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DOES CONTEXT MATTER? INTERNET ADOPTION IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
SPACES (194 PP.)

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The purpose of this study was to discern the technological attributes which influenced the participants to adopt Internet technology. As defined by Diffusion of Innovation Theory, the attributes investigated were trialability, observability, relative advantage, compatibility, and complexity with an additional attribute of awareness.

Using Q methodology, 30 public and private users shared their viewpoints on the adoption of Internet technology by performing a Q sort on a structured Q sample of positive, negative and neutral statements for each of the technological attributes. The 15 public adopters were comprised of public library and community technology center users and the 15 private adopters were home users. The participants also completed a questionnaire which captured demographic information. The sequential statistical operations of correlation, factor analysis and the computation of factor scores, supported by the demographic information, revealed three factors.

Each factor had a majority of either private or public adopters and a unique combination of technological attributes which influenced the adopters. Most notably, the participants on each factor differed in their levels of computer and information literacy or the technological attribute of complexity, as well as their awareness of the negative consequences associated with lack of access. Further, although each factor had a unique set of technological attributes which influenced the adopters, collectively, the participants were influenced by the technological attributes, awareness, trialability and compatibility.