

Information Technology, Organization and Productivity in the Public Sector: Evidence from Police Departments

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Abstract

We examine how information technology (IT) contributes to organizational change, labor demand, and improved productivity in the public sector using a new panel data set of police departments covering 1987-2003. While IT adoption is associated with increased administrative and organizational complexity and use of more highly educated officers, IT itself does not appear to enhance crime-fighting effectiveness. These results are robust to various methods for controlling for agency-level characteristics and the endogeneity of IT use. IT investments do, however, appear to improve police productivity when complemented with particular management practices—in this case, those associated with the Compstat program.