What languages do you speak fluently/well?

The age was interesting to me because I wanted to see if the difference of ICT usage was depending on age or social standards, which was asked about with the following. My observations showed me that education defines a lot in the lives of the Lamunian people; their knowledge about ICT’s, the way they use ICT’s, languages, what social status they come from, their class income, and the educational level of their parents. As mentioned, the Lamunian society is a highly collective one, where the family defines a lot about the future of the children, for instance, what schools the kids will attend and to what level they will be educated. This is also the reason why I was interested in the level of education and knowledge about ICT’s of the parents/children. Depending on the informant’s age, I asked about the parents, and in one case also about the knowledge and educational level of the children. The age group aimed at was the one reaching from 20 to 40 years of age. One of the informants was a few years older than the others and had grown up children in the aimed age group. The last question I had chosen because, depending on the response, it explains something about the informant’s heritage, educational level, and sometimes even religious education (if they speak Arabic fluently for example, one could conclude that the informant had been educated in Madrasas to a high level or has an Arabic heritage).

After these first questions/themes, I started asking about usage and personal ICT trends. These are the questions asked:

7. What applications do you use on your mobile phone? Do you: text, call, chat (over Mig33 or Facebook), use the Internet, listen to music, listen to radio, watch television, use Mpesa?

8. When you call someone, who do you call? Family, friends, work related people?

9. Where do the people you call live? Do they all live here in Lamu or also somewhere on the coast, up country or abroad?

10. Do you use Internet? If so, daily?

11. (If the informant uses Internet) What pages or programs do you use in that case?

12. Do you have a Facebook account?

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11 Islamic school
13. (If the informant has a Facebook account) Do you meet new people on Facebook or do you only talk to people you know?

14. What would be a negative/bad aspect of Facebook, or other social mediums, in your opinion?

I had observed that the mobile phones are used quite extensively in Lamu and I wanted to investigate how the usage differs from informant to informant. My friends had been using the phone a lot for texting, chatting and listen to music. The phone is the Mp3 of many people, their private bank, and sometimes even security (communication when in need). Mpesa is used much more frequently than normal bank transactions in Lamu, but I still wanted to ask about the trends in relation to the personal background of the informants. Often, the usage of Internet depends on the social status, very often on income and knowledge – education. The usage and trend questions were asked to map the change and difference between ages, classes and educational backgrounds. While observing the people of Lamu and talking to some people in my circumference, I noticed that some people don’t know what Internet is, nor how it is used, but have a Facebook account and use the mobile phone to access it. Facebook is very popular in Lamu but is often seen as the same thing as the Internet. This is also the reason why I asked specifically about Facebook in my interviews. It was interesting for my research to see the attitude and perception about ICT’s and a social medium such as Facebook. Therefore I also ended the interviews with a last question about the informants view on negative aspects of Facebook.

4.5.3 The Approach

All my informants were asked in advance if they would mind to answer some questions about their ICT usage and were thus prepared when we sat down. The way I gathered my purposive sample was through contacts and opportunities. I had a clear aim towards how many I wanted to interview and what age group they should fit into but was open for the rest. I more or less took two handfuls of people that were close at hand, trying not to control what social status they come from. The time and date of the interviews are all within a time period of one week and were all picked spontaneously, to the degree that I asked the people for an interview that crossed my road during my everyday life in Lamu, explained my aim and let them pick the date best suited to them.

My first informant was a local man working with computer classes and an American organization. I saw him as an interesting informant since he works everyday with ICT’s and meets a lot of people. What family he comes from and how his educational history looks like was interesting for my study because it would show that there are people in Lamu working with ICT’s, and that
there are some that have more knowledge than most other people in Lamu. The data that could be collected from the interview would show what factors in peoples’ everyday life define the frequency of ICT usage and knowledge. One day during the interviewing week I stopped by the office where my informant worked and took the opportunity to ask him about an interview when he was working with computer repair. After I had explained about the reason for my interviews and what questions he could expect during the conversation he gladly accepted. We sat outside on the balcony of the office and had a friendly interview about his habits and his background.

The second informant works with tourists and a lot of local people every day. The fact that he communicates with a lot of people every day made the interview interesting for my study. How is a person working with tourists communicating during the day. What technologies are most popular and what background does he come from. He accepted my proposal for an interview at once when I asked. None of my informants hesitated when asked but had positive attitudes towards the interviews. I had met my second informant several times during my stay and therefore it was more comfortable for him to do the interview over a cup of tea in the living room of the house where I stayed than in the office of his work. This was the first time I talked to him in the role of a researcher which made him unsure in the beginning of the interview, but soon he loosened up and gave me a lot of information that was useful for me.

The following six informants were asked at a gathering of teachers at a cybercafé. They were approached more spontaneously. When I had walked in earlier that same day and talked to an acquaintance, I put the word out that I was interested in interviewing some men and women about their ICT usage. My acquaintance told the group about my research and what questions I wanted to ask and then they came to me. This way the interviews became non-planned. The only thing I controlled was the amount of men and women. It turned out that all six where of different ages, with different backgrounds, and different ways of using ICT’s. I found it interesting to interview teachers, since they are a group in the community that are very respected because of their reputation but at the same time can have very different backgrounds. I had learned for my interviews that many people working in Lamu come from other regions around Lamu District. Therefore I imagined that the attitudes towards ICT’s and the way these people use ICT’s could differ from each other. I had asked my acquaintance prior to the interviews about the age group and he had told me that they were a mixed group and that they were there to learn about ICT’s. The older generation was interesting for my study since that age group was underrepresented in my observations and the conversations that I had had before. I sat behind a little wall in the room giving me and the informants just enough space to sit comfortably on some wooden chairs and talk privately. The teacher, my acquaintance, told the class of teachers
about my motive and gave them the freedom to choose who wanted to come and talk to me. The second alternative of approaching the teachers would have been to go up to them and ask them directly. To avoid forced interviews, just because it is courtesy in Lamu to say yes and please people, I gave the informants the freedom to choose if they are up to or not. This way all of my six informants from the group of teachers had a positive attitude towards the interviews and were eager to answer my questions.

The next informant was a local girl working in a café speaking a limited amount of English. I asked her one day, when I walked into the café, and she accepted right away after I told her what it was all about. To limit the time that she had to be away from her work, I chose to have the interview in the café late in the afternoon when there were little customers. This way, I believe, she was more at ease with the time spent on the interview. When we had sat down at the table, she offered me some tea and sat expectantly in front of me waiting for my questions. We were disturbed once, and she had problems understanding some of my questions and what I meant with Internet and mobile applications. All these factors changed the interview. After having lived in the community for more than ten weeks I had learnt how to explain concepts that were foreign to some, and this helped me when I tried to make her understand every question. I did not take on the role of a teacher but was merely explaining my thoughts and motive behind the questions. This informant was interesting for my study since she is almost the same age as me, comes from a lower income level (which I presumed since she works in a café which is untypical to wealthier Lamunian women in our age), and worked in the café. Working in the café entails talking to both men and women, talking both English and Kiswahili every day, and doing a lot of different chores. How she uses ICT’s, what background she comes from, and what attitude she has towards ICT’s motivated me to ask her as the ninth informant of my group.

The last informant was a so-called dhow captain. His daily life consisted of being at sea, meeting a lot of tourists, and fishing. What differs between his life and the second informant, who worked as a tour guide on a more daily basis, is the lifestyle and work. This man spends most of his time out of the house, has his own business as a dhow owner and tour guide out at sea. I knew from the beginning that he uses his phone every day, but if he uses the Internet or chats I was unclear about. This informant was interesting for my study since the difference in usage, but similarity of age from the second informant, could show what factors would change usage. Since this informant spends most of the day either out on the sea (if he managed to book in some business) or around one of the main streets of Lamu, I approached him in the streets. Most tour guides and captains are lined up along the seafront and this is where I found him. I told him my motive and asked him about a possible interview. Soon after, we decided to sit down and talk. I gave him the
freedom to choose a place that he felt comfortable with, and this resulted in us sitting down and talking in my dining room area.
5 Results Analyzed

5.1 In what way are mobile phones used in Lamu?
The way in which the mobile phones were used in Lamu was interesting to observe. The mobile phones were used for everything. They were not only used as communicative tools but as small computers, bank transaction devices, radios, file storage. This might not be a big difference from how mobile phones are used in Europe or other parts of the world, but the amount of traffic to and from a mobile phone in Lamu was immense. They were a sort of life line for the people. Not many people can afford computers, mp3s, or other technological gadgets so the mobile phones provide the people with a platform that gives them access to all of the applications that are useful for them. After I had conducted my interviews I found that all the informants use their mobile phone in a way that suits their own interests best, which culturally seen is different from the way people in Europe use it. How the mobile phones are used shows the interplay between culture and technology. When I asked a female informant if she uses the phone to listen to music or radio, she told me: “Yes, I like recording since I like singing gospel music, in Swahili”. What this sentence told me was that she either is a Christian or Catholic that likes to listen to gospel and sing. In Kenya the two largest religions practices are Christian or Catholic. Muslims only make up for ten percent. (http://www.kenya-information-guide.com/kenya-religion.html). Most of the ten percent live at the coast, from the Tanzanian border to the Somali. When watching television in Kenya most programs are aimed towards their Christian or Catholic population. Gospel can be heard in many radio stations except in the two Muslim radio stations, Radio Rahman and Radio Salaam. These two radio stations are very popular in Lamu. I had learned this from my observations and therefore I wanted to know how many listen to the radio through the mobile phone. After I finished all of my interviews, it turned out that it was not popular to listen to the radio through the mobile phone among my group of people. This also showed me that most people then probably have a radio at home or listen to it otherwise.

People call their relatives all over the world, their family members, sometimes even friends abroad on the mobile. One of my informants even had a special cell phone just for calls to her brother that works in Qatar. I found this interesting. It showed me that the people in Lamu put a lot of effort, money and time on the upholding of contacts. When walking through the streets of Lamu you can see a lot of people just walking around or sitting somewhere calling someone on their mobile phone. That they talked on the phone was not surprising, but the frequency was. When invited to lunch at an informant’s house, he first called one relative in Australia, then he called the next relative living in Mombasa, then the next living in Lamu. One after the other. My companion to the lunch (also a European) asked if he wants privacy but he just waved with his
hand and kept on talking. Even though people in Lamu keep the private and the public apart, the inclusion to the family’s communication is shared when you are being accepted as a close contact to the family.

Since the culture of Lamu is dominated by Arabic influences as regards religion and schools, the usage of mobile phones was influenced by this as well. When walking through the streets one could hear men and women listening to their cell phone where they had recorded or downloaded verses from the Quran or songs in Arabic. When I talked to male informants they could tell me about mobile applications that sent the user one verse from the Quran a day. In the beginning of my stay I saw the usage of mobile phones as a hype (that it is new and because of that people call a lot), but after a while I realized that this is the way people use their technologies in Lamu. Everywhere, all the time. When my friends could not reach me then they almost got cross. To them it was obvious to be reachable all day, everywhere. When I was at different meetings I could observe that people in meetings pick up their phone and do not turn off the sound either. What was culturally unique was everything in between: the ringtones, the amount of traffic, how it was used and carried by the women and the applications.

5.1.2 The women and their relationship to their mobile phones
Women have always had a special role in the community. Since they are not supposed to talk to unknown men traditionally, not even visitors at the door or friends of the husband’s, it is very new how women meet and talk to men over the phone. When walking through the streets they can play their traditional part as they are supposed to (although there are those that have given up aspects of that too nowadays), but then the mobile phones might give off a sound and they receive a text from a man they have never met, except in the virtual world. Here the boundaries are blurred. In the physical world the appearance is very important, but when talking and meeting in the virtual world the traditional robe can be taken off.

After having a conversation with an informant, a young girl of my own age that is divorced, I understood that there are no clear rules for chatting and texting. What could guide the young women in the virtual sphere of the net are the norms of conduct of the community, but if a girl wants to follow these norms or not is up to the individual. She had contact with several men over a mobile chat program, none of who she knows. This is the way many women meet a man I was told by the informant. First they chat anonymously and then they decide to get married or not. The men then talk to their parents and they decide if it would be wise or not. In many cases this can result in love marriages, which might be a reason why the parents are not totally against the chatting. The parents of young girls want them to get married, to be happy and start a family as
soon as they are mature (which in some cases already happens at the age of 14). Depending on the social status, the women either get married at a young age or when they have studied. The girls that have parents or a family with a good income can afford to get a higher education, but when the family is struggling financially it is wise for a girl to get married and hopefully to a man with more money. Families share everything and therefore weddings are seen as a symbol of hope and future. I had many conversations about these issues with the women I met in the community. The women are not shy to talk about these issues. One time I asked one of my informants about her different contacts during one of our conversations, and she told me:

- “I have had contact with three men, all of them wanted to marry me but none of them were right. They all want to change me and don’t understand. This is typical for Swahili men. I want to work, do education. They don’t like it. We fight and I stop talking to them.”

It seemed to me that women, like my informant, that have contact with men over a Chat program or Facebook, use the anonymity to be able to discuss norms and values before a real life meeting. In a way it is seen as bad to have contacts with several men but to me it seemed logical to first discuss options and important aspects of the future. The women use the anonymity of chat programs, and texting over the phone, to cross the boundaries of the strict traditions and norms.

I have also come to the conclusion that many women cling to their phone because that is the only way they get news from the outside world, outside of their homes. Women are, in most cases, meant to stay inside, cleaning, cooking, and raising the kids. Except for the weddings the women don’t go out. Other than family life and an occasional friend over for lunch the life of women revolves around the home. Seen in the light of my collected data through observations this also seemed to be the reason for the immense amount of traffic. In a way the phone is, in many aspects, a bridge over a border. The phone has overcome the barrier of space.

Women travel to Mombasa to shop and prepare for traditional celebrations such as weddings. Most accessories and dresses used at these weddings are bought in Mombasa. Women travel there to shop and visit family. Informants that I met daily told me that they sometimes travel to Mombasa as often as once a month. This is not representative for all Lamu women but is still quite frequent. Mombasa, a six hour bus ride away, is the metropolis for Arabic, Indian and Kenyan fashion on the coast, and the shopping streets are filled with women buying new clothes, mattresses, food and utensils for the home. Sometimes whole families travel to Mombasa to shop and visit families but often only one person at a time. People from the middle class of Lamu cannot afford to go very often and rarely with the whole families. For a European the tickets are
cheap, but for some they cost as much as a whole month’s salary. While observing the women of Lamu I came to understand that the competition between women has a lot to do with status symbols such as these wedding accessories. The women with the most jewelry and glittery clothes are looked upon as accomplished and well taken care of. Just like in western parts of the world money and superficial symbols are thrived for, maybe even more. The same symbolic popularity is seen with the latest technology. Technological gadgets such as mobile phones have a high symbolic status since they can be very expensive.

Mpesa, which is a mobile phone banking program initially designed by Vodafone, is widely used by most people in Lamu. Since not all people have access to Internet or can afford or manage a bank account the simplest way to transfer and receive money in Kenya, and other East African countries, is through Mpesa. Pesa is Money in Kiswahili and the M stands for Mobile. This was one of the first things that I had heard about Lamu, that all of the people use Mpesa for paying bills, top up the mobile phone with credit, send money to banks, even pay in shops. When interviewing the informants I asked about their Mpesa use to be able to show to the reader of this report the frequency of Mpesa usage. All of my informants use Mpesa and most of them on a regular daily basis. Some use the account of the family and some have their own account. In Lamu there are many Mpesa shops. If you have cash that you want to put into your account you go to these shops, as well as if you want to withdraw money. To use Mpesa is also a very secure way of sending money. Sending money with the mail is very risqué. I had heard stories of people travelling to Nairobi that used Mpesa to pay the taxi drivers. Mpesa is a good example of how extensively mobile phones are used by people in Lamu. Traditionally the men are responsible for the money, and when seeing a married couple going shopping, which happens, one could observe that the man is the one paying and the woman deciding what to buy. With Mpesa this cultural segregation is diminished. Most women have their own account and can through the program control their own expenses. I see this as a change in the culture. Through this new technology the controlling of money has become more individual although many families only have one account that they share. Money is often something that regards the whole family, but now many men and women can open their own account.

Mobile phones are in everyone’s pocket, the women carry them around like little handbags sometimes fully covered with glitter or in a gold casing, and the phone is always on. Young and old, rich or poor, all of them have a mobile phone and it is like an extension of them, individually adapted after their need. Through these phones the contact can be held to family members far away, to friends in other countries, or to their kids when being at work. One of my informants
that I interviewed told me that she likes mobile phones a lot since communication becomes so easy:

Interview 5

- “And the children can call us parents at work. I can call them, ask them to buy something and then they can call me if there is anything. Even at work it is easier. Communication is easier. Before, someone had to get you, ask you to come to the phone. Then you would get the call and from there send the message on.

5.2 How do the people of Lamu use ICT’s?

As in our cultures in the west, social networks are used to keep in touch with friends and family and to get to know new people. What is unique in the usage of social networks in Lamu is the new sphere that emerges.

The religion of Islam influences all spheres in Lamu and is a dominant part of life. Women live to a great extent among themselves, except when married or still living at home. In town not many shops have female workers and most voices that stand out when you are just sitting and listening are male. I came to understand it like this: that the women control and rule the private sphere while the men are most active and visible in the public sphere. What I found out during my stay was that there are a lot of very strong and powerful women in the community, and their voices are not at all suppressed. The only thing is that it might be a bit harder to get your opinion through and get your voice heard as a woman. I came to understand that the role of women in the public sphere has changed over time and that they are taking more space than before.

5.2.1 The Attitude towards the new sphere

I had a conversation with some male volunteers from Europe that told me about their observations in the male community. Since men live a very different life than the women; more public, they must notice a change in behavior. According to my informants there is the discussion among men if it is good that women are more out in public or if this is bad for the safeguarding of the culture. Some older and more traditional men see it as a bad thing but those voices are not many. Most men see the change, but don’t raise their voice against it. I got the impression that most older people believe that it is good, but that there will not occur a great change since the culture is so strong. When talking to the former Curator of the Museum of Lamu about this he said:

- “Of course things will change but our culture is strong and will remain a strong traditional culture for very long”.

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When I talked to a younger female informant, during a walk along the seafront, we discussed the women that give up their traditions and behave morally incorrect. She told me:

- “There are women that forget their culture, make bad habit when they move away. Even if I would move to Europe I would not lose my culture and forget my religion and start acting bad. It is important to remember traditions and your culture”.

This informant uses Facebook on her mobile but does not have a picture of herself in her profile and does not post things that would be wrong religiously or culturally. To have a picture of yourself, without the veil over the face, would be morally wrong since this means that you show your face in public. Conversations with informants explained that this attitude can differ between the people in Lamu. Some see the Internet as public and some might see it as a middle sphere between private and public. The way some women I observed change their behavior on the net; less strict on the traditional norms of conduct, than in public, is an indicator that they obviously see the Internet as a intermediate sphere. After researching Facebook and observing the young people in the Internet cafés I would say that it does not seem like the norm to be as careful on the Internet as in public. The younger people that I talked to and observed seem to see the change in spheres as good (which might just have to do with the cultural way of only talking about positive aspects) but also talk about the bad habit that comes from ICT usage and about people losing their culture when moving away from Lamu as the younger female informant mentioned above.

Internet cafés are meeting places for those that frequent the places and create a special kind of room for those that search the ambiance. Both men and women, people from all social classes and all ages are represented at these cafés. When talking about my observations with one of my informants she mentioned the changed sphere that these hubs create. I started asking more questions and she shared her thoughts on the changed sphere:

- “Normally it is not seen as appropriate for men and women to interact in public, but these hubs create a blurred space without rules.”

Since the men and women can use the Internet there and sometimes have to, for school related activities, they also meet each other there and start talking. I noticed that women in my own age are much more open to and used to, talk to the opposite sex. In these hubs I noticed a shift, a huge change in behavior. My own generation, let’s say ages between 17 and 35, is much more used to the interaction, while the older generation keeps the distance at an appropriate length. When coming into the café during the day or early in the afternoon I could observe a full café
with young people talking, listening to music on Youtube.com and chatting on Facebook. It could be a very loud and friendly arena for young people. The difference between generations was the most noticeable when I came in for my interviews in the end of my stay. The class of teachers, most of them in the older generation, 40 and above, was quiet and controlled. The teacher has a hard time to get feedback from some of the women. The teacher being a man in my own age, around 25, was used to the open and changed atmosphere from the youth and seemed to expect the same feedback from the older generation as with the young, which he did not get. To gather for Internet and computer access in this sphere is a new phenomenon that is getting more and more normal in Lamu. Using the Internet and computers is the biggest trend, and many kids have computer classes in their school syllabus. I followed a group of people from the NGO Camara to two of the schools in Lamu. The group was to assess the possibilities for good Internet connection and what equipment was needed. Both schools had well-equipped computer labs with at least ten computers, all with Microsoft Office and programs like Photoshop.

Computers start to become a part of the daily life of Lamu youth. To clarify, the youth observed were all from the Lamunian Middle Class or higher, and those kids with computer classes in their schools can all afford to go to a private school. All levels of the society were not researched and no comparison was made. What needs to be highlighted is that the development in education; computers, programs and Internet usage is a part of the school syllabus nowadays.

5.2.2 Answers on negative aspects of Facebook

In the culture of Lamu it is not common to utter dislike or negative arguments, which is why I asked a straightforward question about possible negative aspects of Facebook. I had tried a more open question, before starting to plan my interviews, on other local people in my surrounding and noticed quickly that they try to avoid the negative comments at all costs. But when I was asking about the negative aspects of Facebook, some interesting thoughts emerged. It seemed as though the women had thought more about the negative aspects than the men because they were quick at answering my last question while the men sometimes did not even understand what I meant with “something negative”. The overall consensus about the negative aspect was more or less that people can spread bad rumors over the Internet when posting something on Facebook, for example.

Interview 2 (a frequent user of Facebook)

- “And then there are some people that start thinking something if it is an opposite sex, you know?!! If they picture tag of you and someone else, you know. For example if it was someone I see and she sees my friends and that I am friends with a lot of girls and I could...
see that she would think - Why does he have so many women friends, did he have something with them?”

This informant criticized the structure of the medium. To him it is too public. Everything is recorded and stored and to him which gives him a problem. A problem that four of my informants saw with the public was badmouthing. To them the profile on the net can give your name or company a bad rumor if someone wants to be mean.

Interview 3 (does not use Facebook)

- “Negative, maybe people who use it send threatening messages, or that someone writes something negative about me or my business on Facebook. That is the only reason why I don’t like Facebook. Because people can use your name and write bad things. Threatening or so…”

Interview 4 (Does not use Facebook)

- “Sometimes people post bad things on the net and if you have a business this can mean bad things for you. [What do you mean?] – They maybe write something bad about you and your company and other people on the Internet read this and believe the lies. This means bad reputation. […]”

Interview 7 (Does not use Facebook)

- “Others, they abuse. They tell you bad words. [Over Facebook?] – Yeah!”

Interview 9 (Does not use Facebook)

- “They just post really nasty nasty things. They abuse. But it’s also good if you use it in a positive way. One time for example someone might have written that Obama is dead and stuff like that. So, sometimes if you are maybe a fanatic to him you get shocked. So they spread a lot of lies.”

None of these informants uses Facebook but all of them had very strong opinions about the bad effects of posting things. Obviously this is a theme that is discussed among people in Lamu and maybe this is the reason why none of these informants uses Facebook. One of the females explained the attitude towards Facebook like a bad habit that is created from the using.

Interview 5 (Does not use Facebook)
“It creates a bad habit. They talk to each other, send bad pictures... I see the words and messages the kids send. Oh, it’s awful. And they only talk nonsense to each other. You can even read. That is very bad. Also another part, They use it at night. They don’t go to sleep. Especially the age from 18 and on. We leave them to do what they want but the whole night they chat and stay up. You want to go to the room to see if they are asleep, but no. And it is expensive. You want them to be able to call you but they use it up, and it becomes expensive. You cannot control it. So, the parents have to pay.”

I believe that this bad habit has to do with the same bad habit that one of my informants talked to me about. There is this common theme that is talked about regarding the women. Either a woman keeps her culture and behaves traditionally right or she starts with bad habits, which can be talking with many men at the same time, using bad words, posting pictures of herself that is religiously wrong or other things that do not fit into the picture of the good Muslim woman. With the new technology and the new virtual space, without the boundaries that are common in the public sphere, people can start behaving in a way that is frowned upon and outside of their cultural norms. I heard at various occasions that there is a belief that technologies mislead men and women into this bad habit. This was also one of the reasons why I wanted to know more about the attitude towards Facebook and the possible bad aspects.

5.2.3 Conclusion about Interviews

What one can conclude based on the answers of my informants is that knowledge about computers and Internet has a strong correlation with the level of education and therefore also with the income of the family. Two of my informants, both with a higher educational level, finished secondary diploma level, used the Internet on a daily basis. Both come from families from the higher income classes and both speak very good English. In contrast to these informants one could see how a lower educational level correlates with lesser knowledge about computers and Internet. Two informants, with an educational level of a finished primary diploma, had very little knowledge about Internet. The man, who is 23 years old, used the Internet very seldom and had no interest in social mediums. When I asked him about the negative aspects of Facebook he replied:

- “No. I am not interested in Facebook. I don’t know.”

The girl, who is 22 years old, used Facebook on her phone but did not see the connection between Internet and Facebook. When I asked her about her Internet usage she said that she doesn’t use the Internet. She had already told me when answering a previous question that she uses Facebook on her phone every day. To her, Facebook was not part of the Internet but an
application on the phone. I had observed this in previous conversations with men and women; that Facebook is interesting and wanted but that they don’t see it as part of the Internet. When talking to a teacher at the hub of the NGO Camara, he told me about a conversation with a man that desperately wanted a phone with Facebook and had gone to a store to buy one and not asked for Internet access on the phone but for Facebook. The older women that I interviewed told me about their children and their bad habits of using the computer and Internet too much. These children are all highly educated and are coming from higher social classes. If a family can afford a computer the children are, in most cases, highly educated as well.

In my interviews there were some answers that showed consistency throughout the group of people. The first thing was the generational knowledge shift of social media. All of my informants were absolutely sure that their parents would not know anything about Facebook or any other medium. They all gave me a short and self confident No! when I asked them about their parents. If this is true I will never find out, but for all of my informants ICT’s and social mediums are a trend for the current young generation, and one or two even laughed at my question since they seem to see it as something unthinkable. One of my older informants that I interviewed had grown children. Instead of asking her about her parents I asked her about her children’s usage. When I asked her if she has a Facebook account she replied:

- “No! My son told me “Mom, you are too old.” [Oh, that’s not true. There are so many people on Facebook.] - I got discouraged. “Oh, mom, you cannot be on Facebook, you are so old.” They told me “Mom it is not for you, it is for the teenagers” All the teenagers are there? Oh, I don’t want that.”

I think that many young people see Facebook as something new and modern that does not fit together with their image of their parents. The parents do not want to engage in a hype that is for the kids, so they get discouraged as the informant above.

Most people in Lamu, that I observed and talked to gave me the impression that they know about Facebook, Internet and new mobile phone gadgets. When I was talking to a mother of an informant she was playing with her mobile phone at the same time. She was also very good with the DVD-player and was interested when I was showing my computer to the informant. Everybody talks about this new trend and since the culture of Lamu is very family oriented and communicative I doubt that really all these parents have missed these subjects. My own assumption is that the parents might just keep out of the hype and are not as interested, which may seem to some like lack of knowledge about the phenomenon.
6 Conclusion

The people of Lamu use ICT’s in a way that suits their culture and their needs. Mobile phones are used to keep contact with all sorts of people; friends, family and sometimes colleagues. In my interviews I asked my informants who they called on a daily basis and where these people live. All of my informants used the mobile phone to keep in touch with the family that in most cases lived outside of Lamu; in other countries, in Mombasa, up-country or on the other islands. During my observations I noticed that the people of Lamu love to travel. Family is important, if not even the most important aspect of life, and this makes travelling and communicating very important. Facebook is an extra tool to keep contact with people from all around the world. People coming to Lamu for business, like hotel owners, tourists, and volunteers keep in touch with their staff, their friends, and colleagues over the Internet. When making an assessment for future ICT4D projects it is important to assess how ICT’s already are used in the community. ICT4D projects mainly aim towards a developed society through the implementation of ICT’s, and this makes the assessment of the actual usage highly relevant. Since the people of Lamu are very positive towards new technologies and embrace new ways to connect to the Internet and the world, ICT4D projects could have a very successful future there.

What was noticeable from the results of my interviews was the shift in generations. Two of the older women that I interviewed had grown children. Instead of asking about the parents I asked about the ICT usage of the kids. Both women were sure that their kids frequented the Internet, had computers at home, and were using it extensively. Although these women had access to the Internet at home and had children that used the computers they did not use it themselves. The change between generations correlates to the changed sphere. The youngest generation that frequents the Internet the most, also seemed to frequent the Internet cafés the most. The traditional norms of conduct are blurred through the usage of social mediums. This shows that ICT4D projects could be successful in changing the behavior of the people of a community similar to the one of Lamu. In Lamu the behavior and traditions already have started to change and according to my observations this will increase over time. The spheres of private and public might remain, but the third sphere of the virtual world is expanding and giving the users a new way of expressing their individual personalities and needs. As my data has shown, mobile phones are used in an individual way, money is dealt with individually, and the new trend with social mediums gives the users another space of individual freedom. Money is otherwise something that is a family matter or the matter of the men, but the mobile program Mpesa makes it more individual.
In the beginning ICT4D entailed the adoption of western culture. The media were to change the underdeveloped countries into a political and economic state of western development. Later cultural differences were incorporated into the theories, and the way to approach projects became more humble. Binary factors were taken in consideration, and now we have reached a period where cultural difference, the usage of ICT's, and binary factors such as economical and political situations are taken into the equation before making a plan for development. The case of Lamu can be used to push the importance of cultural assessments and user assessments. Every country has its own history, every culture its own influences, and every community its own structure. What the case of Lamu can tell us is that it is important to consider all of the spheres of a community and investigate the differences between them. Lamu has a special structure which is influenced by the religion of Islam. Everything from the daily routines to the segregated lives of men and women is made up of the religious values and the belief. In a community like Lamu, where religion plays a great part, it can be vital to investigate how great the influence is in all of its dimensions. The religion influences how ICT’s are used and explains the attitudes toward social mediums. The older women that I interviewed were hesitant towards social mediums and saw the public character of the medium as the most negative. From a cultural point of view this could be explained. Maybe the women are hesitant to be a part of this public medium because they are used to not being part of the public sphere.

All field cases are unique since all cultures have a unique background and way to adapt ICT’s, as with the case of Lamu. The people of Lamu use the Mobile phone in an extensive way. This entails banking, texting, chatting, listening to music, radio and reading the news. Depending on income, schooling, upbringing, and social status the people of Lamu learn more and more about computers and the Internet. In primary schools little children have computer classes, the older kids in some schools start to work with quite sophisticated programs such as Photoshop or web developing programs, and in town one can witness computer classes for teachers. Teachers, parents and the children start to learn more and more about the importance of Internet connection and computer knowledge. ICT’s are used in different ways depending on age, income, social class, gender, and education. These binary factors need to be investigated and mapped in an assessment. These factors change from culture to culture and define how a community will embrace a project and what things will change during the period of the project.

In the beginning of the development theory it was important to reach the goal of a western model of development. Nowadays the emphasis is more on the indirect goals of inclusion into the Internet. ICT4D projects are nowadays designed for long term commitment and are designed for specific cases. The example of OLPC, although, showed that not all projects think long-term.
When researching work made in the field, I noticed the lack of long-term commitment and projects, where thorough assessments had been made first hand. To introduce a laptop to a child in Africa might be successful. It is a leapfrogging for the children that otherwise might not have had the chance to ever have access to a computer, but what has been forgotten in the theory of leapfrogging is the future. A computer might help the child learn more about technology and trigger an interest in learning more and using it to its full capacity, but what I learned during my stays in Lamu is that a child probably would sell her laptop before losing a family member as a victim of hunger, or throwing it away in the bush when it does not seem to work anymore. These are both possible scenarios that were not thought of.

In Lamu I observed the interest in ICT’s which can be helpful for ICT4D projects. I am sure that they would be successful WHEN presented in a manner that is culturally acceptable and only when it is designed for a long-term plan. When talking to informants through my work at the magazine I got the information that many organizations make a project plan after their own premises; western expectations. These projects are left without anyone in charge from the organizations that started them and are unsuccessful due to the lack of a thorough assessment. But the unexpected can happen, and shows the importance of a culturally adapted project. In a case that I had more insight into, the unusual happened: the organization got picked up by a local woman and was restructured. When I was talking to an informant, she explained that this is the only way to be sustainable. The people of Lamu have to make a project their own. It does not work long-term if there is someone from the outside controlling it. I think that this also confirms that the new theories of development as work going from the bottom up letting the local people learn how to help themselves, as a contrast to the former top-down approach.

In most underdeveloped parts of the world, as well as in Lamu, money is a strong factor. Only a smaller portion of the population is living above the minimum income level, and in their family budget Internet is surely not prioritized as something vital. To have a charged mobile phone might be on the list but newer ICT’s are not. The people use the mobile phone for everything and have adapted them as a normal part of life. The common Lamu citizen would not buy a computer if he, or she, has everything they need in their phone. Money would first be prioritized for school or food. Before pushing a community to use ICT’s I believe that other problems should be dealt with, such as welfare and famine. In assessments one should include problems of health, infrastructure, economics, and sanitation because these issues need to be taken into consideration before a sustainable project is planned.
A project for development should not be made without the first steps of trying to understand the community. I believe it is better to take the time to understand the capabilities and nuances of a community than planning a project for ICT4D that might not result in success.
7 Discussion

There have been a lot of reports made on projects, organizations and new ways towards development. What my research showed is that one should first change the whole outlook on these projects and be sure not to force a community to change into a certain direction. In Lamu a lot of outer forces try to get their share; NGO’s, GO’s, and private investors for example. The community greets them with open arms. Many see big piles of money in these organizations and their people. From there the belief of ‘White men have a lot of money’ comes. Many come to Lamu, see an opportunity to help, as they call it, put money into a project, start it up, even get it to run and then leave letting the people in community think that everything will be fine. The stories one hears and observations one can make in Lamu gave me the feeling as if development work, charity work, or projects for social change are hopeless. They are made on the premise that everything works as it does in the western world. This is one small example of how organization managers misinterpret a case. In the beginning it is all wonderful and goes great. The people get their hopes up and are more than willing to help and be a part of the project. In the end they are left with an organization that loses its structure as the manager leaves, because he or she does not want to stay, and the project fails. The former mentioned example of the organizations that was picked up by the local woman is an indicator that the community needs to make a project their own instead of being a passive employee for a organization.

The examples of ICT4D projects in the chapter of prior research show the change that ICT’s can make in a community. In the example of the organization of SEWA in India the inclusion of the women to the Internet has changed their lives and given them opportunities they would not have had otherwise. The women in India have better ways to communicate over far distances between parts of the organization in the country. The new ICT’s resulted in more efficient work and a higher income. This is also seen in Lamu where communication has become easier in larger families that are spread out over the country and globe. Before, a member of a family had to go to a house where someone had a phone and from there call someone in the region where the other family member lived. This shows that ICT’s overcome the barrier of space. ICT’s make the life in Lamu easier but also change the culture. Although it still is important to safeguard the segregated life of Lamu, women have much more freedom and are not as restricted in public space as before. This has changed over time but also been triggered by the ICT’s. Westernization theorists were right in that aspect, that ICT’s would make other cultures change. Where they were wrong was the part of the goal. Their goal was unachievable since they saw the cases as black and white and forgot all of the grey areas, that I call binary factors. Of course ICT’s influence the culture. All new input influences a culture. But how much a culture is influenced to change, how
they change and what traditions will change differs between cases which is why an assessment is needed.
8 Future Research

If I would have made my study again, I would have been much more thorough with notebooks, keeping a diary and recording much more at spontaneous situations. I believe that the investigative role as an ethnographic researcher is the one best suited to understand the culture of Lamu. The way I interviewed, chose my informants, and how I chose my questions was for the purpose efficient. What I would have changed is the amount of interviews: I would have done more. Although I had decided to make a purely qualitative research, I still believe that more informants from a wider range of social classes would have given me an even deeper insight into the usage and attitude of ICT’s in Lamu.
9 Bibliography

Literary Sources:


Electronic Sources:


Appendix – Interviews

Interview 1 – Male

2011-07-04

1. How old are you?
22

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
- I am not married, not living with any family, I am alone.

3. What is your level of education?
- Just diploma level

4. What is the level of education of your parents?
- Others primary, others high school

5. Following question: Which one of your parents is the one with primary education?
- My mom!

6. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs?
- Actually no! They do not know [light laughter]

7. What languages do you speak well?
- Languages? [Yes, just the one you speak well] – Kiswahili, English, little Arabic, and very little French

Mobile usage

8. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications?
- Yes, Mostly chatting. [But you text too?] - Yes, I text too. [Call? Use Internet?] - Yes! [Do you listen to music on your phone?] - Yes, sometimes [Radio?] - No not radio. [Do you have TV on your phone?] - On my phone? No, not on my phone [Do you use Mpesa?] - Mpesa? Yes daily transactions [Do you use other applications such as notes or voice recorder for example?] - Yes, I use the voice recorder.

9. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
- Friends and Family, Colleagues, and school mates.

10. Do they all live in Lamu. The ones you call? Or in other places? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
- Just Lamu. [They all live in Lamu? The ones you call?] - (Yeah...) No, no, no, they live in other parts of Kenya, and others are abroad. But mostly through internet, those... [OK!]

11. Do you use Internet frequently? Every day?
- Currently? Every day? [Yes, every day?] - Yes, 24 hours a day [light laughter]
12. What pages and programs do you use?
- You mean maybe like... yahoo and whatever? [Yes, for example]- Y epp, mostly Y ahoo. [Facebook?] - Y ees, Facebook [Youtube?] - Sure, youtube sometimes [Anything else. Somewhere you like to go?] - What is it called? Twitter, twitter? [Twitter, yes!] - (Nods approvingly) [You have your own account?] - No, not yet. I use someone else’s account.

13. Do you have a FB account?
- Yes, of course

14. Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?
- Even those that I don’t know, yeah!

15. If you would pick anything negative about social media, such as Facebook, what would it be?
- I don’t think there is anything negative about Facebook.
Interview 2 – Male

2011-07-06

1. How old are you?
   29

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
   - I live alone

3. What is your level of education?
   - High school

4. What is the level of education of your parents?
   - They went to Primary but didn’t finish. [Both of them?] - Yes, both of them.

5. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs?
   - No they don’t!

   - Do they know how to use it? Left this one out, being a follow up question to question 6.

6. What languages do you speak well?
   - Kiswahili and English

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications?
   - What applications? [Yes, do you text?] - Yes, I text... [Do you call?] - (No) I call [Do you chat?] - No, I just use Facebook, for writing messages. [So, then you use internet on your phone?] - Yeah! But right now, no chatting. [No chatting?] - Do you use it as an MP3-player, do you listen to music on it?] - No, not really, ‘cause it isn’t... it doesn’t even have a memory card [So, no radio either?] - No, I use the MP3 at home, with speakers. [Do you use Mpesa? Daily?] - I use it. I have an account, but I don’t use it often. [Do you use any other application like voice recorder for example?] - I have but I don’t have a memory card...

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
   - Most of the time like family, maybe friends at work. (...) Yes, a lot of time it is for the work. [OK!]

9. Do they all live in Lamu. The ones you call? Or in other places? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
   - Most of the time it is people in Lamu, on the island. My family and so. [You don’t call people in Mombasa for example] - Yes, sometimes but not very often.

10. Do you use Internet frequently? Every day?
    - Yes, Facebook on my phone, daily. But I don’t go to the internet cafés often.

11. Anything else than Facebook that you use? Pages and programs?
    - Yeah, I use Yahoo, Tang [Tang?] - Yes, it is like Facebook. And eh, (what do you call... like) WAYN. [What is that?] - It’s an abbreviation of Where Are You Now? - WAYN! [Okay!]
12. Do you use them often?
- No, those are very rare. I use Facebook, like, every day on my phone, but like, the others I might check if I go to the internet cafés. Very very rare.

13. Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?
- No, only people I know. Even if people I don’t know send an request I don’t accept.

14. If you would pick anything negative about social media, such as Facebook, what would it be?
- Negative? [yes, negative. Maybe culturally?] - How it affects the culture? Or anything negative? [Anything negative] - What I think of, it that It might be unhealthy for relationships. [How do you mean?] - What I mean is that someone might read my notes or one might just want to be friendly ... Someone might have a different view on it. More than it is. (Trying to explain and I try to understand)
- No I mean like pictures on have, or what they write. And then there are some people that start thinking something if it is an opposite sex, you know?! If they picture tag of you and someone else, you know. For example if it was someone I see and she sees my friends and that I am friends with a lot of girls and I could see that she would think “Why does he have so many women friends, did he have something with them?”
Interview 3 – Female

2011-07-07

1. How old are you?
   - I am 50 years old.

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
   - Yeah, I am married. And I have six boys. The first one being 30 years and the last one being 21. He turns 22 in November.

3. What is your level of education?
   - Secondary. (After some discussion about her work it turned out that she is a self taught teacher working herself to the position of Kindergarten owner and teacher.)

4. What level of education do your children have? (Asked about children since that is the interesting generation shift)
   - My own children? All of them are all levels. Two of them finished Mombasa Polytechnic, One in computer engineering and the other as lab technician. The third one is an army officer. Then there are three. One has had problems [... ] but he went to form 2. The second and the last one are now going to college. One wants to study law and the other one wants to study media.

5. Do you think your children know about Facebook and other chat programs? Do they know how to use it?
   - Yeah, they know. I am sure. J and A but the rest I don’t know. The third one has a second laptop. We have one in the house, and he has his own.

6. What languages do you speak well?
   - Kiswahili and English. But I don’t know if I speak well... [I think you do! Any other languages?] - I speak Lui.

   Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications?
   - Yes, I text... but I have not been able to access Internet. (She tells me about her problems getting online on the phone and says that she thinks it is easier on the computer) [Do you use Mpesa?] - Yes, very often. [Every day?] - Only when I need credit, and when I want to send to my family or people want to send to me, Mpesa is used. [This is a very interesting thing since it is not available in Europe. Specific for Africa.] Yes, They pay to Mpesa and then it comes straight to my account at the bank. [So you don’t use internet on your phone. Do you listen to music or radio on your phone?] - Yes, I listen to music and sometimes when the lights go off I listen to FM Radio. [Anything else you use your phone to?] - I like to store my account number, water bills or other important things on the phone so I don’t forget.

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
   - Many things. I call my family, many times of them my parents. And the parents of my school. Mostly I communicate with my family and work people.

9. Do they all live in Lamu or do they live in other places? Ex: Other island, up country, other country.
   - Other places. I like I told you my mother and my sister live in western Kenya. My son is in Nakuru. Others are in Lamu.
10. Do you use Internet frequently?
   - Not every day. Once in a while. Maybe after two months. Not very often. [It's rare?] – It’s rare!

11. What pages and programs do you use? Do you have an Email account?
   - I have an email address. Is that an account? [Yes!] – I have an address, an email address. So normally...  
   You know they taught me how to open internet so when I go I open enter my name and password and check my mail. That's all I know. I can open my mail, I can read my mail. (Talking about her computer classes she takes at Camara)

12. Do you have a FB account?
   - I opened one for me, but I don't use it. Once I opened and saw that I had 20 messages. I don’t’ want to use it.  
   [You have an account but you don't use it?] – Yes!

13. [Might be an unnecessary question since you don't use Facebook but I still want to ask.] Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?
   - That's why I stopped using Facebook. They all came to me and wanted to add me. I don’t know how they got to know my account. [It was a bit frightening?] – Yeah!

14. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
   - Negative, maybe people who use it send threatening messages, or that someone writes something negative about me or my business on Facebook. That is the only reason why I don't like Facebook. Because people can use your name and write bad things. Threatening or so...
Interview 4 – Female

2011-07-07

1. **How old are you?**  
   - I am 44

2. **How do you live? Married, family, alone?**  
   - I am single. I am divorced. [Do you have children?] – Yes, I have three. Two boys and one girl.

3. **What is your level of education?**  
   - All levels. [All levels. Did you go to university?] – No, not university. Only until form 4.

4. **How old are your children?**  
   - My first born is 22, the second one is 19, and the third one is 15.

5. **What level of education do the kids have?**  
   - The first one she... She is a girl... she dropped after class 8 exams. She did not pass and decided to drop. My second born is working at Jannet House but he didn’t finish also. He only went until form 3. I pushed him to finish his form 4 so now he has done his form 3 exams and is waiting for results. The third one is now in secondary school.

6. **Do you think all your children know about Facebook and other chat programs and how to use it?**  
   - They both use it. The first born and the second born they’re always emailing and facebook and...

7. **What languages do you speak well?**  
   - The languages that I speak fluently? Kiswahili, well and English.

**Mobile usage**

8. **What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications?**  
   - I text and call. [Ok, do you use the internet on your phone?] – No, I don’t have internet. [Do you use Mpesa?] – Yeah, I use Mpesa. [Every day?] – No, not every day. [How often?] - Before I used to send money to my landlord every month but not now. If I have money for my kids I send, but not often. [Do you use Radio or Music?] Yes, I like recording since I like singing gospel music, in swahili. Then I got a phone made in China and it was not good. The battery died all the time.

9. **Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?**  
   - Mostly my family. They call back but when I am in school (she is a teacher) I call to check if they are home and well.

10. **Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.**  
    - Most of them live in Lamu, but the others they live in Mombasa. Like my parents. I am the only one that lives here. But the others are in Mombasa. [Any other countries?] – countries (thinks), I had a friend in America but only communicating through email. I didn’t write much, since I didn’t know how to use it. Communication stopped. I was too busy and... Now we don’t communicate anymore.
11. How often do you use the internet?
- Internet for E mail? [Mmm... Internet! How often do you use it?] - I do not use the internet but the boy that are at home they use. He was using all day but now he is working. I have email but... [Y ou don’t use it that often?] - N o, not often!

What pages and programs do you use?

12. Do you have a FB account?
- N o! My son told me “Mom, you are too old.” [O h, that’s not true. There are so many people on Facebook.] - I got discouraged. “O h, mom, you cannot be on Facebook, you are so old.” T hey told me “Mom it is not for you, it is for the teenagers” A ll the teenagers are there? O h, I don’t want that. [O h, that is not true. I have a grandmother that is on Facebook and she is much older] (laughter!!) [S he is almost 80 now]

Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?

13. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- Sometimes people post bad things on the net and if you have a business this can mean bad things for you. [W hat do you mean?] - T hey maybe write something bad about you and your company and other people on the internet read this and believe the lies. This means bad reputation. People use the internet in a way and spread lies. [A h, interesting. This is actually something that some sites on the net have written about: the bad advertisement for companies, why companies should avoid social mediums.] - Y es, it can be very bad!
Interview 5 – Female

2011-07-07

1. How old are you?
- I am 40

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
- I am married. [Children?] – Only one. [How old is he/she?] – She is five years old.

3. What is your level of education?
- Secondary and then special education. [What kind of special education?] – To teach children with any kind of disability. So we take care of the children in school with disabilities. [Are they in a special class?] – No, they are in the same class as their classmates but get special treatment. (continues to explain about the different disabilities)

4. What level of education do your parents have?
- They did not go to school. [At all?] – No!

5. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs? Do they know how to use it?
- No they don’t.

6. What languages do you speak well?
- Kiswahili [and English!] – And English obviously. [Any other languages?] – English and a little bit of Arabic

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications.
- I text, call… [Do you use the internet on your phone?] – No! [Do you listen to music?] – Yes I do. [Do you use Mpesa?] – Yes, I have Mpesa. [How often do you use it?] – Most of the time I use it for work or when I travel.

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
- Different people. Family, friends, work; teachers.

9. Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
- I have them in different places. I have them in the country of Kenya, I have some outside of the country: in Saudi Arabia and in the UK for example. [That’s good, so you call a lot of people.] – Yes, with the mobile. It is easier now. Before I had to be at home to take a call, but now I can be anywhere. [This is interesting. That is what I am interested in, how it has changed.] – It has really changed. Before, when you had to call, the lines were busy… Now you have service almost everywhere, it’s cheaper and everyone can be reached. [And you can have two SIM-cards] – Exactly. And the children can call us parents at work. I can call them, ask them to buy something and then they can call me if there is anything. Even at work it is easier. Communication is easier. Before, someone had to get you, ask you to come to the phone. Then you would get the call and from there send the message on. [Now you can call each other more easily. It’s more effective.]
10. Do you use Internet frequently?
- No, But at home the kids use it. They use the laptop, the internet... When they come home from school they say: “I want to use the internet, I want to chat”. [So, you don’t use the internet at all.] - I use it to watch movies. Like, if there is a new Hindi movie that I want to see, I just watch it online.

What pages and programs do you use?

Do you have a FB account?

Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?

11. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- It creates a bad habit. They talk to each other, send bad pictures... I see the words and messages the kids send. Oh, it’s awful. And they only talk nonsense to each other. You can even read. That is very bad. Also another part. They use it at night. They don’t go to sleep. Especially the age from 18 and on. We leave them to do what they want but the whole night they chat and stay up. You want to go to the room to see if they are asleep, but no. And it is expensive. You want them to be able to call you but they use it up, and it becomes expensive. You cannot control it. So, the parents have to pay.
Interview 6 – Male

2011-07-08

1. How old are you?
   - 23

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
   - Alone

3. What is your level of education?
   - I did not go very far.

4. What level of education do your parents have?
   - My parents didn't go to English school. [Did they do primary?] – No, My mother only went to Muslim school. [And your father didn't go either?] – That is a good question. I don't know since he died when I was very young.

5. Do you think your mother knows about Facebook or how to use it?
   - No. Not even about computer. I buy her a phone like this for her but she doesn't use it. She just give it to my sister. She wants to use it but does not know how.

6. What languages do you speak well?
   - Mother tongue? Kiswahili. [And you speak English] – Yes.

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications
   - I don't use internet. I text and call. [Do you use Mpesa?] – Sometimes. [Do you listen to music on your phone?] – Yes. [Radio?] – I do, but not much

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
   - It depends. Sometimes family, sometimes friends, sometimes work.

9. The people you call, where do they live? Do they all live in Lamu or in other places too? Ex: other island, up country, other country.

10. Do you use Internet frequently?
    - Not often. [But you use it sometimes?] – Yes, sometimes.

11. What do you do when you go to the internet? What pages do you use?
    - Chat. [Do you use Facebook or email?] – Notfacebook. (shakes his head) [But you email?] – Yeah.

12. Do you have a FB account?
    - No!
    Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?
13. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- No. I am not interested in Facebook. I don’t know.
Interview 7 – Female

2011- 07- 08

1. How old are you?
   - 22

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
   - I live with my family

3. What is your level of education?
   - Diploma. [Diploma Level?] - No, only up to secondary school. [Are you going to continue?] - I am not sure.

4. What level of education do your parents have?
   - My mother only standard 2, My father... I don't know if he went to school. I am not sure.

5. Do you think your parents know how to use Facebook or other chat programs?
   - No, they don't know.

6. What languages do you speak well?
   - Languages? I? [Yes.] - Swahili and English

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications
   - I take the call, use Facebook [You text? Send messages?] - Yes, I send messages. [Do you chat. For example over Mig?] - No I don't chat, I don’t have Mig. [Do you listen to music on your phone?] - Yes, I listen to music. [On the radio too?] - No [Do you use Mpesa?] - Yes [How often?] - Mpesa? [Do you have your own account?] - Account? No! [But you use it in a other way sometimes?] - Yes

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
   - Family, friends, work

9. Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
   - Lamu, others in Faza, Kiwayu, Mombasa, Nairobi, [Do you call to other countries?] - No!

10. Do you use Internet frequently?
    - No I don't use internet. [Not on your phone either?] - No. [Because you said that you use Facebook on your phone?] - I use Facebook. But not the internet.

What pages and programs do you use?

11. Do you have a FB account?
    - Yes, I have.

12. Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?
    - I meet new people.

13. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
    - Others, they abuse. They tell you bad words. [Over Facebook?] - Yeah!
Interview 8 – Male

2011- 07-08

1. How old are you?
- I'm 20.

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
- I am single. [So you live alone, or you live with your family?] - I live alone, yes.

3. What is your level of education?
- I am applying to college.

4. What level of education do your parents have?
- Very low. [Primary] - Yes primary. Very very low...

5. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs? Do they know how to use it?
- They don't know.

6. What languages do you speak well?
- English and my native language [And which one is that?] - I'm from Luo so it's Luo.

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications
- Applications? [Yes, do you text?] - Yes I text (light laughter) - I can text, I call, [Do you chat?] - No, I don't have internet. [Do you listen to music on your phone?] - Yes, I listen to music. [Radio too?] - I have radio yes. [Do you listen to it?] - Yes. [Do you use Mpesa?] - I use Mpesa. [Often?] - Yeah, I use it often.

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
- I call Family, like my brother, my dad, and friends, and some of the teachers.

9. Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
- They live up country, some in my home province, some also Nairobi.

10. Do you use Internet frequently?
- Now that we are learning computers I hope... But currently I don't use it.

What pages and programs do you use?

11. Do you have a FB account?
- No, I don't have.

Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?

12. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- You know, on Facebook you can only build up, nothing negative on your body, nothing negative, I would only want to use it so it can build me up.
Interview 9 – Male

2011-07-08

1. How old are you?
- I am 38 years old.

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
- I am married with 4 children. [How old are your children?] - The first one is 11 years old, the other one is 10 years, then 7 years old, and the last one is 3 years old.

3. What is your level of education?
- All level. [How far?] - Up to form 4.

4. What level of education do your parents have?
- None. [None at all? They didn’t go to school?] - No.

5. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs? Do they know how to use it?
- They would never know.

6. What languages do you speak well?
- Swahili, English and my native language.

Mobile usage
7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications
- [Do you text?] - Yes, text message, [Do you call?] - Yes, I call, And I... I don’t really use internet but I go to the news, or maybe the English premier league [Do you use Mpesa?] - Mpesa, yes, [Do you listen to music on your phone?] - Yes, of course [Do you listen to radio?] - Radio, and I go to the memory card and there is music inside. [Do you have TV on your phone?] (shows mobile phone.)

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
- Family, friends, work.

9. Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
- They live in like Mombasa, Nairobi [any other country?] - Yes, I have a friend in the UK.

10. Do you use Internet frequently?
- [You said you use your phone to watch news...] - Yes, news, magazines, and I am a fan to Arsenal. So I have to check. But I am not using Facebook, or twitter or whatever.

What pages and programs do you use?

Do you have a FB account?

11. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- They just post really nasty nasty things. They abuse. But it’s also good if you use it in a positive way. One time for example someone might have written that Obama is dead and stuff like that. So, sometimes if you are maybe a fanatic to him you get shocked. So they spread a lot of lies.
Interview 10 – Female

2011-07-08

1. How old are you?
   - I am 40 years old

2. How do you live? Married, family, alone?
   - I was married but we are separated. [Do you live with your kids?] – Yes. [How old are they?] – My first born is 16, my second born is 13, my third born is 10 years

3. What is your level of education?
   - To form 4, and then I did my degree. [What did you study?] - SCE, Special Care Education

4. What level of education do your parents have?
   - My father learned until Standard 8, that is the older system, also my mother. My father became a teacher, and then he changed the profession and became an evangelist, and is now preaching the word of God. And my mother is only a housewife.

5. Do you think your parents know about Facebook and other chat programs? Do they know how to use it?
   - They do not know.

6. What languages do you speak well?
   - Pokomo, Swahili, and a bit of English

Mobile usage

7. What applications do you use? Texting, Calling, Chatting, Internet, Music, Radio, TV, Mpesa, other applications
   - [Do you send SMS?] – Yes! [Do you call on your phone?] – Yes. [Do you listen to music on your phone?] - No. [Radio?] - No, it does not have radio. I send SMS to a number and I get tunes and ringtones that I listen to. [Do you use Mpesa?] – Yes. [Do you use it every day?] – Every day, all day.

8. Who do you call? Friends, family, work related?
   - Family, friends, staff,

9. Where do they live? Ex: other island, up country, other country.
   - Some in Lamu, others outside of Lamu. [Other countries too?] – No!

10. Do you use Internet?
    - I have not done it but you know (Talks about a problem with her phone, which I helped her with right then and there. She had sent an SMS to Safaricom that take 5 shillings per day for internet. But her phone didn’t have it so I sent an SMS for her and quit the service for her) – What do I do if I want to use internet, for example if I use a different phone? [You only activate again, press the number and choose the service] - A h, ok. And if I want to have Facebook? [That is on the internet.] - Oh!

What pages and programs do you use?

Do you have a FB account?
Do you meet new anonymous people through FB or other sites? Or, only friends you know?

11. What would be a negative aspect of social media, in your opinion?
- There is nothing bad about internet. You can communicate with other people all over the world. [There is nothing you can think of that could be bad with Facebook or the internet?] - No!