



**“Something what we
can’t live without”** 

Information behavior of immigrants in the Seattle area

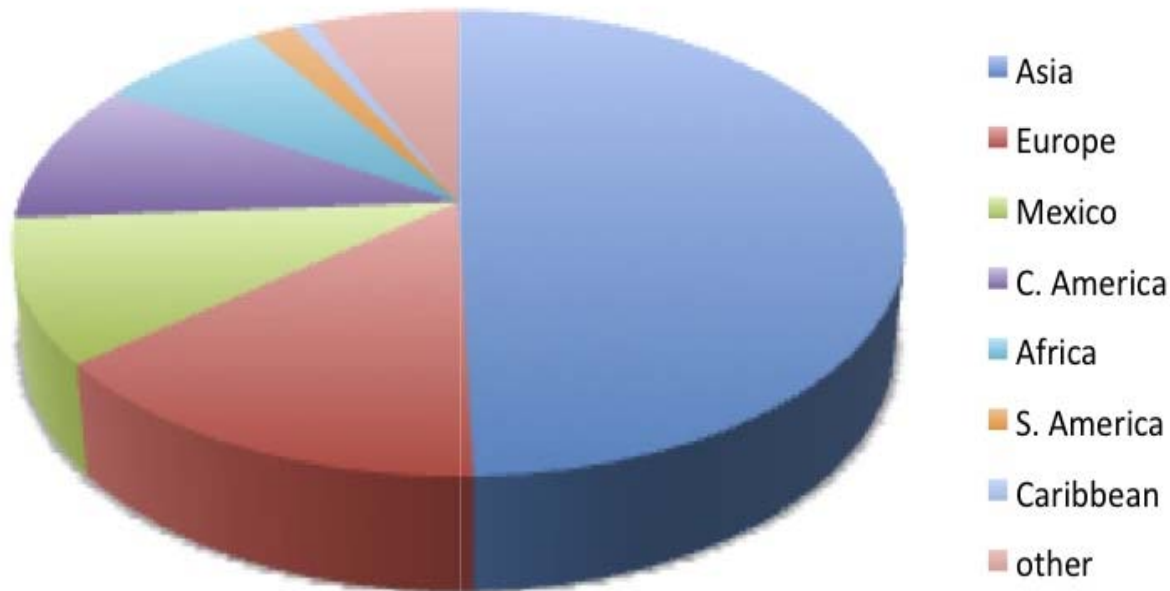
LIS 510

Monica Barba, Carl Burnett,
Gary Gao, Tami Garrard,
& Andrea Hermanson

Immigrants in Seattle

About 1 in 6 Seattle residents is foreign-born, ranking Seattle among the **top third** of large U.S. cities.

Seattle immigrants' places of origin



Top countries of origin:

1. Philippines
2. Vietnam
3. Mexico
4. China
5. Canada
6. South Korea
7. Japan
8. Ethiopia
9. Germany
10. United Kingdom

Categories of Immigration

- Immediate Relative & Family Sponsored
- Employer Sponsored
- Special Immigrants
- Diversity Visa Program
- Humanitarian
 - Refugees/Asylum Seekers

Our participants were primarily refugees and family-sponsored immigrants.



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



TRAVEL.STATE.GOV

A SERVICE OF THE BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS
U.S. Department of State

Literature Review

Similarities

- Consensus in types of information immigrants seek
 - Orellana (2003), Fisher et al. (2004), Caidi (2005), Flythe (2001)
- Most important sources of information tend to be uniform across studies (interpersonal resources)
 - Fisher et al. (2004), Flythe (2001)
- Children as *information mediators*
 - Chu, (1999); Orellana, M. F., Dorner, L., & Pulido, L. (2003); Fisher 2004
- *Barriers* to information
 - Case (2007)



Literature Review

Disagreement

- Use of internet / technology as sources varied in research cases
 - Due to different backgrounds, e.g. well-educated immigrant versus refugee



Literature Review

Anomalies

"Information and a Forgotten Minority: Elderly Chinese Immigrants" (Su & Conaway, 1995)

Immigrant Children Mediators (ICM):
Information Givers vs. Barriers
(Chu, 1999)

ICMs did not impart all the information they obtained to their parents. Fifty-five percent indicated that they did not impart all the information stating that it was their decision to do so, that their parents did not need to know everything, and it was easier that way. However, a difference was observed between Korean American participants and Mexican Americans. 70% of Korean Americans did not impart all the information, 16% would, depending on the situation, and 14% would impart all information word for word. Of Mexican Americans, 40% did not impart all the information, 33%

Literature Review

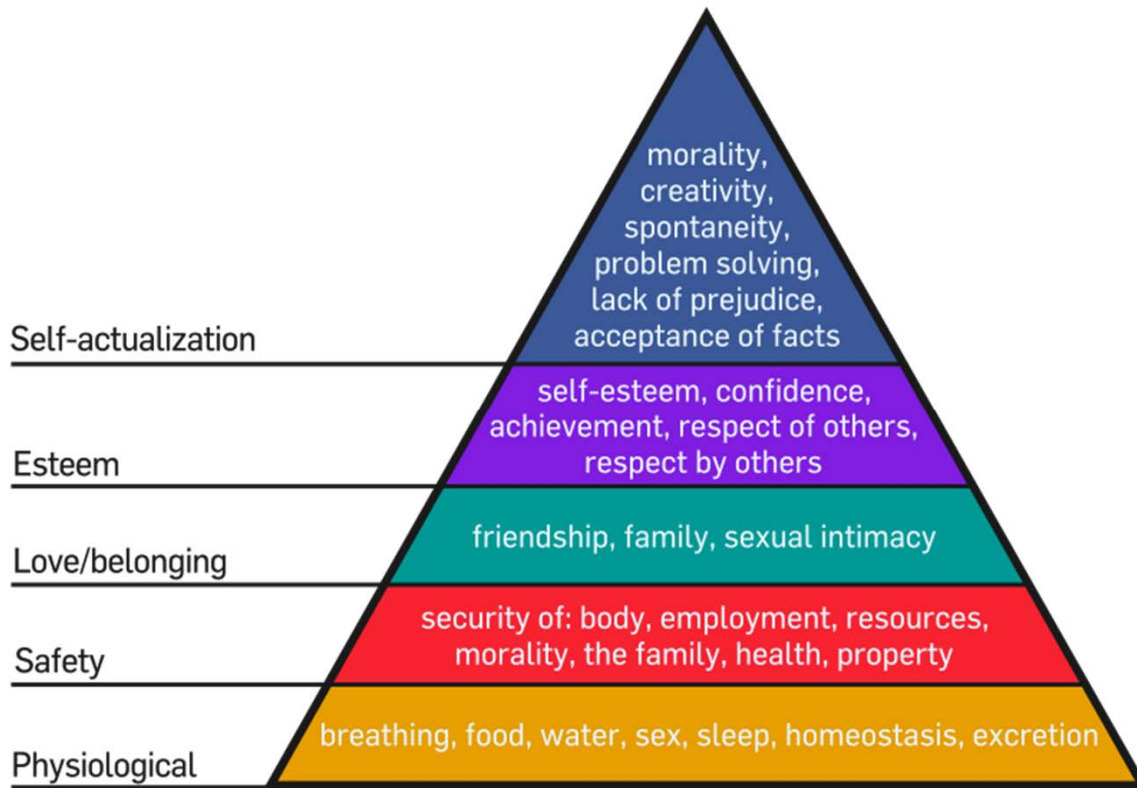
Further study/forecasting

- Further study on the complex roles of different social types in immigrants' information behaviour.
 - as suggested by Fisher et al. (2004)
 - Example: how do roles in culture (e.g. elders) affect information behaviour of younger people? How does the information elders provide affect the value of information to youth?
- Identifying how to facilitate information literacy through programs & services
 - Greater problem for new immigrants as they are confined by language literacy at the same time; how can professionals help?
 - How does native language material help immigrants? What kind of materials are most useful to them?

Themes in Literature Review

- Kinds of information immigrants seek
 - Basic human living needs
- Information Sources
 - Interpersonal sources
 - Communities
- Barriers to Information
 - Language
 - Technology literacy

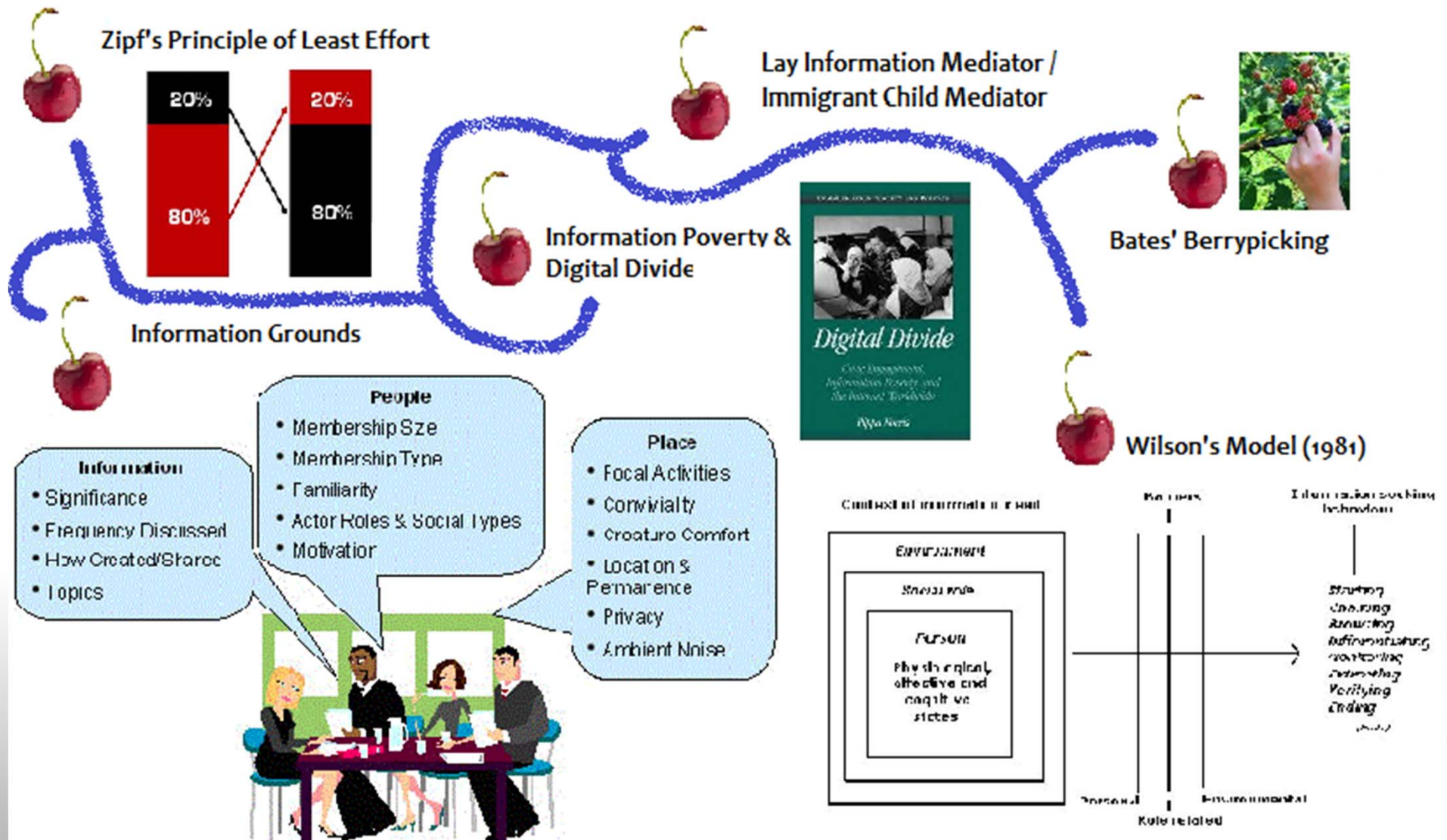
Kinds of Information



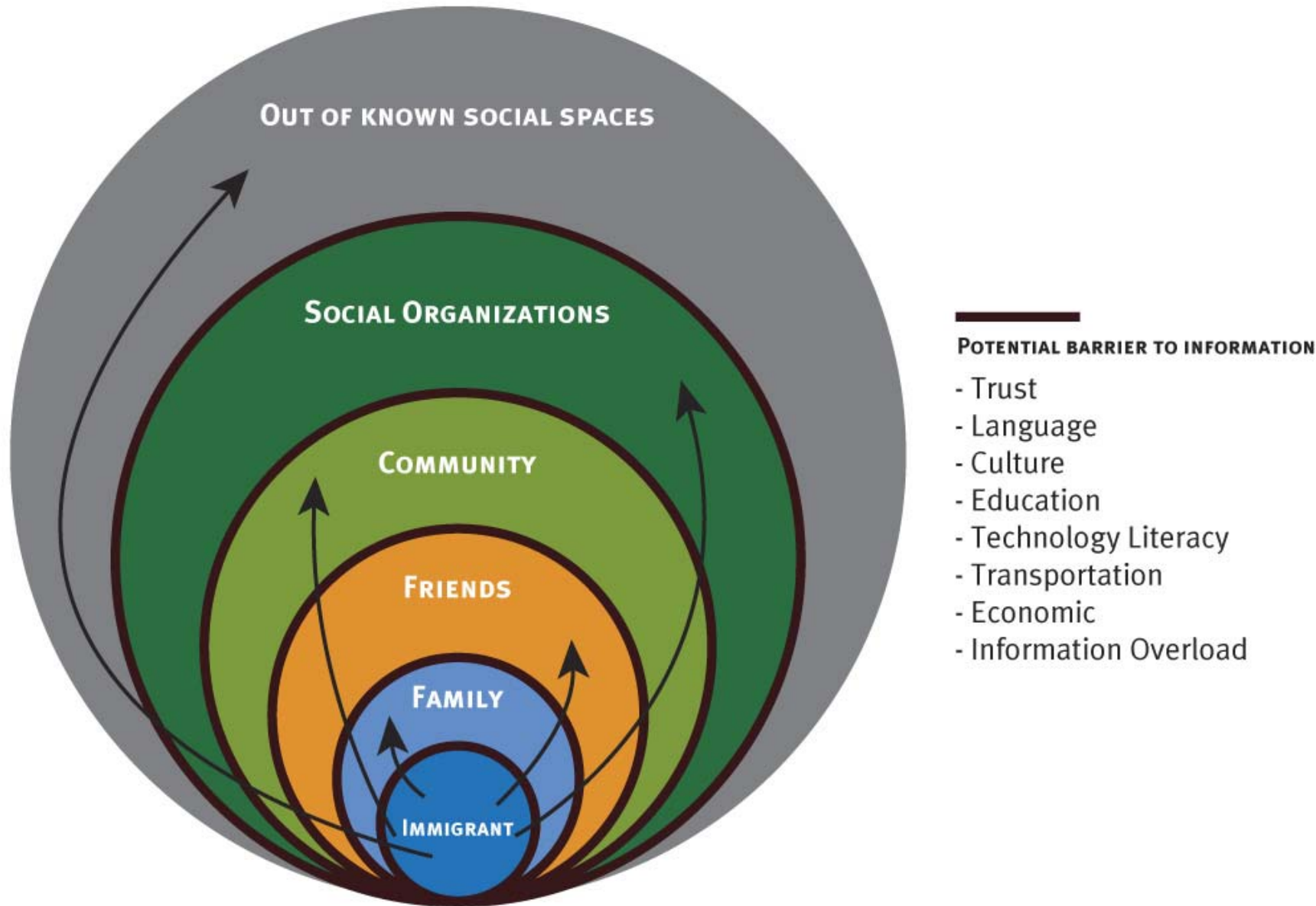
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- Shelter/security
- Jobs/employment
- Language and communication ability
- Health/healthcare
- Education

Our 'Berrypicking' Approach to Models & Theories



Pre-Fieldwork Information Behavior Model



Fieldwork Overview

- Refugee Women's Alliance, ESL Class
- Cascadia Community College, "Talk Time"
- Seattle Public Library - Central Library

INFORMATION WORLD'S SURVEY
UW Library & Information Science 510 - Class Project
Andrea, Terri, Monica, Carl, Gaby

SECTION 1: About You

1. Where were you born? (If n/a blank)

2. When did you move to the United States?

___ Less than 1 year ago
___ 1 - 5 years ago
___ More than 5 years ago

3. What language do you speak most at home? (If n/a blank)

4. Are you male or female? (circle)

Male Female

5. How old are you? (If n/a blank)

SECTION 2: Information Needs

6. What kinds of information do you look for most often? (Choose 2)

___ Health / Health care
___ Jobs / Employment
___ Transportation (Bus, maps, etc)
___ Financial
___ Fun / Entertainment
___ Classes
___ Community events
___ Other: _____

7. Is there anything else you want to share about the kinds of information you need? (If n/a blank)

SECTION 3: Sources for Information

8. Where do you go when you need answers on health/healthcare? (Choose 2)

___ I don't look for this type
___ Friends or family members
___ Place of worship (like a church or mosque)
___ Restaurant or cafe
___ Social services center (like NWHA)
___ English language class
___ Public library
___ Computer / internet
___ TV, radio, newspaper
___ Other: _____

9. Where do you go when you need answers on education/education? (Choose 2)

___ I don't look for this type
___ Friends or family members
___ Place of worship (like a church or mosque)
___ Restaurant or cafe
___ Social services center (like NWHA)
___ English language class
___ Public library
___ Computer / internet
___ TV, radio, newspaper
___ Other: _____

10. Where do you go when you need answers on business? (Choose 2)

___ I don't look for this type
___ Friends or family members
___ Place of worship (like a church or mosque)
___ Restaurant or cafe
___ Community center (like Ethiopian Community)
___ Social services organization (like NWHA)
___ English language class
___ Public library
___ Computer / internet
___ TV, radio, newspaper
___ Other: _____

1

Methods

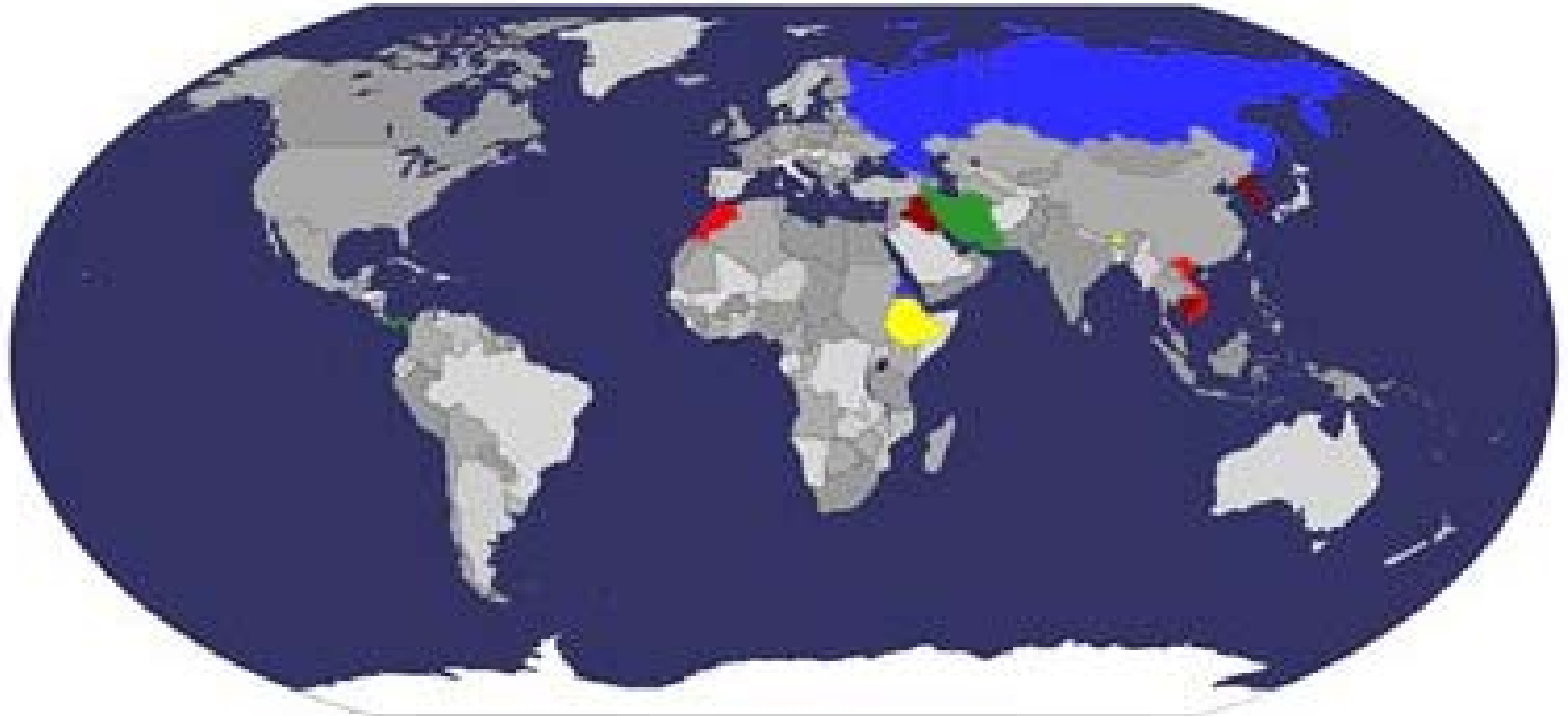
Survey

Focus Groups

Interviews



Participant Demographics



Countries of Birth

Bhutan, Cambodia, South Korea, Vietnam, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Morocco, Somalia, Panama, Russia, Iraq, Iran

Fieldwork at Refugee Women's Alliance



ReWA

Empowering families, strengthening communities



**2010 International
Women's Day
Celebration**

ReWA is a non-profit, multi-ethnic organization that promotes inclusion, independence, personal leadership, and strong communities by providing refugee and immigrant women and their families with culturally and linguistically appropriate services. ReWA advocates for social justice, public policy changes, and equal access to services while respecting cultural values and the right to self-determination.

ReWA's SERVICES

Click on the links below to get a list of ReWA's services translated into the listed language.

[Arabic](#)

[Burmese](#)

[Chinese](#)

[English](#)

[Nepali](#)

[Russian](#)

[Somali](#)

[Spanish](#)

[Swahili](#)

[Thai](#)

[Vietnamese](#)

Survey Participants

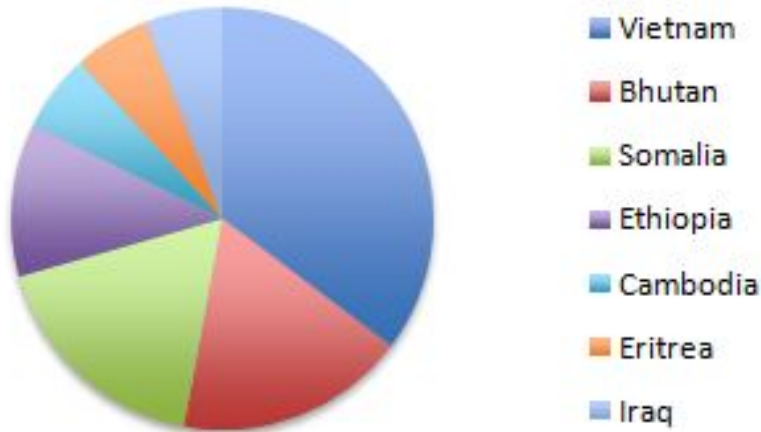
Demographic Overview



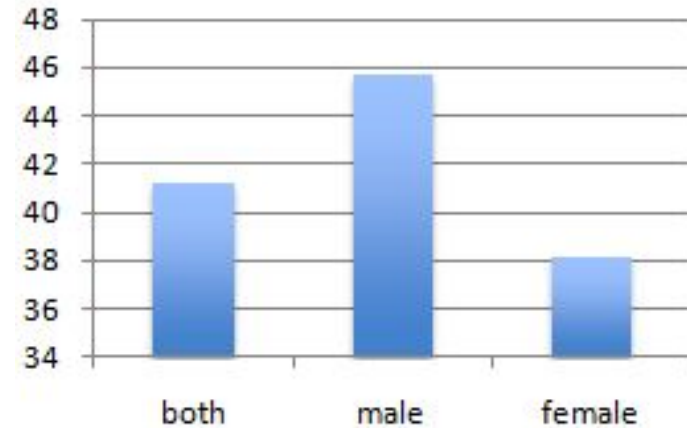
ReWA

Empowering families, strengthening communities

Country of Birth



Average Age



Time in the United States

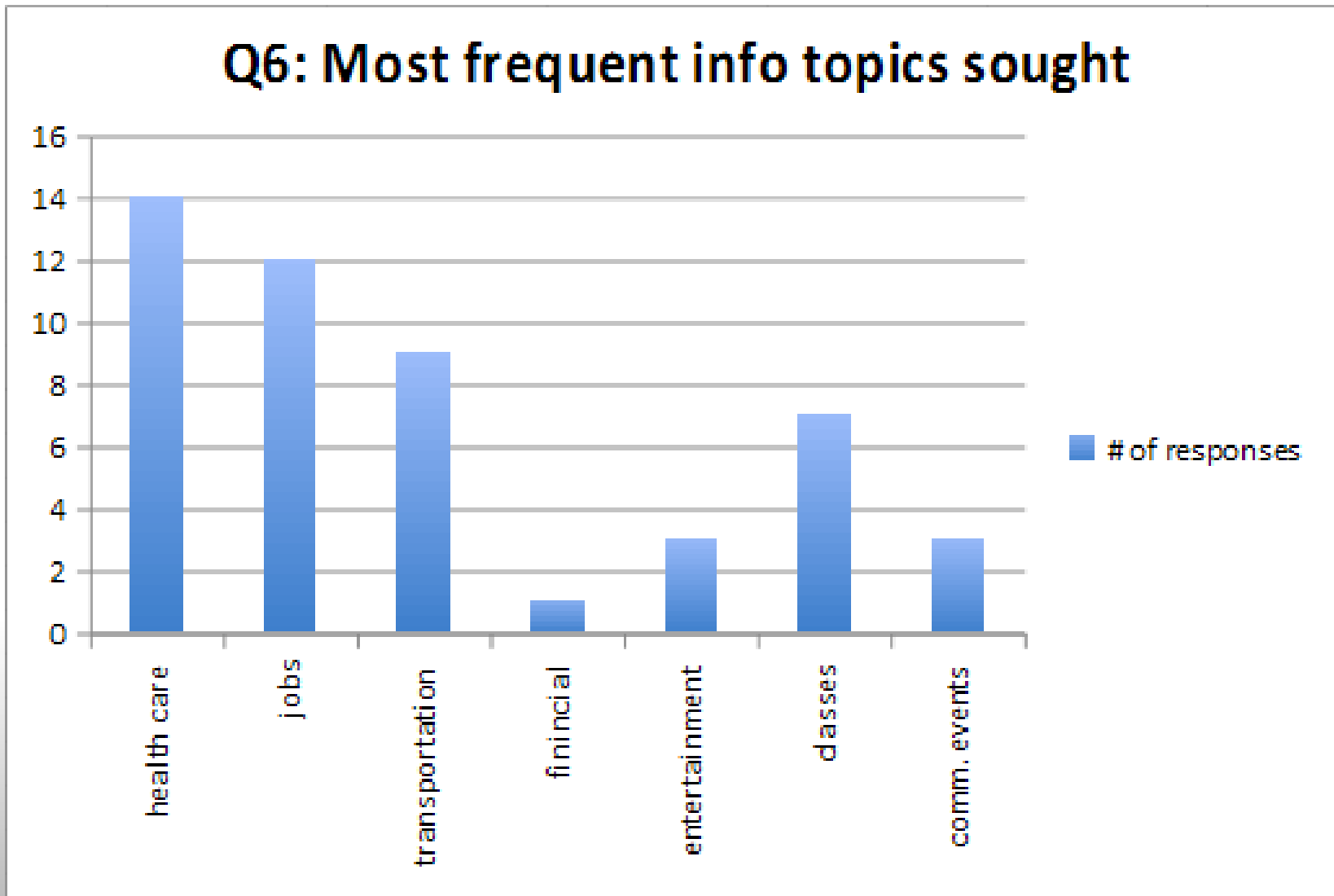


Languages spoken at home

Amharic	Kurdish
Arabic	Nepali
Cambodian	Oromo
Chinese	Somali
Dzongkha	Tigrinya
English	Vietnamese
Hindi	

Fieldwork

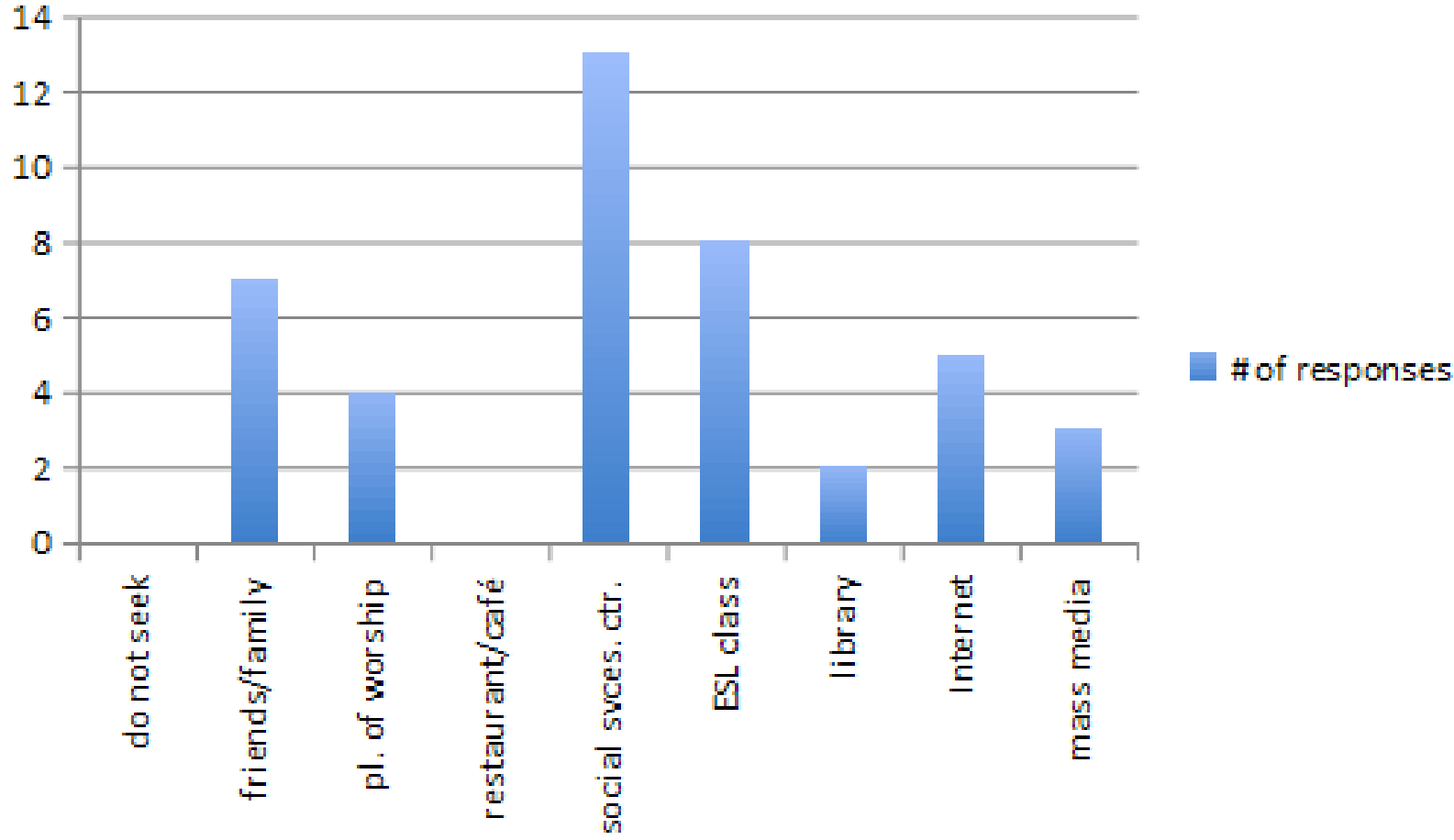
ReWA Survey - Most Sought Information



Fieldwork

ReWA Survey - Healthcare Sources

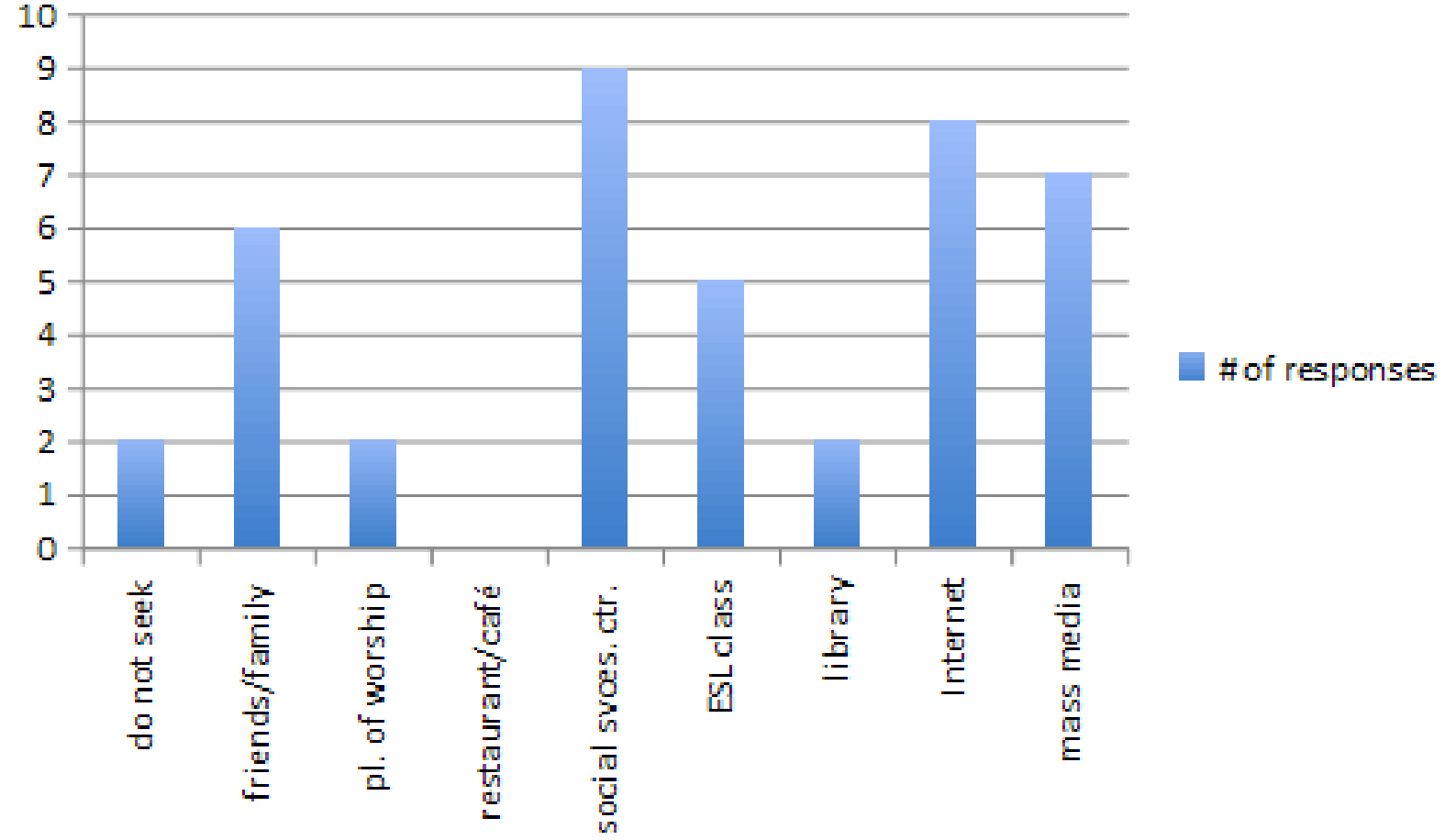
Q8: Health care info sources



Fieldwork

ReWA Survey - Employment Sources

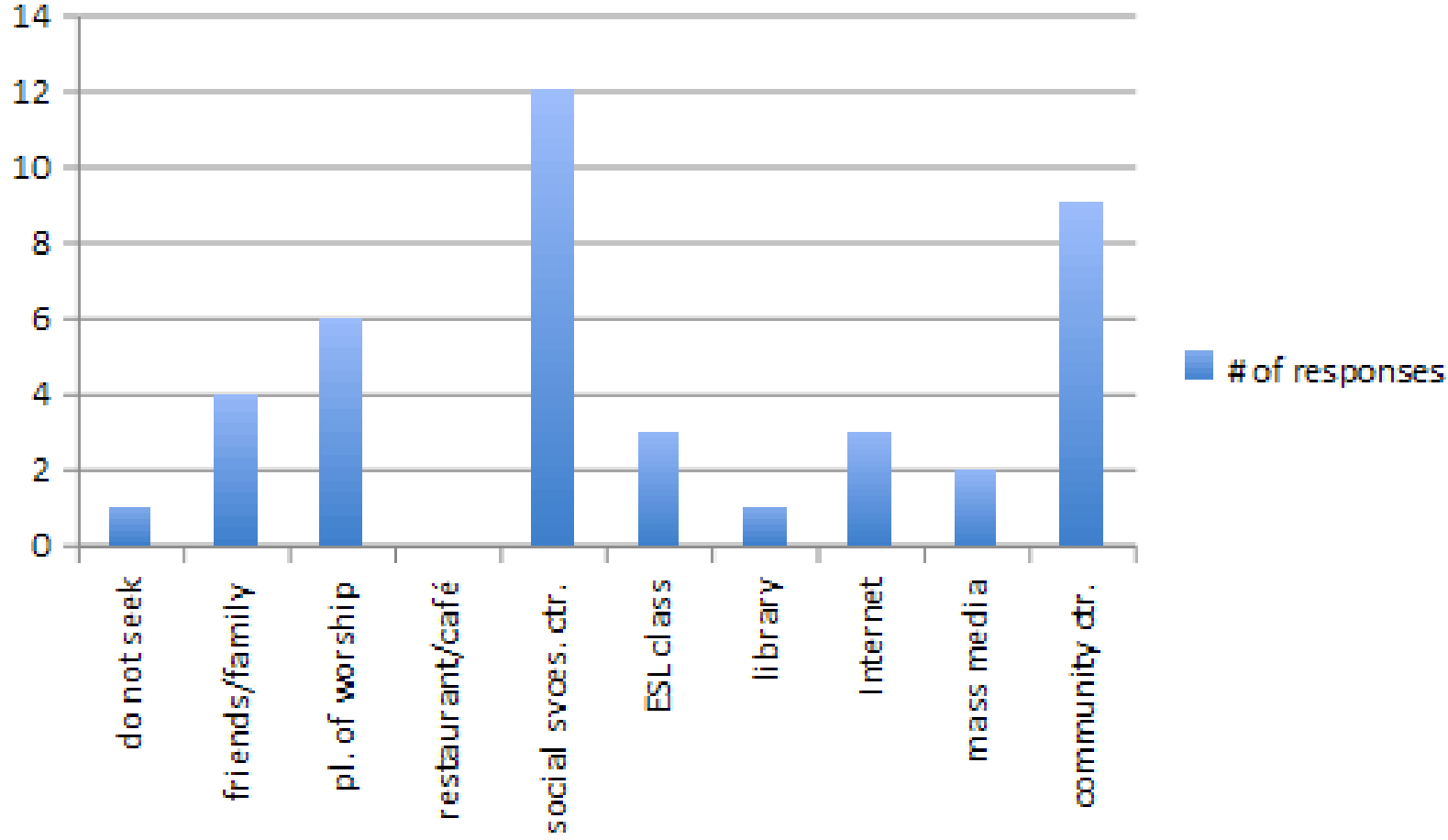
Q9: Employment info sources



Fieldwork

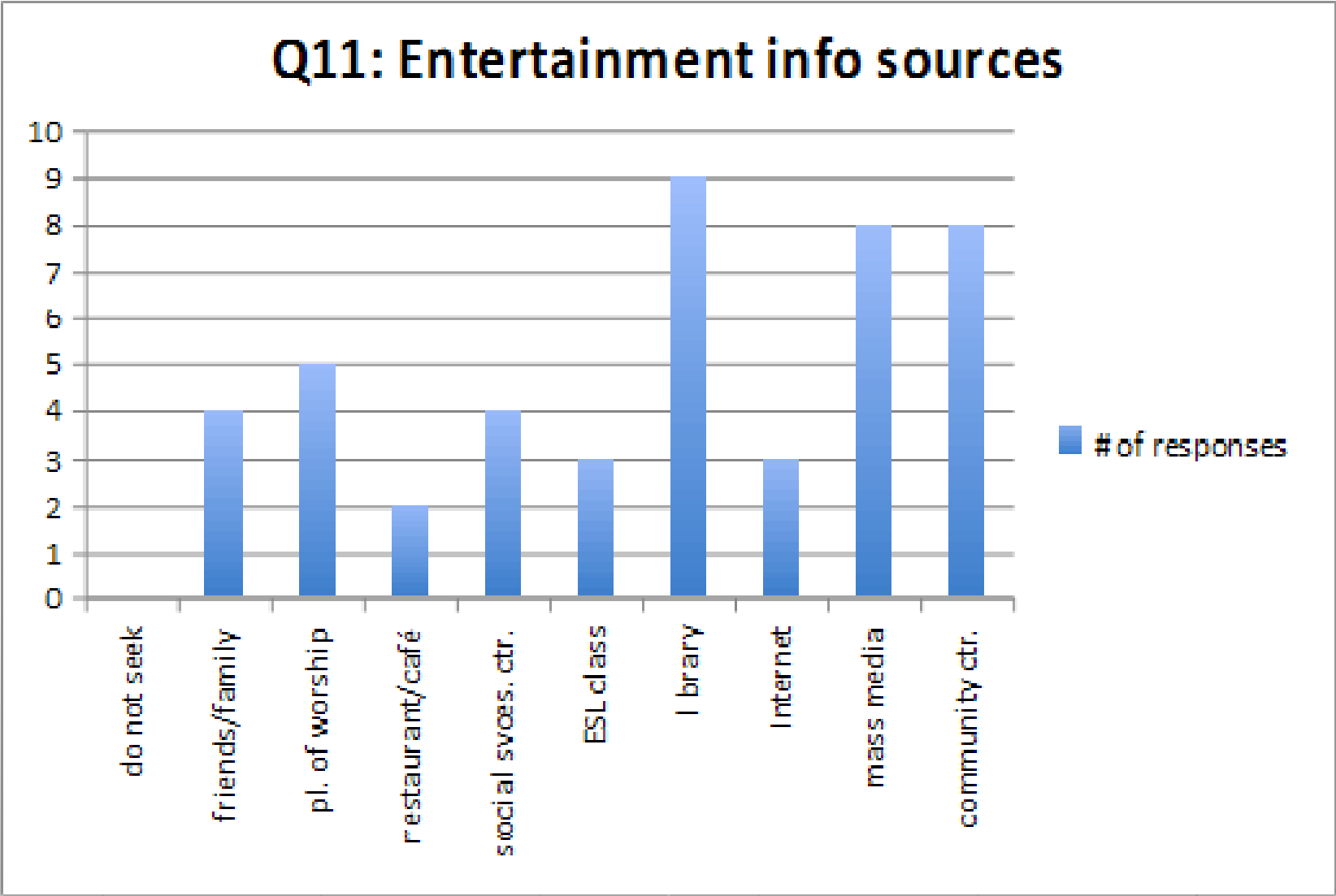
ReWA Survey - Housing Sources

Q10: Housing info sources



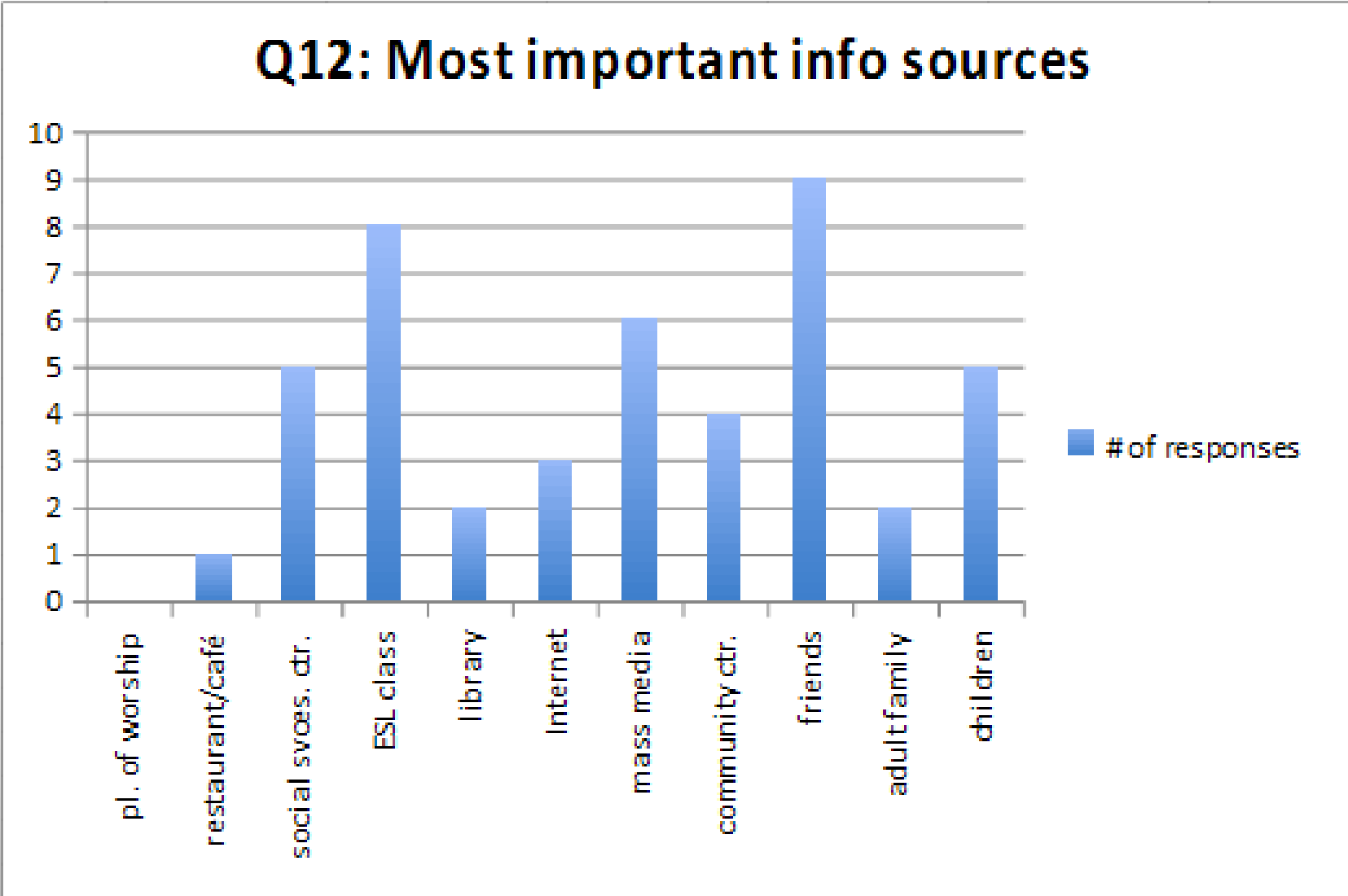
Fieldwork

ReWA Survey - Entertainment Sources



Fieldwork

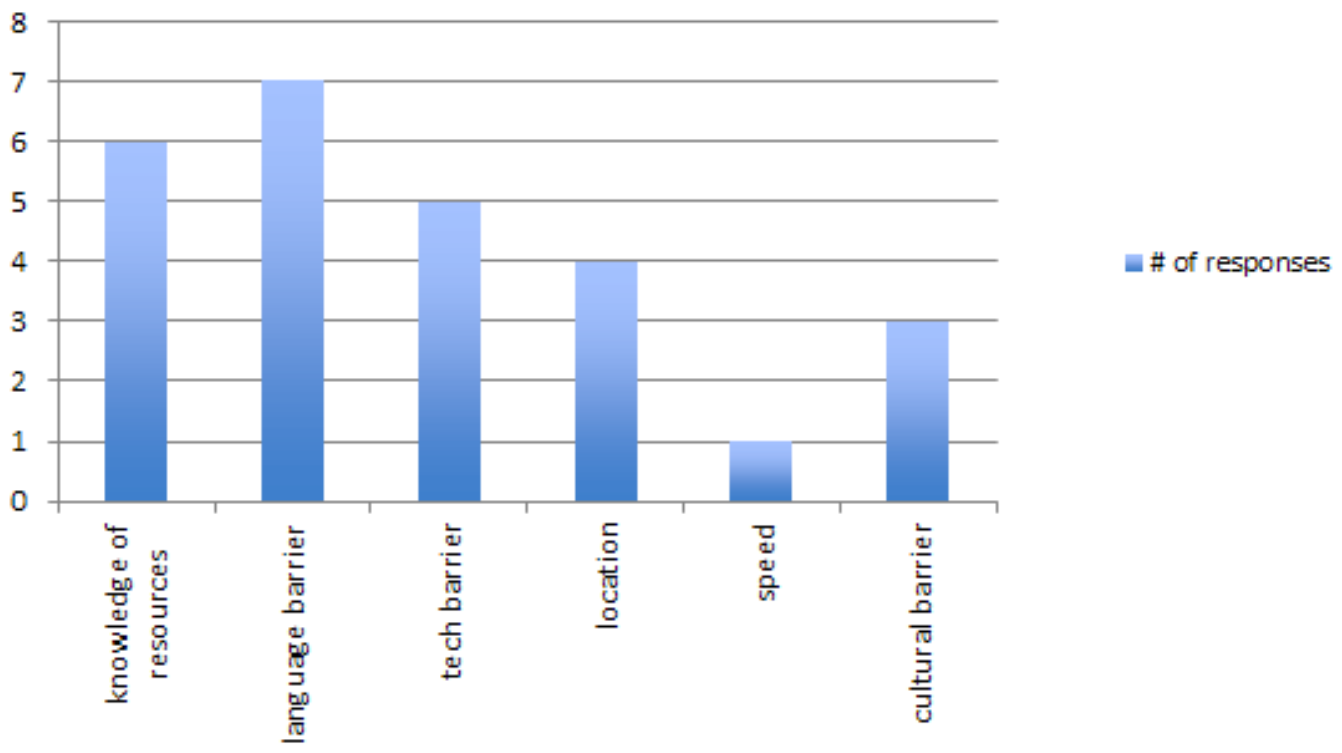
ReWA Survey - Most Important Information Sources



Fieldwork

ReWA Survey – Barriers to Information

Q14: Barriers to info seeking







Fieldwork

Refugee Women's Alliance Focus Group



ReWA

Empowering families, strengthening communities

- 4 focus group participants
- Open-ended, topical questions
- Major topics of conversations
 - Basic Information Needs  1
 - Jobs  2
 - English language skills
 - Internet use (for self and others)  3  4

Fieldwork



Refugee Women's Alliance Staff Interview



ReWA

Empowering families, strengthening communities

Major Topics:

- Barriers
 - Culture (Muslims working in markets, dress code)
 - Language (job applications)
 - Technology (many applications now internet only)
- Students exchanging topics between each other
 - EFL class information  1
- Children as Mediators
 - Anomaly: some immigrants do not trust children with interpreting content  2

Fieldwork - CCC Talk Time

Focus Group

CASCADIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Home > Programs > Adult Basic Education (ABE) > ESL

ABOUT CASCADIA

PROGRAMS

Career Paths: Degrees, Certificates, and More

Transferring to 4-Year Colleges: Options

Academic Transfer Degrees

Professional Technical Transfer Degrees

Professional Technical Certificates

English for International Students

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

ESL



About These Classes
English as a second language (ESL) classes help develop your reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in English.

New students are required to attend an educational interview

- 7 focus group participants
- Open-ended, topical questions
- Participants from: Panama, Korea (2), Morocco, Iran, Russia, & Vietnam
- Languages spoken at home: Spanish/Spanglish, Korean, Moroccan Arabic, Farsi, English, & Vietnamese


Fieldwork - CCC Talk Time

Focus Group

Most important/common information sources:


Family members, church, library, newspapers and the Internet

Several sources were used when seeking information on the same topic.

Easiest and preferred approach? **People**  1

The **Internet was an important source** of information, but comfort levels varied.

Barriers included:

- information overload
- language ability  2
- cultural differences
- difficulty using computers

Fieldwork

Seattle Public Library, Central Library

Valerie Wonder

ESL & Literacy Program Manager

- Services
- Information Seeking Behavior
 - outreach & publicity
 - information seeking
 - barriers
 - other

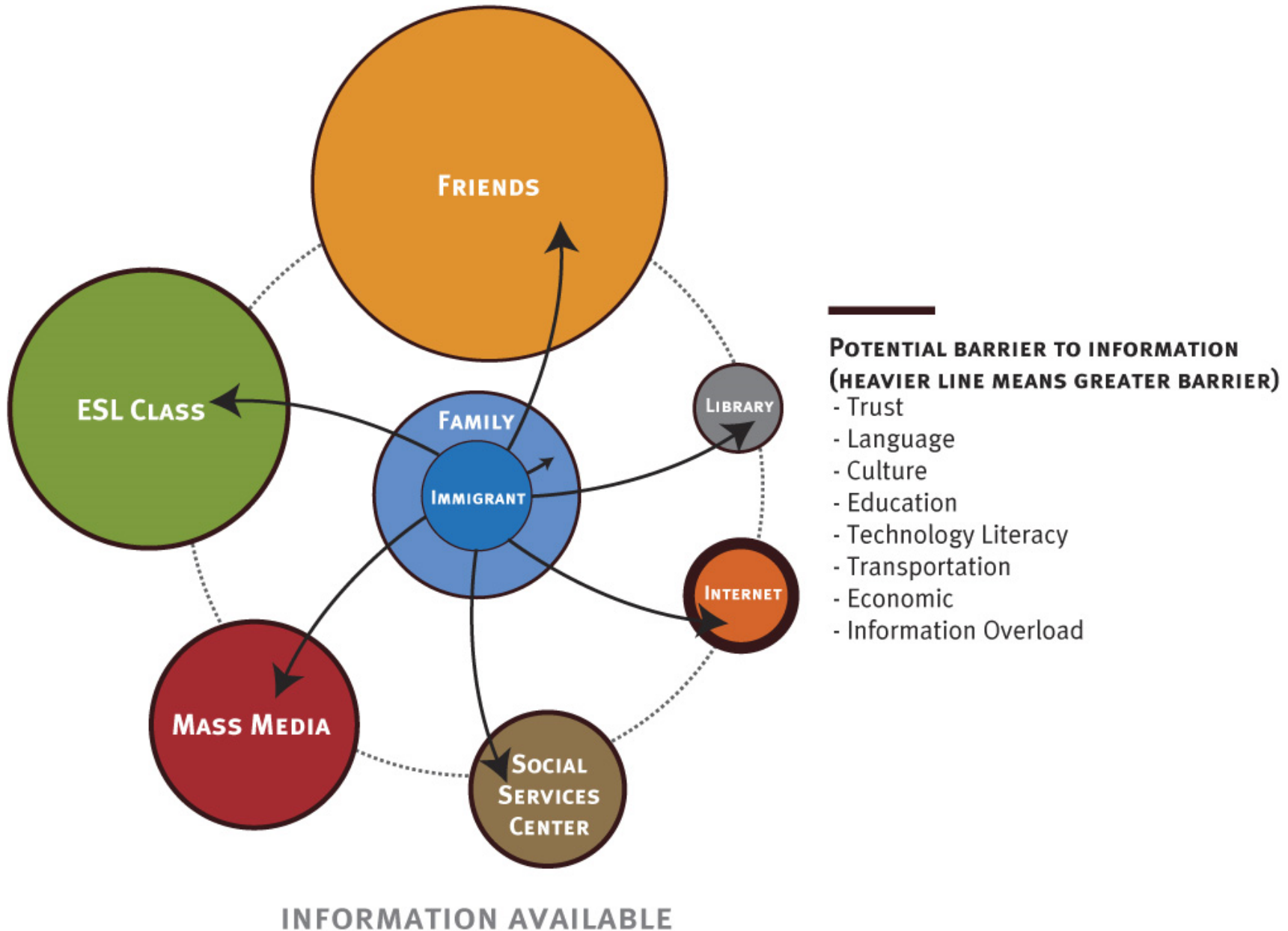


The screenshot shows the Seattle Public Library website. At the top, the logo features a blue square with a white globe icon, followed by the text "The Seattle Public Library". Navigation links include "Home", "Audiences", "Using the Library", and "Library C". Below this is the URL ".literacy/ESL". A search bar is present with the text "SEARCH THE LIBRARY" and radio buttons for "Catalog", "This Site", and "Articles". A "Find" button is to the right of the search input. Below the search bar is a link for "Advanced Search Options".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Audiences" and lists "Children", "Teens", "Adults", and "Literacy/ESL". Below "Literacy/ESL" are links for "Literacy/ESL Calendar", "Citizenship Help", "Literacy/ESL Online Resources", and "Computer Learning". The right column is titled "LITERACY NEWS" and "ESL NEWS". Below these titles is a photograph of three people: a woman in a black hijab, a man in a white shirt, and a man in a red shirt.

At the bottom of the page, there is a list of language services: "ADA/Special Services", "Español", "中文", "Tiếng Việt", "Русский", and "Soomaali". Each language service has a small icon to its right.

Information Behavior Model



Information Behavior Model - 2



Implications - Professional Practice

Continual assessment of changing population

Implementing inclusion and diversity training for staff

Collaboration and outreach between varying social service, government, educational, and community organizations

Multi-generational programs

Language, technology, and information literacy programming

Researchers, or interpreters, who speak the native language

The screenshot displays the USCIS website interface. At the top left is the USCIS logo with the text "U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services". To the right is a navigation bar with links for "Home | Español | Blog | Index", a search box, and a "Search" button. Below the navigation bar are tabs for "FORMS", "NEWS", "RESOURCES", "LAWS", "OUTREACH", and "ABOUT US". The main content area is titled "Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants" and includes a description of the guide's purpose and availability in 14 languages. A green arrow points to a list of PDF links for the guide in various languages, including English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Polish.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Home | Español | Blog | Index
Search Search
Entire Site Just this section

FORMS NEWS RESOURCES LAWS OUTREACH ABOUT US

Home > RESOURCES > Resources for New Immigrants Printer Friendly

Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants

The United States has a long history of welcoming immigrants from all over the world. USCIS is committed to helping them successfully integrate into American civic culture.

Through the landmark publication Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants, we offer a comprehensive guide containing practical information to help immigrants settle into everyday life in the United States, as well as basic civics information that introduces new immigrants to the U.S. system of government.

This guide is available in 14 languages. Welcome to the United States is also available for purchase in English, Spanish, and Chinese through the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). To order a print version of this publication, follow the U.S. Government Printing Office link to the right.

This page can be found at <http://www.uscis.gov/newimmigrants>

Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (English Version) (1595KB PDF)
Brochure - Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (English Version) (749KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Arabic Version) (2229KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Chinese Version) (3626KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (French Version) (2123KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Haitian Creole Version) (2094KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Korean Version) (2227KB PDF)
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Polish Version) (2289KB PDF)

Implications - Systems Design

Multilingual information retrieval systems

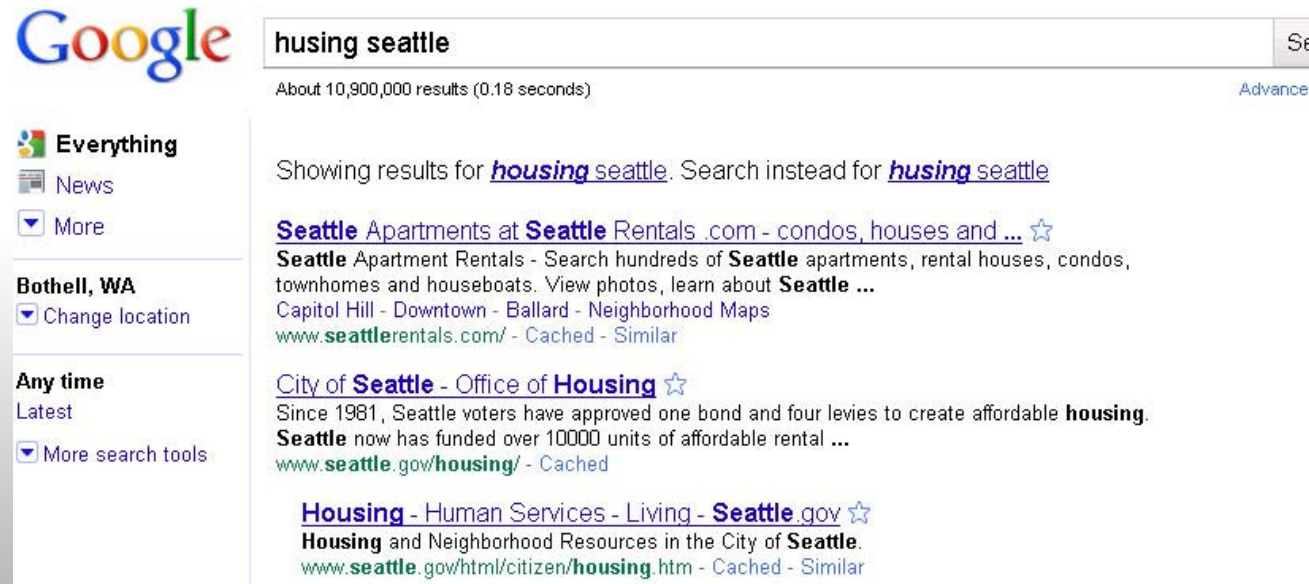
Culturally appropriate indexing language

Online translation

- o built into systems or applications

Simpler searching, Spelling corrections

- o "did you mean?" suggestions



The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "husing seattle". Below the search bar, it indicates "About 10,900,000 results (0.18 seconds)". A message states "Showing results for [housing seattle](#). Search instead for [housing seattle](#)". The search results are as follows:

- Seattle Apartments at Seattle Rentals .com - condos, houses and ...** ☆
Seattle Apartment Rentals - Search hundreds of Seattle apartments, rental houses, condos, townhomes and houseboats. View photos, learn about Seattle ...
Capitol Hill - Downtown - Ballard - Neighborhood Maps
www.seattlerentals.com/ - Cached - Similar
- City of Seattle - Office of Housing** ☆
Since 1981, Seattle voters have approved one bond and four levies to create affordable housing. Seattle now has funded over 10000 units of affordable rental ...
www.seattle.gov/housing/ - Cached
- Housing - Human Services - Living - Seattle.gov** ☆
Housing and Neighborhood Resources in the City of Seattle.
www.seattle.gov/html/citizen/housing.htm - Cached - Similar

On the left side of the search results, there are filters for "Everything", "News", "More", "Bothell, WA", "Change location", "Any time", "Latest", and "More search tools".

Implications

Policy-Making

*State and Federal
Government*

Community Agencies

Naturalization & Citizenship

Common English language

Funding/Grants



U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2008) Task Force on New Americans

image: <http://www.waterencyclopedia.com/Oc-Po/Policy-Making-Process.html>

Final thoughts

