

Chapter 8

Practices and Challenges of Knowledge Management in the Greek Public Sector

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management (KM) is a highly appreciated initiative in the field of management, and though it was initiated from the private sector, in the last years there has been an extensive interest and concern in the public sector. KM seems to be an excellent solution in order to manage the information and knowledge inside the organizations by saving valuable resources. In this research, many studies concerning the implementation of different KM practices in Greek organizations were examined. From the studies analyzed, it was concluded that the employees of the Greek public organizations have embraced all the activities concerning KM practices. However, many problems typical of the Greek public sector were present such as the absence of a reward system for knowledge transfer, the functioning of the public sector employees in an individualistic way, and the delay in adopting information and communication technology (ICT) practices and in the promotion of e-government.

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management (KM) is a highly appreciated initiative in the field of management and though it was initiated from the private sector, in the last years there is an extensive interest and concern in the public sector. Public sector, having as a main scope to provide quality services could exploit KM, in order to be more effective and productive. However, the public sector presents issues (like bureaucracy and other structural problems) that establish KM's implementation even more demanding, essential and being capable to solve many problems.

Greek public sector presents not only the main problems of public management, but in addition, it confronts a long-lasting economic crisis, existing in the country. This crisis raises tough barriers, as the budgets and the funding of organizations are always decreasing. KM seems to be an excellent solution to manage the information and knowledge inside the organizations by saving valuable resources. Many organizations have realized the potential of KM and have already made attempts to facilitate its implementation.

In this research, many studies concerning the implementation of different KM practices in Greek organizations were examined and the more important conclusions were presented. As already referenced, Greek public organizations present the last years an increased interest in KM and therefore there were many case studies. Despite the number of studies already conducted in the public, it still seems that the subject needs to be further investigated.

This study is an attempt to provide some insights into KM practices behavior of public sector employees in a developed, but rather a problematic state and economy, such as the Greek one.

More specifically, the objective of this study is to register the situation in the Greek public sector towards KM practices and activities as:

- The general perception about KM.
- Motives to encourage knowledge sharing.
- Human resources in KM practices.
- Learning in practice and Learning organization.
- Level of ICT implementation.

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