

Acknowledgment

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Abstract

Organizational media choice refers to the decision process of choosing a particular medium to communicate within an organization. Media richness theory and social influence theory are two prevalent media choice theories in the literature. This study proposed two new factors, message polarity (whether the message is a good or bad news to the recipient) and communication orientation (the intentions of the communicator) in determining media choice. A third factor hierarchy which refers to the status difference between the communication parties was also investigated. The study adopted policy capturing as the design. Employees from various organizations in Hong Kong (N=178) responded to a series of communication scenarios and attitudinal items in a survey. Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was used as the analytical technique to deal the multilevel data structure. Results showed that employees were more likely to choose telephone, electronic mail and written medium when communicating positive messages. They were more likely to choose electronic mail and written medium when they were task-oriented. They were more likely to choose face-to-face and written medium for downward communication and telephone for horizontal communication. The results also supported the notion of using HLM for the current survey design. Failures to support some of the hypotheses and implications of the results were discussed.