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Understanding Cultural Influence on Media Choice: A Cross-Cultural Study within Multinational Organization Setting

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a study investigating the influences of cultures on communication media choice within a multinational organization (MNO). A questionnaire was used to collect data from 121 respondents of a multinational organization across four countries; Australia, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia. Cultural level difference was found to influence perception of media richness, task equivocality and media preference. However, cultural differences did not explain relationships between the cultural individualism/collectivism dimensions and media choice constructs. Cultural group variable indicated that cultural group was a much more powerful predictor than individual-level cultural dimension for media choice behavior within MNO. The implications of the results for further research and practice were discussed.

Key words: Communication media choice, perceived media richness, task equivocality, media preference, cross-cultural study.

1. Introduction

The increasing dominance of multinational organizations (MNOs) and the globalization of world markets have exposed people to different cultures. As a result, cultural differences have become a focus of attention, and their effect on work behavior is becoming more evident. This has suggested the need for more cross-cultural research. This need is perhaps even more important for the newly emerging and quickly changing information systems (IS) field as information technologies have allowed organizations to expand beyond the confines of national boundaries to support the global operations of their parent organizations.

The research presented in this paper will focus specifically on one aspect of IS research: communication media choice study, examining cross-cultural differences on media choice by individuals across cultures. Communication is fundamental to the managerial role (Mintzberg 1973). The introduction of various sophisticated electronic communication systems has provided more opportunities and necessities for different culture interactions. Therefore, theories of media choice must be validated in cross-cultural settings. The growth of global businesses is a major impetus driving scholars and practitioners to question the universal applicability of existing theories and practices within varying cultural settings where different cultural norms inherent.

Though culture is a potential determinant of media choice behavior (Rice and Webster 1999; Webster and Trevino 1995), it has not featured prominently in media choice research. In addition, existing studies examining cross-cultural differences on media choice behavior have typically focused on subjects from different countries, often in different organizations,

and facing different product-market environment (e.g., Rice, D'Ambra and More 1998; Ruth 1993; Straub 1994). Therefore, it is difficult to separate country effects from differing organizational culture existing in different national environment. In this study, we examine organizations based in different countries which are the subsidiaries of one MNO; thus, they are sharing the same organizational culture, and most notably of technological origin--institutional frameworks, organizational patterns and structures, and management practices across countries are going to be converging. The objective of the current research is to compare an American-based MNO's four subsidiaries located in Australia, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia respectively. The push towards globalization behoves multinational managers to be aware of the cultural impacts on information media adoption and use. Introducing the cultural construct seems an appropriate step at this stage in multinational organizations' research.

We examine this issue from several perspectives. To begin with, at the cultural-level, we examine the cultural-level differences on media choice behavior across subsidiaries, and then, an etic relationship (Leung 1989) between cultural value and media choice behavior will be explored at individual level. Finally, discussion and implications of this paper are addressed.

2. Literature Review

Several interrelated theories have been developed to study organizational communication, including media richness theory (MRT), social presence, critical mass theory, situational factors, media symbolism, and social influence (for details, see Daft and Lengel 1986a; Daft and Lengel 1986b; Daft, Lengel and Trevino 1987; Fulk and Boyd 1991; Fulk, Schmitz and Steinfield 1990; Fulk et al. 1987; Markus 1987; Rice 1993; Rice et al. 1992a; Trevino, Daft and Lengel 1990; Webster and Trevino 1995). These theories can be categorized into two general conceptual areas: rational explanation (MRT is an example), and social explanation (social influence is an example).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationships between national culture and media choice behavior, specifically, we are focusing on three dependent variables: perceived media richness, task equivocality, and media preference in particular communication situations. Understanding how culture affects individuals' perceptions about media and use is an important step for multinational managers in order to implement and use information systems effectively. Note, however, that this research is limited to studying how media characteristics and culture interact to affect outcomes. In the "real world", other factors, such as situational factors, media symbolism, or social influence, may also impact media choice and, thus, outcomes.

2.1 Media Richness

Media Richness Theory (MRT), originally proposed by Daft and Lengel (Daft and Lengel 1984; Daft and Lengel 1986a), is the leading theory hypothesizing on how and why managers use different media. Media richness theory describes organizational communication media as possessing a set of objective characteristics that determine each medium's capacity to carry rich information, with rich information being more capable than lean information of reducing equivocality in a message receiver. All communication media are ranked along a richness hierarchy based on criteria such as speed of feedback, the form of language employed (body, natural, and/or numeric), language variety, and personal focus (Daft and Lengel 1986a; Daft, Lengel and Trevino 1987). Face-to-face is considered the richest medium

followed in decreasing order of richness by telephone, new media (such as electronic mail, voice mail), written personal, written formal, and the numeric formal media.

According to the theory, equivocal messages require media high in immediate feedback, multiple cues, natural language, and personal focus as such rich media allow shared meaning to be created between communicators. In contrast, a consensus on meaning already exists for messages low in equivocality. Thus, lean media can adequately carry these messages. The essential underlying principle of MRT is that a good match between the characteristics of a medium (such as high in media richness) and one's communication activities (such as equivocal tasks like strategic decision making) will lead to "better" (more effective, satisfying, etc.) performance (Lind and Zmud 1991; Markus 1994; Rice, Chang and Torobin 1992b; Russ, Daft and Lengel 1990; Trevino, Lengel and Daft 1987)

2.2 Cultural Model

Culture refers to a learned, socially transmitted set of behavioral standards. It is held, expressed, and shared by individuals through their personal values, norms, activities, attitudes, cognitive processes, and interpretation of symbols, feelings, ideas, reactions and morals (Douglas and Dubois 1977; Hofstede 1980; Tse, Wong and Tan 1988).

The numerous and varied definitions and conceptualizations of culture all seem to converge on three principle ideas: (1) culture is defined by patterns; (2) culture is manifested symbolically in a variety of indicators; and (3) culture is shared among two or more people. In other word, culture is the integrated, complex set of interrelated and potentially interactive pattern characteristics of a group of people(Lytle et al. 1995).

One of the most central dimensions of culture, individualism versus collectivism (I-C), has been incorporated in order to advance our research propositions that enable us to better understand employees' media choice behavior in the context of cultural differences across subsidiaries. Although there are other relevant dimensions of cultural variations, such as Rice et al. (1998) and Straub (1994) suggested, we found this dimension to be particularly suited for this specific communication media choice study and also all countries selected have cultural compatibility on this dimension.

Traditionally conceptualized as a continuum, individualism/collectivism has received considerable attention from sociologists and social psychologists to explain similarities and differences in behavior (Chinese-Culture-Connection 1987; Earley 1989; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988; Hofstede 1980; Triandis 1988a). At the individualistic end of this dimension, ties between individuals are, indeed, very loose, and people are supposed to look after their own self-interests in the domains of both work and non-work. At the collectivist end, we find societies in which social ties or bonds between individuals are very tight, and people learn to distinguish between their own in-groups and out-group. For the countries involved here, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia are very collectivistic countries(Gray and Marshall 1998; Gudykunst, Matsumoto and Ting-Toomey 1996; Hofstede 1980; Singhapakdi, Vitell and Leelakulthanit 1994; Vance et al. 1993), whereas Australia is largely individualistic in its orientation(Gudykunst, Matsumoto and Ting-Toomey 1996; Hofstede 1980; Rice, D'Ambra and More 1998; Ryan 1999).

2.3 Cultural Influence on Media Choice Behavior

Culture and communication are closely related. Since communication stimuli are processed and interpreted according to cultural characteristics, their effect on behavior is moderated by culture. The same communication stimulus may elicit different responses in different cultures (Erez & Earley 1993). Numerous studies have examined the impact of culture on communication(Erez and Early 1993; Gudykunst and Kim 1997; Gudykunst, Matsumoto

and Ting-Toomey 1996; Singelis and Brown 1995). Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) argues that I-C affects the use of low- and high-context communication. Hall (Hall 1976) points out that “A high-context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low-context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code”. Using HC communication involves using and interpreting messages that are not explicit, minimizing the content of the verbal message, and being sensitive to others. Using LC communication, in contrast, involves being direct, precise, and open. Research on cultural differences in communication supports Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey’s (1988) argument that LC and HC communication are predominant in individualistic and collectivistic cultures, respectively (Gudykunst et al. 1996; & Singelis & Brown 1995). Singelis and Brown (1995) also argue that people with collectivistic characteristics tend to make them more interdependent with more use of HC communication than one with individualistic characteristics.

Cultures modify the cognitive frames that influence communication. Individuals’ communication styles and patterns differ across cultures. Collectivistic values, associated with interdependent cognitive frames and HC communication orientation, would promote an implicit communication style, more emotional than rational, with an emphasis on group decision-making, frequent meetings, and relying on more social cues in ambiguous situations. Following this implication to communication pattern, it is reasonable to conclude that people from collectivistic culture would use face-to-face and telephone more frequently and possibly interpret situations as being more equivocal. In contrast, individualistic values, associated with independent cognitive frames and LC communication orientation, would prefer an explicit communication style, more rational than emotional, with an emphasis on individual decision-making, less meetings, and relying on less social cues in ambiguous situations. Following this implication to communication patterns, face-to-face and telephone will be less used in the same equivocal situations than do collectivism, whereas email and other less rich media will be chosen within a wide range. In a study comparing Japanese and American workers’ media choice, Straub (1994) found that Japanese workers, characterized with more collectivistic culture, have a less evaluation and less use of a less-rich medium; email, than did American workers, characterized with more individualistic culture.

2.4 Research Hypotheses

The constructs motivating this study include national cultural value of the organization (e.g., Individualism-Collectivism), perceived media richness, task equivocality, and media preference. The aim is to demonstrate the effects of culture on media choice behavior.

As this is a study of culture influence on media choice, first we should examine whether culture has impacts on it. Once cultural level influence has been determined further questions of how culture influences individual behavior can be considered.

The theoretical context of this work is media richness theory. Media richness theory hypothesizes in the impact of the perceptions of media richness and task equivocality in media choice. Within this cross-cultural study the measurement of cultural differences on the perception of media richness and task equivocality must be determined prior to further analysis on media choice.

Culture impacts the individuals by serving as a frame to organize cognition and behavior, and by providing norms for appropriate responses (Lytle et al. 1995). Therefore, we argue

that for MNO employees, even though sharing common perceptions and behaviors because they are oriented toward the same purpose, national culture will still manifest its influence on media choice behavior. We hypothesize, that despite the increasing globalization in MNO, cultural-level effects on individual's perception of media richness, task equivocality, and preferred media use will persist. Accordingly,

H1: There are significant cultural-level differences on the perception of media richness.

H2: There are significant cultural-level differences on the perception of task equivocality.

H3: There are significant cultural-level differences on media preferences.

Given the existence of differences of media choice behavior across cultures, the issue remains of how culture causes such differences. No previous studies have explicitly focused on the examination of direct relationship between culture and media choice behavior. Formally,

H4: Collectivists will perceive face-to-face and telephone more rich than individualists.

H5: Collectivists will perceive email and paper written documents less rich than individualists.

H6: Collectivists will perceive communication tasks more equivocal than individualists.

H7: Collectivists will be inclined to more use for richer media than individualists.

H8: Collectivists will be inclined to less use for less rich media than individualists.

3. Methods

3.1 Samples and Procedures

Surveys were conducted within an American-based multinational food company across four countries: Australia, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia. An English version of the questionnaire was used throughout so that problems related to survey language translation were minimized. The instrument was pre-tested on a small sample of Australian subjects to determine the clarity and relevance of the instrument. After minor clarifications following the pre-test, the instruments were then administered to employees in each of the participating countries. After one or two follow-up letters, a total of 18 (100 percent response rate), 21 (52.5 percent response rate), 33 (82.5 percent response rate), and 49 (32.7 percent response rate) useable questionnaires were returned from Thailand, Korea, Malaysia, and Australia respectively. A detailed profile of four groups of respondents was provided in Tables 1 & 2.

3.2 Measures

Communication Media Preferences: The media preference instrument was a refined version of an instrument that has been used in several previous studies (D'Ambra 1995; D'Ambra and Rice 1994; Rice, D'Ambra and More 1998). The information media used for this study consisted of face-to-face, telephone, electronic mail, addressed written paper documents (AWD) (e.g., business memo, notes, and letters), and unaddressed written paper documents (UWD) (e.g., bulletin, general memo, and numeric reports). The Cronbach's alpha was .93 and .71 respectively for two generated factors.

Perceived Media Richness: The previous multi-item richness scale (D'Ambra 1995; D'Ambra and Rice 1994) was used to rate each of selected media's perceived richness. The

alpha reliability for 4-item media richness scale was generally satisfactory with ranging from .69 to .82.

Communication Task Equivocality: The same tasks as media preference constructs were used here. To capture the corresponding task equivocality, we used Goodhue (Goodhue 1995; Goodhue and Thompson 1995) three-item task equivocality scale. In this paper, the alpha reliability for 3-item equivocality mean scale was also generally satisfactory with ranging from .73 to .81.

Cultural Value Dimension: Individualism/Collectivism: Rather than using Hofstede's indices of national culture (1980) directly in this analysis, we measured cultural value patterns at the individual level using 7-item questionnaire based on several previous questionnaires found to be valid and reliable across a number of cultural samples (Earley 1989; Earley 1993; Hofstede 1980; Hui 1988; Triandis et al. 1988b). One item was dropped after conducting a principal component analysis followed by a Varimax orthogonal rotation. The alpha reliability was .63.

Demographics: In addition to the above variables, computer experience, average weekly email use, number of years experience using email, email and telephone availability, respondent's sex, age, educational level, organizational level, and work tenure were included in the questionnaire.

4. Results

4.1 Group Differences on Cultural Dimension

All groups must indicate a significant difference on the cultural dimension, that is, the dimension must prove capable of distinguishing between cultural groups. Otherwise, it would not be possible to test whether culture is a causal explanation for differences on media choice behavior. An ANOVA analysis was conducted using all scales as dependent variable and cultural group as the independent variable. The overall F for I-C dimension was significant at 5.062, $p < .01$. Since the overall F's were significant, planned comparisons could be made. Using Tukey HSD at the $\alpha = .05$ level, analysis showed that for I-C dimension, Thais were significantly more collective than Australian and Malaysian. Korean was placed between the two groups.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Unlike most studies done in Western culture, this study was the first one to compare cultural influence on media choice behavior in these four countries. Therefore, it was decided to have a slightly higher significance level, $\alpha = .1$ or 10 percent for testing research hypotheses (Bang 1993).

The first three hypotheses tackle the basic questions of whether any cultural level differences exist at all. The existences of significant culture effects were established using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) that showed that between-culture variances in all constructs were significantly greater than within-culture variances.

The results of analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the cultural level measure of perceived media richness supported Hypothesis 1, that there were significant cultural level differences on perceptions of media richness ($F=6.439, p < .01$; $F=3.784, p < .05$; $F=5.702, p < .01$; $F=2.759, p < .05$; $F=2.207, p < .1$ for face-to-face, telephone, email, AWD, and UWD respectively). Similarly, the results from analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the

cultural level measure of task equivocality supported hypothesis 2 ($F=3.931, p<.05$). Finally, the results from multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) for the cultural level measure of media preferences mostly supported hypothesis 3, that there were significant cultural level differences on most media preferences except face-to-face ($F=11.223, p<.01$; $F=3.198, p<.05$; $F=15.797, p<.01$; $F=6.898, p<.01$ respectively).

Hypotheses 4 through 8 propose a causal relationship between these cultural group differences; specifically, differences on cultural dimension of Individualism and Collectivism is hypothesized to cause various differences on media preference based on perceptions of media richness and task equivocality.

Separate regression equations were constructed for each dependent media choice construct to test the hypothesized relationships. Each dependent variable was regressed on this cultural dimension. Table 3 showed the results for these regressions. This table failed to support hypotheses 4 to 8. As indicated in Table 3, the lack of significance of all regression equations failed to confirm hypothesis 4 to 8.

5. Discussion and Implications

This study attempt to investigate the existence of culture effects on media choice behavior within one MNO. We suggest that there are significant cultural-level differences on media choice behavior constructs, such as perception of media richness, task equivocality, and media preference. The ANOVA and MANOVA supported these hypotheses. Further, the study is an effort to examine the relationship between cultural value dimension and those constructs. However, the above regressions which used the individual level of analysis did not provide the explanatory power of the cultural dimension on them, that is, etic relationship between cultural I-C dimension and media choice behavior does not exist. These findings suggest that the cultural dimension considered is not among the most significant variables affecting the choice of media. However, we did find out the cultural level differences on the same constructs through testing H1 to H3 at cultural group level. These conflicting results point to the need to understand what factors do determine such differences.

Leung and Bond (Leung and Bond 1989), writing in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, have explored the meaning and usefulness of two types of dimensions: the etic dimensions and the cultural dimensions. The etic dimensions allow us to predict individual phenomena, regardless of the individual's cultural background. The cultural dimensions allow us to predict cultural-level phenomena, in which culture is the unit of analysis. An etic, or universal, relationship emerges only from an individual analysis. A strong etic dimension would emerge from the cross-cultural analysis as well as the individual analysis. They propose that there is no logical reason to expect those cultural dimensions and etic dimensions correspond to each other and different theories will be needed to explain these different types of variation.

In addition, no matter how much the within-cultural group variation could help determine which cultural dimensions are explanatory mechanisms for particular organizational behavior, such as media choice behavior, these dimensions are the property of the cultural group. These individual dimensions offered less value as independent variables, as compared to cultural group, since culture "group" is more than the sum of its individual members. In other words, the level of theory for both the dimension and media choice behavior is the cultural group. Since cultural group is the level of theory for this study, an independent variable with this level of measurement and analysis makes generalizations of

cultural group differences conceptually cleaner. Brett et al. (Brett et al. 1997,p114) argued that

“when researchers specify that the level of theory is the individual, they are then predicting that group members are independent of the group’s influence with respect to the constructs of interest. In this case, the mean score of the cultural group on the cultural dimension of interest would be irrelevant to predicting each individual member’s score, and the study is not cross-cultural”

Therefore, while it is not necessary that measurement or analysis be at the cultural group level(Lytle et al. 1995; Rousseau 1985), some group level analyses would increase confidence in cultural group level generalization. So in addition to the above ANOVA’s and MANOVA’s (H1-H3 on cultural group level), cultural groups, as dummy variables, were added to the regression equation. In identifying strong etic relationships, Leung (1989) suggested the similar method to test if individual cultural dimensions account for more variance as a predictor variable than cultural group through examining the significant changes of R^2 .

Table 4(I) showed the results of all media choice constructs regressed on the cultural dimension with cultural groups added as dummy variables. The Australian sample was chosen as the baseline culture, to which the Thais (D1), Malaysian(D2), and Korean(D3) would be compared.

A surprising result was shown in Table 4 (I). All media choice constructs have been found a significant beta weight and a significant variance accounted for when cultural group was dummy coded and added to the regression equation except face-to-face preference. One problem that may arise with this type of data is multicollinearity, which is a high degree of correlation among two or more of the independent variables. Multicollinearity between the cultural dimension and the cultural group dummy variables should be expected since dimension is argued to be an operationalization of cultural group. Given the fact that cultural group has predictive power for media choice behavior when added to the regression equation as dummy variable, and the concerning of multicollinearity between cultural dimension and cultural group, a separate series of regressions were run using simply cultural group as the independent variable. These regressions will give an indication of the predictive power of each cultural group more precisely. These results were shown in Table 4 (II).

A somewhat surprising result was that the R^2 ’s between Table 4 (I) and Table 4 (II) were nearly identical. The only exceptions were the task equivocality and AWD and UWD media richness. Otherwise the R^2 were the same, implying that equations using both cultural dimension and cultural group as predictors were not better than equations which simply used cultural group as a predictors. The F values and adjusted R^2 for the original equations (with just cultural groups), the changes in F values and adjusted R^2 when both dimension and cultural group were added, and significance of these changes were shown in Table 4 (III). For eight of the constructs, there was no significant difference between using cultural group as the predictor variable versus using cultural dimension and cultural group together as the predictor variables. Only for task equivocality, was there a significant increase in prediction when dimension and cultural groups were used as predictors. AWD and UWD richness only increased marginally($p < .1$).

To sum, cultural group accounts for more variance as a predictor variable than cultural dimension. Moreover, cultural group accounts for just as much variance in media choice behavior as using both cultural group and cultural dimension. Simply being Australian or being Korean effects how you choose media for communication. Cultural group is in fact

much more powerful, in terms of the variance it accounts for, than cultural dimension acting at the individual level.

At least two possible explanations can be speculated in attempting to reconcile this effect. The first one is that the dimension measured here (I-C) is not the right one related to media choice behavior. There may be other dimensions or aspect of culture that was not measured, such as high-context versus low-context communication, power distance, or uncertainty avoidance, related to the media choice behavior. Since cultural group is the embodiment of all cultural dimensions, it would account for more variance in media choice behavior. The implication of this explanation is that further research will be needed to determine what these other causal dimensions might be.

Another reason may derive from the original definition of culture being used here, as the “integrated set” of dimensions. Perhaps something additional in the “integration” of dimensions was lost when culture was broken down into discrete, independent dimensions. This is to say that the culture whole is more than the “sum” of its individual dimensional parts. The implication suggested by this reason would be that future research should begin to study more rich, detailed cultural group profile by complementing quantitative analyses with qualitative descriptions, explanations, and archival measures of dimensions. Cultural group level analysis should be considered together.

Several limitations in this study need to be recognized. First, the sampling design of this study restricts generalizability inasmuch as one cannot be sure that samples obtained were representative of the culture. Second, sample size for each cultural group is relatively small and questions remain concerning the generalizability of the results to a larger population. Finally, cultural group has been found to be much more powerful than cultural dimension on explaining media choice behavior differences across cultures. Therefore, future research should proceed at cultural group level to find out how each culture adopts and uses different media for communication.

The present paper does have some benefits for MNO managers. New information technologies have provided tightened interorganizational linkage, and improved management practices with the expense of high investment (Straub 1994). This research could warn managers, especially for multinationals, that before deciding to invest in new technology, a careful examination of the social impacts of new technology should be made. Also the findings of this paper can help organizational managers be aware of whether communication behavior is culturally specific or culturally universal, then setting up effective communication systems across units. From the theory viewpoint, this study makes at least two important contributions to the cross-cultural media choice study. First, cultural-level differences on media choice behavior demonstrate that culture is an important factor to influence individual media choice behavior. Second, cultural group is much more powerful than cultural dimension for predicting differences.

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Table 1: Descriptives of Demographic and Media usage

		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Age	Thailand	30.28	5.18	18
	Malaysia	34.06	6.18	33
	Korea	39	4.81	21
	Australia	33.47	7.94	49
	Total	34.12	7.04	121
Work Tenure	Thailand	2.289	1.174	18
	Malaysia	1.603	1.741	33
	Korea	4.676	4.935	21
	Australia	4.269	4.281	49
	Total	3.318	3.749	121
Email Use	Thailand	3.972	2.476	18
	Malaysia	5.136	3.085	33
	Korea	5.119	2.569	21
	Australia	5.694	3.084	49
	Total	5.186	2.939	121
Email Received (per week)	Thailand	67.33	164.12	18
	Malaysia	48.27	29.39	33
	Korea	23.67	13.4	21
	Australia	66.53	51.57	49
	Total	54.23	73.49	121
Email Sent (per week)	Thailand	76.72	169.64	18
	Malaysia	73.79	41.57	33
	Korea	52.38	35.31	21
	Australia	103.9	78.99	49
	Total	82.7	87.25	121

Variable	Category	Thailand		Malaysia		Korea		Australia		Total	
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Sex	Male	5	27.80	13	39.40	19	90.50	24	49.0	61	50.40
	Female	13	72.20	20	60.60	2	9.50	25	51.0	60	49.60
Education	High school or less	1	5.60	3	9.10			4	8.20	8	6.60
	College Certificate/Diploma	1	5.60	11	33.30	2	9.50	11	22.4	25	20.70
	University degree	15	83.30	17	51.50	13	61.90	26	53.1	71	58.70
	Master degree	1	5.60	2	6.10	6	28.60	8	16.3	17	14.00
Organizational level	Senior executive			3	9.10	4	19.00	5	10.2	12	9.90
	Manager	9	50.00	18	54.50	12	57.10	15	30.6	54	44.60
	Professional	1	5.60	4	12.10	3	14.30	19	38.8	27	22.30
	Admin	8	44.40	8	24.20	2	9.50	10	20.4	28	23.10
Nationality	Thais	18	100.00							18	15.00
	Malaysian			12	36.50					12	10.00
	Chinese			16	48.50			4	8.00	20	16.50
	Indian			5	15.00			1	2.00	6	5.00
	Korean					21	100.0			21	17.50
	Australian or Western Countries							44	90.0	44	36.00
Computer facility	Stand alone computer	2	11.10							2	1.70
	Personal with network	16	88.90	33	100.0	18	85.70	49	100	116	95.90
	Main frame					3	14.30			3	2.50
Telephone availability	Unavailable							1	2.00	1	0.80
	Available with much inconvenience	1	5.60	1	3.00	1	4.80			3	2.50
	Available with some inconvenience	7	38.90	2	6.10	1	4.80			10	8.30
	Available with slight inconvenience	8	44.40	2	6.10	2	9.50	2	4.10	14	11.60
	Ready available	2	11.10	28	84.80	17	81.00	46	93.9	93	76.90
Email availability	Available with much inconvenience	3	16.70							3	2.5
	Available with some inconvenience	7	38.90	1	3.00	1	4.80	2	4.10	11	9.10
	Available with slight inconvenience	4	22.20	2	6.10	2	9.50	2	4.10	10	8.30
	Ready available	4	22.20	30	90.90	18	85.70	45	91.8	97	80.20

Table 3: Regression of Media Choice Behaviors on Cultural Dimension

Independent Variable	Media Richness					Media Preference					Task Equivocality
	Face to Face	Telephone	Email	Addressed Written Paper Document	Unaddressed Written Paper Document	Face to Face	Telephone	Email	Addressed Written Paper Document	Unaddressed Written Paper Document	
Collectivism /Individualism	-.029 a	0.035	0.004	-0.101	-0.83	0.01	-0.074	0.008	.221**	.151*	-.152*
R Squared	0.001	0.001	0	0.01	0.006	0	0.005	0	0.049	0.023	0.023
F	0.103	0.149	0.002	1.235	0.688	0.013	0.656	0.008	6.128	2.787	2.765
df	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	118
a: standardized regression coefficients											
*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01											

Table 4: F Values, R Square for Regressions on 1) Cultural Group plus Dimension 2) Cultural Group

Independent Variable	Media Richness					Media Preference					Task Equivocality
	Face to Face	Telephone	Email	Addressed Written Paper Document	Unaddressed Written Paper Document	Face to Face	Telephone	Email	Addressed Written Paper Document	Unaddressed Written Paper Document	
I. Cultural Group & Dimension											
R Square	0.151	0.099	0.14	0.097	0.082	0.028	0.225	0.084	0.295	0.151	0.159
F Value	5.167***	3.182**	4.721***	3.108**	2.528**	0.848	8.424***	2.66**	12.116***	5.164***	5.388***
II. Cultural Group											
R Square	0.142	0.088	0.128	0.066	0.055	0.028	0.223	0.076	0.288	0.15	0.093
F	6.439***	3.784**	5.702***	2.759**	2.207*	1.138	11.223***	3.198**	15.797***	6.898***	4.069***
III. Change between I and II											
R Square Change	0.009	0.011	0.012	0.031	0.027	0.000	0.002	0.008	0.007	0.001	0.066
Significance of R Square Change	ns	ns	ns	<.1	<.1	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	<.01
*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01											