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Empirical Findings from the Application of Human Resource Evaluation Methods in the Greek Public Administration

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to approach as much as possible the subject of evaluation in the public sector and to present its effects on job satisfaction. It focuses on human resource management and job evaluation processes, methods developed by theoretical and practical researchers. The main reason someone would want to deal with it at research level is the contribution of the evaluation of human resources in the public sector, in an effort to provide better services to the citizens with low cost, but above all in the cultivation of the feeling of satisfaction of the employees themselves in order to respond better to the work demands of the bodies they serve. We carried out research both qualitatively and quantitatively in the Region of Crete and the results obtained are of particular interest since they gave us an indication of the imperative need to improve the evaluation system as well as the procedures for its implementation.

Keywords

Evaluation, Efficiency, Management, Business Performance, Satisfaction, Human Resources, Public Sector, Cost

1. Introduction

In a world that is constantly taking on new forms, due to rapid economic, technological, political and cultural developments, we realize that the human factor, specifically its management, becomes increasingly important in delivering results when it comes to a public body. The competitive advantage is achieved

when the organization combines in the best possible way its productive resources with its organizational culture, that is the values that dominate, through the human resources that are called upon to implement them. As Golec & Kahya (2007) argue, "Modern employee selection and evaluation is a complex decision-making process that has the ability to place the right employees in the right jobs at the right time."

The constant changes in the working conditions and the increasing work requirements, make it necessary to staff the organizations, bodies and also to promote worthy, capable, experienced and talented people to positions of responsibility. In fact, the selection of personnel these days is not a simple process of placing employees in specific jobs. The proper staffing of the bodies contributes to the achievement of the organizations' goals, that is both improving and increasing efficiency and saving financial resources.

Performance evaluation in recent years has become a common phenomenon in companies, organizations and now almost everyone has an evaluation system, but this does not mean that they are content with it. As Latham & Wexley (1993) argue, most people consider rating systems necessary but do not like to use them. Employee performance appraisal is a process through which each employee is assessed to meet the requirements of their position. Appraisal can be a formal process that takes place at predetermined intervals and applies specific methods, or it can be an informal process where each supervisor of a company observes their subordinates during their work and comments on their positive or negative elements. Essentially, it is the basis for identifying the strong and weak points of the employee, so that with the appropriate actions along the way, they can be motivated and guided in order to improve and achieve better future performance (Ragazou et al., 2022a).

People evaluate others, whether there is a formal evaluation process or not. But since many of these informal spontaneous assessments can be wrong, a formal process is necessary to limit the chances of biased and uninformed assessments. Abolishing appraisal systems will not prevent people from evaluating performance (Grote, 1996).

Evaluation processes are becoming increasingly important from a business, ethical and legal point of view (Gilliland, 1993). From a *business perspective*, candidates reacting (because of their unfair treatment) during the selection process affect the organization's ability to hire highly qualified people, thereby negatively affecting the overall usefulness of the relevant process (Boudreau & Rynes, 1985, Murphy, 1986, Ragazou, Passas, Garefalakis, 2022a). From an *ethical point of view*, the self-concept, self-efficacy and self-esteem of rejected candidates are affected, with consequences either for job search behavior (Ellis & Taylor, 1983) or job performance (Dipboye, 1977; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). The more relevant to the subject matter an organization's selection and evaluation system is, the higher the self-concept of those selected (Gilliland, 1994).

Finally, from a *legal point of view*, unfair procedures create issues of recourse

in justice for workers who have been wronged, as there is not much pressure from society for a policy or legislative changes that would protect equality and fair methods, according to the aforementioned procedures.

The evaluation essentially helps to make decisions regarding the improvement of employee efficiency through special incentives such as pay, promotions, transfers, meeting educational needs, etc. This process helps to ensure that the work is carried out in the most satisfactory manner.

In the public sector, the evaluation of employee performance is a key point for better serving citizens, managing employees and saving resources. In fact, the economic crisis that prevails in all developed countries and affects our country as well, makes it necessary to rationally manage the costs of the public sector.

Although the measurement of human resource performance has only concerned organizational psychologists in the last 70 years, the application of evaluation has been carried out for centuries. The Chinese philosopher Sin Yu blamed the evaluators working for the Wei Dynasty for evaluating based solely on their personal likes and dislikes rather than on merit and qualifications.

Human Resource Management has existed as an institution since ancient times, as the need for organization and management of groups and subgroups was a necessity in order to achieve their goals and objectives.

Human Resource Management went through four phases which are divided into the following periods: the Welfare period (19th - early 20th century), the Scientific Management period (1920 - 1940), the industrial relations period (after World War II) and the Human Resource Planning period (1980 - present).

Although information that establishes the existence of evaluation procedures and tools dates back to at least the third millennium BC (Dubois, 1970; Guba & Lincoln, 1983) evaluation in its current scientific sense has a life of only a few decades. Dulewicz (1989), states that there is a basic human tendency where everyone tends to judge the people they work with as well as themselves. These approaches are mostly informal, unofficial, hasty and arbitrary. The first official evaluation attempts can be found in the 16th century when, in a publication of the Dublin Evening Mail, an attempt is made to define criteria for evaluating employees based on the individual characteristics of the person (Fuller & Huber 1998).

The first industrial application of performance appraisal in Europe was in the early 1800s. In his cotton mills in New Lanark, Scotland, Robert Owens used wooden cubes of different colors to separate the different levels of value of workers. When an employee's performance varied, so did the cubes hanging on the workstation. In the USA the assessment is believed to have started in 1813 (Randell, 1994; Vinci et al., 2023).

General Lewis Cass submitted to the US Army Department an assessment of his men, using terms such as "good character" or "worthy of the contempt of all". Assessments of value or effectiveness in American Civil Services have taken place since at least 1890 (Fuller & Huber, 1998; Moustairas et al., 2022).

The Human Resource Performance appraisal is a systematic evaluation, which originates from the immediate hierarchical superior and refers to the performance of the work by the employee, as well as to their potential for perspective and development. Essentially, it is a process of ascertaining and recording the employee's performance for the present and the future.

In the traditional approach of Management Science, the evaluation of human resource performance is defined as a control technique and therefore includes the identification, observation and use of specific standards at work. Osborne & Gaebler (1992), state that if you do not evaluate the outcome of the work, you cannot distinguish success from failure. So, the supervisor has the role of the rater and the employee the role of the appraised with the main evaluation method being the comparison of employees. On the contrary, in the modern approach, management science approaches the evaluation of the performance of employees with a developmental orientation, while recording their performance, and at the same time supporting their continuous improvement through learning, motivation, goal-setting and information. The role of the assessee is essential and active in this process since they participate in all its stages.

At the same time, the main concern of the assessment should be to re-inform the assessees, so that they can identify their strengths and weaknesses and how well they responded to the performance of the tasks, during a certain period of time, always comparing them with the requirements and goals set by the organization they work for or even with their performance in previous periods of time.

At the same time, the evaluation process should be based on both qualitative and quantitative data, so that through a continuous monitoring of performance on an annual basis, one can objectively evaluate the appraise and propose measures to improve their performance.

2. The Necessity of Evaluation

In today's society, evaluation has become an integral part of the existence and operation of businesses public bodies. The need to utilize the available means and materials, but primarily human resources, so that they perform to the maximum possible on the one hand and the desire to increase productivity on the other, show that evaluation is called upon to play an increasingly large and fundamental role. Through the evaluation process, organizations, businesses can get all that information that will lead to optimal performance, better utilization of means and human resources, fairer and more correct selection, easier decision-making, maximum productivity, etc. (Ragazou et al., 2022b, 2022c).

Although there has been a delay in activating the assessment procedures, it is now a fact that we are going through a period of its escalation and it is expected that this escalation will intensify even more in the coming years. Furthermore, we are in a period of scientificization of evaluation. It is expected that the procedures and the methodology will be improved.

An organization aiming for long-term success needs to make valid and timely

assessments of the performance of its employees. This can be achieved through a continuous and repeated updating of data, by gathering information that will ensure that way in which the work is carried out is in accordance with its philosophy as well as modern standards. These objectives are realized through the "Employee Evaluation". When an organization belongs to a public body, then the evaluation process is not flexible enough by modern standards, for the reason that it is possibly influenced by its political status and the means provided (Wim & Van Den Brink, 1999; Vardopoulos, 2022).

James Harrington said that "Measurement is the first step that leads to control and ultimately to improvement. If you can't measure something, you can't perceive it. If you can't perceive it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it."

In the USA, special publications and journals appeared, with exclusive content of study and research in evaluation (Guttentag & Struening, 1975; Glass, 1976; Guttentag & Saar, 1977), where the increase in the number of books published on specific subject matter is a sure sign of interest in it. In fact, in 1975, large-scale evaluations were financed in the USA, the first scientific journals were published and the first scientific associations were created (Evaluation Research Society in 1976, which became the American Evaluation Association in 1986). The eighties, according to Worthen & Sanders (1987), is the period of the scientificization of evaluation.

The best possible use of human resources is argued to create a competitive advantage in the company (Pfeffer, 1994), while Gratton (2000), argues that at the beginning of the 21st century, the notion, that the path to competitive advantage are people themselves, was fortified.

Several researches related to the evaluation of human resources have been carried out. According to Gerhart & Milkovich (1990), employee evaluation and the connection between evaluation and compensation is consistently linked to increased profitability, while in recent years efforts to determine a causal link between HRM and the company's overall performance have increased (Masi & Cooke, 2000). In addition, according to Brannen & Salk (2000), the functions of HRM, including the evaluation of human resources, may differ between specialties or even countries for various reasons, such as cultural and temperamental characteristics.

Hofstede (1980) commented that national culture influences the attitude and behavior of employees. Thus, in companies that operate in different countries, the culture of the employees is significantly different, resulting in a differentiation in the way they are evaluated.

In 1986, Schuster (1986) suggested using survey data instead of economic data for evaluation problems. He developed the HRI (Human Resources Index) which recorded the utilization of human resources, from the employees' point of view, where a clear shift towards improving the quality of products and services was observed.

3. Research Methodology

In the context of this publication, we have carried out two stages of research, so that we can ensure the best possible result. These stages concern 1) the qualitative research and 2) the quantitative research.

Qualitative research aims to investigate and thoroughly understand various phenomena and situations. Attitudes, perceptions, motivations and behaviours of individuals are researched in depth.

Quantitative research refers to the systematic investigation of situations with statistical methods and numerical data. A representative sample of observations is usually used, with a deeper aim to generalize the results to the wider population. Data collection is carried out with questionnaires, scales, etc.

Within the framework of the primary (quantitative) research model, only a secondary but at the same time auxiliary role was recognized in the qualitative research. Qualitative research can be said to be the forerunner of quantitative research.

According to this point of view, qualitative research can precede quantitative research, with the aim of highlighting novel and unexpected aspects, mainly in the investigation of various points that remain or cannot be easily identified through the search of a large number of respondents and need further research. In this way, it can contribute to the formulation of hypotheses (discovery phase), to be followed by the eminently "scientific" phase of research, i.e. the process of testing hypotheses using quantitative methods (validation phase). An indicative example of this perception is the article by Barton & Lazarsfeld (1955). We used convenience sampling, after a targeted selection of persons, so that a representative sample would emerge, from which we will be able to obtain those answers that will lead us to the correct structure of the quantitative research questionnaire.

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire of the qualitative research, we obtained answers from the General Manager, Directors, Heads of Departments as well as subordinates who are familiar with the operation of their Directorates and Departments respectively, after first explaining in detail the objective of the research being carried out. In this way we gained the trust of the respondents, who understood the essential purpose of the research.

In the context of the qualitative research we carried out, we used a questionnaire[a], which was given to 20 employees of the Region of Crete, of which 17 responded in order to carry out an initial qualitative recording of both their positive and negative stance, regarding their satisfaction with the existing human resource evaluation system in the public sector.

The respondents had the time to study the questionnaire beforehand and to work on the questions, while subsequently (after a scheduled meeting), in the form of an interview, they were able to answer the said questions. On our part, a record was made of the answers, which were in the form of a whole sentence and other times in the form of targeted words that however presented the problem or

even provided a solution to it.

At this stage, special importance was given, so that such questions could arise that could lead us (through the answers) to the quantitative research in the population of the body of "Region of Crete".

For the initial processing of the interviews, we used the software program NVivo.

Compared to common word processors, this program presents significant advantages by providing a much more systematic and flexible way of organizing data. Instead of creating and sorting innumerable documents, information, files, folders and subfolders, the researcher enters and organizes all of their data into a research program, which is their main workspace.

NVivo, by extension, "houses" the qualitative data. Better organization of data also makes it easier to manage, offering a much faster and more efficient way to retrieve useful research information.

In addition, it provides opportunities for an efficient and systematic way of encoding the data. Data encoding is associated with the process of assigning meaning to smaller or larger pieces of text and is a central analytical strategy in qualitative analysis.

1) We individually recorded each interview of each assessee in a word file, saving it with the interviewee's first and last name (encoded), in a central folder.

2) We entered all the data into the program.

3) For each interview, we created codes-nodes (centre points arising from the data we imported) using key words as they emerged from the respective answers of the interviewees.

4) Then we recorded digitally the corresponding quotations of the respondents' answers, which essentially constitute the references on each node.

5) This action was repeated in all the interviews, with the result that in each question sometimes more and sometimes fewer references appear depending on the answers of the interviewees.

Node Name ***	Files	References
Citizen participation	17	17
I agree with the public sector assessment	16	16
Reaction from employees	16	16
Evaluation by Director	13	13
Evaluation per year	13	13
Lack of knowledge of assessment subject	11	11
Training	11	12
Teamwork cooperation skills	10	10
Participation of external evaluators	7	10
Studies	6	6

Continued

Officials only	6	6
Education	6	7
Goal-setting	5	5
It covers employee requirements	5	5
Human Resource Manager	5	5
Additional qualifications	5	5
Knowledge of assessment subject	6	6
Experience	3	3
Evaluation by two evaluators	3	3
Evaluation per semester	2	2
Exchange of views - practices	2	2
Assessees' view	2	2
Substitution of anonymous questionnaires by named ones	2	2
Bonus incentives	2	2
Modernization	1	1
Performance	1	1
Public service	1	1
Conduct	1	1
Proven activity	1	1
Interest	1	1
Self-evaluation	1	1
Job outlines	1	1
Publication of final evaluation grade	1	1
Personality issues	1	1
Evaluation on a quarterly basis	1	1
Employees' view on changes	1	1
Objectivity	1	1
Simplification of procedures	1	1
Punctuality and compliance with working hours	1	1
Project Implementation	1	1

*Codes are central to understanding and working with NVivo. They allow related material to be gathered in one place so we can look for emerging patterns and ideas. **References: when viewing the number of references in the source list view, this is a count of the number of options in that source that have been encoded to any node. The same option encoded in two different nodes will count as two references. ***Nodes—centre points/topics we find in our files. These nodes can be descriptive (e.g. this text is about this topic) or more detailed (e.g. this issue matters because…)

4. Conduct of Quantitative Research

In the context of the quantitative research we carried out, we used a questionnaire[b], which was given to all the employees of the Region of Crete, more specifically to 819 people, of which 516 responded. The questionnaire of the quantitative research is a self-design questionnaire, which emerged from the results of the qualitative research, always combined with the basic evaluation questionnaire that is already applied in the public sector.

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the quantitative research questionnaire, we created and distributed a questionnaire that was completed anonymously by the research participants. The collection of completed questionnaires was done through the elected collective bodies of the employees of each Regional Unit of the Region of Crete. In addition, we used a common measurement scale (Linkerd) throughout the questionnaire, so as not to confuse the respondents.

Simple distributions of participants' socio-demographic characteristics

Characteristics	N	%
Sex		
Men	225	43.6
Women	291	56.4
Age		
20 - 29 years old		0.4
30 - 39 years old		9.7
40 - 49 years old		43.4
>50 years old		46.5
Working relationship		
Permanent employees		89.7
Employees that have an *open-ended contract*		10.1
Employees that have other types of employment relationship		0.2
Job position		
General Directors		3.1
Directors		2.1
Heads of Department		15.1
Employees		79.7
Years of service		
<1 year		3.7
1 - 5 years		11.2
5 - 9 years		6.6
9 - 15 years		22.5
>15 years		56

Continued

Years of work in the current position	
≤6 months	3.7
6 months - 1 year	3.5
1 - 5 years	22.3
5 - 10 years	23.1
>10 years	47.5

In our research we made use of the statistical hypothesis, which essentially can be a hypothesis that describes the behaviour of certain random variables, through a number of observations.

To perform our statistical results in this research, we chose the 5% significance level α = 0.05 in all hypotheses tests[1].

We then proceeded to a Crosstabs analysis for each question, in the order of their presentation in our basic questionnaire, after first recording the Main Components analysis of the evaluation scale of the Current Evaluation Framework, the satisfaction resulting from the job position, the satisfaction from the Head-Director, the satisfaction from working relationships with colleagues and finally the satisfaction resulting from the organization's policy towards human resources.

5. Empirical Analysis

1) Qualitative research conclusions

From the above measurements, we observe that 16 of the 17 respondents are positive about the process of evaluation in the public sector as long as the principle of objectivity and transparency is respected, whereas only 1 expressed a negative opinion. In fact, this is expressed and linked to the fact that 16 of the respondents react to the current process since they consider it to be done in a non-objective way, as various other factors (e.g. interpersonal relationships, friendships, conflicts, etc.) come into play and ultimately determine the final result of the evaluation. What is more, only 5 respondents consider that it meets the requirements of the employees, whereas the rest do not.

An additional factor that expresses the reaction, as well as the lack of confidence in the current system of evaluation by only officials, is the fact that, although they are positive towards the participation of officials, they also consider it necessary that there is assistance by external consultants with special knowledge (7 respondents and 10 references) who will guide and assist evaluators in their difficult but rather important role. However, 13 respondents consider that the evaluation should be done hierarchically by the Director, Head of the employees, and 6 argue that only officials should be involved in the evaluation system and not the respective political figure, who will hold the position of either

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[1]This means that the probability of rejecting H0 should not exceed 0.05%.

the Regional Governor or the Deputy Regional Governor, since they consider their judgment to be non-objective. Finally, there is a reference about reinforcing self-evaluation and another about asking and taking into consideration the employees' opinion on changes.

However, the measurement of citizens' participation in the evaluation, which records absolute positivity as all 17 respondents answered positively, is also impressive, and rather surprising, since we could have had the exact opposite result (e.g. for fear of a negative evaluation, etc..). Civil servants now seem to have understood their multifaceted role and the fact that they essentially serve the public and of course the public interest.

Thus, they consider the citizens' judgment to be a lot more essential than that of their superiors managers, or even that of their political superiors (in whichever departments this is required).

An important finding is that employees consider that studies (6 reports), education (7 reports), experience (3 reports), training (12 reports) are important elements that must be taken into account during the evaluation process, however, 10 respondents prioritize teamwork, cooperation, skills and abilities of employees.

A further 5 respondents focus on their additional qualifications, which is due (if we consider our sample) to their continuing education and training.

At the same time, they believe that due weight should be given to other aspects such as personality, punctuality, project implementation (1 report each), citizen service (1 report) and interest (1 report). Finally, 2 respondents raised the element of providing incentives productivity bonus.

Of the 17 respondents, 11 responded negatively to whether the people in charge who carry out the evaluations have knowledge related to human resource management, whereas only 6 responded positively, and in fact 5 of them argued that it should be carried out by the Human Resources Director, who naturally should have knowledge or have ongoing training on the subject.

Extremely high positivity is expressed regarding the time of the evaluation since 13 respondents agree with the current framework, whereas only 2 responded per six months and 1 on a quarterly basis.

Regarding the critical points that they consider should be modified or changed, the respondents emphasize the goal-setting (5 reports), the exchange of opinions-practices (2 reports), the consideration of the point of view of assessees themselves (2 reports), the replacement of the anonymous questionnaires by named ones (regarding the evaluation of subordinates towards superiors or directors) (2 reports). They believe that the system should be modernized (1 report), procedures simplified (1 report), job outlines defined (1 report) and the final evaluation grade made public (1 report).

2) Quantitative research conclusions

In the phase of realizing the model of regression analysis of our statistical data, it was considered appropriate to check the significance resulting from the

hypotheses testing. In a previous stage we named our already grouped questions and in this phase we want to establish which demographic, social and work factors have a significant effect on the satisfaction of human resource evaluation in the Public sector.

1st set of questions

Principal Components Analysis of the Assessment Scale of the Current Assessment Framework

F 1.1	F 2.1	F 3.1	F 4.1	F 5.1
Importance of innate characteristics	Positive reaction towards institution-people	Involvement of political figures	Negative reaction towards institution-people	Importance of requisite qualifications

Regarding the importance of innate characteristics (F1.1), we notice that gender, age (especially those in their forties), education (graduates and postgraduates) as well as job position, are the factors that are statistically significant for the evaluation. A special mention is made by (Mondy, 2012) where he gives particular consideration to the abilities, skills, as well as the behaviour of the employees.

Regarding the positive reaction towards institution-people (F 2.1), we observe that gender, marital status (those with one to two children) as well as job position are the factors that are statistically significant for the evaluation. According to (Grote, 2002) the evaluation process requires the completion of a standardized evaluation form, through which the employee is evaluated on different dimensions.

In addition, the Head, Director can advise, guide the employee on what they should do to achieve the goals set by the company (in our case, the organization). Also, an effective evaluation system should be specific and clear, appropriate, acceptable, reliable and objective, focused on the goals but also efficient. (Mondy, 2012) states that a properly designed evaluation system can contribute to the achievement of an organization's goals and enhance employee performance. According to the supervisory evaluation (360˚ feedback) (Drakes, 2008), everyone around the evaluated employee can participate, including the Manager (in our case the Director, or even political figures), the direct Head, the employees themselves, their colleagues, the people who belong to the same work group as them, their subordinates, the internal and external customers, whom the employees deal with (in our case the citizens, whom come into contact with).

Regarding the involvement of political figures in the evaluation process (F 3.1), we notice that no factor has a statistically significant effect on the evaluation. According to (Lussier & Hendon, 2013) and (Mondy, 2012) besides the supervisor, other people could be involved in the evaluation process, simply to offer a second opinion and thus contributing to the elimination of the problem of bias.

Regarding the negative reaction of employees towards institution-people (F 4.1), we notice that gender, marital status, as well as education (graduates and postgraduates), are the factors that are statistically significant for the evaluation.

(Wim & Van Den Brink, 1999) makes the same finding, that is, when it comes to a public body, the evaluation process is not flexible, as it is influenced by the policy of the respective government. This fact creates tensions and naturally hinders the proper conduct of the evaluation, since it makes the employees particularly cautious and hesitant. At the same time, in a survey carried out in 2009 entitled "Employees care a lot more about performance reviews than you may think", it was found that 80% of employees are not satisfied with the evaluation process.

Regarding the importance of requisite qualifications (F 5.1), we notice that no factor has a statistically significant effect on the evaluation.

2nd set of questions

Principal Components Analysis of the Assessment Scale regarding Work Satisfaction.

Component	
F1.2	F 2.2
SENSE OF SATISFACTION WITH QUALIFICATIONS UTILIZATION	EFFECT OF ADDITIONAL DUTIES ASSIGNMENT

Regarding the sense of satisfaction with the qualifications utilization (F 1.2), we notice that gender, age (especially those over fifty), marital status (but those with one child), education (graduates) as well as job position, are those factors that are statistically significant for the evaluation. (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1990) confirm that the connection between evaluation and compensation is linked to the relationship between HRM and business performance.

Regarding the effect of additional duties assignment (F 2.2), we notice that only education (graduates) is the factor that is statistically significant for the evaluation. According to (Davis & Werther, 1996) the information obtained from the evaluation helps to make the right decisions for the job design, the development, the promotions, the redeployment of the human resources.

3rd set of questions

Principal Components Analysis of the Assessment Scale regarding the Satisfaction with the Head-Director.

Component	
F 1.3	F 2.3
QUALIFICATIONS OF HEAD-DIRECTOR	COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF HEAD

With regard to the importance of qualifications of the Head-Director (F 1.3),

we notice that only family situation (especially those who have two children), as well as marginally education (graduates), are the factors that statistically significantly affect the evaluation.

According to the views of the modern organizational theory (Modern Organization Theory), the strengths and weaknesses of the employees are identified and the head-director adjusts their attitude towards each of their subordinates accordingly.

Regarding the importance of communication skills of the Head (F 2.3), we notice that gender, education (especially graduates and post-graduate holders), as well as job position, are the factors that statistically significantly affect the evaluation. Essentially, the evaluation is a means of developing the best possible communication, understanding and cooperation with subordinates, as well as improving their performance.

4th set of questions

Principal Components Analysis of the Assessment Scale regarding the Satisfaction with collaborative relationships with colleagues.

Component	
F 1.4	F 2.4
POSITIVE LEVEL OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES	NEGATIVE LEVEL OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES

Regarding the positive level of relations with colleagues (F 1.4), we observe that education (especially graduates, but also postgraduates), is the factor that is statistically significant for the evaluation.

Regarding the negative level of relations with colleagues (F 2.4), we observe that education (especially postgraduates), is the factor that is statistically significant for the evaluation.

5th set of questions

Principal Components Analysis of the Assessment Scale of Satisfaction with the organization's human resources policy.

Component	
F 1.5	F 2.5
SENSE OF REWARD	SENSE OF WORK SATISFACTION

Regarding the sense of reward (F 1.5), we observe that education (especially graduates), along with position of responsibility marginally, are the factors that are statistically significant for the evaluation. (Jackson & Schuler, 2003) applaud the fact that motivation and improvement are the dominant goals of evaluation.

Regarding the sense of work satisfaction (F 2.5), we observe that gender, marital status (especially those with one to two children), education (especially

graduates and postgraduates), are the factors that are statistically important for evaluation. (Mondy & Noe, 2005) as well as (Drucker, 1954) argue that it is essential to highlight the strengths of employees and put their strong features to good use.

What emerged from the results of the quantitative research is that it is necessary to make radical changes in the way of evaluation, emphasizing the participation of citizens, directors and colleagues and not the participation and involvement of the political leadership. In addition, they consider that the assessors do not possess the required knowledge and abilities skills to objectively evaluate their colleagues. Moreover, multiple times they may have fewer formal qualifications than their appraisees, which can be a bottleneck on the objective evaluation, since there is the threat of the difference between them showing up, followed by the risk of the position of responsibility they hold being jeopardized.

6. Final Conclusions and Future Research Directions

The aim of this treatise is to highlight, through various research methods, the degree of satisfaction of human resources in the public sector, regarding the manner and methods followed during their evaluation stage. Their evaluation is essentially the only way to reward their effort, but also the essential measure of comparison against their colleagues.

Additionally, through the evaluation, even the organization itself can make corrective actions regarding the redistribution of its staff (even more so of the General Managers, Directors, Heads of Departments), since this way their strong features, as well as their weaknesses can easily be identified.

Taking into account the above hypotheses tests, we can come to the following final conclusions:

1) Gender, age, level of education, marital status as well as job position, are those factors that seem to play a particularly important role in the satisfaction resulting from the Human Resources evaluation stage in the public sector.

2) However, we must make special mention of the fact that gender, marital status, education level and job position are the critical variables in almost all of our grouped questions (e.g. 1st set of questions F1.1, F2.1 etc.)

3) Consequently, based on the main components F1.1 (Importance of innate characteristics), F2.1 (Positive reaction to institution-people), F4.1 (Negative reaction to institution-people) (1st set of questions), F1.2 (Sense of satisfaction with qualifications utilization) (2nd set of questions), F1.3 (qualifications of Head-Director) (3rd set of questions) and F2.5 (Sense of work satisfaction) (5th set of questions), gender seems to play a very important role.

Also, the level of education significantly affects the main components F1.1 (Importance of innate characteristics) and F4.1 (Negative reaction to the institution-people) (1st set of questions), F1.2 (Sense of satisfaction with qualifications utilization) and F2.2 (Effect of additional duties assignment) (2nd set of questions), F1.3 (Qualifications of Head-Director) and F2.3 (Communication Skills

of Head) (3rd set of questions), F1.4 (Positive level of relationships with colleagues) and F2.4 (Negative level of relationships with colleagues) (4th set of questions) and lastly F1.5 (Sense of reward) and F2.5 (Sense of work satisfaction) (5th set of questions).

In addition, the job position in the organization affects the following components:

F1.1 (Importance of innate characteristics) and F2.1 (Positive reaction to institution-people) (1st set of questions), F1.2 (Sense of satisfaction with qualifications utilization) (2nd set of questions), F2.3 (Communication skills of Head) (3rd set of questions) and F1.5 (Sense of reward) (5th set of questions).

It is also worth noting that marital status is an important factor and affects the following components:

F2.1 (Positive reaction to institution-people), F4.1 (Negative reaction to institution-people) (1st set of questions), F1.2 (Sense of satisfaction with qualifications utilization) (2nd set of questions), F1.3 (Qualifications of Head-Director) (3rd set of questions) and F2.5 (Sense of work satisfaction) (5th set of questions).

Finally, age affects the following components: F1.1 (Importance of innate characteristics) (1st set of questions) and F1.2 (Sense of satisfaction with qualifications utilization) (2nd set of questions).

We therefore note that the present research could be the trigger for further discussion, so that a new evaluation system is adopted, which will focus both on the importance of innate characteristics and acquired ones. The conclusions highlight useful elements, which could, in our opinion, be used in the wider public sector. Special emphasis should be put on the satisfaction of human resources from the proper utilization of their qualifications, but primarily to their work satisfaction, which results from various factors (workplace, policy of the organization, cooperation with colleagues, communication cooperation with Directors, Heads of Departments, etc.).

However, the respondents' positive or negative attitude towards people participating in the process of carrying out their evaluation cannot be ignored.

In addition, further research could be carried out that would primarily focus on improving and strengthening the relationship between human resources and the performance of the organization.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix A

[a]Qualitative Research Questionnaire

1) Do you agree or disagree with the evaluation process in the public sector?

2) Do you think that the current evaluation framework meets the requirements of employees and promotes work satisfaction? Elaborate.

3) Suggest three (3) critical points that you think should be modified or changed (education, training through various seminars, attendance at conferences, additional qualifications other than basic ones, frequency of the evaluation process, participation of other assessors, asking for the assessees' opinion on what works, as well as on what needs to change both on a personal level and management level, etc.)

4) Are employees opposed to the current evaluation system?

5) Do you think that the evaluation of human resources should be carried out at a different time than what is currently stipulated by the legislation for the public sector (annual basis)? If yes, specify.

6) Who do you think should be involved in the human resources assessment? (Director, Head, Colleagues of the department, Regional Governor, Deputy Regional Governor)

7) Do you think that the managers who carry out the evaluation process have knowledge related to human resource management?

Who do you think should be involved in the process (HR Director, Executive Secretary, external consultant with knowledge on the subject).

8) The current assessment report emphasizes studies and training (only at EKDAA). Do you think this information is enough to evaluate an employee? Do you think that studies and training are sufficient for encouraging the development of an employee and, by extension, for improving the operation of the public institution? (additional skills - competences)

9) Do you think the idea of a possible evaluation on a daily basis by the citizens would be effective? In what way do you think it could contribute? (motivation to provide better quality services, development of initiatives, teamwork, cooperation, more efficient management)

Appendix B

[b]Quantitative survey questionnaire

1) Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

2) Age: 20 - 29 ☐   30 - 39 ☐   40 - 49 ☐   50 and above ☐

3) Marital Status: Married ☐   Number of children ☐   Unmarried ☐

4) Education level:

• Compulsory Education - Junior High School

• High School graduate

• I.E.K[2] graduate

• Graduate (University - T.E.I[3])

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[2]I.E.K, Vocational Training Institute

[3]T.E.I, Technological Educational Institution

- Master's degree holder
- Doctoral degree holders

5) Total years of service in the Region of Crete to date:

Less than 1 year ☐   1 to 5 years ☐   5 to 9 years ☐

9 to 15 years ☐   15 years and over ☐

6) Total years of work in your current position to date:

Up to 6 months ☐   from 6 months to 1 year ☐   1 year up to 5 years ☐

5 years up to 10 ☐   10 years and above ☐

7) Type of employment:

Permanent Employee ☐   Employee on open-ended contract ☐

Other (description) ……………………………..

8) Job position:

Director ☐   Head of Directorate ☐

Head of Department ☐   Officer ☐

A. SATISFACTION WITH THE CURRENT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK	1 Very little	2 Somewhat	3 Not at all	4 A lot	5 Very much

1. Do you agree with the evaluation process in the public sector?

2. Do you think the evaluation process is objective?

3. Are employees opposed to the current evaluation system?

4. Do you agree with the time frame for implementing the current evaluation system (annual basis)?

5. Do you know what criteria the personnel are evaluated by?

6. Which of the following do you consider most important in the evaluation of human resources (you can choose more than one answer):

a) formal education

b) training (EKDDA certified seminars)

c) additional qualifications (e.g. foreign languages, PC, etc.)

d) attending conferences - workshops

e) special skills/competences

f) personality

g) initiative

h) perception

7. To what extent have you been informed about your evaluation process?

8. To what extent do you think that evaluation is influenced by interpersonal relationships?

9. Do you think the evaluation is done by relevant people?

10. Do you think that people unrelated to the institution should also take part in the process?

11. Who among the following do you think should be involved in the HR evaluation process? (you can choose more than one answer)

a) Director-General

b) Director

c) Head of Department

d) Colleagues

e) Subordinates

f) Citizens

g) Deputy Regional Governor

h) Thematic Deputy Regional Governor

i) Regional Governor

B. WORK SATISFACTION

1. To what extent have your role and responsibilities been explained to you?

2. Do you have the ability to communicate directly with your Head - Director?

3. Do you perform duties beyond those related to your position?

Continued

4. Are there clear expectations from the institution about your performance?

5. Are you aware of the institution's expectations?

6. Do you simultaneously perform duties in another Directorate?

7. Do you find that juggling multiple tasks affects your work and performance?

8. Do you consider your knowledge to meet the requirements of your job/role?

9. Do you think your performance is satisfactory?

10. Do you feel your efficiency is being recognised?

11. Do you participate in training programs or seminars in order to better fulfil your role?

12. Is the reason you participate in training programs or seminars to get away from your work environment even for a little bit?

13. Are you aware of the annual goals of your institution?

14. Do you think you are being treated unfairly by your institution?

15. Do you think you would be better suited to another department or directorate?

16. In general, how satisfied are you with your current job?

C. SATISFACTION WITH HEAD-DIRECTOR

1. How does your Head/Director respond to your work:

a) rewards

b) encourages

c) ignores

d) circumvents

2. Do you have the ability to inform your supervisor about the inappropriate behaviour of your colleagues towards citizens?

3. Do you have the ability to inform your Head-Director about the lack of interest of your colleagues?

4. Do you think that your Head - Director is generally accepted by his subordinates regarding their competences?

5. Do you think that your Head - Director has knowledge of human resource management?

6. Do you think that your Head - Director has the competence to utilize human resources in the best possible way?

7. Is your Head - Director interested in the needs of subordinates?

8. Does your Head - Director inspire confidence in you?

9. Does your Head - Director treat you equally with other subordinates?

10. Does your Head - Director take the necessary decisions with ease?

Continued

11. Does your Head - Director make a fair judgement?

12. Does your Head - Director ask for the opinion of their subordinates on dealing with problems?

11. In general, to what extent are you satisfied with your Head - Director?

D. SATISFACTION WITH WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

1. Your relationships with colleagues are (you can choose more than one answer):

a) creative

b) constructive

c) confrontational

d) merely good

e) typical

2. Is there a spirit of cooperation - teamwork among colleagues in the workplace?

3. Are you satisfied with the trust shown in you by your colleagues?

4. Do you maintain relationships with your colleagues outside the workplace?

5. What do you think your workplace exudes:

a) creativity

b) cooperation

c) pessimism

d) conflict

6. Are conflicts with your colleagues at work particularly common?

7. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationships with your colleagues?

E. SATISFACTION WITH THE INSTITUTION'S POLICY TOWARDS YOU

1. Does the institution you work for recognize your efforts?

2. Are you given opportunities for promotion - development in your workplace?

3. Does the institution you work for offer you opportunities to develop new skills?

4. Does the institution you work for make use of your competences - skills?

5. Does your institution allow you to participate in training seminars?

6. Does the management take care to inform the employees on issues that concern them?

7. In general, how satisfied are you with your institution's policy?

Continued

8. Do you think that the current assessment framework meets the requirements of the employees and promotes their work satisfaction?

9. What factors do you think enhance their work satisfaction?

(you can choose more than one answer)

a) working conditions

b) financial rewards

c) security

d) working hours

e) acknowledgment of your individual contribution

f) supervision by superiors

g) autonomy