

## **Business Excellence and Employees' Job Satisfaction In Public Tourism Sector: Evidence From The Greek Ministry Of Tourism**

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### **Abstract**

Nowadays, it seems that the increase in the internationalization of the transactions, the management of large data as well as its speed together with the need to adapt to an evolving technological environment have an impact on both the private and the public tourism concerning organizations that are required to operate in such an environment. This study, which takes business excellence into consideration, has an aim to examine the extent of business excellence application to the Greek Ministry of Tourism, to ascertain the employees' job satisfaction in the organization and to determine the relationship between employees' job satisfaction and business excellence in the abovementioned organization. The results showed that there was a mediocre extent of application regarding the business excellence, an above average extent of application regarding the employees' job satisfaction and a significant and positive relation between business excellence and employees' job satisfaction. This study offers to the exploration of the concept of business excellence as far as it concerns the public organization like the Greek Ministry of Tourism as well as to the managers' understanding as to how important is the role of business excellence in the smooth functioning and the goal achievement of the organization and specifically the tourism sector.

**Keywords:** Business excellence, leadership, organizational culture, human resource empowerment, innovation, customer orientation, employees' job satisfaction, Public tourism sector.

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**JEL Classification:**M1, M12.

### **1. Introduction**

Globalization of economic activity, the continuous rotations of the phases of the economic cycle, coupled with rapid developments in the field of technologies, has changed the environment in which businesses and organizations operate. These changes have influenced both the way in which they operate and the nature of the work. There have also been impacts on people, whether they have the status of employee, customer/consumer, or that of the citizen. These developments have played a key role in enabling businesses and organizations to adapt to the new data and adopt actions and management methods, in which they will be able to achieve better performance and operation (Kefis, 2014).

The above economic and social changes are also a challenge for the public sector, which is called upon to adapt to the new situation in order to meet the demands of citizens, through better quality services. Therefore there is a need for public organizations to formulate a new philosophy based on a modern management

model, which by adopting and implementing modern management tools, will lead to improved administrative performance (Kefis, 2014).

Both private and public organizations in order to adapt to the new situation focus their changes based on a common characteristic, the quality. Quality itself is a set of values, actions, standards and methods that their implementation by an organization ensures customer satisfaction, exploitation of human resources, optimum performance and hence the business excellence of the organization. This modern scientific approach to the concept of quality can be ensured by adopting and implemented Total Quality Management (Kefis, 2014; Logothetis, 1993; Velissariou, Karahontzitis, & Komninakis, 2000).

The business excellence of an organization is based, among others, according to the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), on leadership, human resources and its abilities as well as the continuous training and empowerment of them, organizational culture, focusing on performance, customer loyalty, innovation and the impact of its activities on the community (<https://www.efqm.org/>).

Empirical research on employees' job satisfaction and different factors of business excellence has been conducted within the business sector, in financial services and in health services (Saura, Contri, Taulet, & Velazquez, 2005; Silverthorne, 2004; Tsai, 2011; Tutuncu & Kucukusta, 2010; Tzeng, Ketefian, & Redman, 2002) However, research regarding employees' job satisfaction and business excellence in the public tourism sector is still limited. The purpose of the present study was: (a) to determine the extent to which business excellence is applied to the Greek Ministry of Tourism, (b) to determine the extent of employees' job satisfaction in the organization, and (c) to examine the relationships among the factors of business excellence and employees' job satisfaction in the Greek ministry of tourism.

The research questions that were addressed in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent is the business excellence being used in the Greek Ministry of tourism?
2. To what extent are employees satisfied in relation to their job in the Greek Ministry of tourism?
3. Is there a relationship between the business excellence and employees' job satisfaction in the Greek ministry of tourism?

This paper will be useful because it will provide information concerning the concept of employees' job satisfaction and business excellence in the public tourism sector and the relationship between them. The present study will help the directors in the Greek Ministry of Tourism further to understand these concepts and it will allow them to implement appropriate policies in order to achieve business excellence.

## **2. Literature Review**

Total Quality Management (TQM) has been recognized as a key to the organizational performance of organizations, both private and public. TQM is a management philosophy which can be adopted not only by the private sector, but also by the public organizations. The implementation of a TQM model facilitates a culture of continuous improvement, which is a core principle, through which organizations can respond to beliefs and perceptions that customers have for the quality of products and services, with the ultimate goal of increasing and achieving their organizational performance. This can be demonstrated by the existence of many awards, such as the Deming Prize, the American Malcolm Baldrige award and the European Quality Award. TQM includes principles, values and methods within it, which aim not only at quality management but also at the quality of management applied (Alghamdi, 2018).

In order to achieve a successful implementation of Total Quality Management program, leadership plays an important role as well as a properly empowered human resource. Also, in the service sector customer satisfaction depends on their contact with the employees. It is clear that dissatisfied employees cannot convey customer satisfaction. It is therefore important for employees to feel satisfied, which is achieved through their empowerment and the existence of an organizational culture that emphasizes on quality (Ugboro & Obeng, 2000). Moreover, leadership, human resources management (empowerment, education, delegation of responsibilities, team work), customer orientation and the exploitation and analysis of the information (innovation) are some of the principles and values of TQM which positively affect the success and excellence of a business (Samawi, Abu-Tayeh, Yosef, Mdanatand, & Al-Qatawneh, 2018).

By leadership we mean a process, through which a person seeks to influence the behaviors, attitudes and even actions of a group of people, which may be small or large, formal or informal, in such a way as to achieve certain goals that have been set. The leader of a group is the person who will try to influence and guide it (Bourantas, 2015; Koutouzis, 1999).

Transformational leadership contributes to a positive way in innovation which relates to the management style of the organization. This kind of leadership, which inspires, creates relations based on trust and mutual

respect with team members, based on a number of common goals, can lead an organization to introduce changes and new ideas as far as practices, processes and structures which are related to the management of the organization are concerned (Vaccaro, Jansen, Van Den Bosch, & Volberda, 2012). Transformational leadership affects the creativity of both employees and the organization in a positive way. The employees' creativity in an organization can be achieved through their emotional and psychological empowerment, and this should be aimed by a leadership of this type (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009).

Human resource empowerment can be considered as a strategy of change, which aims to improve the ability of both employee and organization to act and operate effectively in a highly competitive environment. Human resource empowerment is the process that encourages the employees to take initiatives, to choose their own method of work, while at the same time decision making and responsibility are transferred to employees. It is a procedure that encourages and welcomes the initiatives and creativity of personnel (Papaioannou, Kriemadis, Alexopoulos, Vrontou, & Kartakoullis, 2009; Papaioannou, Kriemadis, Alexopoulos, & Vrontou, 2012).

Human resource empowerment leads to increased efficiency and productivity and helps an organization to respond to the challenges it has to face faster. Human resource empowerment techniques, such as employee autonomy, access to information and resources, and involvement in processes, when they carried out in a well-planned and organized manner, they lead to job satisfaction and the stimulation of the morale of the staff. Human resource empowerment leads to increased employee motivation, boosting self-esteem and achieving maximum individual performance (Papaioannou et al., 2009).

According to Shein (1990, p.109) culture can be thought "*as a pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation or internal integration, therefore is to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems*".

These assumptions have been tested and attributed in the past and are therefore taught, as they are considered the most suitable and appropriate way of dealing with these problems. From the above definition it follows that the culture of an organization evolves, as long as its members are in touch with the challenges and problems that come from the external environment, as well as from internal conflicts (Jancikova & Brychta, 2009). Moreover, organizational culture is one of the most important variables, which plays an important role in the success or failure of a Total Quality Management program. These are two concepts that are related. The culture that prevails in an organization is able to support the implementation of such a program by creating a more favorable environment, which shows the way for the successful adoption of such a program. The existence of a culture of change is one of the prerequisites for excellence and quality. The researchers also believe that there is a mutual relationship between organizational culture and Total Quality Management. It is considered necessary to have a widespread culture within an organization, in order to be able to implement a program based on the principles and values of TQM (Alghamdi, 2018; Jancikova & Brychta, 2009).

Innovation can be defined as a procedure that integrates, combines, composes and ultimately exploits everything new, new ideas and knowledge, which may concern new or modified products and services, new production methods and management processes, changes in the way an organization is run. It can also be approached as a process that transforms the ideas and knowledge of a business's employees into forms of added value for the business (Dasgupta & Gupta, 2009; Ertürk, 2012; Ostrom et al., 2010; Spanos, 2013).

Innovation in the service business can lead to the reduction of failures and mistakes and to better utilization of information and ensuring targeted quality levels. At the same time innovation in the service sector creates value not only for customers but also for the business and its employees through new or improved processes (Dasgupta & Gupta, 2009; Ertürk, 2012; Spanos, 2013).

Innovation is not just about technology achievements, but also with finding new ways of management, with modern perceptions and approaches, to exploit human resources. This innovation is based on rational decision-making, by utilizing and extracting information and data, the continuous training of staff and decision makers. In this case the aim is to provide high quality services. A key requirement is that knowledge is constantly updated and focused on what is useful to the organization (Dasgupta & Gupta, 2009; Ertürk, 2012; Jimenez-Jimenez & Sanz-Valle, 2010; Prajogo, 2015).

By the term customer oriented strategy, we mean the policy that puts the needs and beliefs of customers in the foreground. But this policy does not exclude all those involved in it, namely workers and managers. The aim of this strategy is to create profitable businesses with a long-term horizon. Moreover, customer oriented strategy expresses business interest in customer (old, current, and future) needs and expectations, as

well as the strong commitment that it will satisfy them in an efficient and effective way, which will ensure the long term development of the business (Bartley, Gomibuchi, & Mann, 2007).

Customer oriented strategy plays a key role for business and organizations who operate in the service sector. This is because services are distinguished by certain characteristics, such as indivisibility, inability, heterogeneity and permeability, which significantly affect the customer's perception of quality. In addition, the customer oriented strategy leads to better results for businesses, while it can be argued that it leads to an improvement in employee performance (Boles, Babin, Brashear, & Brooks, 2001; Hartline, Maxham, & McKee, 2000; Papaioannou, Macheimari, & Kriemadis, 2016; Papaioannou, Kriemadis, Mitsios, & Kartakoulis, 2018).

Employees expect their job to provide them with some information, which they consider and evaluate as important. Their satisfaction derives from the degree to which their job offers what they consider important. Job satisfaction can be seen as a general attitude and appreciation of a worker for his or her job, shaped by the beliefs he or she has formed and which are related to factors and elements of his job, such as remuneration, work environment, evaluation, control, interpersonal relationships and recognition of their offer (Argyris & Kaloupsis, 2011). Job is not a one-dimensional concept, it consists of many different dimensions, in which emotional and cognitive factors are involved. That is why it cannot be understood in an absolute and unique way, but it should be understood through a broader perspective (Argyris & Kaloupsis, 2011).

### **3. Methodology**

#### *Sample*

The research was addressed to all full-time staff of the Central Service of the Greek Ministry of Tourism (250 people were employed during the time of the research according to the Human Resources Director of the Greek Ministry of Tourism) and involved 250 experienced managers and employees who were the most knowledgeable regarding complex and multidimensional processes (such as personnel management issues - human resource empowerment, organizational culture and leadership-, innovation activities, customer oriented strategy issues, and Total quality management methods) and who can respond as accurately as possible. Responses were received from 126 managers and employees of the aforementioned organization with a 50.4% response rate. They all had full time experience.

According to the findings of this research 35% of the participants were males and 65% were females. 42.9% of the responders were aged from 36-45 years old, 38.1% were 46-55 years old, 8.7% were 26-35 years old, 8.7% were 56-65 years old, 0.8% were 18-25 years old and 0.8% were over 66 years old. The educational level of the participants was grouped into three categories: 54.8% had post graduate level education, 31% had university level education, and 14.3% had elementary/high school education. 11.9% of the participants were managers and 88.1% of the participants were employees. The average time that the respondents had worked in the private sector was  $M= 4.03$  years ( $TA=4.00$ ). The average time of holding the job title was  $M= 3.87$  years ( $TA= 3.54$ ).

#### *Questionnaire*

The business excellence questionnaire, used for the purposes of this study, was developed by Papaioannou and Kriemadis (2017) and focused on the issue of business excellence and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questionnaire included forty (40) questions about business excellence and seven (7) questions regarding demographic characteristics of the respondents. More specifically, the first part of the questionnaire included 40 questions, from a total of 57, concerning the six factors of business excellence:

- Human resource empowerment (six questions)
- Customer orientation strategy (seven questions)
- Leadership (nine questions)
- Organizational culture (six questions)
- Innovation (six questions)
- Total quality management (six questions)

The six-factor questionnaire describing the most salient dimensions of Business Excellence which referred in achieving excellence in the most critical aspects of a tourism organization. The questions were answered using a five point Likert Scale where the 1 corresponds to very little, 2=little, 3=some, 4=great and finally 5=very great.

Correspondingly for the study of employees' job satisfaction, it was used a questionnaire developed by Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979), which was consisting of 10 closed questions, by applying a seven-point Likert scale where 1 declares "completely dissatisfied" and 7 "completely satisfied". The questions were related with:

- Physical working conditions
- Freedom to choose your own method of working
- Your colleagues and fellow workers
- Recognition you get for good work
- Amount of responsibility you are given
- Your remuneration
- Opportunity to use your abilities
- Your hours of work
- Amount of variety in your job
- Taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your job?

Finally, the last section of the questionnaire concerns demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questions referred to gender, age, education level, job title, time he or she holds the job title, work experience, and finally experience in the private sector.

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed through Cronbach's coefficient alpha ( $\alpha$ ). The reliability coefficient of the above mentioned scales was found to be  $\alpha=0.88$ . The content validity, the translation and the modification of the questionnaires were determined appropriately by a panel of experts consisting of six academics and practitioners in tourism management, human resources management and management research.

#### *Process*

The process to collect the data began in April 2019 and was completed at the end of May of the same year. In order to save time, but also not to create problems in the conduct of research, with the cooperation of the Human Resources Director of the Greek Ministry of Tourism, questionnaires were distributed to the Central Service of the Ministry of Tourism, both in hard copy and in electronic form, using the capabilities provided by the google forms service. The employees of the Ministry of Tourism participated in the research voluntarily, while the completion of the questionnaire was anonymous. The time required to complete the questionnaire was approximately 10 minutes.

#### *Data Analysis*

Standard descriptive statistics including mean, percentages and standard deviation were used to answer the first and second research question. Data were also examined for normality, using normal probability plots and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Since were indicated serious deviations of normality ( $p < .05$ ), non-parametric statistical tests of Spearman's rho, Mann Whitney & Kruskal Wallis were performed. Research questions three was answered by using Spearman Correlation, using SPSS software (version 22).

## **4. Results**

The data in the following table shows that business excellence is applied to a mediocre extent ( $M=2.59$ ,  $TA=0.65$ ) by the Greek Ministry of Tourism. At the same time innovation ( $M=2.54$ ,  $TA=0.75$ ), organizational culture ( $M=2.75$ ,  $TA=0.72$ ), customer oriented strategy ( $M=2.91$ ,  $TA=0.75$ ) and human resource empowerment are also applied to a mediocre extent ( $M=2.60$ ,  $TA=0.74$ ) by the Greek Ministry of Tourism. Moreover table 1 shows that leadership ( $M=2.45$ ,  $TA=0.86$ ) and total quality management ( $M=2.32$ ,  $TA=0.70$ ) are applied to a little extent by the Greek Ministry of Tourism.

**Table 1.** The extent of Business excellence in the Greek Ministry of tourism

	M	TA
Human resource empowerment	2,60	,74
Customer oriented strategy	2,91	,75
Leadership	2,45	,86
Organizational culture	2,76	,72
Innovation	2,54	,75
Total quality management	2,32	,70
Business excellence	2,59	,65

Table 2 shows that the overall employees' job satisfaction in the Greek Ministry of Tourism was above average (M = 4.43, TA = 1.18). More analytically, 76.9% of employees were at least little satisfied with their colleagues and fellow workers, 62.7% were satisfied with their hours of work, 61.9% were satisfied with the amount of responsibility they are given, 58.0% were satisfied with the freedom to choose their own method of working, 57.1% were satisfied with their physical working conditions, 53.9% were satisfied with how they feel about their job, 53.1% were satisfied with the recognition they get for good work, 49.2% were satisfied with the amount of variety in their job, 46.9% were satisfied with the opportunity to use their abilities and 26.9% were satisfied with their remuneration

**Table 2.** The extent of employees' Job satisfaction in the Greek Ministry of tourism

	Totally dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Little dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor satisfied		Little satisfied		Very satisfied		Totally satisfied		M	TA
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Physical working conditions	11	8,7%	9	7,1%	22	17,5%	12	9,5%	29	23,0%	34	27,0%	9	7,1%	4,40	1,75
Freedom to choose your own method of working	8	6,3%	14	11,1%	9	7,1%	22	17,5%	39	31,0%	30	23,8%	4	3,2%	4,40	1,58
Your colleagues and fellow workers	1	0,8%	9	7,1%	3	2,4%	16	12,7%	25	19,8%	48	38,1%	24	19,0%	5,34	1,43
Recognition you get for good work	12	9,5%	10	7,9%	16	12,7%	21	16,7%	29	23,0%	28	22,2%	10	7,9%	4,34	1,74
Amount of responsibility you are given	2	1,6%	13	10,3%	11	8,7%	22	17,5%	29	23,0%	42	33,3%	7	5,6%	4,72	1,48
Your remuneration	22	17,5%	27	21,4%	22	17,5%	21	16,7%	24	19,0%	8	6,3%	2	1,6%	3,24	1,62
Opportunity to use your abilities	12	9,5%	15	11,9%	21	16,7%	19	15,1%	32	25,4%	20	15,9%	7	5,6%	4,05	1,71
Your hours of work	2	1,6%	9	7,1%	9	7,1%	27	21,4%	22	17,5%	41	32,5%	16	12,7%	4,94	1,50
Amount of variety in your job	10	7,9%	8	6,3%	19	15,1%	27	21,4%	25	19,8%	30	23,8%	7	5,6%	4,33	1,64
Taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your job?	6	4,8%	9	7,1%	13	10,3%	30	23,8%	29	23,0%	31	24,6%	8	6,3%	4,52	1,53
Overall employees' job satisfaction	9	7%	13	10%	8	6,5%	23	18,3%	39	31,0%	30	24%	4	3,2%	4,43	1,18

The following table shows analytically the significance between the dimensions of employees' job satisfaction and business excellence. The research indicates that there is a significant and positive relationship between the dimensions of employees' job satisfaction and the factors of business excellence. More specifically human resource empowerment has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .415, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .554$ ,

$p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .356, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .476, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .522, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .439, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .433, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .436, p < 0.01$ ) with how they feel about their job ( $r = .572, p < 0.01$ ) and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .584, p < 0.01$ ), while it is not related with their hours of work ( $r = .118, p > 0.05$ ).

Customer oriented strategy has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .268, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .333, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .268, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .336, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .286, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .327, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .351, p < 0.01$ ) and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .334, p < 0.01$ ) while it is not related with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .159, p > 0.05$ ), their remuneration ( $r = .172, p > 0.05$ ), and with their hours of work ( $r = .057, p > 0.05$ ).

Leadership has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .357, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .556, p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .325, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .503, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .520, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .527, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .483, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .355, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .567, p < 0.01$ ), Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .604, p < 0.01$ ) and with physical working conditions ( $r = .249, p < 0.01$ ).

Organizational culture has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .383, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .426, p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .303, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .394, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .401, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .307, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .395, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .312, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .492, p < 0.01$ ) and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .465, p < 0.01$ ), while it is not related with their hours of work ( $r = .048, p > 0.05$ ).

Innovation has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .456, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .458, p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .257, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .408, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .482, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .329, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .380, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .314, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .411, p < 0.01$ ) and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .487, p < 0.01$ ), while it is not related with their hours of work ( $r = .133, p > 0.05$ ).

The results suggested that total quality management has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .372, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .353, p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .255, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .340, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .390, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .274, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .288, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .290, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .357, p < 0.01$ ) and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .393, p < 0.01$ ), while it is not related with their hours of work ( $r = .070, p > 0.05$ ).

Finally the following table shows that business excellence has a significant and positive relationship with physical working conditions ( $r = .434, p < 0.01$ ), with the freedom to choose their own method of working ( $r = .532, p < 0.01$ ), with their colleagues and fellow workers ( $r = .320, p < 0.01$ ), with the recognition they get for good work ( $r = .472, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of responsibility they are given ( $r = .529, p < 0.01$ ), with their remuneration ( $r = .416, p < 0.01$ ), with the opportunity to use their abilities ( $r = .455, p < 0.01$ ), with the amount of variety in their job ( $r = .398, p < 0.01$ ), with how they feel about their job ( $r = .552, p < 0.01$ ), and Employees' Job satisfaction ( $r = .573, p < 0.01$ ), while it is not related with their hours of work ( $r = .151, p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 3.** The extent of employees' Job satisfaction in the Greek Ministry of tourism/Significance of the relationship between the dimensions of employees' job satisfaction and the factors of business excellence

	Human resource empowerment	Customer oriented strategy	Leadership	Organizational culture	Innovation	TQM	Business excellence
<b>Spearman's rho</b>							
Physical Working conditions	,415 <sup>**</sup>	,268 <sup>**</sup>	,357 <sup>**</sup>	,383 <sup>**</sup>	,456 <sup>**</sup>	,372 <sup>**</sup>	,434 <sup>**</sup>
Freedom to choose your own method of working	,554 <sup>**</sup>	,333 <sup>**</sup>	,556 <sup>**</sup>	,426 <sup>**</sup>	,458 <sup>**</sup>	,353 <sup>**</sup>	,532 <sup>**</sup>
Your colleagues and fellow workers	,356 <sup>**</sup>	,159 <sup>**</sup>	,325 <sup>**</sup>	,303 <sup>**</sup>	,257 <sup>**</sup>	,255 <sup>**</sup>	,320 <sup>**</sup>
Recognition you get for good work	,476 <sup>**</sup>	,268 <sup>**</sup>	,503 <sup>**</sup>	,394 <sup>**</sup>	,408 <sup>**</sup>	,340 <sup>**</sup>	,472 <sup>**</sup>
Amount of responsibility you are given	,522 <sup>**</sup>	,336 <sup>**</sup>	,520 <sup>**</sup>	,401 <sup>**</sup>	,482 <sup>**</sup>	,390 <sup>**</sup>	,529 <sup>**</sup>
Your remuneration	,439 <sup>**</sup>	,172 <sup>**</sup>	,527 <sup>**</sup>	,307 <sup>**</sup>	,329 <sup>**</sup>	,274 <sup>**</sup>	,416 <sup>**</sup>
Opportunity to use your abilities	,433 <sup>**</sup>	,286 <sup>**</sup>	,483 <sup>**</sup>	,395 <sup>**</sup>	,380 <sup>**</sup>	,288 <sup>**</sup>	,455 <sup>**</sup>
Your hours of work	,118 <sup>**</sup>	,057 <sup>**</sup>	,249 <sup>**</sup>	,048 <sup>**</sup>	,133 <sup>**</sup>	,070 <sup>**</sup>	,151 <sup>**</sup>
Amount of variety in your job	,436 <sup>**</sup>	,327 <sup>**</sup>	,355 <sup>**</sup>	,312 <sup>**</sup>	,314 <sup>**</sup>	,290 <sup>**</sup>	,398 <sup>**</sup>
Taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your job?	,572 <sup>**</sup>	,351 <sup>**</sup>	,567 <sup>**</sup>	,492 <sup>**</sup>	,411 <sup>**</sup>	,357 <sup>**</sup>	,552 <sup>**</sup>
Employees' Job satisfaction	,584 <sup>**</sup>	,334 <sup>**</sup>	,604 <sup>**</sup>	,465 <sup>**</sup>	,487 <sup>**</sup>	,393 <sup>**</sup>	,573 <sup>**</sup>

\*\*p<0.01

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the study revealed that business excellence in the Greek Ministry of Tourism is applied to a mediocre extent and this is because human resource empowerment, organizational culture, customer oriented strategy and innovation were being used to some extent, while leadership and total quality management, were being used to a little extent, as shown from the findings (see table 1).

The factor of human resource empowerment was applied to a mediocre extent in the Greek ministry of tourism. This means that the employees in the Ministry were motivated to work as a team to some extent. At the same time, the administration of the organization inspired the employees to some extent to set an example and to cooperate collaboratively with each other. Also the Information Management System provided access to non-confidential information to as many people as possible to some extent. In addition the employees in the organization were aware of their performance to some extent. The study showed that when an employee did not perform well in his working field, the managers were cooperating with him and trying to determine what was needed to make his work more effective, to some extent. Finally the findings showed that the managers of the organization encouraged to some extent the transfer of power to take decision and responsibilities in their working field (Papaioannou & Kriemadis, 2017).

Concerning the factor Customer oriented strategy the organization's priority was not to serve the needs of the citizens but to serve its internal needs. Also the information that the organization was receiving from citizens is being used to some extent in order to design services and products. At the same time the Ministry known to some extent how people define the concept of quality. In addition the results indicated that the employees were encouraged to some extent to serve the people in an effective way by overstepping their abilities. The results also showed that the personnel of the organization were participating to some extent in decisions that were related with their working field. Finally, the study revealed that the employees of the Ministry were not working to a large extent to improve continuously the services provided by the organization (Papaioannou & Kriemadis, 2017).

Relating to the factor organizational culture the findings of the research showed that it was applied to some extent in the Greek ministry of tourism. This is explained because the organization demonstrated to some extent that it was capable to adapt to changing conditions, when and where it was required. The research indicated that the Greek Ministry of Tourism did not offer to a large extent personalized attention to the people it serves. Additionally, this institution has developed to some extent a stable system of shared values, beliefs and standards of behavior. At the same time the Ministry did not focus to a large extent on



creating innovations and new services. Also the employees in the organization addressed effectively, the problems associated with setting and achieving goals, to some extent. Finally, the personnel firmly believed to some extent in a common system of core values on how employees should work together, in order to solve common problems and achieve common goals (Papaioannou & Kriemadis, 2017).

Regarding the factor innovation the results of the study showed that was applied to some extent in the Greek Ministry of tourism. This is justified because the results showed that the vision and the mission of the organization did not include a reference to innovation to a large extent. Also, innovation is linked to some extent to the strategy of the organization, while employees had at their disposal the right tools to some extent. The findings indicated that the innovation strategy has helped the organization to some extent to achieve its strategic goals. At the same time the cooperation between the employees was to some extent an important factor of the implementation of an innovation strategy. Finally the study showed that people satisfaction was to some extent part of an innovation strategy (Papaioannou, & Kriemadis, 2017).

The low score regarding the factor leadership pointed out that the management of the Greek Ministry of tourism was acting with efficiency to a little extent. Managers encouraged employees to act in accordance with shared values and beliefs, to a little extent and they also provided the necessary information for employees to plan and implement their work effectively to a little extent. The employees valued to a little extent the rewards given by the administration as recognition of their performance. The management helped employees to a little extent to obtain the training they needed in order to be effective at their duties. The management of the organization kept its promises to a little extent, while it did not show an interest in the feelings and ideas of its employees. Finally the results showed that the help that the management offered to its employees in order to learn from their mistakes was to a little extent (Papaioannou & Kriemadis, 2017).

The research also showed that total quality management as a factor of business excellence was applied to a little extent in the Ministry of Tourism. This is based on the answers given by the employees, who answered that they received the appropriate training and education on quality improvement tools and techniques to a little extent. Employees also applied structured tools and techniques to a little extent in order to improve and measure quality in the organization. The results of the study showed that personnel were committed to providing quality services to citizens to a little extent and that the organization included all its employees in the process of quality improvement to a little extent. In addition, managers had set a long-term plan to improve quality to a little extent. Finally, there was a quality improvement plan within the strategic planning of the organization to a little extent (Papaioannou, & Kriemadis, 2017).

Based on the results of the study (Table 2), it was found that employees' job satisfaction was above average ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $TA = 1.18$ ). The findings of this research are in accordance with the results of a corresponding research conducted on human resources (teachers) in sport divisions of the Higher Military Educational Institutions and higher schools of Armed Forces, suggesting that employees in public sector are generally satisfied with their job (Kaniadakis, Papaioannou, & Kriemadis, 2017; Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009).

The findings also confirmed the relationship between business excellence (human resource empowerment, leadership, customer oriented strategy, organizational culture, innovation and total quality management) and employees' job satisfaction in the Greek Ministry of tourism. More specifically, business excellence was positively and significantly related to employees' job satisfaction, which is consistent with previous studies that were conducted among the winners of Turkish Quality Awards winners' employees in the business sector, in order to demonstrate the close relationship between the EFQM business excellence model and job satisfaction (Tutuncu & Kucukusta, 2010) and shows that the extent of business excellence which managers exercised in the Greek ministry of tourism is related to their employees' job satisfaction.

Moreover, it was found that there is a significant positive relationship between employees' job satisfaction and human resource empowerment as well as leadership. These results are consistent with previous research conducted in the Korean hotel industry, on workers in Indian restaurants, as well as in the health care field and university education level sector (Gill, Flaschner, Shah, & Bhutani, 2010; Kaniadakis et al., 2017; Lee, Nam, Park, & Lee, 2006; Morrison, Jones, & Fuller, 1997; Ugboro & Obeng, 2000) and shows that the extent of human resource empowerment and leadership which managers exercised in the Greek ministry of tourism is related to their employees' job satisfaction.

Also, a significant relationship between organizational culture and employees' job satisfaction was also found, which is in accordance to the literature and surveys that carried out in Taiwan in the field of business (Silverthorne, 2004; Tsai, 2011), as well as in the health care field (Tzeng, Ketefian, & Redman, 2002).

Additionally, the results also indicated a positive relationship between employees' job satisfaction and total quality management, as the implementation of such a model leads in addition to better efficiency,

reducing errors and costs, to greater flexibility, but also to the satisfaction of employees, which is in accordance to the literature (Beheshti & Lollar, 2003; Hendricks & Singhal, 1999; Prabhjot & Kumar, 2014) and shows that the extent of organizational culture and total quality management which managers exercised in the Greek ministry of tourism is related to their employees' job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the research indicated that employees' job satisfaction is significantly and positively related to customer oriented strategy, the results of which are in accordance to earlier research conducted in a service firm in the banking sector (Saura, Contri, Taullet, & Velazquez, 2005) and shows that the extent of customer oriented strategy which managers exercised in the Greek ministry of tourism is related to their employees' job satisfaction.

Finally, the results revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between employees' job satisfaction and innovation, which is in accordance to previous research carried out in 90 small and medium-sized enterprises in Greece. Human resource empowerment, teamwork, continuous education, is necessary to achieve employees' job satisfaction, which in turn leads to innovation (Trivellas & Santouridis, 2009) and shows that the extent of innovation which managers exercised in the Greek ministry of tourism is related to their employees' job satisfaction.

The findings of the particular study presented and discussed above have implications for the development and use of the business excellence process in the Greek Ministry of tourism. Given that the business excellence is a factor of strategic importance which increases the employees' job satisfaction in the public tourism sector, the managers of Greek Ministry of tourism can be encouraged to implement it in a greater extent. This could happen by developing a business excellence culture based on principals such as (Bartley et al., 2007; Behesti & Lollar, 2003; Papaioannou et al., 2016; Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1996; Sashkin & Kiser, 1992; Vogt & Murrell 1990; Whiteley, 1991):

- Promoting teamwork and collaboration between employees
- Delegation of authority and responsibilities to employees in their working field
- Implementation of evaluative systems of performance
- Building an effective organizational culture of common values and principles
- Continuous improvement
- Create a motivational climate which assists and supports employees
- Adopt total quality management throughout the organization
- Enhancement of customer oriented strategy
- Emphasis in innovation
- Continuous empowerment of employees (education and training)

The literature in the area of business excellence in the tourism public sector is limited. There appears to be an ever increasing interest in this area, and further studies could prove to be beneficial. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered for future research:

- Follow-up studies should be carried out in the same sample over three to five years, to investigate possible changes in the utilization of the business excellence process.
- A comparative research could also be conducted between a public tourism organization and a large private tourism enterprise. These comparisons would be useful in order to find out similarities and differences in business excellence process and employees' job satisfaction.
- There could also be a study to measure the impact of business excellence regarding the citizens' satisfaction.

The study yields interesting insights. However, possible limitations of this research need to be acknowledged. A total of 126 (50.4%) managers and employees responded to the survey. According to Babbie (2015), a response rate of 50% or more is generally considered an acceptable response rate in the surveys. Based on this fact and the response rates, it appears that the results of the study could be generalized to the target population (Greek Ministry of tourism). The present study was delineated at the Greek Ministry of Tourism. Data for this study were only collected from the Greek Ministry of Tourism and there was no attempt to generalize this information to the whole public sector. The study was also delineated by the questionnaire, which was aimed to collect data on business excellence and employees' job satisfaction at the Greek Ministry of Tourism. The following were acknowledged as the limitations of the study:

- There was no proof of the objectivity, accuracy or honesty of the participants when responding to the questionnaire
- There was no proof of the level of participants' comprehension about business excellence terms.

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