

An Empirical Study on the Communication Channels by Chinese Tourist: A Perspective of Tourism Management

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Abstract: The main purpose of this study was to identify the most frequent and preferred communication channels used by tourists in interacting with their tourist service providers. And also wanted to see the factors that influence tourists' preferred of communication channel and see the impact of new media on traditional media as the development of technology is changing people's way to communicate in general. This study conducted to answer some questions. They are about the tourists' perception of media richness, the preferred communication channels to send special messages, the preferred communication channels based on the type of tourists' relationship with their tourist service providers and how big the impact of new media on traditional media. Two hundred and sixty four tourists from one of the tourism education institute were participated in the survey, but only two hundred and fifty analyzed due to the removal of fourteen outliers. The tourists were randomly selected and required to fill up the questionnaire. The result showed that most of the tourists usually use face-to-face communication in interacting with their tourist service providers. Based on their relationship with their tourist service providers, most of the tourists preferred to communicate by face-to-face and followed by mobile phone. Yet, according to the characteristic of the messages, most of the tourists preferred to use email and followed by mobile phone in interacting with their tourist service providers. The study found out that the tourists' perception of media richness is the biggest influence in tourists' selection of communication channel. It influences tourists' selection by 36.2%. The tourists' perception of media richness also has the strongest positive relationship with the preferred communication channels used by tourists at the level 0.604, significantly. This study revealed that the invention of new media and due to the increase in global internet penetration, make new media becomes the preferred communication channels used by tourists to interact with their tourist service providers. However, for further study, the element of time should be one of the elements that are used as consideration in the survey because time might influence the selection of preferred communication channel.

IndexTerms - Computer-Mediated Communication, Media Richness, Traditional Media, New Media, Social Presence Theory.

1. Introduction

Communication becomes the most significant factor in human life. Through communication, people do exchange about ideas, opinions, information, thoughts, etc. at work, at home, or even everywhere people spend their time mostly to communicate with each other. In this globalization era, new media is offering new way, chances and challenges for anyone to communicate. When traditional way of communication requires face-to-face communication as part of the interaction between sender and receiver, new media requires internet and some devices. New media helps people who live far away from each other to stay in touch without even meeting each other. New media is offering new way of communication that don't need the presence of both parties.

Nowadays, people communicate through some different tools or channels. The way tourist communicates with their customer also influence by the channels that they prefer to use. Some tourist might prefer traditional way by face-to-face meeting with their customer or the modern way by utilizing new media. Especially, since few years back when internet is easy to access. People are online now. Internet is no longer service that is difficult to get. Anyone can go online everywhere, every time through PC or even mobile phone. This changes in lifestyle has brought computer mediated communication become another channel of communication that need to be consideration. Internet was brought to universities around 1970 and 23 years later became available for engineers, librarians, computer scientist and military personnel (Atwood and Gallo, 2011). Nowadays, based on Internet World Stats, on June 2012, there are 34.3% people are online all over the world. The traditional theories and concepts of interpersonal and mass communication has been challenges by internet as a multifaceted medium (Bubas, 2001). The preferred communication channel is important because it will influence the way tourists communicate with their tourist service providers. If they feel not comfortable with the channel that is used, they might not get the exact meaning that their tourist service providers want them to do or in reverse.

The growth of the technology usage has grown exponentially in the past decade due to two reasons, the first reason is the universities should ensure that their graduates are ready in Information Communication Technology (ICT) usage and the second reason is ICT might have more and better contribution to the learning process (Pedró, 2005). The way people communicate has been revolutionized by the development of internet and computer-mediated communication (Baltes et al., 2002). Previous research found out that traditional media still becomes the most preferred communication channels in education context.

2. Literature Review

This study is referred to two main theories as a cornerstone. The theories are Media Richness Theory (Daft and Lengel, 1986; Daft, Lengel and Trevino, 1987) and Social Presence Theory (Short et al. as cited by Ghanbari et al., 2009; Keil and Johnson, 2002).

These two theories are talking about the communication channel, both traditional media and new media. Media richness theory was developed in 1986 in order to reduce uncertainty and equivocality as the assumption for the organizations process information (Daft and Lengel, 1986). When the medium capability to carry and deliver the information is fit to the task necessities, the achievement of the task will be better. That is how media richness theory suggests for task achievement (Dennis and Valacich, 1999).

Related Theoretical Review for this study:

Year	Theory	Constructs/Truth Claims
1948	Communication Theory (Shannon & Weaver)	The engineering challenge of how to move A to point B. There is a source (not necessarily the same as a message constructor) that sends a message over some channel with some risk of interference that then is received at some destination (that is not potentially the actual message recipient). Consider a postal service in which a mailman picks up a letter and takes it to the post office where it is sorted and then sent on to some destination—another mailbox. Telephony, television, and the Internet work in the same way. The meaning of the message is beyond the scope of this delivery system.
1976	Social Presence Theory (Short, Williams, & Christie)	Communication is effective if the communication medium has the appropriate social presence required for the level of interpersonal involvement required for a task. Social presence is the amount of awareness of a person a medium enables and this seems to depend on the ability of a medium to provide visual and oral/nonverbal cues.
1984	Media Richness Theory (Daft & Lengel)	How managers chose the channel by which to send a message is determined by the medium's 1) number of visual/oral cues, 2) immediacy of feedback, 3) ability to personalize a message, and 4) and the linguistic form of the medium. Rich media (i.e. F2F) are better for tasks that are more ambiguous and complex. Lean media (i.e. numerical reports) are better for routine tasks.
1999	Media Synchronicity Theory (Dennis & Valacich)	Feedback (synchronicity) is less an affordance of a medium, and more a product of a conversation. People chose when to respond and traditionally responding to a message in a timely manner has been advantageous. Media differ in the things specified by Media Richness Theory, but also differ in rehearsability [the ability to which a medium enables reflection and strategic planning and construction of messages].
1992	Social Information Processing Theory (Walther)	People add verbal/nonverbal cues to a medium and are able to extract social information from rather subtle cues. This may actually result in hyperpersonal communication (relationships that are more intense/real/vested than F2F).
1962	Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers)	A theory of how innovations (including technology) become adopted. It is a five step process: awareness (knowing the innovation exists), interest (getting info about it), evaluation (deciding to try it or not based on pros/cons), trial (trying it out), and adoption (full use/dependence on the innovation). People differ in their timing/willingness to try out new things.
1996	Media Equation Theory (Reeves & Nass)	Media = real life. People treat media as if they are real. They talk to computers and talk about fictitious media created characters as if they are real. The implication here is that if people can personalize their media, then they will have better interactions with it.

Media richness theory proposed that the richest medium is the medium that provides insight and quick understanding. The richness of the medium is a blend of four criteria (Daft, Lengel and Trevino, 1987): (1) Feedback, The capability of the medium to provide immediate feedback and allow clarification of the issues; (2) Multiple Cues, The number of ways in which information could be sent such as physical presence, tone of voice, gesture, expressions, words, numbers and graphic symbol; (3) Language Variety, The capability of the medium to provide both numbers and natural language; (4) Personal Focus, The ability of the medium to deliver personal feelings and emotions in the communication.

Based on media richness theory, the richest media is face-to-face communication medium. It is because face-to-face as a medium; it offers the blend of four criteria of the richness of the medium. Then followed by telephone line. Telephone line as a medium offers the blend of four criteria as well except the multiple cues. Telephone only offers verbal cues without any nonverbal cues. Then written communication such as memo, letter and notes is in the third place. It is because written communication only offers language variety and personal focus. The less rich medium is unaddressed documents. It is because unaddressed documents don't focus on any individual (Daft and Lengel, 1983; Daft, Lengel and Trevino, 1987). To transfer actual news about the task and social information, media with high richness like face-to-face media allows both parties to use many ways of communication such as gesture, expressions, voice tone, etc. according to media richness theory, computer-mediated communication considered as a lean channel because it is useful only for simple or straightforward messages (Wright, 2000). Nevertheless, media richness theory proposed when the internet has not yet to be conceptualized. Nowadays, in the era when almost everyone is online, it is not easy to rank media on scale of its richness.

One key prediction of media richness theory is that communication media of low richness (e.g., e-mail, as opposed to face-to-face) consistently leads to a decrease in the quality of the outcomes of group tasks. One of the complicating issues associated with media richness theory is that there is abundant evidence that low media richness leads to perceived obstacles to communication (Kahai & Cooper, 2003; Kock, 2004), which is consistent with the theory, and yet it is obvious that media of low richness like e-mail are widely used, sometimes even when richer media are easily available (Kock, 2005; Lee, 1994; Markus, 1994).

Even though media richness theory was proposed a long time ago, well before the emergence of modern e-collaboration technologies and the Internet as we know it today, it addressed topics that are highly relevant today. It addressed the notion that characteristics of a communication medium may affect group work, which has been a recurrent issue in recent research (Alge et al., 2003). Media richness theory and its non-verbal cues suppression perspective set the stage for the study of behavioral e-collaboration phenomena at the individual level of analysis, such as "flaming" (Alonzo & Aiken, 2004), and at the group level of analysis, such as group decision making (Baker, 2002). The theory has also motivated research into technological solutions to the problems associated with lean media (Briggs, 2002; Briggs et al., 2003).

In spite of the large amount of research in connection with media characteristics and their impact on group tasks, there has been little empirical evidence that the adoption of a lean medium can lead to increased group outcome quality; a counterintuitive finding that goes squarely against predictions based on media richness theory

Social presence refers to quality of the communication medium that relates to social psychological concepts of intimacy and immediacy. According to Social Presence Theory, media communication that provides nonverbal and social context cues has higher social presence compare to media communication that has less nonverbal feedback cues like computer-mediated communication and written documents (Keil and Johnson, 2002). Social presence can be defined as the degree to which a medium able to carry the actual presence of the communicators. Based on a research conducted by Rice (1993), face-to-face meetings is a medium with highest social presence, followed by voice mail and email ranked second and third.

Key uncertainties such as the economic, political and social factors have been analyzed and South Africa has been benchmarked against the key tourism countries' strategic and/or foresight plans. In Canada, Australia, Scotland and Singapore, the focus is mainly on marketing and to remaining competitive. These top tourist destinations are aggressively realigning their tourism industry through strategies and plans to diversify products, upgrade infrastructure, and make optimum use of technology. Technology is focused on promoting and enhancing competitiveness within the information and communications fields rather than exploring the full range of opportunities in a holistic sense. The tourism industry is supported by an array of major technologies, and the global increase in consumer demand for tourist products has provided one of the main driving forces in the development of a wide range of technologies.

Where foresight studies have been undertaken (Japan, Germany, the UK, the USA, the European Union, etc.) these have focused on technologies that could support tourism. This applies particularly to issues such as transport, information, communication and infrastructure. In the UK, the foresight process included the topic 'leisure and learning,' but this, like others, dealt only partially with tourism-related technologies. The concept of 'sustainable tourism' pervades best tourism practice and was also the outcome of a priority area identified by the sustainable environment foresight. While technologies have numerous benefits, they also pose socio-economic challenges, such as changing labour practices, employment, and social behavior patterns.

Most of media that exist now are lacking social presence. Distortion in understanding and propensity to misconstrue the messages usually happen due to the use of media communication that is lack of social presence. Communication media that able to carry both verbal and nonverbal cues like face-to-face communication usually have higher social presence compare to computer-mediated communication, written and text-based communication that have less social presence due to lack of nonverbal cues. The needs for social presence differed depend on the different communication tasks. Tasks that require high social presence are tasks that need interpersonal skills such as resolving conflict or negotiation. Routine tasks usually low in social presence needs. Face-to-face meetings is suitable for tasks that require high social presence whilst email, letters and memos are suitable for tasks require low social presence. In the era of internet, like nowadays, Krish and Wong (2009) defined the main aspect of online learning for both the instructors and learners is social presence. Krish, Maros and Stapa (2012) added in online learning, a learner is 'socially present' when he or she makes any activities online.

There are differences in the way people communicate depending on the mode of communication. A face-to-face (FtF) interaction allows the participants to communicate thoughts and feelings using a wide range of verbal and non-verbal clues. A FtF interaction allows the participants to communicate not only through their spoken thoughts, but also through facial expressions, posture, physical closeness, gaze, intonation and a myriad of other social interactions. Computer mediated communication does not allow for the same physical propinquity. The theory of "Social Presence" has been developed to explain how one has the sense of being with another even though not in the same physical space.

The Social Presence Theory as applied to mediated communication is generally attributed to Short et al. from their book on the social psychology of telecommunication published in 1976. In their study, social presence was conceptualized, as "another person is perceived as present or absent." The concept of what constitutes social presence does not lend itself to a simple, static definition. "The simple presence of another body or even awareness of it may not be satisfactory to signify social presence.

Measuring Social Presence

Biocca, et al. recognized the limitations in the current conceptualizations of social presence and have attempted to define criteria for a more usable theory in the realm of mediated communication. They limited the boundaries of social presence so as to not include the effects or correlates of social presence. "Social presence is a highly dynamic and transient state that is defined in relation to another entity but is independent of judgments about that entity" (Steinfeld, 2010). Early studies concerning social presence centered on the "richness of the media" (Steinfeld, 1986). Steinfeld et al (2010) assert that studies such as short, et al. asked users to assess the effect of the medium instead of the experience of others and are in effect conceptualizing "the measure as a business consumer's attitude about a medium." "This measure of social presence appears to be concerned with the extent to which an actor perceives a medium as capable of allowing a sense of social presence". Biocca, et al submits that "social presence measures should address a transient phenomenological state that varies with medium, knowledge of the other, content of the communication, environment, and social context".

Social presence is a dynamic variable where the degree of social presence is dependent upon the characteristics of the medium and the user's perceptions. It may be possible to modify user's perceptions to create a more positive sense of social presence. Social presence through any medium can be cultivated (Joseph et al, 2010). Recent studies have shown that social presence is a significant factor in improving instructional effectiveness. The ability to create a sense of social presence can contribute to the success of distance learning. Joseph et al, (2010) showed that social presence can be cultured by teleconference leaders or encouraged by initial learning sessions. It is important to the success of distance learning that social presence be fostered, as social presence can be a strong predictor of satisfaction within a CMC learning environment.

The frame work that is used in this study developed by the factors that influence the most preferred communication channels used by the tourists in interacting with their tourist service providers. There are three factors that influence tourists' selection of communication channels. They are the tourists' perception of media richness, the characteristic of the messages and the relationship between tourists' and tourist service. Based on the theories mentioned above, the tourists' perception of media richness refers to the capability of the medium to convey personality traits of both parties, to enable the use of friendly languages, to provide immediate feedback and to carry verbal and nonverbal cues, either both or one if it. The characteristic of messages will cover four characteristics of messages. They are straightforward or clear message, simple message, ambiguous message and complex message. The relationship between tourists and tourist service providers refers to two kinds of relationships, which are task-focused relationship and personal relationship. Task focused relationship is any relationship that has relation with educational context. Personal relationship is more into relation-focused.

3. Methodology

This study is conducted in one of the tourist education institute and used its tourists as the respondents. According to the administrator database on September 2012, there are 657 active tourists. Based on sampling method by Morgan, this survey requires to gather data around 234 – 238 data. This survey succeeds in gathering 264 data but only 250 data were analyzed due to removal of the fourteen outliers. Pilot study was doing to first 30 respondents and the result showed that the questionnaire was reliable based on the Cronbach's Alpha value that is more than 0.5 (Hair et. al., 2010). It means that the questions were understandable and targeted the right audience. For the data collection, random sampling was done. It means that all 657 active tourists have the same chance to participate in the study.

4. Findings

From 250 data that is analyzed, 64.8% were male and 35.2% were female. Most of the tourists usually use face-to-face channel (66.4%) to communicate with their tourist service providers, followed by email (20.8%), mobile phone (7.2%) and telephone line (5.6%). Characteristic of messages also influence the tourists' selection of communication channels. Based on Media Richness Theory, in order to send straightforward and simple message, lean channel is enough. Yet, for ambiguous and complex message, Face-to-Face communication will be better because immediate feedback can be given at any time. Descriptive frequency analysis shows that the tourists prefer to use email to send straightforward messages (46.4%). Facebook ranked the second (27.6%), followed by mobile phone (16%), Face-to-Face (8%) and telephone line (2%). This finding is in line with the idea of media richness and social presence theory, which mentioned that straightforward or clear messages could be sent by using lean medium.

To send simple messages, 46.4% tourists prefer to use mobile phone. Followed by telephone (23.2%), Face-to-Face (15.2%), Email (10%), Facebook (3.2%), online communication platform (1.2%) and Twitter and Google both 0.4%. This finding is consistent with the idea of media richness and social presence theory, which mentioned that simple messages could be sent by using lean medium. For ambiguous messages, 81 respondents that equal with 32.4% of the respondents prefer to use email to send the messages. Face-to-Face ranked second with 79 respondents (31.6%), followed by mobile phone (13.6%), telephone line (13.2%), Facebook (6%), online communication platform (2%), twitter (0.8%) and Google+ (0.4%). The finding for preferred communication channel to send ambiguous messages contradict with the idea of media richness and social presence theories because the tourists preferred to use email the most than Face-to-Face. To send complex messages, 48.4% of the respondents prefer to use Email. Face-to-Face ranked second with 75 respondents (30%), followed by mobile phone (9.6%), telephone line (8%), Facebook (1.6%) and

online communication platform (1.2%). This finding also contradicts with the idea of media richness and social presence theories.

Table 4. Communication Channel

Type of Messages	Communication Channel	Frequency	Percent
Straightforward	Face-to-Face	20	8
	Telephone	5	2
	Mobile Phone	40	16
	Email	116	46.4
	Facebook	69	27.6
Simple	Face-to-Face	38	15.2
	Telephone	58	23.2
	Mobile Phone	116	46.4
	Email	25	10
	Facebook	8	3.2
	Twitter	1	0.4
	Google+	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	3	1.2
Ambiguous	Face-to-Face	79	31.6
	Telephone	33	13.2
	Mobile Phone	34	13.6
	Email	81	32.4
	Facebook	15	6
	Twitter	2	0.8
	Google+	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	5	2
Complex	Face-to-Face	75	30
	Telephone	20	8
	Mobile Phone	24	9.6
	Email	121	48.4
	Facebook	4	1.6
	Twitter	2	0.8
	Blog	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	3	1.2

Type of relationship between tourists and tourist service provider can be in educational context or personal context. In educational context means any kind of relationship that is related with education or any subject that is taken by the tourists. And personal context can be any kind of relationship that has no relationship with education. Educational context or personal matter might influence the tourists' selection of communication channels in interacting with their tourist service providers. Based on the table 5, most of the respondents prefer to use Face-to-Face for almost all-educational relationship, except make an appointment to meet their tourist service providers. For educational relationship like asking feedback for their assignments, discuss the difficulties that they face in the subject, discuss the idea for their final year project more than 50% of the tourists prefer to use Face-to-Face communication, followed by email, mobile phone and telephone line. For the personal relationship, to ask the tourist service providers to eat or drink outside, the tourists prefer to use mobile phone (40.4%). Telephone line ranked the second (32%), followed by Face-to-Face (21.6%), email (2.8%) and Facebook (2.4%). To show their attention to the tourist service providers' problems, 44.8% of the tourists prefer Face-to-Face medium, followed by mobile phone, email and telephone line.

Information is the backbone supporting tourism. Therefore, timely and accurate information relevant to consumers' needs is often the key to satisfying tourist demand. Within the fiercely competitive global tourism environment, prospective travellers are continuously faced with more information and options. The combination of these forces and the need for professionalism in handling the information supplied to the consumer necessitates the use of technology to gather, manage, distribute and communicate information.

Over recent years, information technology has experienced an unprecedented degree of change. The Internet and e-commerce are increasing at a rapid pace and are fulfilling a vital support role in such activities as global connectivity and foreign business activity. The application of information technology (IT) and telecommunications, as well as technologies specifically designed and developed for the tourism industry, includes the management of the various modes of transportation, travel distribution systems, the hospitality industry, and the recreation and entertainment components of tourism. The use of IT technology in the management of ecosystems, wildlife populations and natural areas is becoming increasingly important.

The implementation of various forms of IT in the industry is driven by both the development of the size and complexity of tourism demand and the rapid expansion and sophistication of new tourism products. Three main waves of technological developments established IT in tourism enterprises, from Computer Reservation Systems (CRSs) to Global Distribution Systems (GDSs). The WWW has the potential to eliminate expensive intermediary systems in working towards a network system.

The Internet has the potential to change the balance of power among consumers, retailers, distributors, manufacturers and service providers. Some may experience increase in power and profitability, others will experience the reverse, and still others may even find that they have been bypassed and lost their market share. In the case of air travel, airlines have a motive to bypass travel agencies, which take up profitable corporate business that airlines could easily handle directly, and which they could easily target given all the customer information they have.

Airlines operate flights and offer seats. CRS vendors, such as Galileo and Worlds pan, maintain global inventory management systems and communicate inquiries and booking requests between airlines and travel agencies. Some players in the distribution channel for air travel are vulnerable to bypass and disintermediation. While airlines and passengers will always have a role, travel agencies and CRS vendors are less essential. It is likely that agencies will lose much of their easiest corporate business to direct distribution by airlines. Internet-based search agents can locate flights and lowest fares; these same services can be used to book flights and to generate tickets or e-tickets.

On-line search agents, tied to e-ticket selling, could be part of a strategy that would make it easy to attack established agencies. Airlines would start by developing systems for e-ticket selling and would make them available directly to travelers for last-minute changes.

Table 5: Communication Channel Used Based on the Type of Relationship

Educational Relationship	Communication Channel	Frequency	Percent
Make Appointment for Meeting	Face-to-Face	53	21.2
	Telephone	61	24.4
	Mobile Phone	106	42.4
	Email	25	10
	Facebook	4	1.6
	Twitter	1	0.4
Ask Feedback For Assignment	Face-to-Face	148	59.2
	Telephone	11	4.4
	Mobile Phone	15	6
	Email	70	28
	Facebook	3	1.2
	Twitter	1	0.4
	MySpace	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	1	0.4
Discuss Difficulties	Face-to-Face	157	62.8
	Telephone	28	11.2
	Mobile Phone	4	1.6
	Email	55	22
	Facebook	3	1.2
	LinkedIn	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	2	0.8
Discuss Final	Face-to-Face	182	72.8

Year Project	Telephone	6	2.4
	Mobile Phone	16	6.4
	Email	41	16.4
	Facebook	2	0.8
	Twitter	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	2	0.8
	Personal Relationship		
Ask to Eat or Drink Outside	Face-to-Face	54	21.6
	Telephone	80	32
	Mobile Phone	101	40.4
	Email	7	2.8
	Facebook	6	2.4
	MySpace	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	1	0.4
Show Attention	Face-to-Face	112	44.8
	Telephone	39	15.6
	Mobile Phone	47	18.8
	Email	45	18
	Facebook	4	1.6
	LinkedIn	1	0.4
	Online communication platform (instant messaging, e.g: YM, MSN, whatsapp, etc)	2	0.8

Based on the research questions, this study has developed seven hypotheses. All hypotheses were used to measure the relationship and the effect of three independent variables to the dependent variable and also to identify the differences of new media and traditional media in term of usage. The first three hypotheses will measure the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable. The first three hypotheses are:

H1 – There is significant relationship between the preferred communication channel used by tourists and their perception of media richness.

H2 – There is significant relationship between the preferred communication channel used by tourists and the characteristic of the messages they send.

H3 – There is significant relationship between the preferred communication channel used by tourists and the type of their relationship with the tourist service providers.

In order to see the relationship among the three independent variables and the dependent variable, correlation test was run. The range for Pearson Correlation test is between zeros, which mean no correlation, until one, which mean perfect correlation. Table 1 shows the result from correlation test. From table 1, it shows the tourists' perception of media richness has the strongest relationship (0.604, significant) with the preferred communication channels they used to interact with their tourist service providers. Followed with the characteristic of the messages that correlate with the preferred communication channel at point 0.304, significantly. The type of relationship doesn't correlate with the tourists' preferred communication channel, if it has correlation, it will be very low at point 0.020, not significant.

Table 1. Correlation Test

		Media Richness	Type	Relationship Type
CommChannel	Pearson Correlation	.604**	.304**	.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.759
	N	250	250	250

Another three hypotheses were created to measure the influence of the three independent variables to the dependent variable. The three hypotheses are:

- H4 – There is significant effect of tourists' perception of media richness to the preferred Communication channel used.*
H5 – There is significant effect of the characteristic of the messages to the preferred communication channel used.
H6 – There is significant effect of the type of the relationship to the preferred communication channel used.

To identify which independent variable influence the tourists' selection of the preferred communication channels used, regression test was run. Linear regression was run to see the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. Multiple regressions were run to see the influence of combination of three independent variables on the dependent variable. The result from the regression test can be seen in the Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Test Result

Independent Variables	Linear Regression			Multiple Regressions		
	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig.	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig.
1. Tourists' perception of media richness	36.5%	36.2%	0.000	40.6%	39.8%	0.000
2. The characteristic of the messages	9.2%	8.9%	0.000			
3. The type of relationship	0.0%	-0.4%	0.759			

Dependent Variable: Preferred Communication Channels

Table 2 shows that the tourists' perception of media richness is the biggest influence (36.2%) to the communication channel they prefer to use to interact with their tourist service provider. When three independent variables were combined, it will predict 39.8% of the tourists' selection of preferred communication channel.

Nowadays, the global internet penetration was developed faster than before. Almost everyone is online and they able to online anywhere anytime. The internet penetration also influence the tourists' preferred communication channel. One hypothesis were created, which is a set of hypotheses. They are:

- H7 – There is significant different in the level of usage between new media and traditional media.*
H7a – There is significant different in the level of usage between Mobile phone and Face-to-Face.
H7b – There is significant different in the level of usage between Email and Face-to-Face.
H7c – There is significant different in the level of usage between Mobile Phone and Telephone Line.
H7d – There is significant different in the level of usage between Email and Telephone Line.

Paired T-test was run to see whether there is impact from new media on traditional media or not. The traditional and new media that will be compared based on the data of communication channel mostly used by tourist. Based on the data, the communication channels mostly used by tourists are Face-to-Face, telephone line, mobile phone and Email. According to Lam (1998), Face-to-Face and telephone line is considered as traditional media and mobile phone and email is deemed as new media. The result of comparing new media and traditional media can be seen in the Table 3.

Table 3. Paired Sample T-Test Result

		Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	FtF - Mobile_phone	-0.14	-2.174	249	0.031
Pair 2	FtF - Email	-0.196	-2.826	249	0.005
Pair 3	Telephone_line - Mobile_phone	-0.1	-1.602	249	0.11
Pair 4	Telephone_line - Email	-0.156	-2.41	249	0.017

As shown in Table 3, there is significant different between Face-to-Face as traditional media and mobile phone (-2.174, significant) and email (-2.826, significant) as new media. For telephone line as traditional media, when it compares to mobile phone as new media, the result as can be seen in table 3 is there is no significant different with mobile phone at point -1.602, not significant. Yet, between telephone line and email, there is significant different at the point -2.41, significantly.

5. Discussions

The way people communicate nowadays, more or less are influenced by the development of the technology. The development of the technology that is in line with the global penetration of the internet, change the way people to communicate with each other significantly. If previously people usually do face-to-face communication, recently, people might prefer to use new media that come in various shapes. New media can be mobile phone, social networking sites, email, etc. Usually, most of the tourist use Face-to-Face communication to communicate with their tourist service providers. The tourists' perception of media richness significantly has high correlation with their preferred communication channels. All items of media richness perception is high reliable. The tourists' perception is also the biggest influence in their preferred communication channel choice. The tourists' perception of media richness plays an important role in the selection of preferred communication channel by tourists. The mean value for each item on the perception of media richness is above 3.70, it means most of the tourists agreed that communication channel must convey personality of both parties, must provide immediate feedback, must enable the use of friendly language and also must provide either both or one of verbal and nonverbal cues.

The characteristic of messages that the tourists send is also significantly correlate with their selection of communication channel. All items in the characteristic of messages are reliable. Therefore, the characteristics of messages that the tourists send only influence their selection of communication channel 8.9%. To send straightforward messages, most of the tourists prefer to use email, while to send simple messages most of the tourists prefer to use mobile phone. These findings are consistent with the notion of media richness theory and social presence theory that proposed lean medium can be used to send straightforward and simple messages.

When it comes to ambiguous and complex messages, most of the tourists prefer to use email to send the messages. This finding contradicts with the idea of media richness and social presence theory that proposed face-to-face is the best medium for such ambiguous and complex messages. Most of the respondents, which is tourists, prefer to use new media like email or mobile phone to send their messages to their tourist service providers. This might happen because of the penetration of internet recently. Nowadays, everyone is online and it is easy to access the internet.

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Type of relationship between tourists and tourist service providers more or less cold influence the tourists' selection of communication channel. Each item is reliable but the type of relationship between tourists and tourist service providers doesn't have any relationship with their preferred communication channel. Tourists-tourist service provider's relationship almost has no effect to the tourists' preferred communication channel. For the relationship in educational context, more than 50% of the respondents prefer to use Face-to-Face channel, except to make an appointment with their tourist service providers, the tourists prefer to use mobile phone.

For personal relationship, in order to ask the tourist service providers to go out for lunch or dinner or just have a drink together, the tourists prefer to ask by mobile phone, either by sending the tourist service providers an SMS or calling them. But to show their attention to the tourist service providers' problem, they prefer to come and talk Face-to-Face. This findings indicated as a fundamental contribution to the body of knowledge as well improvement for the organization. To ask tourist service provider to go out and have drink outside, maybe easier and more effective if the tourists use mobile phone. But to show their attention to the tourist service providers' problem, it will be better if they come and talk face-to-face.

Due to the growth of the internet penetration is getting higher and higher, from this research, the researcher can discover the impact of new media on traditional media. Whether they are different or similar. The test is run for the mostly used traditional media and mostly used new media. Based on Lam (1998), face-to-face and telephone line considered as traditional media and face-to-face and telephone line is the mostly used channel by tourists. For the mostly used new media channel are mobile phone and email. Based on the result on table 4.23, it shows that there is significant different between face-to-face as traditional media and both of new media, which are mobile phone and email. It means that between face-to-face and mobile phone and also face-to-face and email, they are significantly different in terms of how the tourists use it to communicate with their tourist service providers. Thus, for telephone line as traditional media, it has no significant different with mobile phone. It means, between telephone line and mobile phone, they are homogenous or similar. In general, both telephone line and mobile phone has almost the same function and same way to use it. Both only provide verbal cues or only nonverbal cues. This might be the reason why they are homogenous or similar. But for telephone line and email, they are significantly different.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

Overall, the present study confirmed a positive direct significant effect of media richness perception to the preferred communication channels for 36.2%. The characteristics of the messages also influence the tourists' selection of communication channel but only 8.9%. And the relationship between tourists and tourist service providers can be said almost have no influence to the tourists' selection of communication channel because the number is so small and negative. When all three independent variables are combined, it will influence the tourists' selection of communication channel 39.8%. In conclusion, the tourists' perception of media richness is the main factor that influences their selection of preferred communication channel.

In sending any type of messages, the tourists prefer to use new media than traditional media. It might be happened due to the global internet penetration that has been grown exponentially. In educational context, tourists still prefer to use traditional communication channel like face-to-face in order to discuss about assignments, final year project or discuss difficulties. It happens because face-to-face as a medium can help the tourists to understand what their tourist service providers want. The growth of global internet penetration shows that new media has impact on traditional media. Mobile phone and email as new media have an impact on face-to-face as traditional media significantly. They are not similar. Email as new media also has an impact on telephone line as traditional media. Thus, mobile phone as new media has no impact on telephone line as traditional media. In conclusion, the development of communication technology with the invention of new media does influence the way tourists communicate with their tourist service provider and give an impact to the use of traditional media significantly. For future research, this study strongly recommends a structural equation modeling technique to analyze the research framework as hypothesized model. Furthermore, it will be better to consider time as one of the factors in choosing communication channel. The element of time is important in choosing what kind of media that is suitable to interact with each other's, as discussed by the Social Information Processing Theory (SIP).

7. References

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