

*' Conceptualising the Role of Intermediaries
in Developing SMEs' ICT Capabilities'*

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Abstract

The concept of absorptive capacity has been increasingly applied to SMEs in the analysis of capability development, (see for example, Gray 2006; Harrington and Guimaraes, 2005). Equally, there has been a growing interest in the analysis of the role played by various intermediaries in knowledge acquisition by SMEs, especially at a regional/cluster level, such as the work by Bennett et al (2005) and Dyer and Ross (2007) for example has demonstrated how different intermediaries are trusted by SMEs. However, what is missing is an integrated framework that brings together these two somewhat separate strands of theoretical development. The conceptual framework proposed here is an attempt to clarify the mechanisms at work in developing ICT capabilities within SMEs by bringing together two different areas of theoretical development.