

1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. OPENING NOTE

This is an interdisciplinary qualitative study which uses an exploratory research design and builds on Fariclough's Critical Discourse Analysis methodology to analyze the discourses surrounding an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for livelihood development (ICTLEMD) project in Jamaica. This project is the Jamaica Sustainable Development Networking Programme (JSDNP) introduced to Jamaica by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1998. The primary goal of this project is to enhance the capacity of people – especially the poor – in Jamaican communities to access, understand, distribute and utilize ICTs to expand their livelihoods. This, according to UNDP, is accomplished through cybercentres across the island which provides access to, and training in the use of ICTs. The project is one of many Sustainable Development Networking Programme's (SDNPs) operating worldwide which have been introduced to approximately 80 developing countries as a livelihood expansion model for developing countries. This investigation analyses the discourses surrounding several Cybercentres across Jamaica to gain some insights into the possible implications of this initiative for several microenterprise entrepreneurs operating in the Jamaican tourism industry, who have been exposed to the training offered at the Cybercentre.

This chapter introduces the thesis, the topic being studied and the epistemological roots. It is broken down into several sections. The first sections outline the goal and objectives of the research, the research questions as well as the significance of this study. Section two provides a conceptual definition of the key terms which will be used throughout this thesis. Thereafter, I outline the theoretical framework used to guide this research and the epistemological properties which contributed to the selection and use of this framework. Given the potential practical implications of this text in terms of the expected readership – policy makers,

students, ICT and management consultants – and what I believe to be the pedagogical currency of this thesis, I have attempted to keep the language as simple as possible and to clarify cumbersome, problematic or abstract concepts.

1.2. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM, THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.2.1. The Research Problem

In the late 1990s to early 2000s, several international development agencies began implementing various ICTLEMD development projects in Jamaica in various areas such as agriculture, tourism, education and music, based on the use of non-indigenous technologies (see Golding and Waller, 2003). In many ways it may be argued that these initiatives have been inspired by the global discourses on ICT for development which represent ICTs as a development panacea (see Chapter 3). For the most part, these development projects have been uncritically received by the government, academia, corporate Jamaica and civil society. Although for many such discourses and the social practices they encourage are perceived as an opportunity, for others such as myself, (schooled in the discipline of development, and with knowledge of the history of development) the possibility may exist that these are the seeds of a possible emerging problem.

From my perspective such discourses and the social practices they promote, are indeed problematic for two reasons. First, Jamaica's history with non-indigenous technology for development (interchangeably - technology for development) initiatives has illustrated that although such initiatives have contributed to livelihood development and wealth creation for a few and the modernization of various spaces in the country, at least where infrastructure, manufacturing, mining, communication and agriculture is concerned, they (these initiatives) have also engendered widespread inequality, poverty, and unemployment for many (see Chapter 2 - Girvan, 1976, 1979, 1983a; 1983b; Mandle, 1985, 1997; Ventura, 1980, 1990, 1999). For example, according to Jamaican scholar Norman Girvan such initiatives have also contributed to the country's state of technological underdevelopment (in terms of skills), technological dependency and technological dysfunctionality (the ability to appropriately utilize and apply technologies for the

purposes of development) (Girvan, 1976, 1979, 1983a; 1983b). This situation, Girvan as well as other Jamaican scholars such as Arnaldo Ventura and Jay Ray Mandle argue, has had an even wider impact on the overall development of Jamaica. These issues will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Secondly, and more recently, there are emerging claims that current ICT for development initiatives may be inhibiting the development of the developing world generally, and livelihood development for the poor in these countries specifically (see for example Luyt, 2004; Wade 2002; Ojo, 2004). Such alternatives suggest that the ways in which ICTs are represented, what is represented, what is not and who is doing the representations are problematic, and that the promise of ICTs may never be a reality for many people in the developing world. Furthermore, it has also been argued that in some cases these technologies may even contribute to the very same poverty, inequality and underdevelopment they claim to address. These issues will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Given these outcomes, I argue that there exists a genuine need to understand the configurations surrounding this new ICT for development drive in Jamaica and its possible implications for the people of Jamaica. And, I do so by focussing on discourse as a unit of analysis (process)¹.

1.2.2. Goals and Objectives of the Thesis

Based on the above problematic then, the goal of this thesis is to seek to understand and explain the discourses surrounding an ICTLEMD initiative of the UNDP, the JSDNP Cybercentre Project, and their implications for microenterprise entrepreneurs operating in the Jamaican tourism sector. I do this by critically analysing the discourses surrounding the JSDNP. The units of analysis (group) are a group of microenterprise entrepreneurs operating in the Jamaican tourism industry who have been exposed to ICT for livelihood training offered at Cybercentre across Jamaica. I have also drawn on the experiences of other persons involved in this initiative at both the policy and implementation level (Policy Makers and Project Managers) to achieve this goal. In achieving this goal, the

¹ Babbie noted methodologist argues that there are different types of 'units of analysis' which can be simultaneously analyzed to understand a phenomenon. These include aggregates, processes, groups individuals and institutions.

primary objectives of this thesis are (1) to identify, as well as to critically analyze the discourses surrounding the JSDNP Cybercentre Project, (2) to critically assess the implications of these discourses on a select group of microenterprise entrepreneurs in the Jamaican tourism sector who have been exposed to this project and (3) to develop an appropriate methodological and analytical tool for analyzing, understanding and explaining the possibilities or problematic of an ICT for development initiative.

1.2.3. The Research Questions

Mills (1959) tells us that as academics we need to critically analyze social phenomena and ascertain their effects on societies, groups and individuals in order to understand and make better sense of a phenomenon, and to describe and explicate them, not only for ourselves but for others. This will help others to be aware of the social relationships between themselves and the phenomena, and how 'it' (the phenomena) affects their lives. To these ends, and based on the aforementioned problems, this research sought to answer the following questions:

- a. What are the discourses surrounding the JSDNP Cybercentre Project?
- b. What, if any, are the implications of these discourses on microenterprise entrepreneurs operating in the Jamaican tourism industry who have been exposed to these projects?

The UNDP (which has several ICT for development projects in Jamaica) was selected from among a number of international development agencies undertaking ICTLEMD initiatives in Jamaica for a number of reasons, some of which are explained in section 4.6.1. of Chapter 4. The most dominant of these, however, was my familiarity with the processes and structure of this organization which made information easily accessible, especially documents and archival records.

While reading this thesis, it is important for readers to be cognizant of the fact that I have worked with this organization for almost four years in the capacity of consultant on ICT for development initiatives but not directly (but rather indirectly – setting in meeting and reviewing and providing comments on reports) the JSDNP Cybercentre Project. Although many, especially positivists, may argue

that such a politics can bias results, and perhaps they may indeed do, I believe that my knowledge of the inner workings of UNDP and the organization's ICT for development portfolio can be put into effective use in the analysis of the data collected. In addition to this, and more importantly, I have adhered to specific processes and utilized several tools known to minimize bias including more contemporary instruments such as reflection. Chapter 4 presents a more detailed discussion of this.

Of the many ICT for development projects of the UNDP, I have focused my attention on the Jamaica Sustainable Development Networking Programme (JSDNP), a Cybercentre Project which seeks to develop the capacities of Jamaicans to be able to access and use ICTs in the achievement of livelihood expansion. My interest in the JSDNP is based on the fact that at the genesis of my research, this initiative, more so than the others, had reached a stage which I considered ripe for analysis. The project had been in operation for more than three years (the longest of all the ICTLEMD initiatives).

My decision to focus on tourist entrepreneurs was accidental. Several entrepreneurs were interviewed for this study most of which happened to be tourist workers. Based on this pattern I had decided to focus on this group of entrepreneurs. This discovery was very welcome given:

- my previous knowledge of the tourism sector as a development tool based on a brief exposure to the topic during my undergraduate years at the University of the West Indies (Mona), Jamaica;
- the problems which many microenterprise entrepreneurs face in the industry with regard to competition and access to international markets, and the promise by several international development agencies that ICTs can address these problems;
- the relatively scant scholarly attention given to ICT for livelihood expansion in Jamaica through microenterprise development in the Jamaican tourism industry (a gap in the literature) and;
- the importance of the tourism industry to the development of Jamaica. This will be discussed in Chapter 5.

1.3. KEY TERMS USED IN THIS THESIS

There are several common terms which are used throughout this thesis which need to be defined and explained before we proceed. This will help the reader to understand what and who will be represented in this thesis, how and in what way they are represented and the meanings behind such representations. These terms include: *discourse*, *development*, *information and communication technology (ICT)*, *ICT for development and livelihood expansion*. Too often, in writings on ICT for development the key terms used throughout the publication are not defined. This often leaves the reader trying to place terms in a specific context. This does not do justice to the objectives of the writer as different people habitually ascribe different meanings to different words. I do not wish to follow this trend.

1.3.1. Discourse

This research project draws heavily on the works on discourse by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1984), Weiss and Wodak, (2002), Harvey (1996), Macdonell (1986), Purvis and Hunt, (1993), Fraser (1997) and particularly Fairclough, (1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2003) and Chouliaraki and Fairclough, (1999).

Discourse, like many words in the social sciences is value-laden. Foucault (1972) argues that discourse is a way of constituting knowledge about a particular topic at a historical moment through language in speech and text (statements) which shape or are shaped by institutions, situations and structures. Words, he argues, are constituted by discourse, and these discourses help to identify a subject's characteristics and possibility. Discourse provides an image about the reality of the subject (individual, group, institution), and how meanings are constructed in certain situations.

Macdonell (1986) defines discourse as a process of social exchange which is organized around rules and regulations involving social intercourse; Harvey (1996) explains that it is a combination of languages bounded together to represent the world; Gee (1999) that it is the use of language to socially identify

and position oneself; and Parker (1992) “a system of statements which constructs an object” (Parker 1992: p.5).

Fairclough, (1989) whose definition of discourse I have subscribed to, discourse is the “whole process of social interaction of which text is just a part” (Fairclough, 1989: p. 24). Discourse includes language forms (written and spoken) which “operate conjointly with vocal and visual elements (depiction, gesture, graphics, typography), in the context of meaning-laden architectures, with the semiotics of action itself, and with music or other extra-linguistic auditory signs (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak, 2004: 5). Discourse, Fairclough (2003) further argues, is not only preoccupied with the analysis of texts (eg books, transcripts, letters, pictures or the colour of a t-shirt, music, a dance piece, the lay-out of an office, the communicative process of social actors and so on), but is more a matter of discriminating the systems and regulations which govern bodies of texts and the processes which texts themselves govern dialectically.

Discourse also includes ‘other elements’ sometimes referred to as ‘social practices’, or ‘moments’ of social life or ‘extra-discursive elements’ (Fairclough, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2003; Harvey, 1996). Moments, social practices or extra-discursive elements (used interchangeably in this thesis) are relatively stabilized forms of social activities. The literature identifies two different types of these moments. These are discursive practices and socio-cultural practices. Discursive practices include material practices, beliefs, attitudes, values, desires and institutions/rituals (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: p. 28). It can also include power and discourse (Harvey 1996: p. 78), as well as forms of consciousness, time and space, objects, instruments, subjects and their social relations and activities (Fairclough 2001: p. 1; Fairclough 2003: p. 205). Socio-cultural practices are the wider socio-cultural, political, ideological and institutional structures and processes in a historical context (Fairclough, 2003; See also Weiss and Wodak, 2002). The concept of social practice allows one to capture the changeability and interactive flow between social structure, as well as social action and agency and the role of discourse in this context.

Discourse internalizes the other moments without them being reducible to each other (Fairclough, 2003). In other words, these elements are dialectically related in that they are the active entanglement of relations, interactive discussions, contradictions, permutations, difference combinations, interactions, argumentation, reasoning and reactions which is liken to the process of exchanging propositions (thesis) and counter-propositions (antithesis) to produce synthesis - a socially constructed truth (either someone's truth, an agreed-upon truth, an abstraction of the truth or an imposed truth). Therefore analyzing discourse requires a form of "dialectical thinking" (Harvey, 1996: p. 49). One needs to understand the processes, flows, fluxes, circulatory framework, and relations over the analysis of elements, things, structures and organized systems (Harvey, 1996: p. 49) and how, why and in what way they were constructed. One needs to also have an understanding that "elements, things, structures, and systems do not exist outside of or prior to the processes, flows, and relations that create, sustain, or undermine them" (Harvey, 1996: p. 49). For example, discourses may produce/represent an institution, a particular time or space, can be used to describe different institutions, time and/or space, continually make and remake institutions, time, and/or space, emerge from the action of institutions, time and/or space, capture phenomena within institutions, time and or space and can exclude a particular institution, time and or space.

Fairclough (2001) explains that discourse "features in broadly three ways of social practices" (Fairclough 2001: p. 2): as genres (ways of acting or action) – interacting through speaking and writing; as Discourses (ways of representing or representation) and as particular ways of representing the world and as styles (ways of being or identification) – "particular social or personal identities" (Fairclough 2003: p. 26). It is "the relationship of text to the event, the wider physical and social world, and to the persons involved in the event" (Fairclough 2003 p 27). The relationship between ways of representing, ways of acting and ways of being, within the context of social practices, is a dialectical one. Fairclough (2001) attempts to illustrate the link between these three elements of discourse in his 2001 paper *The Dialectics of Discourse* (and more comprehensively in his 2003 publication *Analyzing Discourse: Textual analysis for social research*). He is worth quoting in length:

Discourses include representations of how things are and have been, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be....In terms of the concept of social practice, they imagine possible social practices and networks of social practices – possible syntheses of activities, subjects, social relations, instruments, objects, space-time,...values, forms of consciousness. These imaginaries may be enacted as actual (networks of) practices – imagined activities, subjects, social relations etc can become real activities, subjects, social relations etc. Such enactments include materializations of discourses – economic discourses become materialized for instance in the instruments of economic production, including the ‘hardware’ (plant, machinery, etc) and the ‘software’ (management systems, etc). Such enactments are also in part themselves discursal/semiotic: discourses become enacted as genres....Discourses as imaginaries may also come to be inculcated as new ways of being, new identities....Inculcation is a matter of, in the current jargon, people coming to ‘own’ discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses.... Inculcation also has its material aspects: discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialized in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth.

The dialectical process does not end with enactment and inculcation. Social life is reflexive. That is, people not only act and interact within networks of social practices, they also interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they do, and these interpretations and representations shape and reshape what they do. (p. 2-3).²

What Fairclough (2003) suggest here is it is possible to argue that particular ‘ways of representing’ social life (discourses) may in many ways be enacted in specific ‘ways of acting’ (genres or social practices), and inculcated in certain ‘ways of being’ (certain styles). They can be seen together in texts as what brings subject, objects and action – the cosmologies of a phenomenon – to the fore. This is how the link between discourse, genre styles and social practices capture the structure/agency/action link discussed above. Specifically, the linkages highlight and draw attention to the dynamics of agency as well as the cosmologies of many types of structures (abstractions, theories, and institutionalized structures of

² Fairclough however also admits that it is possible for new discourse to enter an institution without being enacted or for that matter inculcated.

knowledge (Harvey 1996: p. 55). This linkage also highlights and draws attention to how the dialectics of discourse regulate and are regulated by agency, structure and action. According to Fairclough (2003), focusing on discourse can provide inroads into these other moments of social life and how they are arranged around a social phenomenon – their cause and consequences.

The notion of social practices suggests that the entire world is thus not reduced to discourse as some scholars critical of discourse analysis techniques have argued (see for example Widdowson, 1995). Rather discourse must be understood dialectically in relations to the other moments (Fairclough, 2003). This dialectical process discourse can provide an understanding of these other moments as they (the other moments) all have some form of discursive property: and thus provides a researcher with insights into the discursive processes and the dynamics of other moments.

Fairclough also suggests that discourse can have various meanings and represent a multiplicity of subjects and objects based on the audience, environment, history, position of the producer, and the recipient. Through a communicative process, discourse can position and label people in different ways (Foucault 1972; Weiss and Wodak, 2002; Harvey, 1996; Macdonell, 1986; Purvis and Hunt, 1993; Fraser, 1997; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2003; Hall, 2003). For example discourse can define the roles of social actors - as someone who can (or cannot) bring about a change in a condition or as someone who is (or is not) knowledgeable. It can also define their status, for example, as someone who needs (or does not need) help, as someone who cannot (or can) understand complex things or as someone who is (or is not) in the lower-class, middle-class, or upper-class. Discourse can also be used to define the significance or existence of social objects. ICTs, for example, have been defined by many international development agencies as important to the development of developing countries. In the same vein, the dialectical nature of discourse can permit social actors to position and label a discourse in different ways. For example, as is illustrated in this thesis, ICTs have also been defined by several scholars as tools which may threaten the development of developing countries.

Discourse can thus be viewed as socially constitutive of, as well as socially conditioned from constituted objects, subjects, processes, events and phenomena. For example, it is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: p. 258).

Discourse is also normalized by, and normalizes social practice. For example, many people act and organize through and around discourses in specific ways. Such action helps to shape and create discourses while at the same being shaped by discourse. They (the action) represent ways of acting and organizing, and produce and are produced by imaginary projections of new or alternative ways of acting and organizing (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak, 2004). The knowledge society, bridging the digital divide, and ICT for development may be constructed as discourses that specify ways of (inter)acting which become modes of operation. At the same time ways of inter(acting) help to shape and redefine the notion of 'the knowledge society'.

The ability of a discourse to influence social practice or the other way around is dependent on the dynamics of power. For example, the power of an institution, a group or an individual can influence social actions and relations. Harvey (1996), argues that in such instances, discourses often crystallize into 'things,' 'elements', and 'insoluble domains' or 'systems' which assume a relative permanence within a social system and or among other discourses. In some cases they may become "part of the landscape of knowledge seemingly impermeable to change" (Harvey 1996: p. 81). Through the dynamics of power, some discourses can, for example, hierarchically position themselves above other discourses and, as Chapter 5 will illustrate, have the ability to marginalize and exclude these other discourses and regulate social practices. It is for these reasons that Titscher et al. 2000) argue that power relations play an important role in discourse. Accordingly, "[p]ower relations have to do with discourse....Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse" (Harvey 1996: p. 148). The impermeability of a discourse, they argue, is also historical and should only be understood from such a perspective as well as in relation to the particular context within which they exist.

This they further argue is important as the dialectical nature of discourse makes possible certain social practices (such as resistance to a discourse) which can undo the impermeableness of a discourse (Purvis and Hunt, 1993). This will be demonstrated in Chapter 6.

1.3.2. Development

What constitutes development today has come to occupy a variety of discourses in various spaces and in different places as well as time periods. As a discourse ‘development’ is often used to represent “aspects of the world – the processes, relations, and structures of the material world, in ‘mental world’ of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world. Particular aspects of the world may be represented differently, so we are generally in the position of having to consider the relationship between different discourses (Fairclough 2003: p. 124). As a process, development represents ways of acting, being and organizing which both reflect the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of social actors about various subjects, objects, events, processes and phenomena and at the same time, influence and change ways of representing what constitutes development. Development may thus be seen as a discourse – the development discourse.

The ‘development discourse’ is a discourse which is indeed multidimensional, encompassing many different local as well as global representations, formal theories as well as informal ways of thinking, acting, organizing and being. Some of these discourses include neo-liberalism, neo-Marxism, Orientalism, Africanism, Islamism, Subaltern Studies, pan-Caribbeanism, pan-Africanism, (as well as other types of post-colonial discourses), post-developmentalism, cultural-hermeneutic or cultural studies, feminism, post-feminism, post-modernism, post-structuralism as well as the critical-dialectical, social-democracy, indigenous development and social movement approaches to development. It also included many others which are themselves permutations of these discourses. Critical-feminism for example represents one of these permutations.

These formal theories as well as informal ways of thinking, acting, organizing and being embody the more popular ways of representing what is development in the

contemporary global political economy. Neoliberalism,³ however, represents what many would consider to be the more dominant development discourse. Each discourse prefers a different way of defining and representing development. This ‘way’ is representative of a particular goal and objective of a group, institution or individual. This may explain why it is indeed possible to view development as a discourse which may be representative of “different perspectives on the world...associated with the different relations people have to the world, which in truth depends on their own positions in the world, their social and political identities, and the social relationships in which they stand with other people” (Fairclough 2003: p. 124). The relationships between discourses “are one element of the relationship between different people – they may complement one another, compete with one another, one can dominate others” (Fairclough 2003: p. 124). For example, development discourses manifest themselves in taxonomic forms which in many ways govern the relationship between different actors. Take, for instance, the term ‘the developing world’. In many texts it is used to represent a discourse which signify countries with high levels of poverty, underdeveloped, with uncivilized practices, poor governance, inadequate information, limited in terms of knowledge-based capabilities and so on. Countries which are represented as developing are therefore represented by many as having these characteristics.

Another term, ‘the industrialized world’, has been used in many texts as a discourse to represent countries which are wealthy, sophisticated, developed, knowledgeable and information rich, and civilized. The industrialized world is viewed and promoted by many texts as a model of what is development and what the developing world ought to aspire to be. Indeed, the dichotomy between the two, the model of the latter, the state of development and the question of agency (specifically those behind deciding who are developed and who are not) are all contentious discourses which have influenced social practices between and among these countries. More so, they are discourses which have influenced the concept of self by many people living in the ‘Third World’. There are also discourses (texts

³ According to the literature, within the spatio-temporality that this thesis was constructed, Neoliberalism is the dominant discourse (Escobar, 1995; Jessop, 2000; Fairclough, 2002).

on development, the comparative analysis of the lifestyles of the peoples of both worlds)⁴ which have also been influenced by social practices.

Indeed, many, such as Sen (1999) and Escobar (1995) have illustrated, such representations are debatable. Although this thesis will not address these debates (as a debate would certainly be outside the boundaries of the goals and objectives of this study) I have, however, maintained an awareness of these debates as some of the assumptions surrounding them (the debates) have been helpful in how I interpreted the data collected for this research (see Chapters 5-7).

From the above it is thus clear that in many ways the notion of development is built on a diversity of truths and a multiplicity of assumptions. Because of this diversity, if not uncertainty, many of the aforementioned development discourses are themselves often challenged by other discourses or social practices (material practices, beliefs, attitudes, values, desires, power, discourse, forms of consciousness, time and place, objects, instruments, subjects and their social relations and activities). Very often these discourses are influenced by annual paradigm shifts in leading development institutions, or by disgruntled scholars who display ideological discontent with a particular theory and/or informal ways of thinking, acting, organizing and being.

Consequently, possibilities of defining development (or accepting a particular definition) have over the years been problematic. Development as a discourse as well as a process is certainly not static, but rather eclectic. Rist (2002) brings to life the eclectic nature of 'the development discourse' when he correctly asserted that:

The images associated with it, and the practice it entails, vary from one extreme to the other depending on whether we adopt the viewpoint of the 'developer'- committed to bringing about the happiness he wishes for others – or the viewpoint of the 'developed' – who is forced to modify his social relations and his relationship to nature in order to enter the promised new world. And that leaves out two further viewpoints: that of the technocrat with a brief to display the originality of the institution for which he works; and that of the researcher

⁴ Indeed, it is possible to argue that many of these texts and the way in which the peoples of these countries have been comparatively represented may have well been influenced by powerful discourses and social practices in what many people term the industrialized world.

determined to prove that his chosen parameters are the only ones capable of accounting for the phenomenon under study. (Rist, 2002: p. 2).

In other words, development means different things for different people in different places and different disciplines. In this thesis, I have used the definition of development which has been promoted and used by the United Nations and its various agencies in the last decade. According to these bodies, development is the process of enhancing human capacities. For them, it is “the range of things that people can do or be in life... The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community” (UNDP 2005: p. 1). It is assumed by these organizations that the expansion of human capabilities will lead to the enlargement of societal choices and opportunities. This assumption is brought to life in the second paragraph of page 6 in the 2004 UNDP Human Development Report, (HDR) which states that “human development is the process of widening choices for people to do and be what they value in life (UNDP, 2004: p. 5). This in turn, it is argued, will provide social actors with inter alia greater access to knowledge, health, education, information as well as political and cultural freedoms, social security, equity, livelihood enlargement, and greater participation and security against physical violence and harm.

This definition may be said to emerge from decades of negotiations between and within the UN and other discursive interests couched in different spaces both at the global and local levels. Based on my knowledge of these debates, this definition represents what can be considered to be a compromise in that it can be said to incorporate the voices of the different interests. Many of these different interests have for decades attempted to be included in the official position of ‘what is development’.

The definition emerges from debates going as far back as the 1980s when development was looked at narrowly – the achievement of sustainable economic growth – and, measured only by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the late 1980s however, it was recognized by the United Nations (based on pressure by

these other interests) that many countries had failed to achieve sustainable economic growth and therefore a broader understanding of and greater variety of practices in development was needed. As a consequence, UNDP, specifically since 1990 through its annual Human Development Report (HDR) has manufactured a broader understanding of development. This definition, they argue, recognizes that economic variables are only one factor, and that people, including their politics and culture, should be at the centre of development (an institutional discourse). It is a definition which is based on the assumption that many people in the developing world, especially the poor, are limited in terms of the choices and opportunities offered to them in achieving a better life (a life of respect and value). Thus, developing one's competences (social, technical, mental capacities and capabilities) will help to broaden the range of options and alternatives offered to them in terms of accessing and effectively using objects, subjects or processes/services, thus allowing them to lead a life of respect and value.

It is a definition which has been adopted as the guiding principles in achieving the Millennium Development Goals to which many nation states are signatories and is considered an official way of defining what development is by powerful and dominant development institutions. Nevertheless, it is a definition which is even now still being contested by many, some of whom believe that 'other'; voices are still excluded. These include social movement theorists and radical factions of Islamism (See Rajagopal, 2003; see also publications in *The Middle Eastern Quarterly*, for example).

From my perspective, this definition by the UNDP draws together many discourses influenced by various contemporary and research-specific structures. These include academia, governments, various international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) as well as various local and global non-governmental organizations. This definition has been promoted by dominant institutions and events. Since the publication of the 1991 HDR, the definition has been used in several development publications around the world and has thus become the common criteria for measuring what is development. Over the years, it has influenced both social practices where development is concerned as well as other discourses. In many respects it has also evolved over the years to reflect emerging

discourses and changes in social practices (non-discursive factors). It is widely recognized by many nations, even beyond the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations. For example, it provides several key discursive elements for the Kyoto protocols the UN Habitat summits, the Beijing Women's Summit. It also acts as a guideline for significant processes of the World Trade Organisation's World Information Property Organisation declarations, the World Summit on the Information Society, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development as well as many other planetary conferences and summits addressing development today. Thus, the definition has become naturalized in many spaces. According to Cubitt (2005):

Since 1989 and the fall of Soviet communism, the residual possibility of a global collapse of capitalism, implicit in Samir Amin and other dependency theorists and the motivating fear of Modernisation theorists, no longer obtains as an alternative route to development. The era of globalisation is also one of global capitalism. Therefore fundamentally capitalist indicators of development, as implied by the UN definition, are not only appropriate but unavoidable. At the same time, however, the legal restraints on free enterprise in developed nations (for example the restraint on monopoly) have now become available as models of ethical accounting in developing nations as well (Cubitt S, personal communication, December 29, 2005).

This may explain why this definition is widely used by the many government agencies and institutions globally. Based on my analysis of the main ICT for development policy documents, certainly, this definition is recognized in the norm in the ICT for development arena. As this research enterprise will demonstrate, the discourses of all institutions under scrutiny in this research project subscribe to and promote this definition of what is development or what it ought to be. A review of several documents in Jamaica outlining the country's development project – the modalities, objects and subjects envisioned and promoted to achieve development - also indicate that this definition has been a guiding beacon for the current and successive governments of Jamaica, all of them signatories to the United Nations Treaty.

Thus, for these reasons I argue that my usage of the aforementioned definition is thus both practically and theoretically crucial for this research project. Indeed, I find its use appropriate in avoiding both conceptual and contextual confusions

here regarding what is development. In my quest to locate possible injustices in the current development solution offered by international development agencies, there needs to be some yardstick with which to measure the success or failure of the use of this tool - to detect whether or not development is being advanced. In other words, I am working under the intellectual assumption that what the United Nations (and who they represent) says is development, ostensibly speaking and for the purpose of this thesis, 'is indeed development' and what they represent as ways of achieving development, can actually do so. This is in no way to suggest, as Sardar (1999: p. 45) has stated, that I, (like many Third World intellectuals) have instinctively been colonized by the West and have accepted their truth, "towards a single determined future" (Sardar 1999: p. 47) (albeit the history and geopolitics of Jamaica almost makes this an inescapable reality). Rather, my reasons for using their truth in reality an attempt to ascertain whether or not what they also say are the 'tools' for achieving development (ICTs) can indeed do so. Therefore, a comprehensive deconstruction of this discourse would put me outside the boundaries of this thesis. Thus, for the moment I will accept this definition of development and operate within a Western theme so to speak.

In using this definition I am, however, aware of its many limitations for those involved in projects contesting, deconstructing and resisting the dominant development discourse – the notion that it is a 'Western' conceptualization of what development 'should' be. I am also aware of the many attempts to contest, deconstruct and resist such conceptualization (Rist, 2002; Munck and O'Hearn, 1999; Sardar, 1995, 1996, 1997; Escobar, 1995). Rist (2002), for example, suggests that such a definition is a representation of Eurocentric presupposition of what development ought to be (see also various chapters in Munck and O'Hearn, 1999). According to these critics, such representations, can indeed cripple alternative forms of, and attempts to achieve development based on other 'Third World' type models. I am also aware of the many discourses with claims of the similarities between the UN's definition of development and the current construction of neoliberalism and the ideas regarding the spread of the neoliberal agenda under the UN's rubric of development, the application of development, and the policing of development activists.

I maintain a high awareness of, and appreciation for these post-development and postcolonial projects and their relevance not only to contemporary development thinking, but also for their contributory value towards this thesis. These discourses show how power in discourse and power over discourse can assign forms and limits to knowledge, influence social practices, marginalize groups and help to preserve social structures through a cultural elitist domination of the development agenda. Several ideas of various post-development as well as postcolonial thinkers such as Escobar, (1995) Rist, (2002), Munck, (1999), Tucker, (1999), O’Hearn, (1999) and Sardar (1999) have been instrumental in helping me to interpret the data collected for this thesis. These ‘ideas’ have helped me to better understand and explain the configurations of the social relations at play as they relate to the initiatives under investigation in this research. Certainly a more critical discussion of the aforementioned and subsequent definitions especially as they relate to the ICT for development discourse, based on the findings of this research, will unarguably form a large part of my post-doctoral studies.

For now however, and in this thesis I reiterate and therefore emphasize, the goal is not to contest, deconstruct and/or resist this definition of development. Rather, this research attempts to ascertain whether the recommendations touted by a dominant international development agency as ways of achieving ‘development’ (what many construct and represent as Western ways) - through the use of ICTs - can actually engender such ends, and, if not, what other possible outcomes may be. Ironically, and, in keeping with what many may consider my ‘western theme’, I have chosen to use their presumably ‘non-western’ methodology and methods of researching to investigate this phenomenon.

1.3.3. Livelihood expansion

One abstraction of development over the years has been the undertaking of processes to address the basic needs - livelihoods - of the poor. These needs include among other things air, water, food, shelter and clothing. This discourse has been the foundation of development and the agenda of the aforementioned definition of development for decades. It was one of the many pillars of the Marshall Plan as well as President Truman’s famous Four Point Speech which together “inaugurated the development age” (Rist, 2002: p. 71). Catering for the

needs of the poor is one of the more commonsense assumptions of the development process and the appeal of development. This is the way development is represented in books and the media. Thus, rather than being on the periphery, the poor therefore reside at the centre of development. This is the reason development initiatives launched by international development agencies in the past ten years, have been directly or indirectly aimed at assisting the poor by providing them with a variety of choices to contribute to their livelihoods. This has especially been the case in livelihood expansion activities.

Livelihood expansion initiatives are attempts to improve the basic needs, capabilities, capacities and social conditions of the peoples of the developing world, especially the poor, through the provision of various opportunities. Livelihood expansion activities very often, but not always, involve the construction of roads to allow villagers better access to markets for the sale of goods, the provision of water for agricultural or health purposes or the establishment/construction of schools to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. More recently 'freedom' (Sen, 1999) as well as information (McNamara, 2003) have become important basic needs and properties of livelihood expansion.

Livelihood expansion activities can also involve various forms of income generating enterprise exercises and here is where information in particular becomes important (I will discuss this in Chapter 3). These usually include providing the poor with access, materials, and/or knowledge-capacity development regarding ways and means to improve their standard of living and now with information about markets, suppliers, resources, the weather and so on. It is this second construction of livelihood expansion activity – income generating enterprises – in which I am interested.

Income generating enterprises, especially for the poor in the developing world, are usually described as a micro-enterprise, small-enterprise or medium-sized enterprise initiative depending on the aim of the activity and the number of beneficiaries. These enterprises are usually business development exercises which include among many other activities, providing people, especially the poor, with access to business opportunities, improving: the mode of operation of a business

or people; its/their operational efficiency; response effectiveness; resource capabilities and knowledge/information/communication capacities. This can sometimes be achieved through training, knowledge based development or the provision of access points to resources – capacity building activities. Although there is much debate over what constitutes a microenterprise, from much of the literature reviewed, microenterprise initiatives tend to cater for individuals, small families and/or small groups of five people or less working towards improving their living standards and socio-economic conditions. In Jamaica as in many developing countries, this has been the standard benchmark used to categorize a microenterprise. Thus, for the purpose of this research project, this is also the standard that will be used to describe a microenterprise.

1.3.4. ICTs and ICT for development, ICT for livelihood expansion and ICT for livelihood expansion through microenterprise development (ICTLEMD)

On UNDP's ICT4D Social Enterprise toolkit website, ICTs are defined as “tools that use technology to communicate, exchange and share information” (UNDP, 2003: p. 1). On that very same website, there is a link to a Sustainable Development Network Programme (SDNP) website – SDNP Technical Terms – which outlines several of these tools. Listed among these tools are: hardware such as the telephone, facsimile, video, television, radio, computer-based or computer-mediated modes such as email, chat and news groups, list-serves, CD-ROMs as well as software applications. This definition, explanation and examples of what ICTs are (UNDP-SDNP-JSDNP's usage of the term) was the one selected to be used throughout this thesis.

According to the UN, these tools can be used to achieve poverty reduction, livelihood expansion and contribute to the advancement of developing countries (UNDP, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c) human capabilities. The UN suggests that these tools can be used to provide persons with access to: potable water (*ICTs for water*); improve the conditions of women (*gender and ICT*); provide people with access to health care (*ICT for health*); improve access to educational services (*ICT for education*); enhance one's democratic rights and access to government services (*ICT for governance*) or provide the poor with access to resources which help in improving their basic needs, capabilities, capacities and social conditions

through capacity building activities (*ICT for livelihood expansion*). The expanded term '*ICT for livelihood expansion, through microenterprise development*' (*ICTLEMD*) extends the definition of the latter to capture initiatives which attempt to provide microenterprise entrepreneurs, especially poor ones, with access to business opportunities, improving: the mode of operation of a business or people; its/their operational efficiency; response effectiveness; resource capabilities and knowledge/information/communication capacities through the provision of ICTs repeated from above (UNDP, 2001b). *ICTLEMD-T* is specific to ICT for livelihood expansion, through microenterprise development in the tourism sector.

On the aforementioned ICT4D Social Enterprise toolkit website the organization claims that “the inclusion of ICT strategies in development programs such as the UNDP indicate that there is now an acceptance that ICT can assist in achieving broader development objectives.” (UNDP, 2003: p. 4). This is indeed a true indication of how normalized is the assumption that ICTs can engender development. Following Cubitt however, and as will be demonstrated in this thesis, the aforementioned list of ICTs upon which these assumptions are made – ICTs as tools needed to achieve livelihood expansion and development – may be seen as inadequate and does not capture what Cubitt refers to as “the complexity underlying the simplifications of dominant ICT for development discourse” (Cubitt, S, personal communication, December 29, 2004). According to Cubitt (2005), ICTs include:

- computers and wireless devices, peripherals and storage instruments;
- software applications;
- network infrastructures and the technical protocols they require such as SMTP, TCP/IP, FTP; particularly significant are security (SSL) and privacy (P2K) protocols for e-commerce and commercial surveillance (cookies etc) and
- legal and regulatory frameworks such as patents, copyright etc (i.e. these are not contextual to ICT: they are integral) (Cubitt, S, personal communication, December 29, 2004)

What is also important, Cubitt suggests, is the interrelationship between these components, how they are articulated into a network and how the network affects and is affected by social practices. This suggests that ICTs are much more than tools. ICTs are actually a wide range of infrastructures, instruments, objects, processes, protocols, metacodes and devices which when combined

facilitate the creation, retrieval, storage, processing, analyzing, management and dissemination of information. Cubitt (2005) is concerned that “documents which do not address this range of activities in something like the breadth of this taxonomy are mystifying the technologies, and obfuscating the political decision-making which goes into the design” and, I argue the distribution configurations of technologies. According to him, the narrow definition used by UNDP which many individuals, groups and institutions world-wide have adopted as commonsense, neglects what he refers to as “ key issues in ICT policy, removing them from public debate and development strategy discussions” (Cubitt, S, personal communication, December 29, 2004). As this research illustrates, at least with respect to the cosmologies of the study, Cubitt’s concerns are well founded as the consequences of this have been counter-developmental (see Chapter 5).

1.4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Lincoln and Denzin (2003) argue that “[t]he social sciences have undergone a kind of crisis in purpose, with more thoughtful practitioners daring to question” what is the purpose of social research and who does it or should it serve (Lincoln and Denzin 2003: p. 6). Thus this section outlines the significance of this study.

At the global level, Duncombe and Heeks (2002) argue that despite the importance of ICT for livelihood development in developing countries, “little work has been undertaken” regarding the possibilities of ICTs for livelihood development. What exists are what Muller-Flacke (2002) describes as “of anecdotal nature” (Muller-Flacke 2002: p. 2). What does exist also does not address the issues of power, knowledge and discourse and the socio-cultural and historical dynamics of the ICT for development phenomenon, issues which hve always been significant to the development process. This research attempts to address this gap. Thus at the global level, it is expected that this research project will:

- a) provide researchers, policy makers and those involved in implementing ICT for development initiatives with insights regarding the implications of

the dominant ICT for development discourses on microenterprise entrepreneurs generally and specifically in the space of tourism;

- b) develop an alternative way of theorizing about ICT for livelihood expansion through microenterprise development and specifically in the space of tourism; and
- c) identify key variables and the association between these variables (in the space of ICT for livelihood expansion through microenterprise development and specifically in the space of tourism) which can be used by researchers in more empirical and representative research projects aimed at analyzing the cause and effects of ICTs on the peoples of the developing world, and/or to explore other elements or aspects of ICT for development (gender, health, education, governance, environment, etc.), other organizations (governmental organizations, civil society, etc.), other sectors (such as energy, healthcare, immigration, textile, fashion, etc.) and/or in other countries. Such an approach may be used to test the reliability of the findings which emerge from this qualitative research (which uses an exploratory design) or to see how widespread the findings described in this research really are.

At the local (Jamaican) level no research has been done on ICTLEMD despite the many projects which have been and are being implemented. Therefore we have no way of ascertaining the effects of these technologies on the lives of the Jamaican microenterprise entrepreneurs. It is therefore hoped that this research and subsequent publications will help those involved in all forms of ICT for development research, planning and implementation at various levels, discover alternative ways of socially constructing ICT for livelihood development possibilities and outcomes. This, I believe, can contribute to more efficient policy making. It is also hoped that this thesis will educate people to the way discourse is used in social life and how it can be used to influence social practices by social actors. For Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), such knowledge helps people to accentuate those aspects of social life which enhance human life and change or mitigate those aspects which are detrimental to it. (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: p. 4). I thus use this thesis to encourage, “discourses of resistance” (Purvis and Hunt 1993: p. 489) in ICTLEMD. Richardson and Adams St. Pierre (2005)

suggest ‘writing’ as a way to engender such change. Writing, they argue, can “disrupt the known and the real”; it is a form of “stimulation” (Richardson and Adams St. Pierre 2005: p. 967).

In undertaking this thesis I am aware that changing discourse may not mean changing other moments such as desires, deeply held fantasies and beliefs (Harvey, 1996). “This does not mean that the struggle to change discourse is redundant, merely that such struggles function as a necessary but not sufficient moment for change to occur elsewhere” (Harvey, 1996: p. 90). Given the dialectical nature of discourse in relation to the abovementioned other moments of social life, changing discourse presents a starting point for change in the other moments. This research project seeks to start that process by shifting attitudes and drawing attention to the discourse process, the importance of language and other moments and the power dynamic which can undermine the development process itself.

1.5. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.5.1. The Place of a Theoretical Framework

For various reasons, which I will shortly discuss, I used Critical Theory as the theoretical framework to guide this research project. My choice here, as will be explained later, is based on several epistemological influences.

Theoretical frameworks are an important part of the research process. According to Cubitt (2005):

A theoretical framework is a self-conscious set of (a) fundamental principles or axioms (ethical, political, philosophical) and (b) a set of rules for combining and applying them (e.g. induction, deduction, contradiction, and extrapolation). A theoretical framework defines the objects of a discourse, the permissible ways of thinking about those objects, and so determines the kinds of knowledge about the objects that can be produced legitimately within the framework” (Cubitt, S, personal communication, October 6, 2005).

A theoretical framework thus guides the research material used, methodologies, methods of data collection and analysis of the data and is instrumental in guiding research objectives as well as in the construction of a set of research questions.

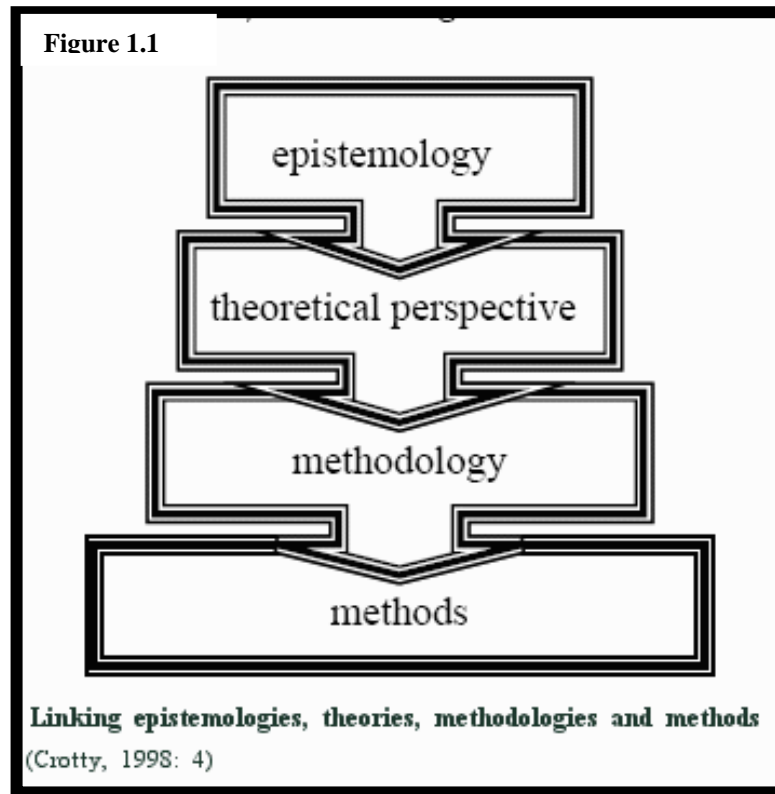
Theoretical frameworks are the entire cosmologies of belief-systems, value-systems and ideological perspectives of an individual and are often influenced by ones knowledge (based on life experiences) and their awareness of social life. In other words, “what it means to know” (Crotty, 1998: p. 10), or in philosophical terms, epistemology. Not many scholars have been able to capture this intertwined linkage between epistemology and theory, nor for that matter their connections with methodology and methods. There are however some good if not brilliant attempts such as Hughes (1990: p. 11) who, for example, tells us that:

The relevance of the philosophical issues arises from the fact that every research tool or procedure is inextricably embedded in commitments to particular versions of the world and the knowing that world....no technique or method of investigation is self-validating: its effectiveness is from a philosophical point of view, ultimately dependent on epistemological justifications....Research instruments and methods cannot be divorced from theory (Hughes 1990 p. 11).

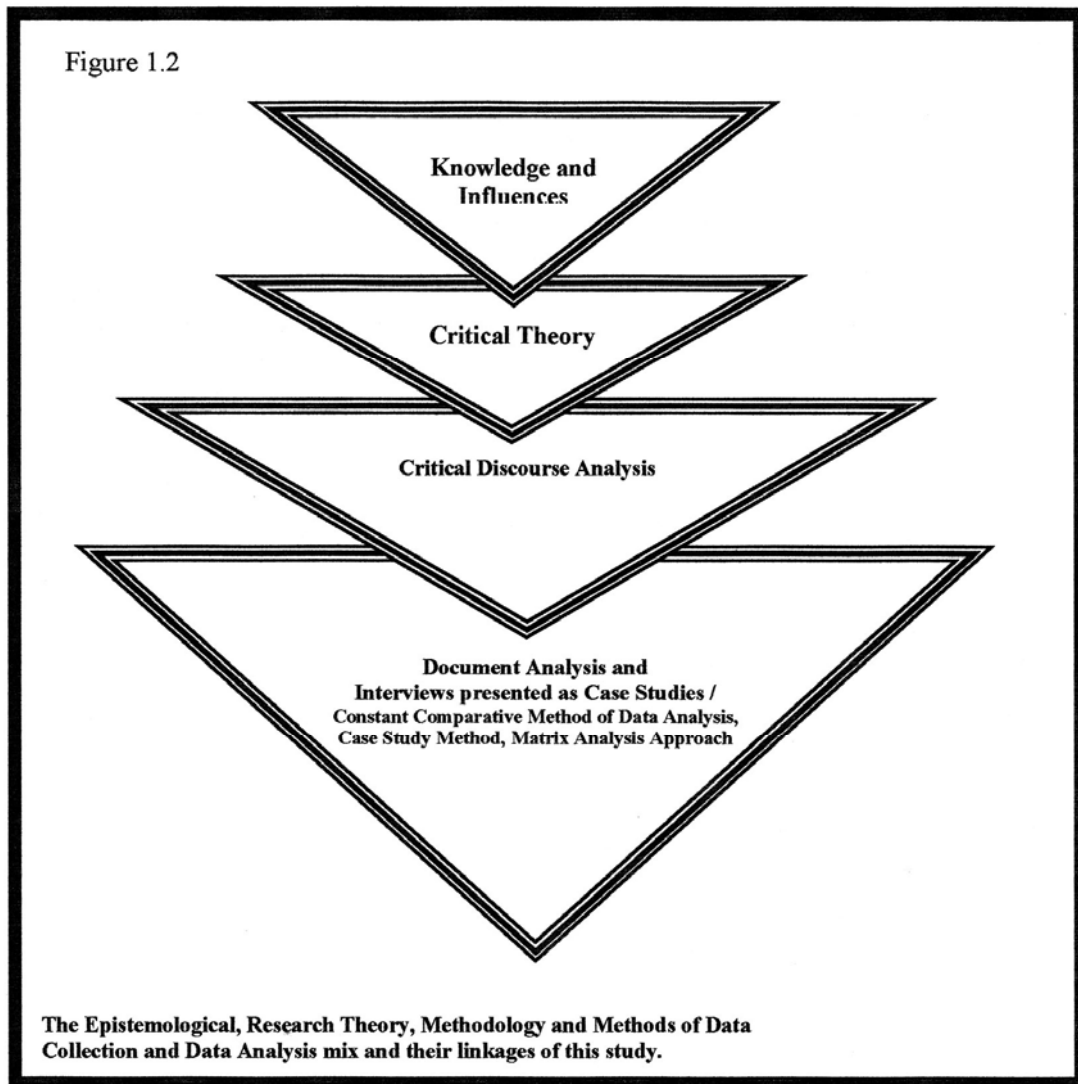
There are also others such as Neuman, (2000), Tolich and Davidson, (1999), Sarantakos (1993) as well as Denzin and Lincoln, (2000) as well as Crotty, (1998). Crotty’s work is however foremost in my mind because of the simple way in which he has captured these linkages, packaged and presented them for social sciences struggling to comprehend and more importantly deconstruct their associations. Crotty (1998), argues that “epistemology bears mightily on the way we go about our research” (Crotty 1998: p. 9). Indeed, this is a view which I also appreciate and see as important to any research project.

Crotty (1998) argues that the decision to use a particular research methodology for data collection is anchored in the assumptions and theoretical perspectives researchers may have about being in and knowing about the world. Such an ideology fertilizes a number of epistemological and ontological questions about ourselves as researchers, what we are trying to achieve, as well as how and why we are trying to achieve it. This ontology/epistemology, theory, methodology and

methods relationship is illustrated in Figure 1.1. Note, however, that Crotty has not made direct reference to ontology in his scheme. According to him the two are interdependent – “ontological and epistemological issues tend to emerge together” (p. 10). In other words they are not conceptually separate. Ontology is integrated within the epistemological experience.



I have come to find Crotty’s approach to meet my needs in this particular research as I am in strong agreement that knowledge of the research process influenced by texts and experiences suggests that methodologies and methods are indeed related to epistemological, theoretical and political/philosophical stances. Thus it was used as a guide throughout the research process. Figure 1.2 outlines the framework used in this study and how it influenced the research design. It is an adaptation of Crotty’s schema. This chapter and to some extent the next two (Chapter’s 2 and 3) addresses the first two levels – epistemology and the theoretical framework – while methodology and methods will be dealt with in Chapter 4 and the output in Chapters 5 through 7.



1.5.2. Origins and Key Elements of Critical Theory

Critical Theory (which Crotty argues has elements of constructionism and subjectivism) has been criticized for its tendency to impose the voices and values of the researcher on the groups being studied (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: p. 332). Critical theory is thus considered as any approach which politicizes qualitative research and has been labelled as political since it seeks to “upset institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth” (Kincheloe and McLaren 2005: p. 433). Charles Mills (1959) tell us that some critics often tend to judge the scholarly work of social scientists “according to whether or not its conclusions are gloomy or sunny, negative or constructive. The sunshine moralists want a lyric upsurge, at least in the end: they are made happy by a sturdy little mood of earnest optimism, out of which we step forward fresh and shining” (Mills 1959: p. 78). Mills however goes further to say.

But the world we are trying to understand does not always make all of us politically hopeful and morally complacent, which is to say, that social scientists sometimes find it difficult to play the cheerful idiot (Mills, 1959: p. 78).

Chouliariki and Fairclough (1999) in many ways share the same view when, in their justification of their critical approach, to analyzing discourse they paint a bleak picture of the world today, a world filled with injustices (see also Chapter 1 of Fairclough, 2003, as well as pages 5 - 6 in Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak, 2004). As social researchers, we need to understand the possibilities of a social phenomenon and the problems which it may encourage. In Jamaica, for example, an analysis of the country's history with technology of development by Norman Girvan using an Marxist approach (which has many characteristics of Critical Theory) revealed that although many Jamaicans have benefited from various non-indigenous technologies for development initiatives in terms of livelihood enhancement, most have not and have instead experienced unemployment, poverty and unequal access to resources. Indeed, in this time and place such an approach is again needed. Therefore I have chosen to use critical theory as the theoretical framework for this research.

Critical Theory, Agger (1991) explains, was developed by the Frankfurt School to "explain why the socialist revolution prophesied by Marx...did not occur as expected" (Agger 1991: p. 107) and "the changing nature of capitalism" (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005: p. 434). It soon blossomed into reaction against the role of positivist social sciences. At the level of theory, these critical theorists accused positivism for accepting the world not simply as given but as necessarily given in the form understood by contemporary society, and as intrinsically rational (and therefore understandable by scientific rationality). Critical theory opposed these terms with the argument that the world as given is contingent (and therefore open to historical change) and intrinsically irrational because it is contradictory (i.e. understandable by dialectics).

Critical theory, on the other hand, focuses on unearthing domination, self-interest, control, hegemony and issues of power. In so doing, critical theory also attacks projects in elitist social research and promotes emancipative exercises in self-

reflection and self-criticism as the researcher is asked to question the ways in which he or she undertakes research projects and advances theories.

Kincheloe and McLaren, (2005) describe critical theory as an approach which:

...analyses competing power interests between groups and individuals within a society – identifying who gains and who loses in specific situations. Privileged groups, criticalists argue, often have an interest in supporting the status quo to protect their advantages; the dynamics of such efforts often become a central focus of critical research...critical research attempts to expose the forces that prevent individuals and groups from shaping the decisions that crucially affect their lives (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005: p. 437).

A similar description of critical theory appears in an article by Fairclough and colleagues:

Critical social research draws upon the resources of social science to address the most pressing social problems of the day: those aspects of the structure, organization and functioning of human societies that cause suffering, injustice, danger, inequality, insecurity, and self-doubt. It has long been an assumption of critical social science that these dysfunctions are products of human invention and can therefore be changed through human intervention. It is a central concern and responsibility of critical social research to show the contingency of existing social arrangements: to expose to scrutiny claims of inevitability, claims that the way things are is the way they have to be. The critical objective is not only to identify and analyze the roots of social problems, but also to discern feasible ways of alleviating or resolving them.

Of course critical social scientists can claim no special expertise in curing social ills, but we can certainly reflect on what the problems are and how they might be resolved. Such findings will ideally have resonance for, and be taken up by, other social forces which may be able to change social life for the better. Also, critical researchers do not stand outside social life. We are a part of it, and our critical reflections are also properly seen as critical self-reflections on our own positions, motivations, and actions (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak 2004: p. 1).

Alvesson and Deetz, (2000) postulate that the agenda of critical theory is:

1. Identifying and challenging assumptions behind ordinary ways of perceiving, conceiving and acting;

2. recognizing the influence of history, culture, and social positioning on beliefs and actions;
3. imaging and exploring extraordinary alternatives, ones that may disrupt routines and established orders;
4. being appropriately sceptical about any knowledge or solution that claims to be the only truth or alternative. (Alvesson, and Deetz, 2000: p. 8).

Critical theory is thus an emancipatory process which is committed to engaging oppressed groups in collective, democratic theorizing about what is common or different about their experiences of oppression and privilege....A constant focus is given to the material and cultural practices that create structures of oppression” (Denzin, 1998: p. 332). It is an approach which gives the oppressed a space to speak, to tell their story. This process is dialogic and collaborative as the researcher assists the oppressed through data analysis and interpretation.

Over the years, (specifically during the era in qualitative research that Denzin and Lincoln (2005) refer to as ‘the crisis in representation’ or others ‘the discourse turn’)⁵, scholars such as black critics, culturalists, queer theorists, post-structuralists, postcolonialists, postmodernists, feminists and post-developmentalists, to name a few, have refined critical theory and method, adding a number of concepts which enhances Critical Theory’s analytical capabilities. Foucault (1972, 1977, 1981), Habermas (1984) and Derrida’s (1976) for example, have introduced the importance of language in undertaking critical research. This transition termed the ‘discursive turn’ is committed to the analysis of “opaque as well as transparent structural relations of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (McKenna, 2004: p. 10) and thereby encourage “more practically just ways of using language” (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak, 2004: p. 5). Exemplary examples of the application of this discourse turn have included the analysis of:

- Marketization and global capitalism

⁵ Denzin and Lincoln (2005) tell us that during this era (the mid 1980s) “researchers struggled with how to locate themselves and their subjects in reflexive texts. A kind of methodological Diaspora took place, a two-way exodus. Humanities migrated to the social sciences, searching for new social theory, new ways to study popular culture, and its local ethnographic contexts. Social scientists turned to the humanities, hoping to learn how to do complex structural and post structural readings of social texts. From the humanities, social scientists also learnt how to produce texts that refuse to be read in simplistic, linear, incontrovertible terms (p. 3).

- Problems of gender identities
- Unjust social relations - class
- Problems of national identities
- Imposed knowledge
- The oppression of minorities
- Organized violence
- Incivility
- The hegemonic transnational institutions and their control of nation states and social actors
- Global surveillance, issues of privacy and the manipulation of identities and social practices through global information and communication technologies

Many of these areas are governed by new rules, regulations in books and guidelines, speeches, contracts, rule accords, memorandum of understandings, resolutions, agreements in text/documentations and visual images from interaction, conversations with specific vocabularies and terminologies as well as sounds from television, radio and internet broadcasts which influence social behaviour – how people act and organize. Fairclough et al (2004) have come to conclude “that such issues and problems are, to some significant degree, problems of discourse” (Fairclough et al 2004: p. 2).

It is argued that through a critical analysis of discourse, researchers are able to make better sense of contemporary social problems to analyze, understand and solve them (Fairclough et al 2004). In so doing the researcher questions the power structures which maintain the status quo, identify whose power, whose knowledge, who controls the power and the knowledge, how they came to control it, who are the marginalized and the exploited, why are they marginalized and exploited, how were they marginalized and exploited, who orchestrated this marginalization and exploitation exercise and for what reason, what are the hegemonic forces at play, and, most importantly, what role does discourse play in these processes (power in discourse and power over discourse in a historical, socio-cultural and political context). The objective of this critical analysis of discourse remains true to critical theory - how can we challenge and oppose the system, with the aim of bringing about some sort of positive change? In asking these questions, history and biography play an important role.

Mills (1959) tells us that any “social study that does not come back to the problem of biography and history and their intersections with the social structure has not completed an intellectual journey” (Mills 1959: p. 4 and 143). As said by McNamara (2003: p. 8) ICT for development research “rarely includes an effort to absorb lessons from earlier, and sometimes unsuccessful efforts to introduce technologies into developing countries (e.g., automation of government ministries, television for education, radio for rural extension)” (McNamara 2003: p. 8). He has advocated for the incorporation of the historical analysis in ICT for development research suggesting:

Since the success or failure of these earlier efforts most probably had similar underlying causes, such as the enabling environment, appropriateness of the technology, human and institutional capacity, the structure of local and global markets, etc., there is much to learn from these earlier efforts (McNamara 2003: p. 8).

Guided by the critical perspective, I have incorporated a historical analysis in this thesis which I present in Chapter 2. This helps to set the context within which this research is undertaken. In many ways then, this research project goes beyond the normative levels of analysis present in the existing body of knowledge surrounding ICT for livelihood expansion through microenterprise development research (see for example O'Farrell, Norrish, and Scott, 1999; Muller-Flacke, 2002; Duncombe and Heeks, 2001, 2002; Bayes, Braun, and Akhter, 1999; Lawson and Meyenn, 2000; Lefebvre and Lefebvre, 1996; Barton and Bear, 1999), as well as those spaces specific to the tourism industry (Biggs, Goussard, Constance, and Bytheway, 2000). Indeed, the use of critical theory to tackle ICTLEMD generally and specifically within the space of the tourism industry of the developing world and the focus on discourse as a unit of analysis represents an original and alternative way of approaching this phenomenon.

1.6. CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this research will offer an alternative approach to understanding not only ICTLEMD but also other aspect of ICT for development spaces such as gender, education, agriculture, governance etc. Those involved in such projects

need to be cognizant of these 'other discourses' to fully comprehend the complex and multidimensional dynamics of the many spaces of ICT for development. Such an approach may provide an understanding of, and help in extending the range of choices about, and opportunities regarding the possibilities, potentialities and implications of ICT related projects. It is thus hoped that this research will provide policy makers with tools for shaping more holistic policy frameworks in implementing and managing ICT for livelihood development projects not only in Jamaica, and not only in the tourism industry, but possibly also other parts of the world and in other industries as well. It is possible to argue that the approach taken in this thesis, using Western methods of analysis to critique Western constructions of ways of achieving development through the eyes of a 'Hybrid' aware of postcolonial discourses and drawing on these discourses as interpretive tools may represent a new way of revealing the ways in which particular meanings are constructed through specific systems of representation or discourses and as such may shed new light on new and traditional problems. In the next chapter, using the historical method, I will attempt to provide an overview of the main body of knowledge regarding Jamaica's history with technology for development with a specific focus on the discourses surrounding the use of non-indigenous technologies in this context.