

Smart Working and Performance in the Public Administration: Opportunities, Challenges, and Future Perspectives

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Abstract

submission the adoption of smart working in the Public Administration (PA) has significantly increased, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, raising important questions about its impact on employee performance. This paper examines the relationship between smart working and performance within the PA, considering both opportunities and challenges. Smart working offers potential benefits such as increased flexibility, reduced commuting time, and improved work-life balance, which may enhance productivity. However, its effectiveness depends on organizational readiness, technological infrastructure, and managerial practices. Studies suggest that in the PA, the transition to remote work has been uneven, with some agencies experiencing efficiency gains while others face difficulties due to bureaucratic rigidity, digital skill gaps, and resistance to change. Performance in the PA is traditionally measured through compliance and process efficiency rather than outcomes, making it difficult to assess the real impact of smart working. Preliminary evidence indicates that while some employees report higher job satisfaction and autonomy, others struggle with isolation, blurred work boundaries, and inadequate supervision. Furthermore, the lack of a performance-oriented culture and standardized evaluation metrics complicates objective assessments. To optimize smart working's potential, the PA must invest in digital tools, training, and adaptive leadership. Policymakers should also redefine performance indicators to focus on results rather than presence. Future research should explore long-term effects on service quality and employee wellbeing. In conclusion, smart working presents both opportunities and risks for the PA. Its success depends on systemic reforms that align remote work with organizational goals while addressing structural and cultural barriers.