

AI 360 Research Brief

AI Research Fellows Symposium

PAPER TITLE

Work Ethic and AI Adoption: How Generative AI Use Shapes Performance Evaluations Through Effort and Competence Perceptions Across Four Countries

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BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Across two experiments with 1,000 working adults in the U.S., India, and South Korea, we test how disclosing generative AI use shapes performance evaluations. Disclosure lowers perceived effort in every country, but whether that translates into lower ratings, bonuses, and future assignments depends on national context and evaluators' work ethic.

WHY THIS RESEARCH MATTERS

Organizations are urging employees to adopt generative AI, yet many hide their use for fear of looking lazy or less capable. Our findings show that fear is warranted, but not universal. U.S. evaluators penalized disclosed AI use through both lower effort and lower competence judgments, cutting bonus allocations by roughly a quarter, while Indian evaluators noticed reduced effort but did not penalize it. Performance appraisal systems built around visible human effort can therefore systematically disadvantage AI-assisted work, and global firms cannot assume uniform reactions. Evaluations should weight outcome quality and give employees standardized ways to document their human contribution.