

# **SOURCE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND EMPLOYEES' SUPPORT FOR TELEWORK POLICY INITIATIVES – A SURVEY EXPERIMENT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, telework has been widely adopted by most organizations, public or private, to adjust to the challenges of the pandemic and keep employees safe. Telework is mostly going to stay even after the pandemic and every government agency will be faced with deciding on what kind of remote working policy changes they would adopt post pandemic. This study focuses on how public organizations can successfully implement these telework/remote work policy changes with wide employee support. Public managers respond to changes in performance data by introducing policy changes to counter areas of poor performance or to further improve areas of high performance (Meier, Favero, and Zhu 2015). These policy changes need the support of frontline employees to be successful. Recent research finds experimental evidence that public employees are more likely to support policy initiatives if they are exposed to positive performance information and there are no effects for negative performance information exposure (Petersen, 2020). However, research in government-citizen has shown that dimensions and source of performance information also matter when we present the information (Walker et al., 2018). There is little evidence in the literature on whether source of performance information affects public employees' support for organizational policy initiatives. Our study bridges this gap by testing the effects of two sources of performance information – citizens (external) and public managers (internal) on employees' support for telework/remote working policy changes. We hypothesize that employees are more likely to support telework policy change if given positive performance information and if the performance information is internal. We test our hypotheses using survey experiments on public sector employee samples from both Hong Kong and the United States (estimated 1500 total sample size). The survey experiments will be 2x2 factorial design with positive and negative performance information from two sources: citizens (external) and public managers (internal). The study bridges the gap in the performance information use literature by offering evidence on whether source of performance information affects public employees' support for organizational policy initiatives. The study will also provide valuable evidence to policy makers and public managers in various organizations and help them communicate and implement remote work policies successfully.

**Key word:** Public Administration, Performance Information, Telework Policy, Survey Experiment