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**The Factors that Influence the Adoption or Non-Adoption of
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by
Recently-arrived Immigrants in the Wellington Region**

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

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to better understand recent immigrants' perceptions of ICTs, what causes them to adopt or not adopt ICTs, and the factors that influence such action.

A self-selected, volunteer sample of 32 recent immigrants living in 15 households, between the ages of 12 - 65 and who came from developing countries that include Africa (5), the Middle East (4), Central Asia (3) and South East Asia (2) participated in the research. The Refugee and Migrants' Service (RMS), Wellington branch, and ethnic community leaders supported the study and introduced the researcher to potential participants.

Two rounds of semi-structured, in-depth audio-taped interviews were held in the immigrants' own homes. The aim of the first round of interviews was to establish trust with the volunteers. The second round of interviews occurred six weeks later. The follow-up interviews provided an opportunity for both the researcher and the participants to validate the transcribed interviews as well as allowing further discussion on their ICT adoption.

The majority of participants interviewed had a positive attitude towards ICTs. They viewed the technology as a useful tool because they saw relative-advantage benefits such as accomplishing tasks more easily, saving money on communication and finding employment.

A priority on home access was evident for nearly half the interviewees who owned their computers (despite participants being low-waged and some unemployed). The major method of adoption for the immigrants who were new to computing was via friends and family. The personal one-to-one teaching, in a safe, relaxed environment was important to many migrants, as was the timeliness of the teaching.

Overall, the results show that young, male participants with a relatively higher educational background were more likely to be adopters. In contrast, older female participants with little or no education were less likely to participate in ICTs. The results also show that the majority of the participants lacked computing experience.

This study was exploratory in nature, therefore there is opportunity for researchers interested in understanding ICTs adoption to build on these research findings and explore in greater detail a range of factors that influence recent immigrants' adoption or non adoption of ICTs. The findings have important implication for policy makers and practitioners who wish to create an inclusive society where all members, including recent immigrants, are able to access and use ICTs and hence be able to fully participate in the information society. Recommendations, based on the study's findings, include suggestions to promote ICTs among recently-arrived immigrants community.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	<i>i</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	<i>iii</i>
TABLE OF CONTENT	<i>iv</i>
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	<i>vii</i>
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
Research Objectives	<i>2</i>
Overview of Method	<i>2</i>
Justification for the Research	<i>3</i>
Organisation of the Thesis	<i>4</i>
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	<i>6</i>
Introduction	<i>6</i>
The Digital Divide	<i>6</i>
<i>Barriers to ICTs Adoption</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Physical Access Barrier</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Content Barrier</i>	<i>10</i>
ICTs and Social Inclusion	<i>12</i>
<i>Technology and a Social Inclusion Framework</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>New Zealand's ICT Vision for an Inclusive Society</i>	<i>15</i>
Immigrants	<i>17</i>
<i>New Zealand Immigrants</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Immigrants, Employment and ICTs</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Immigrants and Adoption of ICTs</i>	<i>22</i>
Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Framework	<i>25</i>
Diffusion process	<i>26</i>
<i>Innovation Characteristics</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Communication Channels</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>The Effect of Time on Adoption Process</i>	<i>29</i>

<i>Adopter Distribution over Time</i> _____	30
<i>Adoption Rate over Time</i> _____	31
<i>Social System</i> _____	31
Beyond the DOI Framework _____	32
Summary _____	35
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN _____	36
Research Design _____	36
Background: Research Approaches _____	37
Sample Selection and Description _____	38
Interviews _____	40
Reliability and Validity _____	42
Ethical and Cultural Considerations _____	43
<i>Informed Consent, Anonymity and Confidentiality</i> _____	44
<i>Cultural Consideration</i> _____	45
Data Collection _____	45
Overview of Analysis _____	48
Summary _____	50
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS _____	51
Background _____	51
Approach to Interview Analysis _____	52
Interview Results _____	54
<i>Immigrants' Perceptions of ICTs</i> _____	56
<i>Perceived Usefulness</i> _____	56
<i>Perceived Ease of Use</i> _____	57
<i>Perceived Importance</i> _____	58
<i>ICTs Access</i> _____	59
<i>Computer Access at Home</i> _____	59
<i>Educational Background, Gender and Age</i> _____	60
<i>Language</i> _____	62

<i>Computing Skills</i>	62
<i>ICTs Usage</i>	63
<i>Communication with Friends and Family</i>	64
<i>Gathering Information</i>	64
<i>Following News from Back Home</i>	65
<i>Motivation</i>	65
<i>Relative Advantage</i>	66
<i>Friends and Family</i>	66
<i>Peer Pressure</i>	67
<i>Internet Content in Immigrants' Language</i>	68
Summary	68

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND

IMPLICATIONS _____ 71

Overview of the Study	71
-----------------------	----

Findings and conclusions	72
--------------------------	----

<i>Objective 1: Understand Recently-arrived Immigrants' Perceptions of ICTs</i>	72
---	----

<i>Objective 2: Examine the Factors that Influence Immigrants' Adoption and non Adoption of ICTs</i>	73
--	----

<i>Objective 3: Understand the pProcess Followed by Recently-arrived Immigrants when Adopting ICTs</i>	75
--	----

<i>Objective 4: Make Recommendations, where Appropriate, to Assist in Promoting ICTs Usage among the Immigrant Community</i>	77
--	----

Limitations of the Study	80
--------------------------	----

Implications and Suggestions for Further Research	81
---	----

Reference List	83
-----------------------	-----------

Appendix 01 MUHEC Approval	90
-----------------------------------	-----------

Appendix 02 Information Sheet	91
--------------------------------------	-----------

Appendix 03 Consent Form	93
---------------------------------	-----------

Appendix 04 Interview Questions	94
--	-----------

Appendix 05 Interview Categories and Themes	97
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List of Tables and Figures

Tables

	Page
2.1 Percentage of Immigrants and their Region of Origin in the Wellington Area	19
3.1 Numbers and Age of Participants from the Four Regions	39
4.1 Participants' Adoption Status, ICTs Access, Gender and Age	55
4.2 Non Adopters' Profile	61

Figures

2.1 Resources contributing towards ICT access	14
2.2 The conditions necessary for realizing ICTs benefits	16
2.3 A model of five stages in the innovation-decision process.	29
2.4 Adopter categorization based on innovativeness.	31
2.5 The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).	34