CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Out of the Office but Not Out of Touch: Engaging Different Generations of Administrative Teleworkers in the Public Sector

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

By

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Abstract

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The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a mass mobilization towards teleworking (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garces, 2020). While organizations figure out the right balance of working in and out of the office, they must also be mindful of the generational differences among their workforce (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Moreover, through all this change, managers must continue finding ways to keep their employees engaged in an effort to maintain and improve organizational performance (Khademian, 1998). High performance is imperative due to the important role government plays in citizens' lives (Bakker, 2015). This proposal addresses a gap in the teleworking and engagement literature by investigating these phenomena through the lens of generational differences. Using a cross-sectional quantitative electronic survey questionnaire distributed to randomly selected California public sector administrative teleworkers, the proposed study seeks to answer the following research question: how do generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public

sector? In identifying how the sampled population relates to engagement, and associated factors such as autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation, this study's findings would have implications for public sector managers in engaging their age-diverse workforces in the post-COVID-19 era.

Section 1: Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a mass mobilization towards teleworking as organizations have sought to protect their employees from the illness (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garces, 2020). The implications for this unprecedented shift have yet to play out fully, but there are indications that telework could be here to stay in the long term (Guyot & Sawhill, 2020). While organizations figure out the right balance of working in and out of the office, they must also consider the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce–one that features more generational differences than ever before (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Additionally, through all this change, managers must continue finding ways to maintain and improve organizational performance (Khademian, 1998). This is especially important in the public sector, with its limited resources relative to the private sector (Jin & McDonald, 2017). One of the ways to enhance organizational performance is through employee engagement (Vigoda-Gadot, Eldor, & Schohat, 2013). Furthermore, research has shown autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation to be factors related to this phenomenon (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Davis & Cates, 2013; Menguc, Auh, Fisher, & Haddad, 2013). Although research on teleworker engagement exists, the researcher is not aware of any studies that have investigated it through the lens of generational differences. Therefore, how do generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector? This research proposal offers a way to study and seek answers to this question. It begins by introducing the major concepts of the proposed study: teleworking, generational differences, and engagement.

Technological innovations have made it possible for ever-increasing amounts of our work to be completed away from a traditional office setting (Vega, Anderson, & Kaplan, 2015). Teleworking is one of many terms used to describe the act of completing work away from one's

primary work location (i.e., the office an employee commutes to) (Caillier, 2016). However, the definition is fluid in the literature due to the many ways in which employees can complete work away from the office (Hilbrecht, Shaw, Johnson, & Andrey, 2013). For example, Messenger and Gschwind (2016) argued that teleworking has evolved from stationary home offices, with desktop computers and dedicated telephone lines, to cyber offices where workers using smartphones and tablets can be productive without the hassle of spatial or temporal constraints. Caillier (2016) noted that some teleworkers do not perform their work at home, but rather at satellite centers near their home. One area that the teleworking literature seems to agree on is that this mode of working remains largely reserved for knowledge workers in professional positions (Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Pyoria, 2011). However, like its definition, scholars do not appear to agree on teleworking's organizational outcomes.

Some researchers have found that telework corresponds to increases in job satisfaction, job performance, reduced stress, and employee retention, though others have highlighted the phenomenon of professional isolation and its effects on performance and connectedness to the workplace (Vega et al., 2015). As we start to reimagine what workplaces look like, it is important to consider the increasingly diverse generational differences among them. To this point, one of the more pronounced differences called out in the literature is comfort with technology (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Accordingly, generational differences are discussed next.

Workplaces in the U.S. now have four generations of employees working together (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Cogin, 2012; Haynes, 2011). According to Eyerman and Turner (1998), a generation is a group of individuals that develop a shared perception and sense of self that serves as a collective identity through which they are linked over time. The presence of different

generations in the workforce has driven practitioners and researchers to explore ways in which to best lead them (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Benson and Brown (2011) posited that employees' values and attitudes towards work would vary by generation, requiring management to account for these differences to manage their workers effectively. Relatedly, scholars have argued that each generational cohort is distinguished by the unique environment and cultural climate in which it was brought up (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; McMullin, Comeau, & Jovic, 2007). While the exact dates are oft-debated, the literature generally identifies the following generations and their birth years: silent generation, 1922-1943; baby boomers, 1944-1960; Generation X, 1961-1980; and millennials, 1981-2001 (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). As previously noted, these generations have been found to possess different values and attitudes, which makes it important for leaders to understand these differences to achieve the best organizational outcomes (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). However, some wonder whether generational differences exist at all, as the literature has seen mixed results (Cogin, 2012).

Researchers have suggested that perceived generational differences are simply due to different life stages (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014). According to Cogin (2012), this outlook presupposes a shared development cycle for all, from early childhood to elderly age. Arguing the life stage point of view, Arnett (2010) concluded that young Americans are not significantly different from the previous generation. Rather, the path they take from teenager to young adult is what has radically changed; they value the freedom for self-exploration before ultimately settling down in their late 20s or early 30s (Arnett, 2010). On views of work, Becton et al. (2014) noted that this could be explained by the type of jobs older workers have or where they are in life (i.e., older employees may be more committed because they have a family to provide for). Nevertheless, as mentioned, researchers have argued that managers should account

for different generations' values and attitudes if they hope to manage their workforce effectively. One aspect of effective management is employee engagement, which is discussed next.

Employee engagement–the degree to which one is involved in their work–has been a key topic among management scholars in recent years (Breaugh, 2021; Gerards, de Grip, & Baudewjins, 2018; Jin & McDonald, 2017). According to Saks (2019), much of the employee engagement research traces its roots back to Kahn's (1990) study on personal engagement and Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker's (2002) investigation of work engagement. Kahn (1990) said that personal engagement is the full devotion of oneself to the task at hand. Of work engagement, Schaufeli et al. (2002) offered that engaged employees view work as more than a task to complete, but rather a calling worthy of maximum effort. Employee engagement is vital to agencies because it has been known to relate to several positive organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, performance, and overall agency success (Breaugh, 2021; Jin & McDonald, 2017). Moreover, according to Jin and McDonald (2017), engagement is critical to retaining a dedicated workforce which can help to avoid costly turnover. However, the public sector presents unique challenges in fostering worker engagement.

Although sustaining employee engagement is a tough task in any organizational setting, Jin and McDonald (2017) argued that it is particularly challenging in the public sector. Salary freezes, volatile budgets, and threats of workforce reductions are just a few of the hurdles that public sector managers contend with in trying to engage employees (Jin & McDonald, 2017). Similarly, Breaugh (2021) noted that agencies are finding themselves in a constant state of flux due to financial concerns and frequent reform initiatives, which she suggested may lead to lower levels of engagement. Next, the researcher will explain how teleworking, generational

differences, and engagement converge; their importance to public administration; and reaffirm the research question for the proposed project.

As new ways of working proliferate (ten Brummelhuis, Bakker, Hetland, & Keulemans, 2012) among increasingly age-diverse workplaces, it is important to know how these relate to employee engagement. As previously noted, engagement is related to higher levels of organizational performance, which is critical in the public sector because government plays such an important role in people's daily lives through education, public health, and public safety (Bakker, 2015). In addition to the previously identified knowledge gap–generational differences–this proposal also answers Saks' (2019) call for research on how employee and social characteristics influence employee engagement. Consequently, the proposed study aims to fill these gaps in the literature by examining how generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector. For this proposal, telework is defined as work performed at home for all or part of the workweek; this is a modified version of Hilbrecht et al.'s (2013) concept of telework. Specifically, the proposal focuses on work from home because the literature suggests that working from home is the primary method in which organizationally employed individuals engage in telework (de Vries, Tummers, & Bekkers, 2019). In the following two sections, the researcher will provide background on teleworking and its role in the COVID-19 pandemic, and review the literature to place the proposed study in the context of the existing body of knowledge. Then, after a discussion of the proposed research methodology, the researcher will turn to the proposed data collection methods, anticipated limitations, and ethical considerations. Lastly, the proposal concludes with the expected contributions to the literature and practical implications of the proposed research, which is especially relevant to public sector managers looking for ways to engage their different generations of administrative teleworkers.

Section 2: Background

In this section, the researcher will provide historical context for telework. This will include a discussion on its growth and why organizations may show support for telework. Then, the proposed study will be put in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Growth and support of telework

Teleworking is the act of performing one's work duties away from their employer's worksite using information technology resources (Garcia-Contreras, Munoz-Chavez, Valle-Cruz, Ruvalcaba-Gomez, & Becerra-Santiago, 2021). In the early 1990s, only 10 states had implemented teleworking programs and, at the federal level, only a few hundred workers from roughly a dozen agencies participated in telework (Mahler, 2012). Almost 30 years later, over 100,000 employees (nearly 6% of the federal workforce) participated in telework (Mahler, 2012). Davis and Cates (2013) noted that nearly 100 million U.S. workers were expected to spend at least part of their week teleworking by 2016, which they acknowledged could be a low-end estimate. For jobs conducive to such arrangements (i.e., administrative), teleworking is considered a solution to issues such as stress and work-life balance for employees, productivity for organizations, and even pollution at a societal level (Caillier, 2016). To this point, Vega et al. (2015) noted that many public sector organizations have adopted policies to encourage telework to increase productivity and save money. At the federal level, Congress passed the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, which directed federal agencies to enact policies to allow employees to telework (Caillier, 2016). One other reason that agencies are interested in telework is that it can act as a critical element of their business continuity plans (Caillier, 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing example of this, where many organizations quickly adopted telework to protect business activities (Garcia-Contreras et al., 2021).

Teleworking and the COVID-19 pandemic

Although teleworking is practiced today, the literature often positions it as the future of work rather than the norm of today (de Vries et al., 2019). However, the COVID-19 pandemic critically disrupted organizational operations around the world and significantly accelerated the adoption of teleworking practices (Garcia-Contreras et al., 2021; Mouratidis & Papagiannikis, 2021); in many places, as the saying goes, the future is now. Some have suggested that teleworking could be the "new normal" in the post-COVID-19 era (Dickler, 2021). In a study of the effects of teleworking on public sector employees during the pandemic, Garcia-Contreras et al. (2021) found that although employees were more committed based on the trust placed in them by employers, and experienced less burnout, there was no indication of increased productivity or job satisfaction. Although this study was carried out during an extraordinary period, it suggests a need for further research into the long-term implications for telework implementation. Additionally, with different generations of employees working together, and an apparent lack of research on how their differences relate to telework and engagement, it is important to investigate how generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector. Next, the researcher will review the literature to place the proposed study in the context of the existing body of knowledge.

Section 3: Literature Review

In this section, the researcher will review relevant literature to discuss how the proposed study's concepts have been investigated in past research. Telework researchers do not appear to have arrived at a consensus for what defines telework, let alone how beneficial the practice is for organizations. Some have found that certain amounts of teleworking are associated with employee motivation (Caillier, 2016), can enhance employee-supervisor relations (Golden, 2006), and provide the necessary autonomy to keep employees engaged (O'Neill, Hambley, Greidanus, MacDonnell, & Kline, 2009), while others have observed that teleworking too much can lead to professional isolation (de Vries et al., 2019). Regarding generational differences, the literature appears to be divided on whether they truly exist, as some scholars have argued that perceived differences can be explained by different life stages (Becton et al., 2014; Jorgensen, 2003). On engagement, scholars have found it to be related to improved organizational outcomes (Breaugh, 2021; Jin & McDonald, 2017). However, stress has been shown to be negatively associated with engagement (Breaugh, 2021). While there are connections in the literature between teleworking and engagement, there appears to be a gap this proposed study can fill in relation to generational differences. Specifically, how do generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector? This review begins with the teleworking literature.

Telework: Origins, progress, advantages, and drawbacks

Teleworking's origin comes from the early 1970s when researcher Jack Nilles investigated potential savings to the nation's economy through reductions in commuting (Pyoria, 2011). This was an era, Pyoria (2011) noted, where people believed the solution to ever-growing amounts of traffic was to build satellite offices to support teleworking. As we moved into the

1980s, interest in teleworking was still rising among employers and employees alike, as well as urban and infrastructure planners (Handy & Mokhtarian, 1996). In the 1990s, teleworking rapidly rose in popularity and, into the new millennium, became a solution to deal with work-family conflict (de Vries et al., 2019; Hilbrecht et al., 2013). Ultimately, however, even in the face of global warming and increased awareness of environmental issues, telework has not lived up to the lofty expectations set in its early days (Pyoria, 2011).

It is important to remember that teleworking does not exist in a vacuum, but rather must contend with organizational and societal needs (Pyoria, 2011). For example, as Pyoria (2011) indicated, environmental considerations alone are not enough to convince organizations to invest in telework. Instead, organizations must see how teleworking can add value and enhance organizational outcomes (Heinonen, Jokinen, & Kaivo-Oja, 2001; Helminen & Ristimaki, 2007). Although organizations tout their environmentally-minded initiatives, this alone is unlikely to prompt a broad adoption of telework (Pyoria, 2011). Instead, it will be the marriage of social responsibility and organizational interests, such as an engaged workforce, that moves organizations toward telework (Pyoria, 2011). Next is a discussion of telework in practice.

In its most basic form, teleworking is the act of using information technology to complete work away from one's primary work location (Davis & Cates, 2013). Beyond this fundamental concept, there is no universal definition for telework because there are different ways in which it is practiced (de Vries et al., 2019). According to Daniels, Lamond, and Standen (2001), the main methods of teleworking are working from home, at satellite offices away from home and the main office, and mobile work that is performed while in transit (i.e., on a business trip). Mahler (2012) described teleworking as a type of cyber organization. These organizations consist of employees separated by some physical distance yet bonded through the pursuit of a shared

organizational goal and working together toward it via information technology (Ahuja & Carley 1999). The technology used in facilitating telework can range from basic phone and email to cloud-based collaborative software (Mahler, 2012). Virtual-conferencing software takes the place of face-to-face meetings and can facilitate information sharing through "screen-sharing" functionality (Mahler, 2012). As previously noted, organizations must understand how they will benefit from a teleworking arrangement. These benefits are discussed next.

Although teleworking solutions strive to virtually emulate more traditional working arrangements (i.e., teleconferencing instead of meeting face-to-face), there are some distinct advantages to this alternative work model (Mahler, 2012). Teleworking can save organizations money that would have otherwise been spent on office space (Caillier, 2016). Also, Mahler (2012) noted that teleworking presents an opportunity for organizations to reconfigure business processes and increase productivity. While these are some of the noted advantages to telework, organizations also have reason to be hesitant in adopting it (Mahler, 2012). According to Pyoria (2011), management's hesitancy to cede control is a classic teleworking issue. However, he argued that teleworking requires a change in management's mindset, from focusing on how employees do their work to what employees produce. One teleworking issue that labor and management can agree on, however, is related to the complications it presents with teamwork (Mahler, 2012). According to Pyoria (2011), it is easier to collaborate with colleagues when all team members are in close physical proximity; this is one reason why fully teleworking organizations are rare. Pyoria (2011) concluded that some mixture of working in and out of the office is probably ideal for most organizations. These described some of the high-level impacts of telework, but scholars have also looked at employee-related telework outcomes.

The teleworking literature has found evidence of both positive and negative outcomes from employees' teleworking. Caillier (2016) investigated the relationship between telecommuting and Public Service Motivation (PSM) for federal employees by analyzing survey data from the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board. PSM is a key differentiation between public and private sector employees (Caillier, 2016). It is rooted in the belief that public employees are motivated by their desire to serve others and work in the interest of the public good (Caillier, 2016). Caillier (2016) found that employees who teleworked most of their workweek had higher levels of PSM than those who did for one day or less. Furthermore, Caillier (2016) found little difference in PSM between those who teleworked most of the week and those who did about half the week. This aligns with Pyoria (2011) in suggesting that some type of hybrid telework schedule would be preferable. However, other scholars have found a downside to teleworking.

Conversely, in a study of the effect of teleworking on the organizational commitment, work engagement, and professional isolation of Dutch public servants, de Vries et al. (2019) found that teleworking leads to greater isolation, less commitment, and no clear benefit to engagement. Professional isolation, one of the more pronounced teleworking drawbacks noted in the literature, is described as a sense of separation from the social and work-related connections that go with working in an office environment (Cooper & Kurland, 2002; de Vries et al., 2019; Sardeshmukh, Sharma, & Golden, 2012). The physical separation between the employee and organization can cause the employee to feel that they are being treated unfairly, which could lead them to feel apprehensive about their status in the workplace (Dahlstrom, 2013). Additionally, these uneasy feelings could further cause the employee to feel disconnected from the organization and less committed to their job (Dahlstrom, 2013). Consequently, this could result in increased turnover and decreased job satisfaction (Hill, Miller, Weiner, &

Colihan, 1998). Taken together, the literature has found that there are different ways of teleworking, but it has not lived up to its potential. While the literature has found benefits to teleworking, there are also drawbacks; one other drawback of teleworking is older generations' unease with the requisite technology (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Such differences are the focus of the next section.

Generations: Theory, archetypes, and managing them at work

Sixty years separate the oldest and youngest employees in the U.S. workforce (Cogin, 2012). Figuring out how best to lead employees spread among the silent, baby boomer, Generation X, and millennial generations has been a primary focus of management scholars (Cogin, 2012). The study of generations is driven by generational cohort theory (Becton et al., 2014). A generation is a social construct consisting of individuals that are born within a certain number of years from one another who share an outlook that is rooted in the significant events they experience during their coming-of-age years (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). According to Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014), this is because these events play a part in molding the individuals' values, attitudes, and beliefs, which the authors suggested could have implications for their behavior in the workplace. Although the literature discusses distinct differences between the four noted generations, there appears to be little empirical evidence to support these claims. Becton et al. (2014), in a study of job applicants at two hospitals in the southeastern U.S., found some evidence of generational differences but they were not significant. They cautioned human resource managers from putting much effort into treating generations differently. Nevertheless, these differences, which some scholars identify as stereotypes (Becton et al., 2014), will be discussed over the next few paragraphs as they are important considerations in managing different generations at work.

Members of the silent generation–also known as veterans–comprise 2% of the U.S. workforce (Sackett, 2021) and were generally born between 1922 and 1943, though as with all generations, this range is up for debate (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Veterans came of age during the great depression and, consequently, experienced hardships caused by economic turmoil and elevated joblessness (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Additionally, this cohort's lives were largely upended by the events of World War II (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). As a result of these experiences, veterans are dutiful (Haynes, 2011). They have respect for authority and take their work seriously (Hammill, 2005). Moreover, veterans prefer to work independently, favor official communication channels, and value clear direction delivered through a command style of leadership (Hammill, 2005). It is not surprising, then, that veterans support discipline and possess a strong work ethic (Cogin, 2012). This work ethic makes veterans, as well as baby boomers, strong prospects for mentoring the younger generations (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). At the same time, while older workers impart their knowledge and experience from years on the job, younger workers can return the favor by providing technological support (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014)–a crucial dynamic when faced with potentially wider adoptions of telework in the post-COVID-19 era (Causey, 2021). Next, the discussion will highlight baby boomers.

Baby boomers, at 25% of the U.S. workforce (Sackett, 2021), were generally born between 1944 and 1960 (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). As their name suggests, members of this cohort were born at a time of rapidly rising birth rates following the end of World War II (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). They share a strong work ethic with veterans (Haynes, 2011). However, baby boomers would rather work in a team environment (Hammill, 2005). Additionally, they want a voice in making decisions which is suited to a more democratic leadership style (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Also in contrast to veterans' tastes, baby boomers

appreciate a more informal style of communication; therefore, face-to-face meetings would be most appropriate (Hammill, 2005). However, a preference for informal communication does not mean baby boomers lack respect for authority (Allen, 2004); in this regard, they are similar to veterans. Because baby boomers did not grow up with technology like the younger generations, they can be hesitant in this area as well (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). As mentioned, younger and more tech-fluent employees are key to supporting older workers with technological issues (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Next, the discussion turns to Generation X.

Generation X represents 33% of the U.S. workforce (Sackett, 2021) and was generally born between 1961 and 1980 (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). This generation marks a turning point in working values as its members place a high priority on work-life balance (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). This is due partly to their experiences as latchkey children, home alone while their baby boomer parents were at work (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Becton et al., 2014). This break from tradition extends to a more open-minded and progressive outlook, aided by rapid advancement in technology and the introduction of the Internet (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). It is said that Generation X is less loyal to their employer than previous generations (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014), cynical (Arnett, 2000), distrustful of authority (Eisner, 2005), and appreciates direct coaching (Allen, 2004). Leaders of Generation X employees should consider a less formal and hierarchical structure, in contrast to the preferences of older generations (Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy Jr., 2009). The fourth generation, millennials, are the focus of the next discussion.

Millennials were generally born between 1981 and 2000 and, at 35%, make up the largest segment of today's workforce (Sackett, 2021). They came of age during a time of revolutionary change (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014) with the rapid maturation of technology, including the Internet and mobile devices. Also, similar to Generation X, millennials grew up with working

parents and have a progressive mindset for social issues (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Millennials have also been described as independent and self-sufficient (Williams & Page, 2011). Like Generation X, millennials are skeptical of authority, want to feel fulfilled by their work (Allen, 2004), and place a high priority on time with family (Gilley, Waddell, Hall, Jackson, & Gilley, 2015). Millennials are also similar to baby boomers in the sense that they want to be successful in their careers (Eisner, 2005), yet research has found that they appreciate leisure activities more than other generations (Meriac, Woehr, & Banister, 2010). Leaders of millennials should also take note of another difference: while baby boomers may prefer face-to-face meetings, millennials prefer communication via email (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). As previously mentioned, the argument against generational differences is that they are simply due to life stages. This aspect of the literature is discussed next.

Some researchers have argued that generational differences do not exist, but rather these perceived differences are due to different life stages (Jorgensen, 2003). A life stages view describes one where all people follow a similar life cycle (Cogin, 2012). Cogin (2012) offered that as people grow up, they are tasked with new challenges and occupy different roles; examples include getting a job, marrying, and having children. Another argument against generational differences is related to how culture affects people's lived experiences, such as growing up in Europe and the United States during World War II (Cogin, 2012)–very different experiences for two people of the same age. However, Eyerman and Turner (1998) noted that shared culture was a key factor in generations. In other words, a generational label is not necessarily cross-cultural. Although there appear to be few rigorous studies to support generational differences, Schuman and Scott (1989) found that people belonging to different generational cohorts were able to remember milestone events and ascribe why the events were significant. Furthermore, Benson

and Brown's (2011) study of baby boomer and Generation X employees found support for commonly accepted generational differences related to job satisfaction and willingness to quit (baby boomers had more and less, respectively). Finally, Cogin (2012) studied the four generations, across five countries, and found significant generational differences related to employees' work values. For example, veterans and baby boomers valued hard work while Generation X and millennials valued instant gratification (Cogin, 2012). Although scholars have explored generations' differing work values, and even the overall relationships between teleworking and engagement, there does not appear to be any research into generational differences relative to teleworker engagement. This gap in the literature is why the proposed study seeks to investigate how generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector. The engagement literature is reviewed next.

Employee engagement: Theories and findings

According to Saks (2006), there are two primary streams of engagement research. In one notable study, Kahn (1990) argued that employee engagement is the consequence of three psychological conditions: meaningfulness (the notion that one's actions are worthy of their spent energy), safety (feeling protected from expressing oneself or taking risks on the job), and availability (having the internal resources to be engaged in the moment). The notion is that workers are more engaged in an environment that provides these psychological elements (Saks, 2006). Extending Kahn's (1990) work, May, Gilson, and Harter's (2004) survey of a U.S. Midwest insurance company observed that the psychological conditions established by Kahn were indeed strong indicators of engagement. The other stream of research deals with stress and burnout, which Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argued is the polar opposite of engagement. According to Maslach et al. (2001), there are six aspects of work that can lead to

burnout and, by association, engagement: workload, control, rewards and recognition, community and social support, perceived fairness, and values. According to Maslach et al. (2001), because engagement is the inverse of burnout, the "positive version" of the six aspects of work (i.e., manageable workload) are positively related to engagement. To this point, in a recent study analyzing data from the European Working Conditions Survey, Breaugh (2021) found that work stress leads to burnout and relates negatively to engagement.

The works of Kahn (1990) and Maslach et al. (2001) established antecedents to engagement (Saks, 2006). Accordingly, through the job demands-resources (JDR) framework, Kahn's (1990) psychological conditions may be seen as a job resource if, for example, an employee feels safe in taking reasonable risks that facilitate goal attainment. Conversely, Maslach et al.'s (2001) six aspects of work may be seen as a job demand if, for instance, an employee is bogged down by an unmanageable workload and compensates for it by exerting more energy.

More recently, Schaufeli et al. (2002) developed the concept of work engagement which describes a mindset in which the employee finds meaning in, and holds a positive outlook of, their work driven by vigor, dedication, and absorption. According to Jin and McDonald (2017), this characterization portrays engagement not as a situational occurrence, but rather a sustained state of mind that is infused into all facets of the employee's work life. Vigor, the first of three key aspects of work engagement, speaks to heightened energy and cognitive fortitude (Jin & McDonald, 2017). Dedication is being present and putting in the time and effort needed to do the job (Jin & McDonald, 2017). Lastly, absorption is to be totally focused on the job and willingly enveloped in the work (Jin & McDonald, 2017).

According to Jin and McDonald (2017), work engagement should not be confused with other phenomena such as job satisfaction or commitment. On job satisfaction, Bakker (2011) noted that it differs from engagement by being a more inert state of mind that is predicated on one's current circumstances. In other words, a feeling of momentary contentment as opposed to sustained devotion to the job. Regarding commitment, Jin and McDonald (2017) posited that it is merely one's feeling of connectedness to the organization. Engagement is more than this in that it reflects one's attentiveness and absorption in carrying out their job functions (Saks, 2006). While scholars have examined engagement from different vantage points, the common thread is that it is a discrete construct that involves key aspects determinant to an employee's job performance (Jin & McDonald, 2017). For example, in a study of burnout and work engagement among Finnish school teachers, Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2006) found that work engagement was related to greater commitment. Employees who are more committed provide a higher level of service than those less committed. Moreover, Salanova and Schaufeli (2008) found that work engagement was related to more forward-thinking behavior. This could manifest in improved performance by employees anticipating issues and dealing with them before they turn into bigger problems. Having already discussed professional isolation as part of a review of the teleworking literature, the discussion now turns to the placement of autonomy and supervisor support within the existing body of knowledge.

Autonomy, supervisor support, and employee engagement

Autonomy is the latitude one has in the performance of their job functions (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to Karasek (1979), autonomy can be split into two categories–skill discretion and decision authority. Skill discretion describes being allowed to come up with new ideas, help make decisions, and develop one's skills (Karasek, 1979). Decision authority is the

potential for taking on a greater role in deciding on the different aspects of how one's job is performed (Karasek, 1979). When employees feel that they have autonomy in their jobs, they feel more driven, invested, and able to accomplish their goals (Marinova, Ye, & Singh, 2008). To this point, Breaugh (2021) found that autonomy, competence, and relatedness were the seeds that, when planted, allowed an employee to blossom and flourish in their job. Other studies have also found autonomy to be positively related to engagement because it enables employees to determine the best way to deal with a challenging scenario (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; (Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). According to Menguc et al. (2013), supervisor support can supplement autonomy in leading to enhanced engagement.

Supervisor support is the extent to which the employee perceives that their supervisor appreciates their work and shows concern for their welfare (Babin & Boles, 1996). According to social exchange theory, if an employee perceives supervisor support, then they will feel compelled to return this support in the form of commitment to the organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Menguc et al. (2013) noted that supervisor support is a key resource under the JDR model. DeConinck (2010) argued that a dependable supervisor can act as a tremendous motivator to an employee facing challenges at work. This supported Sand and Miyazaki (2000), who found that employees who enjoyed supervisor support were better able to weather job-related challenges and remain engaged. Furthermore, May et al. (2004) noted that employees exhibit greater levels of engagement when their supervisors connect with them. Beyond the traditional engagement literature, autonomy and supervisor support are also discussed in the teleworking literature.

Teleworking can result in a heightened sense of autonomy given the freedom employees have to schedule their work (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Due to the autonomy afforded by

teleworking, as well as other positive outcomes such as reduced interruptions, Anderson, Kaplan, and Vega (2015) posited that teleworking would result in greater engagement. A five-day diary study by ten Brummelhuis et al. (2012) also found support for this, though it contradicted Anderson et al.'s (2015) argument for reduced interruptions; instead, ten Brummelhuis et al. (2012) noted that being constantly connected can increase interruptions. Nevertheless, Gerards et al. (2018) also found that the autonomy afforded by telework was positively associated with employee engagement. Another positive outcome related to telework autonomy is the lowered cognitive strain resulting from being able to carry out one's tasks in the way most comfortable to them (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012). The freedom and control offered by autonomy will empower teleworkers to bring their full effort and attention to their jobs, thereby stimulating increased engagement (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012).

There appears to be little research on the effects of supervisor support on teleworker engagement. There are, however, studies examining the importance of the supervisor-employee relationship. In a study examining how relationships mediate the job satisfaction of teleworkers at a U.S. technology company, Golden (2006) found that teleworking was associated with a higher quality supervisor-employee relationship. Golden (2006) posited that this may be a concerted effort on behalf of the teleworker to maintain effective communication with their manager. However, Gerards et al. (2018) suggested that this outcome depends on the type of manager; those not willing to adapt their style to the unique needs of a teleworking arrangement may not be successful in this situation. Along these lines, Green and Roberts (2010) noted that supervisors of teleworkers play an important role in keeping their employees connected by communicating effectively and building trust. Therefore, high-quality supervisor-employee relationships are vital to teleworking arrangements (de Vries et al., 2019). This is especially

important considering that teleworkers may not be as connected to their colleagues and, as a result, would need that extra support from their supervisor (de Vries et al., 2019).

The literature reflects enthusiasm for teleworking, despite it not living up to initial expectations. Autonomy, afforded by teleworking, can result in a more engaged workforce (Gerards et al., 2018). Moreover, teleworking highlights the importance of the employee-supervisor relationship, a valuable job resource (Saks, 2019). However, this enthusiasm is tempered by the prospect of professional isolation (de Vries et al., 2019). Meanwhile, more generations are working together than ever before, and research suggests that the differences between them are meaningful to organizational leaders (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). There appear to be, however, no studies that have examined how generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector. With the COVID-19 pandemic prompting public sector agencies to consider wider adoption of telework (Dickler, 2021), it is paramount that this knowledge gap be investigated. If generations react differently to autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation–all factors related to engagement–then it may provide crucial insight to public sector managers in engaging their teleworkers. Given the importance of government in citizens' daily lives, agency leaders should strive for an engaged workforce.

Section 4: Methodology

The proposed study would add to the body of knowledge in two ways. One, as previously mentioned, it will answer Saks' (2019) call for research on how employee and social characteristics–generational differences–influence employee engagement. Additionally, it will address a gap in the teleworking and engagement literature. Although there are studies that examine the relationship between teleworking and employee engagement, there appear to be no studies that investigate this from a generational differences perspective. Accordingly, the proposed study seeks to answer the following research question: how do generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector? This descriptive study would utilize a cross-sectional quantitative research design and its methods would consist of a multi-agency electronic survey of California public sector employees, including those at the federal, state, and local (i.e., county, city, and special district) level. The proposed design and methods are appropriate for this study because it will collect data from a large population–California public sector employees–to analyze the relationships between different variables, including engagement, autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation (Pajo, 2017). Furthermore, survey questionnaires are an economical way–both in time and money–to collect data from large populations (Pajo, 2017).

The proposed study will be conducted in the state of California, in the United States, and is expected to commence in Spring 2022. California includes populous and diverse metropolitan areas such as San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, as well as more rural communities in the inland, central valley, and northern California regions. Including respondents from different public sector agencies, and the state's varied regions, will enhance the generalizability of the proposed study's findings as they relate to the U.S. public sector. Furthermore, since past

research has shown that teleworking is largely reserved for knowledge workers in professional positions (Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Pyoria, 2011), the focus of this proposed study is on staff-level administrative teleworkers.

Data collection

Public sector agencies throughout California would be contacted via email to participate in the proposed study. For the federal government, the researcher would contact the Office of the Director within the Office of Personnel Management. For state government, the researcher would contact the California Department of Human Resources, CalHR administration. To facilitate contacting the state's numerous local agencies, the researcher would contact the California State Association of Counties, the League of California Cities, and the California Special Districts Association. Through these professional associations, the researcher would obtain the contact information of local government human resource officers throughout the state.

Using the contact information for each agency, the researcher will request, via email, a list of California-based employees working in staff-level administrative classifications from each public sector agency. The researcher will not specify teleworkers in the request, to capture those with informal teleworking arrangements. Disproportionate stratified random sampling will be used to select a sample of employees to invite to complete the electronic questionnaire. This is the appropriate sampling procedure because the proposed study involves analyzing the attitudes and opinions of two or more groups; specifically, generations (Pajo, 2017). Additionally, although each generation makes up a different percentage of the workforce, the researcher will need a representative sample of each generation–accounting for gender, race, ethnicity, etc.–in equal numbers, to conduct the analysis (Pajo, 2017). All employees will be asked to answer a short yes/no screening question: Do you telework from home during regular working hours at

least once per week? After screening for employees that indicate they telework–expected to be between 20 and 25% (Caillier, 2016)–the researcher would sample 1 out of every 5 screened employees which would be equally spread across the four generations and three branches of government. To achieve this, employee lists will be compiled by branch–federal, state, and local–and then separated into generational cohorts–silent, baby boomer, Generation X, and millennial–by birth year. For each of the branches, samples will be randomly selected in each generation up to the target number. When one generation reaches the limit, the researcher will move to the next one. To illustrate this procedure, assume the researcher obtained lists totaling 100,000 administrative staff from all California public sector agencies. Then, after compiling a master list and screening for teleworkers, the list is narrowed down to 25,000 teleworking employees. Next, the researcher would separate the list into branches and generations, and randomly select 1 out of every 5 employees, resulting in a total sample of 5,000 employees. Within each branch, up to 416 employees would be selected within each generation. Once this limit is reached, the researcher would move on to the next until reaching the total sample of 5,000 employees.

The proposed study seeks to investigate how generational differences affect the engagement of administrative teleworkers in the public sector. Through the use of an electronic survey questionnaire, the researcher will measure the level of engagement, autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation for administrative teleworkers from each generation. The questionnaire will collect demographic information such as gender (0 = female), race, age, education, marital status (0 = single), and number of dependents. Generations are the independent variable and engagement is the dependent variable. Variables that moderate the

level of engagement include autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Davis & Cates, 2013; Menguc, et al., 2013).

Generations, the independent variable, are grouped as: silent generation, born 1922-1943; baby boomers, born 1944-1960; Generation X, born 1961-1980; and millennials, born 1981-2001 (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). This variable will be measured by the date of birth included in the employee lists. However, because there is no universally accepted date range for each generation, the sample selection will omit those who were born in the first and last two years of each generation; this is similar to how Cogin (2012) measured generations in an effort to focus on core generational differences. For example, millennials born in 1981, 1982, 2000, and 2001 will not be included in the proposed study.

Engagement, the dependent variable, will be measured using Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova's (2006) nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, which has been used in recent teleworking engagement studies (de Vries et al., 2019; Gerards et al., 2018). Using a seven-point Likert scale, respondents will indicate their levels of vigor (e.g., "At my work, I feel bursting with energy), dedication (e.g., "My job inspires me"), and absorption (e.g., "I feel happy when I am working intensely"). Responses will range from 0 = never to 6 = always/every day.

Autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation moderate engagement. Autonomy will be measured using Breaugh's (1989) nine-item autonomy scale as used in Sardeshmukh et al.'s (2012) investigation into how teleworking impacts exhaustion and job engagement. On a seven-point Likert scale, respondents will indicate their level of agreement with statements such as, "I have control over the scheduling of my work", and, "I am able to modify what my job objectives are." Responses will range from 0 = entirely disagree to 6 = entirely agree, including 3 = neither agree nor disagree. Supervisor support will be measured

using Jin and McDonald's (2017) seven-item perceived supervisor support scale, which they developed in studying how the role of immediate supervisor, perceived organizational support, and learning opportunities related to employee engagement in the public sector. On a seven-point Likert scale, respondents will indicate their level of agreement with statements such as, "my manager/supervisor cares what I think", and, "my manager/supervisor is interested in my success." Responses will range from 0 = entirely disagree to 6 = entirely agree, including 3 = neither agree nor disagree. Similar to de Vries et al. (2019), professional isolation will be measured using Golden, Veiga, and Dino's (2008) seven-item professional isolation scale, which addresses the two main aspects of this phenomenon: isolation from coworkers and the organization. On a seven-point Likert scale, respondents will indicate their level of agreement with statements such as, "I miss the emotional support of my coworkers", and, "I feel left out on activities and meetings that could enhance my career." Responses will range from 0 = entirely disagree to 6 = entirely agree, including 3 = neither agree nor disagree.

Teleworking will be defined as work performed at home, during regular working hours, for all or part of the workweek. This is because the literature suggests that working from home is the most common form of teleworking, as opposed to working from a satellite office near one's home (de Vries et al., 2019). The proposed study excludes telework performed outside of regular working hours, such as answering emails from home in the evening, because this method of completing work can be performed by those who do not regularly telework (Noonan & Glass, 2012). To measure telework, respondents will be asked to indicate how much time they spend teleworking per week (Caillier, 2016). Possible answers range from "less than 1 day per week", to, "4 to 5 days per week." There is no option for those who do not telework because those

employees would be screened before the sample selection process. A copy of the survey questionnaire is in Appendix A.

Limitations

There are advantages to utilizing a quantitative electronic survey questionnaire. For example, surveys are low-cost, time-efficient, and able to capture the attitudes and opinions of a large population. However, the proposed study is not without limitations. First, there is a risk that respondents will be untruthful. For example, although respondents would be assured of their confidentiality, some may still fear reprisal from their employer when answering questions about their engagement, supervisor support, or professional isolation. Another risk is that respondents will perceive the questions or possible answers as too vague and, consequently, provide an inaccurate answer. Since this is a quantitative study, there will not be an opportunity for the respondents to qualify their answers with additional information or clarification, nor will there be an opportunity for the researcher to ask follow-up questions.

There are also potential concerns with the proposed study's internal validity. Although the data collected through the survey may reveal relationships between the independent, dependent, and moderating variables, these relationships are not sufficient to determine causation. As previously noted, a criticism in the generational differences literature is that they do not exist, but are rather due to life stages. To this point, for example, marital status and number of dependents may be confounding variables because they could explain why one is more dedicated to their job.

External validity is a concern as well. Although the proposed sampling frame was intended to increase the generalizability of results, by including various branches of government and those from different socioeconomic backgrounds, the potential participants are limited to

those working in California. Due to the state's progressive nature, California-based employees may have different attitudes and opinions about their work than those in other states. For example, the influence of public employee unions–a significant factor in employer/employee relations–varies by state (Hogler & Henle, 2011). Additionally, employees based in California may have access to better quality Internet–a significant consideration in teleworking–than in other parts of the country. From a practical perspective, this could affect the ability of agencies in other states to implement policies requiring supervisors to stay in closer contact with their teleworkers via video conferencing.

One other limitation of this proposed study is that it does not factor in the newest generation: Generation Z (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Having been born after 2001, members of this cohort have never known a time without mainstream Internet access (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). According to Williams and Page (2011), Generation Z is very confident, and they believe they can change the world in very imaginative ways. With the oldest among them being around 20 years old, they are on the cusp of entering the workforce. As Generation Z embarks on their careers, future research should include how their unique generational identity impacts their attitudes and opinions on work, as this proposed study does for earlier generations. In addition to limitations, there are also ethical considerations to take into account. These are discussed next.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations should be accounted for. To address this, the researcher will obtain informed consent from potential participants before sending out the electronic questionnaires. To implement this, the researcher will request that the agencies' human resource offices disseminate the informed consent forms through email to the prospective participants. The informed consent form shall make it clear that participation in this proposed study is

voluntary, revocable at all times, and a decision to participate in the proposed study will have no impact on the participant's employment. Moreover, the sampled employees would be informed that no personally identifiable data will be shared with their employer.

Because study participants would be revealing sensitive attitudes and opinions about their jobs, such as engagement, it is paramount that their confidentiality be protected. To ensure this, the following process will be followed: the researcher will provide employees with a secure link to access the electronic questionnaire, employees will authenticate using their unique employee identification number, agencies will not have access to the collected data, and the researcher will create an anonymized working file by deleting identifying information. The original dataset with identifiable information will be kept on encrypted storage media kept in a manner accessible only to the researcher. The employees will be made aware of these procedures as part of obtaining informed consent.

Section 5: Policy Recommendations and Conclusion

At the end of 2019, few could have predicted that the COVID-19 pandemic would bring profound changes to daily life in the United States and around the world. One of those changes was the rapid adoption of telework (Garcia-Contreras et al., 2021; Mouratidis & Papagiannikis, 2021). Although it is unclear, at this point, what the new normal looks like, some suggest that teleworking could have more of a presence in organizational life than it has at any point in the last half-century (Mouratidis & Papagiannakis, 2021). As the implications play out, more generations are working together than ever before (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). While the literature lacks consensus on whether generational differences exist, studies have shown that generations can differ in their values and attitudes about work (Benson & Brown, 2011; Cogin, 2012). This is of paramount importance to agency leaders as they figure out how to best engage their teleworking employees in the post-COVID-19 environment.

Although there is research that investigates teleworker engagement, there do not appear to be any studies that have examined this phenomenon through the lens of generational differences. Therefore, this proposal offered a project to answer the following research question: how do generational differences affect the engagement of different generations of teleworkers in the public sector? Using an electronic questionnaire, the researcher would survey public sector employees throughout California, at the federal, state, and local levels, about their levels of engagement, autonomy, supervisor support, and professional isolation.

Based on what the literature has said about the four generations–silent, baby boomer, Generation X, and millennial–agencies should take different approaches with each one. The silent generation, also known as veterans, makes up a relatively small part of the workforce. They respect authority, take work seriously, work independently, and prefer formal

communications (Hammill, 2005). While these attributes suggest that veterans would be engaged at work, they are unfamiliar with technology (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014) which could cause them to exert more energy in completing their task; this would be a job demand that could decrease engagement. Agencies adopting more frequent telework may want to offer this generation early retirement, given their few numbers, or pair them with younger workers in a two-way mentorship program. Baby boomers are similar to veterans in some respects, with their strong work ethic (Haynes, 2011), respect for authority (Allen, 2004), and their unfamiliarity with technology (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). However, in contrast, they prefer working in teams and meeting face-to-face (Hammill, 2005). Given this, agencies should be flexible in baby boomers' teleworking arrangements. This would give them the option to stay connected with colleagues, which is a job resource and therefore favorable to engagement. Additionally, like veterans, two-way mentorships could be beneficial for both younger and older generations. Generation X marks a shift in work values as compared to prior generations (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). They are less committed to their employer and more familiar with technology (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Generation X also appreciates direct feedback (Allen, 2004). These characteristics suggest that they would remain engaged in a teleworking environment as long as agencies prioritize supervisors staying connected with their Generation X subordinates via video conferencing technology. Millennials, the largest cohort represented in the workplace, share a familiarity of technology with Generation X and value work-life balance (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). They are also independent (Williams & Page, 2011). Of the four generations, millennials would likely be the most engaged while teleworking. They would value the autonomy afforded by telework and would not feel as isolated because they are constantly connected to their peers through technology in their personal life. This proposed study would

provide much-needed empirical research into the relationships between generational differences and teleworker engagement, which would provide valuable insight to public sector leaders as they enter a new era in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Appendix A: Survey

Gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender Female

☐ Transgender Male ☐ Gender Non-Conforming ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

(How to write gender questions, 2021)

Race:

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black or African American

☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ Native American or Other Pacific Islander ☐ White

(Race & ethnicity survey, 2016)

Age (Years):

☐ Under 21 ☐ 21-41 ☐ 42-61 ☐ 62-78 ☐ Over 78

Education:

☐ Less than High School ☐ High School or Equivalent ☐ Vocational School

☐ Some College ☐ College Degree ☐ Postgraduate

Marital Status:

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

Number of Dependents:

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or More

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Engagement:

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. Select the number (0 through 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. Refer to the Legend for a description of each option.

	Never	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Always
1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I am enthusiastic about my job.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. My job inspires me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I feel happy when I am working intensely.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I am proud of the work that I do.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I am immersed in my work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I get carried away when I am working.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Legend:

Never = Never Almost Never = A few times per year or less Rarely = Once per month or less

Sometimes = A few times per month Often = Once per week Very Often = A few times per week

Always = Every day

(Schaufeli et al., 2006)

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Autonomy:

The following 9 statements are about the level of freedom you have at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. Select the number (0 through 6) that best describes how strongly you feel.

	Entirely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Mostly Agree	Entirely Agree
Work Method Autonomy							
1. I am allowed to decide how to go about getting my job done.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am able to choose the way to go about my job (procedures to utilize).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I am free to choose the methods of carrying out my work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Work Scheduling Autonomy							
4. I have control over the scheduling of my work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I have some control over what I do and when.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I can decide when to do particular work activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Work Criteria Autonomy							
7. My job allows me to modify the normal way we are evaluated so that I can emphasize some aspects of my job and play down others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I am able to modify what I am supposed to accomplish.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I have some control over what I am supposed to accomplish.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

(Breaugh, 1989) Continue to Next Page >>>

Supervisor Support:

The following 7 statements are about your feelings toward your supervisor. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your supervisor. Select the number (0 through 6) that best describes how strongly you feel.

	Entirely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Mostly Agree	Entirely Agree
1. My manager/supervisor cares for what I think.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My manager/supervisor respects me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. My manager/supervisor listens to my ideas.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. My manager/supervisor recognizes me for my contributions.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. My manager/supervisor is interested in my success.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. My manager/supervisor asks me for input.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. My manager/supervisor provides constructive criticism.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

(Jin & McDonald, 2017)

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Professional Isolation:

The following 7 statements are about how connected you feel to the workplace. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your workplace. Select the number (0 through 6) that best describes how strongly you feel.

	Entirely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Mostly Agree	Entirely Agree
1. I feel left out on activities and meetings that could enhance my career.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I miss out on opportunities to be mentored.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I feel out of the loop.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I miss face-to-face contact with coworkers.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I feel isolated.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I miss the emotional support of coworkers.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I miss informal interaction with others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

(Golden et al., 2008)

Telework:

Please select the amount of time that you spend working from home during regular working hours (excluding overtime).

☐ Less than one day per week ☐ 1 day per week ☐ 2 to 3 days per week ☐ 4 to 5 days per week

(Caillier, 2016)

<End of Survey>