

Electronic Workplace Surveillance:

Notification of electronic workplace
surveillance: Privacy and fairness
reactions across high and low
discretion tasks

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Electronic Workplace Surveillance

- American Management Association (2000):
Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of all employers electronically monitor
worker communication; 54% monitor Internet use
- Justice considerations: Fair implementation and
warning given? (Ambrose & Alder, 2000)
- Privacy concerns: Do employees have control
over information before monitoring? (Bies, 1993)

Why do Justice & Privacy Matter?

- Proc. Justice is linked to greater worker satisfaction with allocation decisions
 - Pay satisfaction; job satisfaction
- Invasion of Privacy related to negative worker reactions
 - Related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intentions

Research Questions

- Does the discretionary nature of the worker's job affect their perceptions of fairness and invasion of privacy under electronic surveillance?
- Does advance notice of electronic surveillance affect perceptions of fairness and invasion of privacy?
- Do these two factors interact?

Research Program

- We are now testing these questions under various conditions
 - Scenario Study (Complete)
 - Laboratory Studies
 - Field Scenario Studies
- Preliminary results indicate support for our hypotheses...

The Scenario Study

- A scenario study; Ss were management grad students and upper division undergraduates (N=93)
- Workers were “managers in marketing department of nationally recognized retailer”
- 3x2 factorial design
 - IV = Notice = Post, Weak, Strong
 - IV = Task Discretion = High, Low

The Variables

- IV: Advance Notice
 - Post = Ss informed of surveillance after working
 - Weak = Ss informed of surveillance @ hire
 - Strong = Ss informed at each login
- IV: Task Discretion
 - High = Jobs involved unstructured work; boundary spanning activities
 - Low = Jobs involved carrying out rigid procedures little choice/latitude in implementation

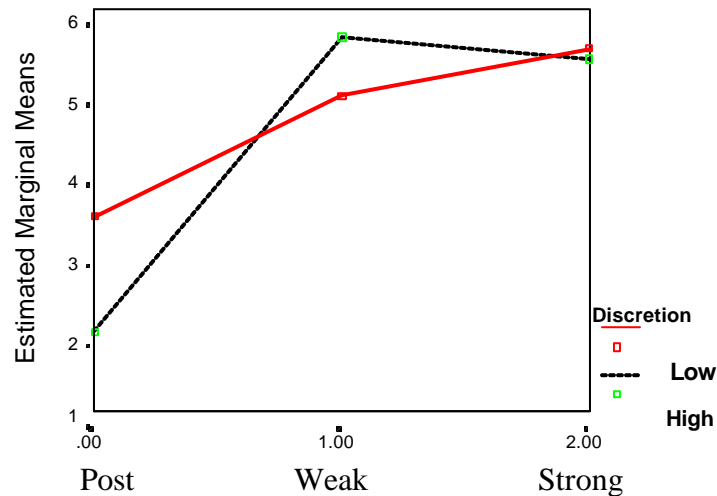
Dependent Variables

- Perceived Procedural Justice
 - Used 3-item measure ($\alpha=.85$)
 - Sample: “Overall, the policies and practices of my organization are fair”
- Perceived Invasion of Privacy
 - Used 10-item scale ($\alpha = .92$) (Alge, in press; Eddy, Stone & Stone-Romero, 1999)

The Results

- H1: Advance Notice had significant effect on perceived fairness & invasion of privacy
- H2: Task Discretion had significant effect on invasion of privacy but not fairness
- H3: Notice X Discretion interaction significant for fairness but not privacy invasion

Estimated Marginal Means of Fairness



Implication of Results

- Who You're Monitoring Matters
 - Workers w/higher freedom on the job will react more negatively to Internet monitoring
- Advance Notice of Monitoring Helps...
 - Can prevent abuses
 - Enhances all workers' perceptions of fairness
 - Helps prevent negative outcomes

Discussion and Extensions

- A first step into efforts to determine how job level impacts surveillance-related perceptions
- Limitation: Scenario Study
 - Used frequently in privacy research (cf. Stone & Kotch, 1988)
- Positive results achieved with student sample; call for future research where conditions are actually "experienced" & work in organizational settings
- Public Policy - NEMA