

COMMUNICATION MEDIA SELECTION IN TELEWORK ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

Information technology has been identified as the facilitator for successful implementation of telework. However, research studies on the implication of different information technologies in telework in an organization are limited. The aim of this research was to study the teleworker's media use, influential factors that affect the media selection and its implication on effectiveness of telework. For purposes of the research, a hypothetical model which shows the relationships between media use and contextual factors, individual characteristics, media richness, and social influence is proposed and tested for validation. For this study, teleworkers' day-to-day job related communication details were collected through log-sheets from a teleworking organization in Japan. Data analysis showed that simple communication media such as telephone and email are effective enough to carry out job-related activities from remote sites. Contextual, individual, and social level factors were found to influence the media selection of teleworkers. Though, email is considered as a lean medium according to the media richness theory, this study shows that email-oriented workers use email effectively even for a complex communication task such as discussion. The main reason for this pattern is the support from management for the use of email in job-related activities.

Key words: *Telework, Organisational communication, Communication taxonomy, Media selection.*