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HRM Practices and Their Impact on Job Satisfaction: Evidence from the Public Sector in Greece †

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Abstract: The aim of this paper was to investigate human resource management (HRM) practices and their effects on the job satisfaction of public sector employees in Greece. More specifically, a survey was carried out via a structured questionnaire distributed to all the employees of the Regional Administration of Crete (Region of Crete), who were selected as research samples. The results of the survey showed a good level of job satisfaction, but a moderate level of satisfaction from the HRM practices of the organization. However, a strong correlation between HRM practices and job satisfaction was statistically proven. Furthermore, significant correlations were identified between specific demographic variables or certain occupational features and the levels of satisfaction from both the job and the HRM practices. In conclusion, the research suggested that there were areas that must be emphasized and problems to be addressed by the top management. These, among others, were the improvement of evaluation procedures, the promotion of fair treatment, and the better planning of development of human resources.

Keywords: human resource management; job satisfaction; employee development; leadership; public sector; Greece

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1. Introduction

Traditionally viewed as a cost burden, human resources (HRs) are now recognized as a strategic asset of critical importance for the success of any organization. As such, human resource management must be prepared to face challenges with readiness and flexibility. HRM encompasses the management of an organization's human capital within a strategic framework aimed at achieving optimal performance, while ensuring employee satisfaction. Its policies and procedures include, among others, practices such as talent management, motivation, empowerment, and leadership. Essentially, these policies and systems define the roles and responsibilities of each employee in contributing to the achievement of desired results [1]. At its core, HRM revolves around maximizing organizational effectiveness by motivating and empowering its people. This can be achieved through a combination of strategies. These strategies include motivation; financial and non-financial incentives; positive work environment, coupled with policies for enhancing effectiveness; providing training and development; designing jobs with clear duties and responsibilities; evaluating performance; and offering guidance and support. Motivation combined with enhanced effectiveness form the cornerstone of HRM, leading to increased productivity and a competitive advantage for the organization. In essence, investing in HRM is equivalent to investing in the very success of the business.

2. Literature Review

Work plays a pivotal role in people's lives which makes it crucial for organizations to maintain a satisfied workforce. Employee satisfaction is defined as the sense of self-

motivation and fulfillment derived from one's work, stemming from feelings of accomplishment and job performance [2]. Furthermore, professional satisfaction is additionally enhanced by the recognition and reward of employee achievements, which is inextricably linked to increased efficiency and a positive work environment. Moreover, flexibility plays a significant role in satisfaction in general [3]. Finally, organizational culture positively affects employees, highlighting the existence of a correlation between organizational culture on the one hand and commitment and performance on the other [4].

According to previous studies [5], additional factors that influence employee satisfaction include the following:

1. Work stress levels: Excessive work stress can negatively impact employee satisfaction and well-being.
2. Training and development opportunities: Providing employees with opportunities for professional growth and development can enhance their satisfaction and motivation.
3. Promotion and advancement opportunities: Employees who feel that they have the potential to advance within the organization are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs.
4. Safety and security: A safe and secure work environment is essential for employee satisfaction and well-being.

Research has shown that HR policies that focus on motivation and reward, empowerment, and communication have a significant impact on employee satisfaction [6]. Overall, it has been suggested that HRM practices and total quality management (TQM) highly affect employee satisfaction [7].

Beyond HRM practices, there are additional factors that influence employee work satisfaction. Many researchers argue that social and demographic characteristics, such as age, marital status, gender, family income, and education level [8,9] have a significant impact on employee work satisfaction.

Recently, the public sector has been slowly following the lead of the private sector in terms of HRM practices. The concept of New Public Management (NPM) has become increasingly important in the research community, despite the lack of a universally accepted definition. Broadly speaking, the theoretical framework describes NPM as a tool to improve the function of public organizations by adopting and relying on certain practices borrowed from the private sector. These practices, introduced in the 1990s, entail performance evaluation, decentralized budgeting, flexibility in the application of public budgeting, separation of responsibilities and services, downsizing of the public administration, and a results-based management culture, as well as the provision of quality services by public entities and the promotion of market principles [10,11].

In Greece, Law No. 3871/2010 was seen as the cornerstone for putting the principles of New Public Management into practice [12]. Public sector organizations in Greece, however, may face several HR challenges, including employee overload, inappropriate behavior, high levels of bureaucracy, and low productivity. These potential challenges are a result of factors such as stagnation in promotions and unexpected salary cuts. A report published by the OECD [13] in 2012 indicated that the HRM framework in the Greek public sector included legal provisions for the protection of employee rights. These included the practices of providing social security and pensions to employees, and the right to strike and form a union, as well as guarantees for long-term employment opportunities. Of course, the Greek public sector requires modernization and the adoption of HR practices and measures from the private sector [14]. According to KPMG [15], Greece ranks 55th globally and has been steadily improving in recent years. The OECD reports that Greece tends to outsource HR management to other government entities to a lesser extent than the OECD average. In terms of strategic HR management, Greece makes little to no use of this.

This paper explores the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and employee job satisfaction in the Greek public sector and more specifically, within the Region of Crete. It specifically examines the relation between HRM practices and job satisfaction, as well as the correlation between specific work characteristics and demographic factors with job satisfaction and satisfaction with HRM practices. More specifically, we examined the extent to which these characteristics influenced the overall level of employee satisfaction.

Delving deeper, this paper investigates the following key questions:

1. Does the level of HR satisfaction affect the level of job satisfaction?
2. Is the level of job satisfaction influenced by the participants' work profiles?
3. Is the level of job satisfaction affected by the participants' demographic characteristics?
4. Is the level of HR satisfaction influenced by the participants' work profiles?
5. Is the level of HR satisfaction affected by the participants' demographic characteristics?

We tried to answer these questions by providing empirical evidence concerning a Greek public organization.

3. Research Methodology

The survey was conducted in the Region of Crete, one of the 13 administrative regions of Greece. Located in the southern part of the country, the Region of Crete includes the island of Crete and smaller islands such as Gavdos, Chrissi, and Koufonisi, among others, and covers a total area of 8303 square kilometers. The capital of the region is Heraklion, where the Headquarter Services of the Regional Government are located. The Region is further divided into four administrative units: the regional units of Heraklion, Lasithi, Rethymno, and Chania.

For the purposes of this study, a structured questionnaire was developed based on a comprehensive literature review. All questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of four parts, with 17 questions in total. It was distributed to all employees of the Region of Crete, a total population of 764 employees, with a response deadline of approximately two weeks. Data were collected from 5 December 2023 to 18 December 2023, resulting in a final sample of 116 responses. The research sample included a diverse range of participants, from all administrative units, and of both genders, reflecting a broad spectrum of age groups, educational backgrounds, marital status, and salary levels.

4. Results

The sample consisted of 116 employees from the Region of Crete. The specific demographic and working profile data are presented in Tables 1 and 2:

Table 1. Sample presentation: demographic data.

Demographic Data		f	%
Gender	Male	32	27.4
	Female	82	70.1
Age	25–35	2	1.7
	36–45	26	22.2
	46–55	62	53.0
	Older than 56	27	23.1

Table 1. *Cont.*

Demographic Data		f	%
Marital status	Single	11	9.4
	Married	91	77.8
	Divorced	11	9.4
	Other	4	3.4
Education level	Secondary education level	8	6.8
	University degree	52	44.4
	Master's degree	50	42.7
	PhD degree	7	6.0

Table 2. Sample presentation: working profile data.

Job/Working Profile Data		f	%
Regional Unit (R.U.)	R.U. of Heraklion	36	30.8
	Headquarters Unit	19	16.2
	R.U. of Lasithi	18	15.4
	R.U. of Chania	26	22.2
	R.U. of Rethymno	17	14.5
Years of work	1–8 years	48	41.0
	9–16 years	29	24.8
	17–24 years	29	24.8
	More than 25 years	10	9.0
Managerial position	Yes	43	36.8
	No	73	62.4
Number of colleagues	1–5 colleagues	16	13.7
	6–9 colleagues	25	21.4
	10–15 colleagues	23	19.7
	16–20 colleagues	14	12.0
	More than 21 colleagues	38	32.5
Desire to maintain their job position	Yes	71	60.7
	No	11	9.4
	I have some concerns	34	29.1
Salary	Less than EUR 1000	15	12.8
	EUR 1001–1250	59	50.4
	EUR 1251–1500	38	32.5
	More than EUR 1501	4	3.4

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to confirm the reliability and internal consistency for each individual question, as well as for the overall questionnaire. The results of the reliability analysis, conducted using IBM® SPSS® Statistics 29 statistical software, allowed the creation of seven grouping variables, as follows:

- Factors of job satisfaction;
- Total satisfaction/commitment;
- HR programming factors;
- Motivation practices;
- Evaluation of productivity;
- Program of training and personal development;
- Employee involvement/participation.

Cronbach's alpha values for the individual questions ranged from 0.787 to 0.890, while the overall Cronbach's alpha value was 0.952. The factors for each constructed variable are presented in Table 3:

Table 3. Grouping of variables.

Factors	Variables
Environment/working conditions	Factors of job satisfaction
Position workload	
Relevance of work to studies	
Earnings/salary	
Opportunity for personal development	
Safety in the workplace and the job position	
Flexibility in working hours	
Relationships with colleagues	
Relationships with supervisors	
Total satisfaction	Total satisfaction/ commitment
Total commitment	
Forecasting staffing needs	HR planning
Eligibility of new personnel	
Staff needs investigation	
Additional benefits (bonuses, overtime, etc.).	Motivation practices
Offering flexibility in permits, facility leaves, etc.	
Satisfactory working environment (furniture, facilities)	
Working atmosphere	
Staff satisfaction investigation	
Effective resolution of employees' problems	
Fair evaluation of performance	Evaluation of productivity
Evaluation based on job specifics	
Evaluation is perceived as an improvement process	
Training programs are provided	Program of training and personal development
Employee support is provided	
Training to new entrants is provided	
Identification of employees' educational needs	
Development and/or career opportunities	
Enhancing employee initiative	Employee involvement/ participation
Participation in decisions affecting themselves	
Encouragement to propose improvements	
Open constant communication	

Two additional composite variables were derived from these variables, following an additional Cronbach's alpha reliability test. The first variable named "job satisfaction" aggregated the factors of "factors of job satisfaction" and "total satisfaction/commitment". The second variable named "satisfaction with HR practices", aggregated the factors of "HR planning, motivation practices", "evaluation of productivity", "program of training and personal development", and "employee involvement/participation". These variables were subsequently used to investigate and answer the research questions.

As presented on Table 4, the factors with the highest levels of job satisfaction were "relationships with colleagues" (M = 4.21, SD = 0.75) and "relationships with supervisors" (M = 4.17, SD = 0.87).

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for the variable: factors of job satisfaction.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Factors of Job Satisfaction	Environment/working conditions	0.00	3.40	28.20	49.60	17.90	3.83	0.76
	Position workload	14.5	12	27.4	29.1	16.2	3.21	1.28
	Relevance of work to studies	7.7	12	22.2	38.5	18.8	3.49	1.16
	Earnings/salary	5.1	25.6	41.9	21.4	5.1	2.96	0.95
	Opportunity for personal development	10.3	21.4	34.2	26.5	6.8	2.98	1.09
	Safety in the workplace and the job position	2.6	10.3	29.9	35	21.4	3.63	1.02
	Flexibility in working hours	2.6	13.7	25.6	42.7	14.5	3.53	0.99
	Relationships with colleagues	0.00	1.7	14.5	44.4	38.5	4.21	0.75
	Relationships with supervisors	0.9	4.3	12	41.9	40.2	4.17	0.87

Regarding the overall satisfaction and commitment (Table 5), it was found that the overall satisfaction level was more than adequate (M = 3.58, SD = 0.85), whereas the overall commitment was high (M = 4.35, SD = 0.66).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for the variable: total satisfaction/commitment.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Total Satisfaction/ Commitment	Total Satisfaction	1.7	6	36.8	42.7	12	3.58	0.85
	Total Commitment	0.00	1.7	5.1	48.7	43.6	4.35	0.66

Furthermore, the results in Table 6 show that the HR department only investigated the needs of its personnel in a moderate extent (M = 3.01, SD = 1.05), while it was inadequate to predict the needs (M = 2.43, SD = 1.16) and actually hire qualified and suitable personnel (M = 2.91, SD = 1.13). In conclusion, the HR planning was limited, and improvements were required.

In the Table 7 it is shown that the most prevalent motivation practice was the effort to create/maintain a positive working atmosphere (M = 3.75, SD = 0.92).

Moreover, the participants reported that the evaluation procedure was moderately perceived as a process of improvement (M = 3.02, SD = 1.06) (Table 8).

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for the variable: HR planning.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
HR Planning	Forecasting staffing needs	28.2	22.2	29.9	15.4	3.4	2.43	1.16
	Eligibility of new personnel	14.5	17.9	35.9	23.9	6.8	2.91	1.13
	Staff needs investigation	10.3	18.8	34.2	31.6	4.3	3.01	1.05

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for the variable: motivation practices.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Motivation Practices	Additional benefits (bonuses, overtime, etc.)	8.5	21.4	33.3	27.4	8.5	3.06	1.09
	Offering flexibility in permits, facility leaves, etc.	0.9	10.3	31.6	41.9	14.5	3.59	0.89
	Satisfactory working environment (furniture, facilities)	1.7	6.8	25.6	52.1	12	3.67	0.85
	Working atmosphere	1.7	7.7	23.9	46.2	19.7	3.75	0.92
	Staff satisfaction investigation	10.3	18.8	30.8	30.8	7.7	3.07	1.11
	Effective resolution of employees' problems	7.7	15.4	34.2	30.8	11.1	3.22	1.09

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for the variable: evaluation of productivity.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Evaluation of Productivity	Fair evaluation of performance	15.4	14.5	38.5	28.2	2.6	2.88	1.07
	Evaluation based on job specifics	14.5	14.5	41.9	22.2	6	2.91	1.10
	Evaluation is perceived as an improvement process	11.1	15.4	39.3	27.4	6	3.02	1.06

Regarding the training programs (Table 9), they were provided to employees to a quite large extent (M = 3.73, SD = 0.88).

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for the variable: program of training and personal development.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Program of Training and Personal Development	Training programs are provided	0.00	6.8	34.2	36.8	21.4	3.73	0.88
	Employee support is provided	5.1	12.8	38.5	31.6	11.1	3.31	1.01
	Training to new entrants is provided	7.7	23.9	35.9	27.4	3.4	2.95	0.99
	Identification of employees' educational needs	7.7	18.8	33.3	29.1	10.3	3.16	1.09
	Development and/or career opportunities	17.9	21.4	37.6	17.1	4.3	2.68	1.10

Finally, regarding employee involvement/participation levels, the analysis (Table 10) concluded that there was a sufficiently open communication between employees and supervisors (M = 3.78, SD = 0.94).

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for the variable: employee involvement/participation.

	Results	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To Some Extent	To a Large Extent	Very Much	Mean	S.D.
Employee Involvement/Participation	Enhancing employee initiative	0.9	12.8	40.2	35.9	9.4	3.41	0.86
	Participation in decisions affecting themselves	5.1	18.8	32.5	36.8	6	3.20	0.99
	Encouragement to propose improvements	3.4	14.5	31.6	40.2	9.4	3.38	0.97
	Open constant communication	0.9	10.3	21.4	44.4	22.2	3.78	0.94

Regarding the overall level of the job satisfaction of employees in the Region of Crete (Table 11), it was sufficiently high (M = 3.63, SD = 0.57), while the overall satisfaction from the applied HR practices was lower (M = 3.19, SD = 0.73).

Table 11. Job satisfaction/satisfaction with HR practices.

		Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction with HR Practices
N	Valid	116	116
	Missing	1	1
Mean		3.6309	3.1944
Median		3.6310	3.1905
Std. deviation		0.56896	073231
Minimum		2	1.57
Maximum		5	4.86
Percentiles	25	3.2727	2.6871
	50	3.631	3.1905
	75	4.0083	3.7

The distribution of the means of the grouping variables, in terms of working profile data and demographic data, are presented in Tables 12 and 13.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the highest levels of job satisfaction and satisfaction from the HRM practices were reported by the following:

- Employees in the Headquarters Services ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.82, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.43);
- New employees with 1–8 years of experience ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.68, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.36);
- Those in managerial positions in terms of job satisfaction levels ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.68) but not in terms of HRM practices satisfaction levels (M.O. HR = 3.20);
- Employees in relatively small directorates of 6–9 people ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.80, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.45);
- Employees with desire to maintain their job position, ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.91, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.50);
- Those paid EUR 1001–1250 in terms of job satisfaction levels ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.68) but those paid over EUR 1501 in terms of HRM practices satisfaction levels ($M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.24);
- Women in terms of work satisfaction levels ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.64) but men in terms of HRM practices satisfaction levels (M.O. HR = 3.21);
- Employees aged 36–45 ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.87, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.54);
- Single employees ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.78, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.42);
- Employees with a university degree ($M_{JobSatisfaction}$ = 3.78, $M_{HRMpractices}$ = 3.35).

Table 12. Means of all variables/working profile data.

Participants' Working Profile Data		Factors of Job Satisfaction	Total Satisfaction/Commitment	HR Programming Factors	Motivation Practices	Evaluation of Productivity	Program of Training and Personal Development	Employee Involvement/Participation	Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction with HR Practices
Regional Unit (R.U.)	R.U. of Heraklion	3.53	3.92	2.84	3.3	3.01	3.19	3.60	3.60	3.18
	Headquarters Unit	3.77	4.03	2.98	3.65	3.25	3.39	3.82	3.82	3.43
	R.U. of Lasithi	3.54	4.06	2.48	3.2	2.94	3.16	3.63	3.63	3.07
	R.U. of Chania	3.52	3.96	2.9	3.51	2.72	3.15	3.60	3.60	3.22
	R.U. of Rethymno	3.45	3.91	2.57	3.32	2.75	2.87	3.53	3.53	3.05
Years of work	1–8 years	3.62	3.98	3.13	3.53	3.15	3.3	3.68	3.68	3.36
	9–16 years	3.61	3.91	2.69	3.29	2.94	3.08	3.66	3.66	3.14
	17–24 years	3.44	4	2.43	3.36	2.75	3.03	3.54	3.54	3.07
	More than 25 years	3.47	3.95	2.43	3.15	2.43	3.16	3.55	3.55	2.95
Managerial position	Yes	3.6	4.06	2.63	3.3	2.87	3.32	3.68	3.68	3.19
	No	3.53	3.91	2.87	3.45	2.97	3.07	3.60	3.60	3.20
Number of colleagues	1–5 colleagues	3.65	3.75	2.58	3.12	2.94	3.05	3.66	3.66	3.02
	6–9 colleagues	3.7	4.24	3.07	3.62	3.25	3.38	3.80	3.80	3.45
	10–15 colleagues	3.71	4.11	2.9	3.53	3.12	3.29	3.78	3.78	3.33
	16–20 colleagues	3.4	3.82	2.83	3.33	2.57	3.23	3.48	3.48	3.14
	More than 21 colleagues	3.39	3.84	2.59	3.3	2.75	2.97	3.47	3.47	3.04
Desire to maintain this job position	Yes	3.84	4.23	3.13	3.64	3.28	3.49	3.91	3.91	3.50
	No	2.84	3.45	1.82	2.5	2	2.29	2.95	2.95	2.29
	I have some concerns	3.21	3.59	2.36	3.16	2.51	2.77	3.28	3.28	2.86
Salary	Less than EUR 1000	3.38	3.87	2.82	3.37	3	3.04	3.47	3.47	3.18
	EUR 1001–1250	3.63	3.91	2.86	3.41	3	3.19	3.68	3.68	3.22
	EUR 1251–1500	3.52	4.07	2.61	3.38	2.82	3.21	3.62	3.62	3.16
	More than EUR 1501	3.53	4.25	3.08	3.38	2.75	2.8	3.66	3.66	3.24

Table 13. Means of all variables/demographic data.

Participants' Demographic Data		Factors of Job Satisfaction	Total Satisfaction/Commitment	HR Programming Factors	Motivation Practices	Evaluation of Productivity	Program of Training and Personal Development	Employee Involvement/Participation	Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction with HR Practices
Gender	Male	3.50	4.00	2.65	3.40	2.98	3.21	3.54	3.21	3.59
	Female	3.57	3.96	2.83	3.37	2.94	3.17	3.40	3.19	3.64
Age	18–24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	25–35	2.83	3.50	2.50	2.83	2.83	2.80	2.88	2.79	2.95
	36–45	3.83	4.04	3.32	3.67	3.33	3.42	3.81	3.54	3.87
	46–55	3.44	3.83	2.67	3.32	2.81	3.06	3.32	3.09	3.51
	Older than 56	3.63	4.24	2.57	3.34	2.85	3.20	3.41	3.14	3.74
Marital status	Single	3.72	4.05	3.17	3.43	3.23	3.52	3.60	3.42	3.78
	Married	3.54	3.98	2.74	3.39	2.95	3.15	3.42	3.18	3.62
	Divorced	3.50	4.13	3.17	3.42	2.92	2.95	3.94	3.30	3.61
	Other	3.55	3.73	2.67	3.40	2.55	3.07	3.25	3.07	3.58
Education level	Basic education level	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Secondary education level	3.46	4.13	2.71	3.27	3.33	2.97	3.47	3.17	3.58
	University degree	3.71	4.07	2.99	3.59	3.05	3.28	3.54	3.35	3.78
	Master's degree	3.46	3.86	2.64	3.26	2.76	3.08	3.33	3.07	3.53
	PhD degree	3.19	3.79	2.33	3.05	2.86	3.11	3.43	3.01	3.30

Subsequently, a normality test was conducted to determine the appropriate method for conducting the correlation analysis. The results of the normality test showed that the sample did not follow the normal distribution (Table 14), as the skewness and Kurtosis values exceeded the demanded value range. Therefore, the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was chosen for this correlation analysis.

Table 14. Skewness and Kurtosis values: test.

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Job satisfaction	0.225	0.446
Satisfaction with HRM practices	0.225	0.446

Regarding the first research hypothesis "Does the level of HR satisfaction affect the level of job satisfaction?", the results in Table 15 indicate that there was a statistically significant correlation between the level of job satisfaction and the levels of satisfaction with HRM practices.

Table 15. Correlation analysis.

Spearman's Rho		Satisfaction with HRM Practices
Job satisfaction	Correlation coefficient	0.776
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

This is also obvious in Figure 1.

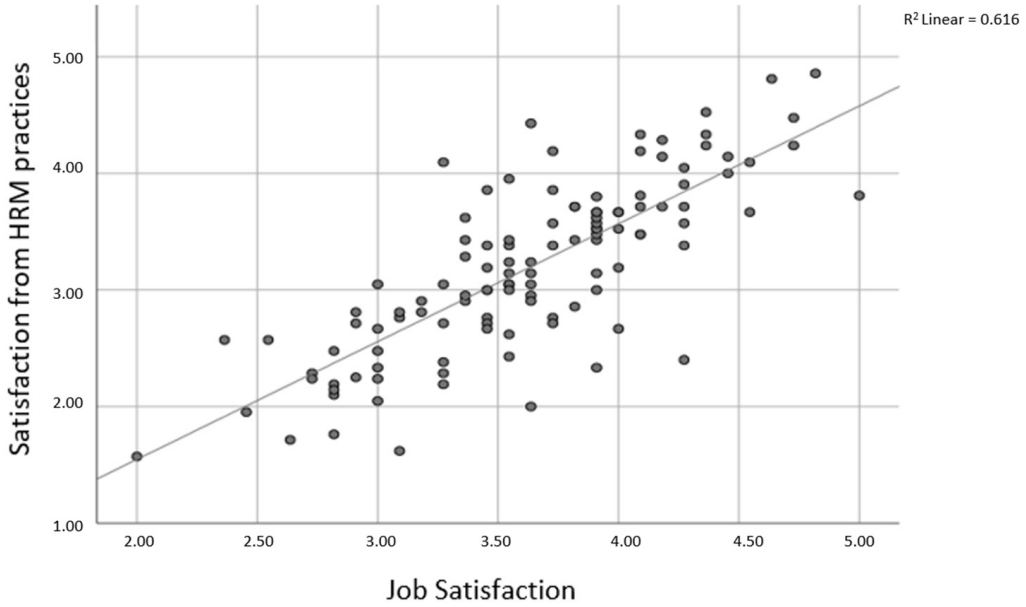

Figure 1. Scatter plot for job satisfaction/satisfaction with HRM practices.

Examining the second research hypothesis "Is the level of job satisfaction influenced by the participants' work profiles?" (Table 16) the level of job satisfaction was statistically significant in terms of the variable "desire to maintain the job position" (F = 37.220, Sig. = 0.000).

Table 16. Analysis of variance in job satisfaction/working profile data.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regional Unit (R.U.)	Between groups	0.884	4	0.221	0.675	0.611
	Within groups	36.344	111	0.327		
	Total	37.228	115			
Years of work	Between groups	0.437	3	0.146	0.444	0.722
	Within groups	36.791	112	0.328		
	Total	37.228	115			
Managerial position	Between groups	0.2	1	0.2	0.616	0.434
	Within groups	37.028	114	0.325		
	Total	37.228	115			
Number of colleagues	Between groups	2.52	4	0.63	2.015	0.097
	Within groups	34.708	111	0.313		
	Total	37.228	115			
Desire to maintain their job position	Between groups	14.785	2	7.392	37.220	0.000
	Within groups	22.443	113	0.199		
	Total	37.228	115			
Salary	Between groups	0.533	3	0.178	0.542	0.654
	Within groups	36.695	112	0.328		
	Total	37.228	115			

In Figure 2 the aforementioned results are visually presented.

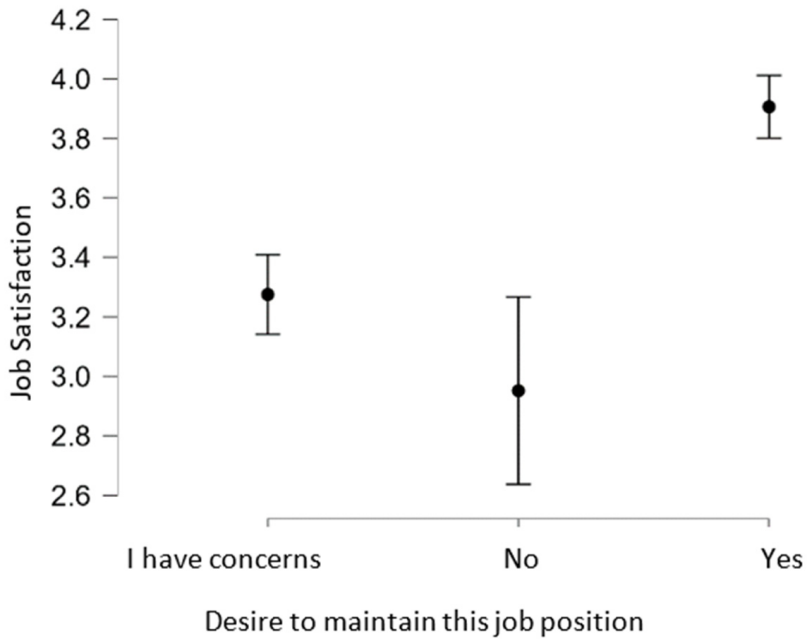

Figure 2. Mean of variable of job Satisfaction/desire to maintain this job position.

Throughout the examination of the third research hypothesis "Is the level of job satisfaction affected by the participants' demographic characteristics?" (Table 17) the level of job satisfaction was statistically significant only in terms of the variable "age" (F = 3.897, Sig. = 0.011).

Table 17. Analysis of variance in job satisfaction/demographic data.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between groups	0.059	1	0.059	0.179	0.673
	Within groups	36.297	111	0.327		
	Total	36.355	112			
Age	Between groups	3.518	3	1.173	3.897	0.011
	Within groups	33.71	112	0.301		
	Total	37.228	115			
Marital status	Between groups	0.267	3	0.089	0.270	0.847
	Within groups	36.961	112	0.33		
	Total	37.228	115			
Education level	Between groups	2.376	3	0.792	2.545	0.060
	Within groups	34.852	112	0.311		
	Total	37.228	115			

In Figure 3 it is shown that participants aged 36–45 and more than 56 years reported higher job satisfaction.

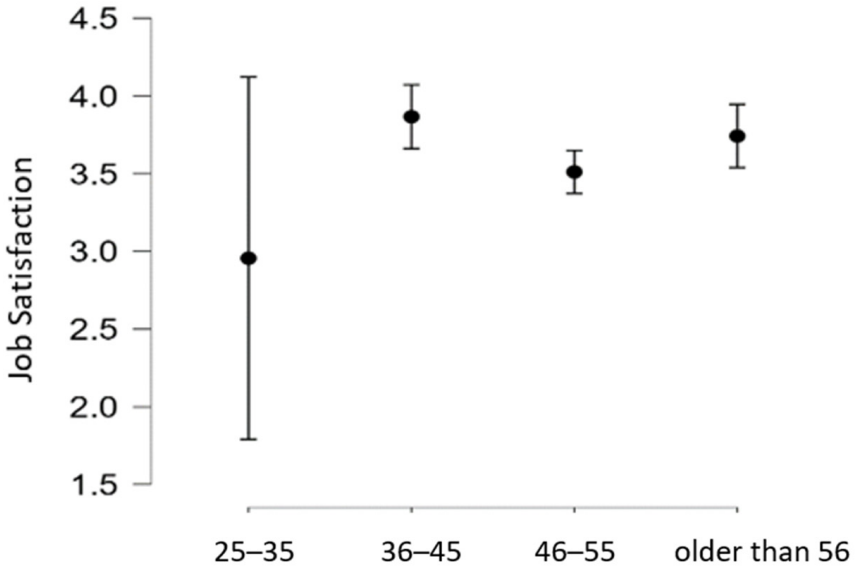

Figure 3. Mean of variables of job satisfaction/age.

Regarding the fourth research hypothesis "Is the level of HR satisfaction influenced by the participants' work profiles?" (Table 18), it was confirmed only in terms of the variable "desire to maintain their job position" (F = 25.726, Sig. = 0.000).

In addition to the above findings, Figure 4 shows that satisfaction with HR practices was influenced by the desire to maintain their job position. More specifically, the more positive the participants' responses were about their desire to remain in their current job position, the higher their satisfaction with HR practices.

Table 18. Analysis of variance in satisfaction with HR practices/working profile data.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regional Unit (R.U.)	Between groups	1.74	4	0.435	0.805	0.524
	Within groups	59.932	111	0.54		
	Total	61.671	115			
Years of work	Between groups	2.422	3	0.807	1.526	0.212
	Within groups	59.25	112	0.529		
	Total	61.671	115			
Managerial position	Between groups	0	1	0	0.001	0.977
	Within groups	61.671	114	0.541		
	Total	61.671	115			
Number of colleagues	Between groups	3.535	4	0.884	1.688	0.158
	Within groups	58.136	111	0.524		
	Total	61.671	115			
Desire to maintain their job position	Between groups	19.295	2	9.647	25.726	0.000
	Within groups	42.376	113	0.375		
	Total	61.671	115			
Salary	Between groups	0.104	3	0.035	0.063	0.979
	Within groups	61.568	112	0.55		
	Total	61.671	115			

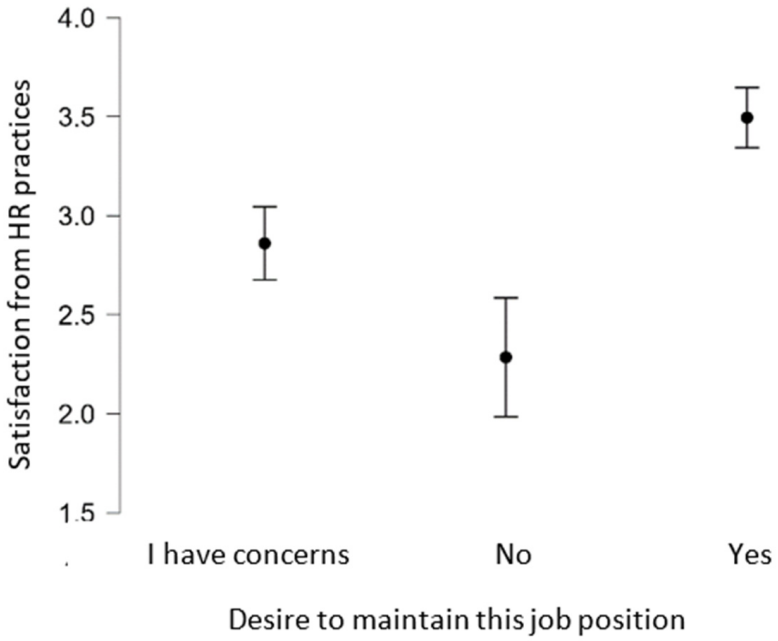

Figure 4. Mean of variable of satisfaction with HR practices/desire to maintain this job position.

Regarding the fifth research hypothesis "Is the level of satisfaction with HR practices affected by the participants' demographic characteristics?" (Table 19), it was not confirmed in this research.

Table 19. Analysis of variance in satisfaction with HR practices/demographic data.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Within groups	59.421	111	0.535		
	Total	59.433	112			
Age	Between groups	3.99	3	1.33	2.582	0.057
	Within groups	57.681	112	0.515		
	Total	61.671	115			
Marital status	Between groups	0.744	3	0.248	0.456	0.714
	Within groups	60.927	112	0.544		
	Total	61.671	115			
Education level	Between groups	2.179	3	0.726	1.367	0.256
	Within groups	59.492	112	0.531		
	Total	61.671	115			

5. Discussion

Job satisfaction is a critical issue with significant implications for both employees and organizations. The factors that influence job satisfaction, considering possible variations at the individual and collective levels, were investigated and the findings clearly demonstrate that the level of job satisfaction was significantly affected by the applied HRM practices. A direct correlation between satisfaction with HR practices and the average value of job satisfaction was confirmed. These results are in line with those of a number of notable researchers [16–18].

Further analysis of the statistical data revealed that relationships with colleagues and supervisors were among the most important factors in shaping job satisfaction for this survey sample, followed by the variables of the work environment/conditions, job security, and the balance between work and personal life. It is noteworthy that payment ranked last. The results of the empirical research also indicated that demographic and work-related factors had a clear influence on job satisfaction. Several studies document the impact of factors such as age, education, current work experience [19], gender, salary [20], and education level [21].

In this study, it was confirmed that the factors of "age" and the "desire to maintain job position" are of statistical significance. The factors of gender, salary, position of responsibility, education level, marital status, and number of colleagues were found to be statistically insignificant.

6. Conclusions

The role of HRM is recognized as crucial for the effectiveness and smooth operation of organizations. One of the most important issues in the implementation of HRM is the achievement of employee satisfaction. Factors that affected the level of job satisfaction include work stress, opportunities for training and development of staff, promotion and advancement of employees, and a sense of security at work. Particularly in the Greek public sector, it was widely acknowledged that there were significant dysfunctions in the exercise of leadership, while the Greek public sector often used incomplete performance appraisal processes in human resource decisions when compared to other OECD countries.

However, the situation has gradually changed, due particularly to the introduction of the law of the "Common Assessment Framework" and the change in the way public servants are assessed and promoted. This article investigates the relationship between HR and job satisfaction and illustrates the correlation between work characteristics and demographic factors that lead to job satisfaction.

The most significant finding of our research was the strong correlation between HR satisfaction and job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that a good HRM system undoubtedly affects employee satisfaction. With regards to other surveyed parameters, age appeared to affect job satisfaction.

Finally, in the case of the Region of Crete, although overall job satisfaction and satisfaction from the applied HRM practices was at a moderately satisfactory level, there were clearly areas for concern and further improvement.

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