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**FLIGHT OF THE KIWI:
AN EXPLORATION OF MOTIVES AND
BEHAVIOURS OF SELF-INITIATED MOBILITY**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of
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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this study was to identify the motives for self-initiated mobility of highly educated New Zealanders across national boundaries. It further seeks to identify the relative importance of these motives and to explore relationships between motivation and mobility behaviour. This study on self-initiated mobility is opportune as an increasingly globalised market place and a demand for the skills of the highly educated result in competition for workers.

Most literature concerning mobility focuses on expatriate assignment. By comparison, self-initiated movers remain an under-researched group. Moreover, of the limited research on self-initiated mobility, most have used interviewing and narrative methods, so that the available information is detailed but restricted to individual experiences. This study used a self-report survey via the internet to collect both quantitative and qualitative data and yielded 2,608 useable responses from New Zealanders living and working throughout the world. It was highly exploratory, using the analytical marketing tool CHAID to show linkages between subjective attitudinal motives and objective measures of mobility behaviours.

The desire for cultural and travel opportunities was the dominant subjective motive, being the best predictor for the objective mobility behaviours of establishment, current spatiality and return propensity and being a secondary predictor for restlessness. Other associations were evident between the quality of life motive and the behaviour of restlessness, the career motive and cultural globalism and the relationships motive and the behaviour of latent transience. Economics and the political environment motives were not found to be significant predictors of any behaviour.

The subjective data reinforced the importance of the cultural and travel opportunities and career motives, ranking these the most important motives in a decision to be mobile. Within these motives, opportunities for travel and adventure and for career development were central. Economics was ranked as the third most important motive, contrary to extant literature, followed by relationships, quality of life and the political environment. The priority accorded to each of these six motives varies according to gender, location and life stage, creating different equations of motivation.

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