

IMPORTANCE OF CHANGING MOTIVATION IN PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS (THE GREEK CASE)

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Abstract

The article elaborates on the role of human resources in the process of public sector reforms in Greece, focusing on changing motivation. The importance of positive motivation as a prerequisite of successful reforms is analyzed. More specific, the incentives of civil servants, which form the backbone of the public administration, are examined in detail. Then is being considered how the multilevel crisis and the prolonged period of recession in Greece have undoubtedly served as a catalyst for structural reforms to modernize the Greek Public Administration, as well as the important role of motivation of workers to the specific procedure. With regard to methodology, a key role in this report is the presentation of innovative motivation practices applied to the Public Administration of European countries.

Keywords: motivation, Public Administration, Human Resources Management

Introduction

The multilevel crisis and the prolonged period of recession in Greece have undoubtedly served as a catalyst for the design of structural reforms aimed at modernizing the Greek state in order to deal with the impact of this crisis on the one hand and to improve the standard of living and maximize prosperity of Greek citizens. A key prerequisite for the sustainability of these structural reforms is the effective and operationally well-functioning Greek Public Administration (Karagiannis, 2012).

Given that the most decisive factor of production in any organization to operate and to achieve its objectives is the human resources (Chitiris, 2001), it is easily understood that the efficient and orderly operation of Public Administration depends largely on the loyalty and engagement of civil servants in their work. Employee engagement and loyalty can be enhanced through specific Human Resource Management practices that focus on incentives to drive employee behavior towards specific goals and results.

Regarding the case of the Greek Public Administration, the efficiency and the effectiveness of which are often questioned, any efforts to strengthen individual incentives for public servants were incomplete (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011). However, the criticism of the commitment of all civil servants to their work and their "investment" in the general objectives of the consolidation of the Public Administration and by extension of the modernization of the Greek State requires the search for appropriate practices to motivate them. Making use of the know-how of the other European states in this field can prove to be extremely useful. The purpose of this paper is to investigate innovative practices in the field of Human Resource Management which are motivated by public officials and are successfully applied in specific countries of the European Union (EU).

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Work Objectives

In particular, the primary objective of the work is to study incentives for civil servants in some European countries. Then, the innovative practices identified in this policy area will be critically reviewed and the added value of this work will be to see if some of these practices can be translated into Greek administrative reality. Therefore, the ultimate aim of the work is to put forward proposals on the transferability of know-how regarding the motivation of civil servants in the Greek Public Administration.

The reduced effectiveness and efficiency of public services has already led to a strong questioning of practices and methods of traditional public management (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011) in the early 1980s. In many states, the public sector is accused of being wasteful, indifferent to the demands and needs of citizens, and generally incapable of responding to the upcoming changes and addressing the new challenges (Kufidu et al., 1997). Globalization, demographic changes and the budgetary difficulties of the States highlight a widely-recognized need for public sector reform, particularly in industrialized countries (Termini, 2008).

Most EU countries are in a phase of sustained administrative reforms and seeking quality upgrading of services. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission are encouraging this process (Termini, 2008), signaling a new concept for the Public Administration, which has been influenced by both the Anglo-Saxon and Central European traditions.

Undoubtedly, the new and existing human resources, which will have to constantly develop new knowledge, skills and attitudes, are a decisive factor in the evolution and successful adaptation of the Human Resources Management (HRM) to contemporary pressures (Voutsinos, 2008). It is therefore necessary for the public sector to ensure the development of a HRM system, which will respond to and adapt to prevailing conditions and challenges (Chitiri, 2001). Moreover, it is necessary for the Governments to put more emphasis on a comprehensive policy of HRM, given the criticality of the willingness and commitment of civil servants as prerequisites for the successful implementation of any state modernization program (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011). The Greek State has always been characterized by rigid structures and an extremely extensive bureaucracy, surrounded by a network of clientele relationships between citizens, civil servants and political parties. The result was the provision of moderate quality public services, the lack of motivation of civil servants and, above all, the inability to meet the expectations of citizens (Kufidu, et al., 1997).

The awareness of pathogens of the Greek Public Administration, in view of the need to successfully adapt the country to the EU's institutional environment, contributed, as early as 1986 (Kufid, et al., 1997), and recently in the proclamation of administrative reform programs. The common concern is the treatment of chronic problems, based on the new concept of the Public Administration, based on the mobilization and active participation of human resources in the implementation of the reform goals (Voutsinos, 2008).

The Greek Public Administration, however, is still largely inefficient and counterproductive, with a HRM that has neither vision nor strategy. The problem also focuses on the almost complete lack of HRM design, coupled with focusing on short-term and substantive snap reforms, while the lack of consistency of HRM with other areas of public management (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011) is noticeable.

It is requested that the HRM of the Greek Public Administration, be more strategic (Rammata, 2011), because only through a HRM strategy can the expected change in the

administrative culture of the Greek public sector and the orderly functioning of the Public Administration will be based on staff who will work with dedication and capacity to achieve the wider objectives of the Greek State.

Regarding the specific characteristics of the HRM of the Greek Public Administration, it is distinguished by the high level of direct, centralized management of staff, the minimal ability of senior management to participate in policy-making and its formal and bureaucratic approach (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011) , to the extent that the powers of its staff departments are mainly exhausted in the granting of authorizations to officials, in the observance of absences, in the handling of issues relating to postings and transfers, recently conducting disciplinary controls.

In this context, its modernization is necessary and a prerequisite for the promotion of all the structural reforms aimed at modernizing the Greek State. Public administrations responsible for personnel management issues should gradually acquire a more senior role by applying modern HRM practices, focusing on staff skills, implementing performance monitoring and evaluation systems , promoting modern flexible forms of work and the management of certain important horizontal issues relating to gender equality, non-discrimination, diversity, positive discrimination and active aging (European Commission, 2015).

Finally, in the belief that the successful implementation of structural reforms and the smooth functioning of the Greek Public Administration presuppose a public-law body with strong motivations to devote itself to its work and to be productive and efficient, it was considered appropriate in this article to study the particular important area of HRM for positive public- servants as a pre requisite of successful reforms.

Motivation of Human Resources: Theoretical Background

"Motivation" is the process that seeks to stimulate and support individuals to produce better results (Martin, 2005). The main components of motivation are energy, direction and perseverance. In practice, this translates into enthusiastic, motivated, enthusiastic employees who work hard to achieve specific organizational goals without abandoning this effort until they have achieved the desired outcome (Xerotiri-Koufidou, S.1997).

The importance of motivating employees to the success of the organizations has attracted the interest not only of managers but also of academics (Xerotiri-Koufidou, S.1997). The more substantial the human factor in the workplace is, the greater the interest in studying the motivation (Markovic, 2002). The motives of a person change indefinitely, depending on the circumstances, and one can certainly not claim the universality of an incentive (Martin, 2005).

Motivation in Public Administration

The more specific study of civil servants' motivation has taken place, unlike to private sector employees' motivation. Therefore, it is not surprising that most motivation theories are based on studies in the private sector and that due to the particularities of the public sector over the private one, their successful transfer to the public sector is questioned (Carole L, et al., 1998).

The appreciable diversification of the functioning of the Public Administration and the working patterns developed within it from those found in the private sector (Markovich, 2002), combined with the awareness of the importance of motivating civil servants for the efficient and orderly its operation has led to an increase in relative academic research (Institute of Public Administration An Foras Riara chain Ireland, 2013) for the last two decades.

It has been found that motivation theories of private sector employees are largely applicable to the public sector (Carole L, et al., 1998), but there are some additional elements that can be used to motivate civil servants. These are the values that civil servants call for public interest and their will to serve the common good (Sotirakou T. and Zeppou M. 2005). The peculiarities of the motivation model of civil servants should be taken seriously when addressing this issue.

Main Motivation Factors in Public Administration

Characteristics of the work and organizational structure

The characteristics of the work and the organizational structure are considered very important motivation factors in the Public Administration. Characteristics, such as meaningful work, responsibility for the derivatives of work, and knowledge of the results of work have a strong incentive for civil servants (Carole L, et al., 1998). On the contrary, the formal, bureaucratic structure and strict control, which are mostly found in the Public Administration, act as a disincentive. For this reason, it is necessary to aim at the Public Administration, on the one hand, to reinforce the above characteristics of the work, on the other, to minimize the need for official controls (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011).

Career opportunities

Career is a very important concept of the HRM in the public sector, as an integral part of most of the Public Administration. There are two distinct career systems:

1) The seniority career system, which is characterized by the association of intake and the start of the civil service career, the senior management positions are only open to civil servants.

2) Career based on positioning and positioning requirements, whereby candidates for a senior management post in the Public Administration need not come from within

In most countries, a hybrid model is in place that maintains data from both of these systems in order for the advantages of one to mitigate the disadvantages of the other. The system based on seniority creates the conditions for a dedicated, dedicated and experienced human resource. On the other hand, the position-based and position-based promotion system permits a better adaptation of recruitment to specific skills, which may require a particular job, while at the same time acting as a motivator for civil servants, as competition for the occupation of senior management positions and the renewal of the administrative culture (European Commission, 2015).

In any case, it should be stressed that the possibility of promotion, if it is desirable and feasible, works motivationally for the civil servant, provided it is directly related to his performance (Carole L, et al., 1998).

Safety and social bonding conditions

Ensuring appropriate security conditions and creating social ties in the workplace are also factors that have a stimulating effect. Appropriate security conditions mean workplace-adapted workspace, well-equipped workplace, social security provision, and appropriate social bonding conditions mean good workplace psychology, appropriate leadership style, managers' interest in the workplace their leisure time, leisure activities, teamwork, and citizenship (Holloway, et al., 1999).

Wage

Wage is the most common external incentive used to increase employee performance, since wages are inextricably linked to their standard of living. However, in the case of civil servants, it is not the most effective means of motivation. Special conditions are required under which remuneration acts as an incentive in the public sector (Holloway, et al.,1999).

Leadership

This is another long-lasting and very important factor of motivation. In particular, at present, when the Governments of different States adopt performance-based management systems, the leadership of incentives for employees is more entrenched, as performance-based management presupposes that executives:

- take decisions and administer the resources at their disposal if they so wish;
- are focused on the performance of their employees,
- set clear organizational objectives and, above all,
- motivate their subordinates to achieve these goals (Organisation for Economic

Co-operation and Development, 2011).

The incentive to provide public service

It is the motivation of individuals to contribute with the effort they make to society and to the wider public interest and good, regardless of their personal interests (Holloway, et al.,1999). It is undoubtedly an important and distinct element of the behavior of civil servants, which is reflected in their individual effort and commitment to the mission and objectives of public organizations (Philip Keefer and Stuti Khemani, 2005).

Incentives in Greek Public Administration

At this point, it is appropriate to summarize some of the institutionalized incentives for civil servants.

Motives deriving from the Staff Regulations :

Permanence

Occupational Safety

Payment of Salary

Ensuring Health and Safety at Work

Protection of Fundamental Rights, such as Freedom of Expression

Freedom of Association

Incentives that have been enacted by a variety of legislative provisions:

Fixed working hours

Possibility of choosing working hours

Facilitating employees to monitor their children's school performance

Granting parental leave to a father civil servant

Ability to pay and gradual development

Training and development

Comparison: motivation in the United Kingdom Public Sector

A new major program for public sector reform was launched in June 2012 by the UK Conservative and Liberal Democratic Government (2010-2015) , with a more flexible and

result-oriented Public Administration focused on delivering results in the best possible way to the needs of citizens (Cameron, 2012).

Aware of the administrative reform is the creation of a modern job offer in the public sector, which encourages and rewards productive, professional and committed human resources. It is about adopting a modern employment philosophy that was thought to mobilize civil servants significantly, as employment is now intended not only to be related to the pay and pensions system but also to include other aspects such as interest and the importance of work, the values and morals of the public sector, the conditions and working conditions, the system of management based on performance and reward, the training and development of employees, the working environment, administrative culture, professional development (Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government 2010 to 2015, 2012).

Comparison: motivation in the German Public Sector

It is common ground that the adaptation of the German Public Administration to the new challenges posed by social, technological and demographic changes, the difficult budgetary state of the State and globalization, and in particular Europeanization, are not only a question of structures but, to a large extent, is a matter of administrative culture. In any case, it is the responsibility of the State to perform effectively, on a citizen-oriented basis and to provide high-quality services (Wouter Vandenabeele, et al., 2006). Staffing in Germany is closely linked to the suitability, skills and performance of each candidate. Additionally, a prerequisite for occupying a managerial position is that a trial period has been passed. The above practice results in an overall improvement in the staffing of administrative positions of responsibility, the intensification of competition for their occupation and the enhancement of the mobility of the public servants. Finally, it has a positive effect on the reinforcement of the incentives of German civil servants. The motivating force of the close link between the selection of superiors and their suitability, skills and performance, as well as the pre-post test condition before their final placement characterize the German managerial staffing system, raise some concerns about possible improvements in the Greek system.

Conclusions

The Greek Public Administration shows low performance and satisfaction indicators for citizens from the quality of public service provision compared to the average of European countries. The low quality of service combined with high public spending demonstrates the urgent need to reform the Greek public sector to better meet the needs of citizens (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011).

Although in recent years an important administrative reform effort has begun in Greece, however, the observed low levels of incentives for civil servants undermine the modernization of the Public Administration and pose risks for the successful implementation of all the country's structural reforms.

As globalization progresses, the variety of international principles and approaches to issues related to the Public Administration is growing. The adoption of best practice, ie improvement by imitation of successful techniques from other Public Administration, is a very attractive idea, which, as revealed by this paper, can greatly contribute to the reform of the system of motivation of Greek civil servants. However, it may be misleading if an in-depth analysis of possible problems is first undertaken, an assessment of the impact of past reform initiatives and results and a full and profound knowledge of the national framework. It is therefore necessary, before attempting to transfer the know-how proposed in this paper, to

explore extensively geographic, historical and cultural factors that affect national policies and regulations in a variety of ways.

What should be emphasized is that the long-term problems of the Greek Public Administration are a serious disincentive for Greek civil servants, and therefore need to be addressed immediately if the ultimate objective is to create a modern and effective Public Administration with deeply satisfied and dedicated work employees. Some of the timeless problems are:

- the strong political and party element,
- the deviation from objective Public Administration procedures and the resulting ineffectiveness,
- legal formalism,
- maintaining anachronistic methods of administration,
- sloppiness,
- fragmentation and incompatibility of most of the adopted public policy actions,
- the lack of strategic planning, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the implemented actions.

Furthermore, a very important condition for improving the motivation and generally the efficiency and effectiveness of Greek civil servants, which is the transformation of the HRM model of the Public Administration from a functional and bureaucratic approach into a more strategic and professional approach. This is an important trend of reformation that characterizes the national Public Administration of many European countries and it will undoubtedly have to happen in Greece (European Commission, 2015).

In conclusion, it should be noted that economic incentives are not the primary drivers of motivation. The incentive to be given greater emphasis by the Greek Public Administration is the incentive to provide public service, since the reinforcement of this incentive strengthens the morale of civil servants, oriented towards serving the public interest and good, and maximize performance and efficiency.

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