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“Personal development and self-efficacy in public administration. Limitations and challenges”.

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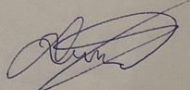
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Abstract

Over the last decade, civil servants in Greece have been hit by the effects of the economic crisis, such as wage cuts, hurdles in the hierarchy due to the lack of evaluation and possible discriminations, more workload and greater insecurity. These impacts above pose a threat to their personal development, which may be reinforced by employees' personal perceptions and emotional abilities. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the personal development of public administration officers and their perceptions of self-efficacy, in combination to their emotional intelligence capabilities. The sample consisted of 120 public administration officers, who completed a self-reported questionnaire consisting of three scales: The Personal Self-Efficacy Scale and Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale. The results of the correlation analyses have shown that both the concepts of self-efficacy and the emotional intelligence capabilities enhance the perceptions of personal development of employees. The results are significant and encouraging because they demonstrate the importance of individual perceptions and emotional capacities for the perception of personal development, regardless of the aggravating and negative environment in which civil servants in Greece live and work during the crisis.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, public administration, personal development, self-efficacy.

1. Introduction

In modern Greece public administration has been characterized as “maladministration”, or “party dominated”, terms that either describe the inefficiency of its services or the clientelism that existed in its hierarchical structure. Since 2010, after the beginning of the economic crisis in Greece, a wave of legal and administrative reforms has been introduced with the aim to either decrease its cost or to enhance its efficiency in service delivery. It is argued that self-efficacy, under this new framework of reforms, remains a challenge for both the employees in the public sector and the final recipients of its services, the citizens as a whole. Nevertheless, along with emotional intelligence and personal development, it constitutes a “triangle” of essential traits that need to exist in the public administration, in order to promote innovation and efficiency. In sum, strong historical and structural limitations to the application of the above triangle are evident in the Greek case that makes the above process difficult to implement.

1.1 The trajectories of reforms in Greek public administration and the restraints to its research.

The Greek public administration, from the 1970s to the 1980s, was unprepared to respond effectively in a series of challenges such as technological, social and demographic¹. The 80s’ was a crucial decade, marked by the deep 1981 cut in political affairs, the rapid change in social hierarchies, and the very distinct and controversial cultural stigma. Between 1981 and 1992, with the accession of Greece to the European Communities, the Greek economy is called upon to operate in a completely different regulatory framework, such as the liberalization of markets and the abolition of protective measures. As the liberalization of the markets was completed in the early

¹ Rammata,M., (2017) "System of evaluation and promotion of civil servants in Greece: A critical approach". Journal of administrative law. January- February 2017, Ed. Sakkoulas.

1990s and the structural adjustment of the Greek economy accelerated, in 1992 the Treaty of Maastricht was signed by Greece. By signing this treaty, Greece was from now on a Member State of the European Union and then it gradually established the economic and monetary union. Until 1992 Member States retained a degree of freedom of movement in the conduct of macroeconomic policy, which was gradually phased out after 1992 through institutional interventions of the European Union. The combination of the continuing structural adjustment of the Greek economy to the liberalization of markets that was almost completed in the 1980s and the macroeconomic adjustment to the requirements of the Treaty of Maastricht, created conditions of recession for the Greek economy until 1995. The developments in the stock market are at the heart of the interest of economic and social life both in Greece and internationally. In the period 1999 to 2000, the Greek government revenue was significantly strengthened by the taxation of stock exchange transactions. Since 2001, Greece's inflation rate has been rising. However, since April 2009 Greece has been subject to the excessive deficit procedure. The Memorandum of 2010 between Greece,² the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund, marks a significant change in the structure and operations of the public administration sector in Greece. The speed of the recommended reforms, as well as their novelty, in a system that was characterized by inefficiency over the past years, created significant limitations and opposition to their implementation. Since 2010, a wide number of new laws, Presidential Decrees and Ministerial Decisions have been adopted in Greece, marking a period of a “high production of laws” that were mostly designed by exogenous factors such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Commission (Sotiropoulos, 1995). More specifically, concerning the public sector the following goals and relevant legislation were set. The first goal was to reduce the number of public servants by 150.000 and the second one, to reduce the salaries and eliminate allowances by also setting a threshold of 3,000 Euros in the remuneration of the public servants. It is therefore noted that an analysis, such as the present one, concerning public administration in Greece, needs to

² See Law 3845/2010 of the 6th of May 2010 on Measures for the implementation of the support mechanism for the Greek Economy by the Euro Area Member States and the International Monetary Fund.

undertake the huge effort of mentioning all these legislative initiatives, an effort that by itself is a challenge.

A second Memorandum signed in 2012³ further deteriorated the previously favorable condition in the public sector by setting limits to the government. Regardless of whether they will be considered as successful in the overall procedure or they were designed to be in the planning period, these reforms will definitely have a lasting effect in the Greek society as a whole.

Another issue for such an approach is that it lacks strong elements of objectivity, since the outcomes of these reforms are not yet visible in both the efficiency of the public sector or the society as a whole.⁴ If it is indeed a period of reform, then the analysts can only make predictions about the future state of the conditions in the public sector or their efficiency. The problem of objectivity is also evident in the fact that an analysis of the public administration refers to the perceptions of the civil servants which can vary based on different time frames. Nevertheless, some initial conclusions can be made, the first limitations can be identified and notions such as self-efficacy can be analyzed in order for the policy makers to better adjust their policy proposals and strategies.

1.2. Greek public administration and the reforms after 2010

One of the major efforts envisaged in the reforms of the Memoranda was to disrupt the special link between the governing party and the public sector, in order to ensure the continuity of the public administration governance in case that the political parties shifted in the government. This phenomenon that is mainly described as

³ See Law 4046/2012 of the 12th November 2012 for the Approval of the plan of the financial assistance facility agreement between the European Financial Stability Facility, the Hellenic republic and the Bank of Greece, the plan of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hellenic Republic, the European Commission and the Bank of Greece and other urgent measures to reduce public debt and rescue the national economy.

⁴ Pollit, Ch, Boucaert, G., (2009), *Continuity and Change in Public Policy and Management*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

clientelism in the Greek public sector remains one of the biggest challenges in our society with disruptive effects on the economy and the public-sector governance.⁵

In accordance with Palliadelis,⁶ e-governance is a new element that operates in the Greek Public administration, although it faces numerous challenges and limitations. It is a necessity that is proposed by the European Union but also a demand from the society since it reduces time, limits interactions between the employees of the public sector and increases efficiency of the public administration.

A major turning point, as it will be further elaborated in the next paragraphs, is the adoption of Law 4369/2016 which introduces a National Registry for the Public Administration, evaluation systems and selection of supervisors. The Justificative Report of the Law mentions that this legislative initiative aims to “disrupt the link between the governing party and the public sector with the introduction of elements of meritocracy and equal opportunities”. These new elements will be the interest for the assigned work, creativity, knowledge of the job, interpersonal relations and the behavior towards the citizens.

1.3. The role of employees in achieving organizational efficiency

In accordance with Mone,⁷ employee engagement as well as motivation in the public sector needs to be based on the following steps. First, it is necessary to establish a framework of trust between the employees and the employer which will enable employees` traits to be developed and further promote innovation and creativity. Second, employees, especially those under 45 years old need to be provided with

⁵Spanou, C., (1998), European Integration in administrative terms: a framework for analysis and the Greek case, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 5, 3, pp 467-484.

⁶Palliadelis, A., (2017), *Communication and new technologies in public administration: The implementation of e-government in O.A.E.E (Free Professionals Insurance Agency)*, Open University of Cyprus: Digital Repository.

⁷ Mone, E., M., London, M., (2010), *Employee engagement Through Effective Performance Management: A practical guide for Managers*. New York: Routledge.

challenging and meaningful tasks along with continuous bureaucratic repetitions that will deteriorate their self-efficacy trait. Third, a clear and understandable goal-performance system needs to be established in order to align it with the appropriate reward system so that the employees can reach the level of excellent performance. Fourth, supervisors in these systems need to be in regular and continuous communication with their employees in order to enhance the flow of communication and implement new measures for the improvement of the organization's efficiency. Fifth, regular meetings, coaching and feedback systems need to be designed in order to decrease the distance between the employee and the supervisor.

Considering the above, Mone proposes the establishment of a solid recognition and reward system that will be closely connected to the goal-performance targets set within the organization. Especially for the award system, this could be based on financial awards, public commendations or other awards and it was mentioned in the Law 4250/2014 concerning the evaluation of public servants in Greece but its connection to evaluation created oppositions from the trade unions of the civil servants. Since then, the reward system was not efficiently implemented. Mone concludes by stressing the significance of a team level learning and development, especially lifelong learning via team training. Last, a system to monitor the overall climate, interpersonal behaviors and efforts is very significant, since this climate can have adverse effects to the efficiency of the organization.

1.4. The first period of the public administration (1974 – 2010)

It is noted that the first period of the public administration in Greece begins in the 1970s, after the reestablishment of democracy in the Greek polity.⁸The first sub-period until 1981 refers to the governance of the country by the conservative political party “New Democracy”, political party which led to Greece becoming a full member of the EU. A second sub-period, after 1981 until 1989 is dominated by the socialist

⁸ Ladi, St., (2011), *The Greek Economic Crisis: A trigger for public administration reforms?*, in Liargkovas P. (ed.), *Greece: Economics, Political and Social Issues*, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

political party called “PASOK”, presided by A. Papandreou. The latter introduced welfare state institutions that although assisted disadvantaged groups of the Greek society, resulted in the increase of government spending and consecutively the increase in government debt. In 1980, Greece's debt accounted for 22.9% of GDP, and five years later in 1985 it had doubled to 47.8% of GDP. In 1990 it reached 79.6% of GDP and its course was upward. Greek public debt in the mid-1990s has reached 108.7% and at the end of the same decade 114%⁹

The above mentioned was based on the strategy of “polarization” by the social democratic party which promoted “ideological extremism, lack of compromise, and politics of outbidding where parties overpromise in order to bid support away from each other”.¹⁰ The above strategy had a clear and negative impact on the operation of the public sector, since it was considered as an opportunity to employ party followers without following the principle of meritocracy. This however is not exclusively attributed to the strategies of the social democratic party, since it is argued that similar strategies also were adopted by the New Democracy party in the period 2004-2009 resulting to the growth of the public sector of the country.

1.5. Public employees in the Greek public administration

According to the previous discussion in various elements of the reform process of the Greek public administration, we see that, the whole framework has been transferred to the public sector. For example, in Law 4369/2016, Article 17, it is mentioned that “social skills” is a factor to be evaluated for the development of the employees in the public sector. However, concerning self-efficacy, the attitude of the employee in the public sector is heavily influenced by the social surrounding that the

⁹ Papadokostopoulos, D. (2006, February 26). Public debt: the sinful past of 1980, a heavy legacy for the future, by D. G. Papadokostopoulos | Kathimerini. Retrieved December 16, 2018, from <http://www.kathimerini.gr/243431/article/oikonomia/ellhnikh-oikonomia/dhmosio-xreos-to-amartwlo-parel8on-toy-80-varia-klhronomia-gia-to-mellon>

¹⁰ Kalyvas, S., (1996), *Polarization in Greek Politics: PASOK`s first four years, 1981-1985*, available at https://stathiskalyvas.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/jhd_kalyvas.pdf

employee operates in.¹¹ This social framework in the workplace in Greece is suggested that it lacks development when we refer to the situation of the economic and social crisis. Therefore, the perceptions of the employees of the public sector are further deteriorated.

In any case, it is evident in Greece that there is no alignment, or that at some cases there is a conflict between the interests of the public organization and those of the employees. For example, if we take into account all stakeholders who are involved in the process, we see that politicians are interested in the decrease of the political cost and the social cohesion, society is interested in the efficiency of the end-user services that she receives, and employees are interested in the viability and sustainability of their positions and their organization.¹²

It is suggested that the alignment between the interests of the public organization and the interests of the employees, can be achieved by strategies concerning self-efficacy and personal development of the employees in the public sector. For example, Libano et al.¹³ (2012) suggest that an employee that has developed his self-efficacy skills can interpret changes as challenges for development rather than threats to his position or to the viability of his organization. The above statement is also heavily connected with the notion of optimism.¹⁴ It is noted that the Greek environment at present is heavily characterized with pessimism concerning future developments in economy in general, for instance in the incomes or the taxation. Therefore, it is safe to suggest that the pessimistic environment reduces motivation and is also created by the destruction of the linkage that existed between

¹¹ Snyder, C., R., Lopez, S.J., (2002), *Handbook of positive psychology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

¹² Papadopoulos, I., (2011), *Change Management in the Public Sector: The Case of the Implementation of the Contemporary Budgetary Control*. EIDHR

¹³ Libano, M., D., Llorens, S., Salanova, M., Schaufeli, W., B., (2012), About the dark and bright sides of self-efficacy: Workaholism and Work Engagement, *The Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 15, 2, pp. 688-701.

¹⁴ Schneider, B., (1975), Organizational climates: An essay, *Personnel Psychology*, 28, pp. 447-479.

the employees and the governing political parties. In the previous framework, the only reason for pessimism was when the parties would change in the government of the country. Now, that this link is at best reduced, pessimism is evident in the perceptions of the employees.

For all the above reasons, abilities and competences such as self-efficacy or emotional intelligence are aspects of positive psychology, meaning the evolution and development of an individual's strengths for a "particular way of behaving, thinking or feeling that is authentic and energizing to the user and enables optimal functioning, development and performance".¹⁵ This would imply that the method of analysis tries to enhance all these positive aspects of an individual's behavior in order to better enhance well-being and health related quality of life.¹⁶

2.1. The theoretical framework of Personal development

In international literature, Personal development is a rather new term in the Greek hierarchical structure of public administration. The groundwork for any research concerning personal development dates back to 1943 when Maslow¹⁷ introduced the hierarchy of needs. In that aspect, individuals seek to fulfill the need of self-esteem as a high need in their hierarchy. According to Robitschek (2012), "Personal growth initiative refers to skills used when one is actively engaged in the process of cognitive, behavioral, or affective change"¹⁸. As indicated by Robitschek, personal development refers to the viable and deliberate engagement in the quest for Personal development, which incorporates changing particular parts of one's life with

¹⁵ Linley A., (2008). *Average to A+. Realising strengths in yourself and others*, Coventry: Capp Press.

¹⁶ Linley, A., Joseph, S., Harrington, S., Wood, A. M., (2006), Positive Psychology: Past, Present and (possible) future, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1, 1, pp. 3-16.

¹⁷ Maslow, A.H., (1943), A theory of human motivation, *Psychological Review*, 50, pp. 370-396.

¹⁸ Robitschek, C., Ashton, M. W., Spering, C. C., Geiger, N., Byers, D., Schotts, G. C., & Thoen, M. (2012). Development and psychometric properties of the Personal Growth Initiative Scale – II. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59, 274-287.

a goal to achieve specific objectives and includes cognitive aspects, for instance, self-efficacy, convictions, attitudes and values related to personal development and behavioral aspects related to the use of these abilities of discernment all through different spaces of development.¹⁹

Ryff (1989) presented an individual with a high level of Personal development as somebody who has the aim of consistent improvement. Such an individual will consider himself to be developing, as ready to understand his potential, as available to new experiences, and willing to change the manners that reflect self-knowledge and success and sees change in his self as well as in his behavior after some time²⁰. Personal development is both a purposeful and a cognizant process²¹. Rather than stable personality attributes, personal development is referring to the abilities that can be created for Personal development and components that have formative parts and can be changed through intercessions²². Personal development can additionally be defined as the range of abilities for working through self-change²³. As indicated by Robitschek and Keyes, people with higher levels of Personal development show higher levels of psychological prosperity and greater life fulfillment²⁴.

The expectation to develop individually is relevant to a wide range of individuals, without considering their status²⁵. As per Allport, the ability to adjust and

¹⁹ Robitschek, C. (1998). Personal growth initiative: The construct and its measure. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*

²⁰ Ryff, C.D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069>

²¹ Robitschek, C., & Anderson, L. (2011, August). Personal growth initiative: Predicting depression, well-being, and functioning in college students. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC

²² Weigold, I.K., & Robitschek, C. (2011). Agentic personality characteristics and coping: Their relation to trait anxiety in college students. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 8(2), 255–260. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.2011.01094.x>

²³ Robitschek, C., Ashton, M. W., Spering, C. C., Geiger, N., Byers, D., Schotts, G. C., & Thoen, M. (2012). Development and psychometric properties of the Personal Growth Initiative Scale – II. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59, 274-287.

²⁴ Robitschek, C., & Keyes, C.L.M. (2009). Keyes' model of mental health with personal growth initiative as a parsimonious predictor. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 56, 321–329. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013954>

²⁵ Stevic, C.R., & Ward, R.M. (2008). Initiating personal growth: The role of recognition and life satisfaction on the development of college students. *Social Indicators Research*, 89, 523–534. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-008-9247-2>

change is an essential characteristic for a normal personality²⁶. The degree to which people look for chances to develop is impacted by their level of Personal development²⁷. This means that the higher the personal development is, the more, the person looks for different possibilities in order to be evolved. As per Robitschek and Kashubeck, Personal development levels are a pivotal factor in estimating how much the individual has profited from the growth opportunities that were presented. Personal development is in this manner a vital characteristic to consider in working environment, since helping other people suggests encouraging a procedure of development²⁸. So, it is very important for people to become aware of their personal development. An individual's inclination to set clear future-arranged objectives, make progress and actualize these objectives is an imperative result of that individual's level of Personal development²⁹.

In accordance with Sidiropoulou et.al,³⁰ in order to explore the personal development level of the employees in the public sector one has to take into account a plethora of factors such as technological development, the need for life-long learning, work and financial insecurity among others. In that aspect, under the new legal framework concerning the evaluation of the employees of the public sector as well as the “reserve” option provisioned in Laws 4093/2012 and 4172/2013, enhances the significance of personal development for the employees. In order to achieve a system which is characterized by meritocracy and equal opportunities, it is true that competent people should be rewarded and that without the adequate evaluation system, the productivity in the public sector is altered. The appropriate evaluation

²⁶ Allport, G.W. (1961). *Pattern and growth in personality*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston

²⁷ Robitschek, C., & Cook, S. W. (1999). The influence of personal growth initiative and coping styles on career exploration and vocational identity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54, 127-141.

²⁸ Robitschek, C., & Kashubeck, S. (1999). A structural model of parental alcoholism, family functioning, and psychological health: The mediating effects of hardiness and personal growth orientation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 46, 159-172.

²⁹ Showry, M. and Manasa, K.V.L. (2014), “Self-awareness – key to effective leadership”, *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 15-26.

³⁰ Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou, D., Mylonas, K., Argyropoulou, K., (2015), Self-Efficacy in Career Planning: A New approach to Career Exploration. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 11, 2, pp. 40-54.

system will enable the public sector to get better and better. In that case, it is crucial for the employees to have high levels of self-efficacy and personal development, in order to maximize their impact and achieve positive results in the evaluation.

To further explore the issue of personal development in the context of the Greek public administration, we consider two generic competences that need to be enhanced. These are self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. In the following sections, the link between personal development, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence will be explored in order to find the limitations and challenges that exist in the public administration workplace in Greece.

2.1.1. Personal development and Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to a person being an active actor in his environment rather than a passive recipient of the circumstances.³¹ It is the whole of the perceptions of the employee concerning his skills in order to achieve specific performance levels and in that manner to affect all the factors that have an impact on him.³² It is an ability that describes personal resistance to tackle difficult and challenging situations, as well as to demonstrate flexibility and innovative approaches in the employees' every day's work without any external support.

Nguyen et al.³³ suggest that employees with lower self-efficacy skills were evaluated lower than similar employees in similar positions for their overall

³¹ Bandura, A., (1997), *Self-efficacy theory. The exercise of control*, New York: W.H. Freeman and Co.

³² Bandura, A., (1994), Self-efficacy. In V.S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81. New York: Academic Press. Reprinted in H. Friedman (ed.) (1998), *Encyclopedia of mental health*. San Diego: Academic Press.

³³ Nguien, H., Johnson, A., Collings, C., G., Parker, S., K., (2016), Confidence matters: Self-efficacy Moderates the Credit that Supervisors Give to Adaptive and Proactive Role Behaviours, *British Journal of Management*, 00, pp. 1-16.

performance. Karwoski³⁴ indicates that extraversion and emotional stability are related to self-efficacy. Nevertheless, self-efficacy is connected to four elements which are:

- personal experiences
- mimesis
- motivation
- physical and emotional condition of the employee.

According to previous studies, occupational self-efficacy is related in a positive way to organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and commitment³⁵. Moreover, it is related in a negative way to psychological strain in work contexts³⁶. It is therefore concluded that self-efficacy is connected to motivation in the public workplace. If motivation is low, then it is assumed that self-efficacy as a skill will not be properly developed in the workplace. Another element that clearly has an impact in the development of self-efficacy is the setting of targets/goals in the operation of the public administration. Until Law 4369/2016, goal setting in the public administration was not clearly developed since there was no evaluation of the activities of the work of the employees (Law 3230/2004 which was only partially implemented).

Nevertheless, in order for goal setting to have a positive effect in the operation of the public administration, there is a need to be in agreement with the departmental goals and be interconnected with personal goals for other employees of the department. Thus, these goals need to take into account the employees capabilities, the level of his/her competences motivation and recent performance. Again, Law 4369/2016 will mark a turning point in the structure of the Greek public administration since it also introduces the term “competences” in the evaluation of the employees, a term that is different than previously mentioned skills, knowledge or seniority.

³⁴ Karwowski, M., Gralewski, J., (2013), Big Five Personality Traits as the Predictors of Creative Self-efficacy and Creative Personal Identity: Does Gender Matter? *The Journal of Creative Behaviour*, 47, 3, pp. 215-232.

³⁵ Rigotti, Schyns & Mohr, 2008; Schyns & Collani, 2002.

³⁶ Mohr, Muller, Rigotti, Aycan & Tschan, 2006

Other factors that affect the person's perception on self-efficacy is the education system, especially in school and pre-school. Bandura (1994) suggests that the perceptions of the pupils concerning their abilities affect their ambitions and their interest for further development. If we combine this issue with the current educational framework in Greece, which as suggested by Dougali³⁷ is a hierarchical structure that lacks motivation, innovation and development of leadership skills, for both the teachers as well as the pupils. This aspect is further elaborated in the research by Gkolia,³⁸ who examined leadership skills of supervisors in the educational sector of Greece and self-efficacy of subordinate teachers, concluding that self-efficacy of teachers is low because of the lack of leadership skills.

When the persons reach adulthood, they face new challenges such as personal financial and social development, marriage therefore self-efficacy is crucial in order to widen his/her expertise or knowledge, to develop his/her interpersonal skills and to self-regulate in the work environment.³⁹ This further leads to the development of competences that are crucial in today's environment especially related to skills and attributes that a person may possess.

However, in order to create the proper environment for nurturing self-efficacy, as it is mentioned before, there needs to be designed an appropriate framework for

³⁷ Dougali, E., (2017), Leadership Style and Teacher Satisfaction: A Quantitative Investigation of Teachers' Views of Primary Education, Department of Educational and Social Policy, University of Macedonia.

³⁸ Gkolia, A., (2014), Transformational leadership and professional teacher satisfaction: The role of self-efficacy, Doctoral Thesis, University of Thessaly.

³⁹ Divari, M., (2017), Investigation of the relationship between the knowledge of the use of new technologies, the beliefs of self-efficiency in terms of work role and optimism for employees of the Attica Region aged over 45, Diploma Thesis, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

setting goals and targets.⁴⁰ Job self-efficacy as it is described by Gist,⁴¹ refers to a specific job and the perceptions that the employee has concerning the achievement of this job. This is also related to future targets and the engagement of the employee for the future. Thus, persons with high self-efficacy are mostly interested with personal and organization development in the long-term⁴² and avoid procrastination.⁴³

Self-efficacy alludes to one's conviction that (s) he can perform well inside the parameters of a particular circumstance⁴⁴. Self-efficacy is a cognitive belief concerning one's capability and an evaluation of one's capacity to act with self-confidence⁴⁵. Judge and Bono found that self-efficacy was fundamentally related to successful task performance⁴⁶. One's self-beliefs enable an individual to "apply self-control over who they are, and what they want to be"⁴⁷. Self-efficacy has an immediate positive effect on "the initiation, intensity, and persistence of behavior"⁴⁸. Self-efficacy impacts one's perceptions about expectations that roles encompass⁴⁹, and

⁴⁰ Wigfield, P., Eccles, J., (2000), Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 94, 1, pp. 68-81.

⁴¹ Gist M.E., Mitchell, T., R., (1992), Self-Efficacy: A Theoretical analysis of its determinants and malleability, *The Academy of Management Review*, 17, pp. 183-211.

⁴² Cherian, J., Jacob, J., (2013), Impact of Self-Efficacy on Motivation and Performance of Employees, *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8, 14, pp. 80-88.

⁴³ Waschle, K., Lachner, A., Fink, S., Nuckles, M., (2014), Procrastination and self-efficacy: Tracing vicious and virtuous circles in self-regulated learning, *Learning and Instruction*, 29, pp. 103-114.

⁴⁴ Bandura, A. (1995), *Self-efficacy in Changing Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

⁴⁵ Pajares, F. (2002), "Gender and perceived self-efficacy in self-regulated learning", *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 41 No. 2, pp. 116-125.

⁴⁶ Judge, T.A. and Bono, J.E. (2001), "Relationship of core self-evaluation traits – self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability – with job satisfaction and job performance: a meta-analysis", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86 No. 1, pp. 80-92.

⁴⁷ Jayawardena, C. and Gregar, A. (2013), "Transformational leadership, occupational self-efficacy, and career success of managers", *Proceedings of the European Conference on Management, Leadership, & Governance*, pp. 376-383.

⁴⁸ Paglis, L.L. (2010), "Leadership self-efficacy: research findings and practical implications", *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 29 No. 9, pp. 771-782.

⁴⁹ Burke, P.J. and Stets, J.E. (2009), *Identity Theory*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

affects the choices that individuals make regarding tasks, goals, and roles that they perform⁵⁰. In spite of the fact that Bandura initially characterized self-efficacy regarding accomplishing particular tasks with related results⁵¹, Wang and Hsu (2014) detailed that self-efficacy was imperative for both task and role performance⁵². Success in personal achievements prompts desires for effective future results⁵³. One's perceptions about their own capacities influence their self-efficacy⁵⁴.

2.1.2. Personal development and Emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is a relatively new term, introduced mainly by Goleman⁵⁵ in 1998 and studies the ability of a person to be aware of his own emotions and to handle interpersonal relationships empathetically. In accordance with Bar-On,⁵⁶ emotional intelligence is heavily connected to the increased demand for higher quality products and services by the end-users or consumers. Although, the above-mentioned researches are mainly conducted in the private sector, their importance for the public sector is strong as well. In a framework of economic and social crisis, the ability of an employee to face stressful factors that are created by the negative feelings of the end-users (in the case of the public sector, the citizens) is an element that needs to be enhanced and further improved. This ability, that in accordance with Martinez⁵⁷ is a non-cognitive one, helps the employee to face every day's challenges and to

⁵⁰ Razek, N.A. and Coyner, S.C. (2014), "Impact of self-efficacy on Saudi students' college performance", *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 85-96

⁵¹ Bandura, A. (1977), "Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 84 No. 2, pp. 191-215.

⁵² Wang, S. and Hsu, I.-C. (2014), "The effect of role ambiguity on task performance through self-efficacy-A contingency perspective", *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, Vol. 61 No. 4, pp. 681-689.

⁵³ Fitzgerald, S. and Schutte, N.S. (2010), "Increasing transformational leadership through enhancing self-efficacy", *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 29 No. 5, pp. 495-505.

⁵⁴ Wojciszke, B. and Struzynska-Kujalowicz, A. (2007), "Power influences self-esteem", *Social Cognition*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 472-494.

⁵⁵ Goleman, D., (1998), *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, New York: Bantam Books.

⁵⁶ Bar-On, R., (2000), *Emotional and Social Intelligence: Insights from the Emotional Quotient Inventory (E.Q-I)*, *Handbook of E.I.*, Jossey Bass.

⁵⁷ Martinez, M., N., (1997), *The Smarts that Count*, *HR Magazine*, 42 (11): pp. 72-78

perform efficiently his work. Goleman further distinguishes emotional intelligence into five categories of characteristics as personal competences. These are: self-awareness, emotional management, self-motivation, empathy and interpersonal relations. In accordance with the above, supervisors should be advised to look for employees that have high levels of emotional intelligence in order to guide thinking and behavior towards the interest of the end user.

Furthermore, the notion "Emotional intelligence" was approached also by Salovey and Mayer and characterized as "the ability to monitor one's own feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action"⁵⁸. Since Emotional intelligence includes managing feelings and emotional substance, it varies from general Intelligence. Emotional intelligence is along these lines initiated when the data handling includes matters that are of individual and emotional significance to us⁵⁹. Having the capacity to peruse the nonverbal setting, perceive, express feelings, comprehend and direct these feelings in ourselves, are crucial to the idea of Emotional intelligence. In another study done by Mayer et al., emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity to complete exact thinking about feelings and the capacity to utilize feelings and emotional learning to improve thought⁶⁰.

Emotional intelligence consists of four key interrelated measurements, the so called "branches". These four branches include the following abilities: Firstly, perceiving emotions. This is the capacity to recognize feelings in oneself as well as in other people. It is the capacity which helps in problem solving, decision-making and interpersonal communication. Secondly, understanding emotions. This is the capacity to bridle sentiments, to encourage critical thinking and recognize the emotional complexity. Another capability is to manage the emotions. This capacity refers to the openness to your own feelings and to the perception of other's feelings. It's the capacity of diminishing, upgrading, or viably changing one's emotional response to

⁵⁸ Salovey, P. and Mayer, J.D. (1990), *Emotional Intelligence*, Baywood Publishing Company, New York, NY, Vol. 9 No. 3, pp. 185-211.

⁵⁹ Brackett, M.A., Rivers, S.E., Shiffman, S., Lerner, N. and Salovey, P. (2006), "Relating emotional abilities to social functioning: a comparison of self-report and performance measures of emotional intelligence", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 91No. 4, pp. 780-795.

⁶⁰ Mayer, J.D. and Salovey, P. (1993), "The intelligence of emotional intelligence", *Intelligence*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 433-442.

accomplish the most ideal result in a given circumstance as far as propriety or value)⁶¹. Emotional Intelligence accordingly continues in a formative procedure, starting with the perception of feelings as the most essential mental process as well as psychological process and then ending with effective emotional regulation as the most developed process. The evolution of Emotional intelligence continues from the lower arrange capacities to the advanced, with the progress dependent upon the advancement of the previous capacities⁶².

To sum up, emotional intelligence encourages us to perceive our emotional state and additionally that of others, along these lines enabling us to adequately utilize this knowledge in order to control our emotions conduct and activities. Possession of interpersonal intelligence enables individuals to work successfully with others and comprehend them better. Emotional intelligence varies from interpersonal intelligence, since it involves the ability to comprehend oneself and value one's emotions, fears, inspirations and wants. So, regardless of the role we play in every situation, emotions which affect our feelings and perspective are constantly present.

Taking into consideration Mayer and Salovey's construct of Emotional intelligence⁶³, we realize that performance in one's personal life relies upon how well an individual can adapt to the negative or positive information that has an impact on his or her emotional perspective. An individual has social and emotional abilities. He or she has the Emotional intelligence to precisely evaluate feelings, to perceive and comprehend his or her emotional state and that of others, and to utilize this knowledge in order to control his or her behavior, mindset and acting. It ought to in this way be moderately less demanding for this person to build up and keep up great relations with individuals in general, despite the given circumstances. Those with high Emotional intelligence not just have capacities that help them to cope better with their personal and work life, but additionally they are capable of being emotionally calm in their

⁶¹ Mayer, J.D., Roberts, R.D. and Barsade, S.G. (2008a), "Human abilities: emotional intelligence", *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 59, pp. 507-536

⁶² Brackett, M.A., Rivers, S.E., Shiffman, S., Lerner, N. and Salovey, P. (2006), "Relating emotional abilities to social functioning: a comparison of self-report and performance measures of emotional intelligence", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 91No. 4, pp. 780-795.

⁶³ Mayer, J.D. and Salovey, P. (1997), "What is emotional intelligence?", in Salovey, P. and Sluyter, D.J. (Eds), *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*, Basic Books, New York, NY, pp. 3-31.

private life, less negative, enhance positive attitudes in the working environment, and set up good relationships concerning collaboration and cooperation. Therefore, highly emotionally intelligent individuals are inclined to accomplish excellent job performance, and in addition overall personal satisfaction in their personal life as well as the working environment.

Emotional intelligence tackles adapting capacity and is an imperative arrangement of conduct attributes for prevailing in indeterminate natural strains⁶⁴. Emotionally intelligent individuals are sure and hopeful, empowering themselves to focus on solving problems, rather than searching why they failed⁶⁵. Emotional intelligence fortifies emotional wellness, adapting capacity and versatility to circumstances while decreasing interpersonal hitches⁶⁶. Emotional intelligence is emphatically related with self-efficacy, which is a segment of psychological capital. One such research carried out in Indian manufacturing sector demonstrates that psychological capital improves organizational commitment⁶⁷. Employees who feel committed would have a higher adaptive performance. Subsequently, we can accept that emotional intelligence would upgrade the level of adaptive performance.

Various researches have demonstrated how Emotional intelligence and its distinctive segments may anticipate altogether efficient performance at work. For example, it has been featured in empirical studies that it is essential to enhance emotional abilities in organizations not exclusively to enhance job performance, but additionally to enhance influence and states of mind at work⁶⁸, and to make a warmer workplace⁶⁹. Moreover, multiple studies upheld this by demonstrating how Emotional

⁶⁴ Bar-On, R. (1997a). *The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): A test of emotional intelligence*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems, Inc.

⁶⁵ Besharat, 2005. Evaluating psychometric properties of Farsi version of the Positive and Negative Perfectionism Scale. *Psychological Reports*, 97 (2005), pp. 33-42).

⁶⁶ Jahanian, R. (2010). Study the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management in managers. *Journal of Management*, 8, 1-8

⁶⁷ Sahoo, B.C., & Sia, S.K. (2015). Psychological Capital and Organisational Commitment: Nature, Structure and Relationship in an Indian Sample. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation*, 11(3), 230-244.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/2319510X15588386>

⁶⁸ Lopes, P. N., Grewal, D., Kadis, J., Gall, M., & Salovey, P. (2006). Evidence that emotional intelligence is related to job performance and affect and attitudes at work. *Psicothema*, 18(Suppl), 132-138.

⁶⁹ Cooper, R. K., & Sawaf, A. (1997). *Executive EQ: Emotional Intelligence in Business*. London: Orion Business Books.

intelligence not just had a constructive effect at an individual and interpersonal level yet additionally in the individuals' job performance⁷⁰. Additionally, higher levels of Emotional intelligence have been connected to better emotional wellness, greater commitment, less pressure, less forceful conduct and higher work fulfillment in the employees⁷¹, and better attitudes to work and better performance in middle managers⁷². The useful job of Emotional intelligence in the workplace has been disclosed because of the directing role of Emotional intelligence in buffering the impact of job-related stressors⁷³.

Concerning Greece, Triantafyllidi⁷⁴ argues that tenure in the public administration as well as the decrease of remuneration does not contribute to their motivation. By enhancing emotional intelligence to the employees, they can acquire initiatives, commitment and alignment with the targets of the organization. In this approach, it is not only the quality of the service that needs to be high, but the process as well.

2.1.3. The contribution of Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence in personal development

Self-efficacy influences someone's personal development, given that studies confirm that the belief in one's abilities contributes to motivation and action⁷⁵. Perceived self - efficacy involves a critical job in causal structures since it influences

⁷⁰ Landy, F., & Conte, J. (2016). *Work in the 21st century: An introduction to industrial and organizational psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

⁷¹ Harvey, P., & Dasborough, M. T. (2006). Consequences of employee attributions in the workplace: The role of emotional intelligence. *Psicothema*, 18, 145-151.

⁷² Sinha, C., & Kumar, H. (2016). Relationship between emotional intelligence, work attitude and outcomes: Examination of Indian middle-managerial level employees. *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 16, 118-125.

⁷³ Guy, M. E., & Lee, H. J. (2015). How emotional intelligence mediates emotional labor in public service jobs. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 35, 261-277. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371x13514095>

⁷⁴ Triantafyllidi, I., (2015), *Emotional Intelligence at Work: Limitations and Benefits for Public Sector Executives, Postgraduate Work, EJPG*, p. 27..

⁷⁵ Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY, US: W H Freeman/Times Books/ Henry Holt & Co.

human working specifically, as well as through its effect on other vital classes of determinants. These determinants incorporate objective goals, incentives and disincentives established in outcome expectations, perceived obstructions, resilience and opportunity structures in social frameworks⁷⁶.

Perceived self-efficacy influences motivation and performance fulfillments both specifically and through its effect on objectives, outcome expectations, and perception of socio structural facilitators and impediments⁷⁷. Among the distinctive determinants, self-efficacy becomes the most important indicator. Self-efficacy beliefs influence self-motivation and action through their effect on objectives and expectations. It is mostly based on efficacy beliefs that individuals pick what objective difficulties to cope with, how much effort needs to put and to what extent is needed to endure notwithstanding troubles⁷⁸. At the point where difficulties and disappointments appear, the individuals who question their abilities loosen their endeavors, surrender rashly, or settle for poorer arrangements. The individuals who have a strong belief in their capacities increase their strength to face difficulties. Perceived self-efficacy similarly has an influential role in the incentive and disincentive capability of outcome expectations. The outcomes individuals envision depend generally on their convictions of how well they can perform in given circumstances. Those of high self-efficacy hope to increase ideal results through good performance, while the individuals who expect bad performance invoke negative outcomes. Expected outcomes may appear as material costs and advantages, social recognition and reproof, and self - approving and self - censoring emotional responses.

Perceived self - efficacy not just sets the slate of choices for thought, yet in addition manages their performance. Having chosen a game-plan, an individual must turn the thoughts into actions in order to achieve good performance. Making a decision does not guarantee that people will act accordingly and face any challenges that may

⁷⁶ Lippke, S., & Plotnikoff, R. C. (2014). Testing two principles of the Health Action Process Approach in individuals with type 2 diabetes. *Health Psychology, 33*(1), 77-84

⁷⁷ Plotnikoff, R. C., Lippke, S., Courneya, K. S., Birkett, N., & Sigal, R. J. (2008). Physical activity and social cognitive theory: A test in a population sample of adults with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*

⁷⁸ Latham, G. P. (2003). Goal setting: A five-step approach to behavior change. *Organizational Dynamics, 32*(3), 309-318. Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

appear. The psychology of decision making requires a mentality in which the individual must preserve the belief of high self-efficacy. One must add a performatory self to the decisional self, otherwise there's just a thought and not a decision. Beliefs of personal efficacy shape whether individuals take advantage of the chances that may appear, or they stuck in case they meet obstacles. Individuals of high self-efficacy focus on the opportunities that may appear and see the obstacles as challenges⁷⁹. Through creativity and determination, they think of methods which would help them figure out the situation and control it even in conditions of restricted chances and numerous requirements. The individuals with high level of self - doubt see the obstacles that may appear as difficulties that they may not manage to handle. They easily persuade themselves regarding the vanity of exertion, so they make constrained progress even in conditions that give numerous chances.

There are recent studies which show that employees' perceptions regarding their own emotional intelligence have been broadened⁸⁰ as well as their perceptions regarding the impact of emotional intelligence on work experience⁸¹. According to the results of recent researches, the key components of EI, such as emotional assessment and positive emotional regulation, prevent emotional burnout, which usually leads to depersonalization and low perception of personal achievement⁸², while the capacity of managing the emotions may predict the personal assessments in case of professional burnout⁸³. Among the four EI skills, emotion regulation has been singled out as an important predictor of employee outcomes⁸⁴. In a longitudinal study,

⁷⁹ Krueger, N.F., Jr & Dickson, P. (1994). How Believing in Ourselves Increases Risk Taking: Self-efficacy and Perceptions of Opportunity and Threat. *Decision Sciences*, 25, 385-400

⁸⁰ Kaufhold, J.A. & Johnson, L.R. (2005). The Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence Skills and Potential Problem Areas of Elementary Educators. *Education*, 125(4), 615-26.

⁸¹ Kafetsios, K., Nezlek, J., Vasiou, A. (2009). A Multilevel Analysis of Relationships between Leaders' and Subordinates' Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Outcomes. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. Retrieved from soc.uoc.gr/psycho/kafetsios/Papers_English/2009_KK_JBN_AV_JASP.pdf

⁸² Chan, D. W. (2003). Perceived emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among Chinese secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 1781-1795

⁸³ Ioannis Nikolaou, Ioannis Tsaousis, (2002) "Emotional intelligence in the workplace: Exploring its effects on occupational stress and organizational commitment", *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, Vol. 10 Issue: 4, pp.327-342

⁸⁴ Kafetsios, K. and Zampetakis, L. (2008). "Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction: testing the mediatory role of positive and negative affect at work", *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 44, 710-20

Côté and Miners found positive relationships between employees' emotion-regulation strategies and job satisfaction and turnover intentions⁸⁵. Emotion regulation and awareness of emotion in the oneself have been discussed as providing a basis for regulating stressful reactions at work; in turn, improving emotions at work, lowering stress, and increasing job satisfaction for subordinates and leaders alike⁸⁶.

2.2. Limitations and Challenges in employees' personal development

2.2.1. Limitations for the enhancement of personal development in the public administration

The following limitations concerning self-efficacy are evident in the Greek framework of public administration: **(a) The impact of national culture:** As noted by Hill,⁸⁷ “national culture is a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people and that when taken together constitute a design of living.” In that aspect, the recent national culture in Greece does not offer the proper motivation for the pursuit of personal development of the employees in the public sector. This is because it is usually being observed that the public sector has no understanding of the importance of human resources and the interest of the “business” and therefore the need for incentives in order to maximize the efficiency of the employees. The staff is being hired only taking into consideration their academic qualifications and credentials and the public sector does not motivate the employees to maximize their performance. **(b) Under development of leadership skill in the public sector.**⁸⁸ This

⁸⁵ Côté, S., Miners C. TH. (2006). Emotional intelligence, cognitive intelligence and job performance. *Adm. Sci. Q.* 51, 1–28.

⁸⁶ Sy, T., Tram. S. & O'Hara, L., (2006). Relation of employee and manager to job satisfaction and performance: *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(3), 461-443.

⁸⁷ Binczycki B., *The Problem of Motivation to Work in the Public Sector Organizations*, 9th International Quality Conference, University of Kragujevac, Kragujevac 2015, ISBN 978-86-6335-015-1, pp. 353-360.

⁸⁸ Darwall, S., L., (1977), Two kinds of respect, *Ethics and Behavior*, 88, 1 pp. 36-49.

issue has been analyzed in the past in various researches concerning the concrete hierarchical structure of the Greek public administration. The lack of a “respectful” leadership model⁸⁹ is a limitation to the ability of self-efficacy to the employees in the public sector. For example, until Law 4369/2016, the development and assignment of supervisors in the public sector was mostly done through seniority in the service, thus leadership skills were not necessary to be developed. **(c) Extreme differences that exist between the public and the private sector in Greece:** All the above models have been mainly examined in private organizations, leaving small space of research in the public sector. The differences especially in Greece are very high.⁹⁰ For example, Greece has implemented strict normative frameworks concerning the operation of the public sector based on past experiences. It is therefore a difficult change not to introduce new legal provisions (although opposition to these reforms is extremely high) but to motivate the employees to accept change. **(d) The special link between the public sector and the governing party:** As it has been previously described, maladministration in Greece has been attributed to clientelism and to the existing connection between the governing parties and the followers in the public sector. This link still exists today and is difficult to break especially in the current context of work and economic insecurity. We see for example that a new case of polarization is evident today and big parties wish to retain their followers without losing them to the extremes of the political spectrum.

2.2.2. Challenges for personal development in the public administration

The economic crisis in Greece in one side has tripped a great number of reforms in the public sector of the country. The other side is the non-adjustment of the public sector to current technological and administrative reforms that took place globally. Both sides of the reform found the public sector unprepared to incorporate all the changes at the time frame requested by the members that signed the Memoranda

⁸⁹Darwall, S., L., (1977), Two kinds of respect, *Ethics and Behavior*, 88, 1 pp. 36-49.

⁹⁰Mihalopoulos, N., (2003), *From Public Bureaucracy to Public Management*, Athens: Papazisis.

with Greece. At the same time, the demand for quality increased from the side of the end-users shifting an impact from the increased taxation and inefficiency of the public sector as a whole.⁹¹

In our modern, globalized society, the public sector cannot stay behind the challenges and demands created by technology, such as the speed of decisions and the quality of outcomes. It is imperative that further researches on the issues of change management, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and personal development need to be presented with concrete proposals for policy makers. These proposals will face the following challenges that exist in public administration today.⁹²

First, demographic changes have severe impact on both sides of the public administration. From the one side, in strong hierarchical structures, such as the Greek one, supervisors are of middle age due to the existing system of seniority. On the other hand, ageing populations stress welfare and healthcare systems and increase management time from the public sector, as well as the need to cope with e-governance practices.

Second, economic changes have strongly affected research and efficiency in the public sector, especially with austerity driven policies that aim to decrease cost and spending in the public sector. This leads to the lack of any motives and rewards for excellent performance for the employees as well as an overall pessimism concerning personal development.

On the other hand, technological developments especially with the use of e-governance, are evident in western societies while its implementation is not similar in Greece. Recent efforts are being implemented such as the Central Infrastructure for the electronic exchange between public-sector bodies of documents with advanced

⁹¹ Stefopoulou, Papamanolis (2004), Panagiotis Karkatsoulis, *The State in Transition. From "Administrative Reform" and "New Public Management" to Governance*, Series: Politics in the 21st Century, Series Editor: Elias Katsoulis, *Science and Society: Review of Political and Ethical Theory*, 13, 239-244.

⁹² Curry, D., Jilke, S., Hammerschmid, G., Van de Walle, S., (2014), *Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future*, European Policy Brief, European Commission, p. 6.

digital signatures. Concerning the above, in accordance with Hall⁹³ there are three orders of changes in any public-sector reform. The first order refers to instrument settings change, while overall policy instruments remain the same, the second order refers to both a change in policy instruments and their settings while policy goals remain the same and the third order refers to the radical change in the framework of ideas and standards that specify not only the goals of policy but the very nature of the problems they are addressing as well. It is safe to suggest that none of the following orders are evident in the Greek reforms since 2010.

However, one of the most crucial limitations in this period, is the overall public trust in government. According to the OECD report entitled "Government at a Glance 2017" about the satisfaction and confidence across public services, which was released in public, only 13% of the Greek citizens trust their government.⁹⁴ This has a direct impact on the way that citizens perceive the role and performance of civil servants and the public service as a whole. This is highly correlated with the constant changes in the political environment. The crisis which hit the country since 2009 has gradually led to the collapse of citizens' confidence in the political system and to major upheavals in party affiliations. These changes were not a simple result of different political parties in power. It was a whole new vision of the country and the causes of the crisis, a new vision of the political issues at that time that changed the way in which people understood the political system and the political parties as well. Furthermore, electoral volatility is another issue that needs to be examined in the analysis of the public sector in Greece. It is noted that in Greece, the current leftist party that governs the country until 2012 had a mere 3% of the electoral vote, gained more than 30% in the elections of 2015 and its percentages are currently dropping.⁹⁵ Political instability and possible changes earlier than the 4 years government term disrupt the efforts for the creation of a long-term strategy for the public sector.

⁹³ Hall, P., (1993) *Comparative Politics*, 25, p. 275.

⁹⁴ OECDilibrary

⁹⁵ <https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/To-Politevma/Ekloges/Eklogika-apotelesmata-New/>

Saks and Gruman⁹⁶ propose that the solution to the above challenges is the socialization of the organizations. This coincides with the proposals for the enhancement of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of the employees, since it puts emphasis on the interpersonal skills both between the employees as well as between the employees and the end-users of the public administration. Brinkerhoffs⁹⁷ refers to this new public administration as a post-new public management which puts incentive structures, avoidance of mimitism (since public administrations are different across national levels) and adaptive processes in the core of any reform in the public sector. Concerning similar strategies of reform of the public sector in the Greek case, it is widely used that similarities exist between the shift from Keynesianism to monetarism in the British context in 1980. However, this is a fallacy since, especially for the public sector, no two examples can be similar, since they face different challenges and come from different historical and cultural backgrounds.

In all the above, competences, positive psychology and emotional skills can contribute to the reform of the public sector as well as to increase its adaptability to current challenges in the globalized environment. These are small wins in a reform process that will take time to show (if any) results and can be the basis for future development of the public sector in the country as a driver of change and innovation.

If this is the case for public administration studies, meaning to include all terms and theory of organizational psychology, then a wide range of terms can be used such as motivation, transparency, competition and choice, performance information and others. This list is not restricted; however, three important terms can be used for the Greek case based on cultural, historical and structural reasons. First, personal development is considered the ultimate target for employees both in the public sector as well as the private one. In order to promote personal development, self-efficacy treats need to be supported for the employees to feel as active actors of reform, change

⁹⁶ Saks, A., Gruman, J., (2011), *Manage Employee Engagement to Manage Performance*, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 4, pp. 204-207.

⁹⁷ Brinkerhoff, D., W., Brinkerhoff, J., (2015), *Public Sector Management reform in Developing Countries: Perspectives beyond NPM orthodoxy*, *Public Administration and Development*, 35, pp. 222-237.

and innovation in the society. Last, in order to be able to communicate with the society, they need to develop emotional intelligence, something that will help them both with their inter-organizational relations as well as with the Greek citizens that constitute a demanding and challenging audience of end users.

3. Research

3.1. Philosophy of research

Research is a systematic attempt to investigate a phenomenon, which aims at producing new knowledge⁹⁸. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines the term "research" as: a process of caution searching for a particular phenomenon, a search that aims to discover facts and draw new conclusions through the critical study, and finally, a systematic study of materials and sources for the collection of information.⁹⁹ According to Vanderstoep and Johnston, a research consists of four stages: The first stage is the study of existing knowledge (secondary research that is based on the study of previous surveys), the second one is the identification of gaps and posing the aim and the research assumptions, the third one is, of course, the conducting of the research, and, finally the last one is the interpretation of results.¹⁰⁰

There is a variety of philosophical schools in social sciences. In the Philosophy of Research, we distinguish two major areas of reference: Ontology and Epistemology. The main approaches of Ontology are Realism and Empiricism while the most widespread approaches of Epistemology are Phenomenology and Positivism¹⁰¹. First of all, "Ontology", is a philosophical system of beliefs which responds to what it could be done and how.¹⁰² Concerning the first main approach of Ontology, according to C. A. Pechlivanidis, "realism would be characterized as the basic ontological position in which the world is real, has an objective status and it is not just a representation or a constructive concept of the human mind. The objects do exist and there are independent of the human mind and human consciousness". According to realism, knowledge is a dynamic process that is determined by social and economic data of the time. The reality as well as the objective truth exist

⁹⁸ Rugg, G., Petre, M. (2007). *A gentle guide to research methods*. Berkshire: Open University Press

⁹⁹ Gregory, I. (2003). *Ethics in research*. New York: Ian Gregory

¹⁰⁰ Vanderstoep, S.W., Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life*. San Francisco: Jossey – Bass

¹⁰¹ Kyriazopoulos P & Samantha Ir. (2011), "Methodology of research papers, Athens, Modern Publishing

¹⁰² Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Janice, and Patricia Leavy. (2005). *Approaches to Qualitative Research*. Brantford, Ont.: Resource Services Library.

independently of human logic. However, their approach is constantly being changed and as a result, the phenomena are constantly changing. So, it's not about the relationship between the phenomena but the creation and the evolution of those notions who are included in the phenomena.¹⁰³ Regarding the second approach of Ontology, Empiricism converges with the concept of positivism in regard to its view about the substance of things. The difference between the two approaches lies mainly in the concept of understanding the objective truth since, according to empiricism, the senses are the only way to approach the truth and the knowledge, which are not objective notions. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge of the absolute reality could never be possible to become concluded and continual.¹⁰⁴

Secondly, "Epistemology" is a philosophical system of beliefs which responds to who can have the knowledge and who is able to produce it. Regarding its principal approach, phenomenology is the concept of producing a new theory which is related to the subjective way we perceive things. The aim is to explore phenomena through the experiences of individuals. There is an overwhelming view that there is no absolute truth and that each person perceives the reality in a different way. The conclusions are derived from the empirical and experimental study of the research problem and it is linked to the quality research method.¹⁰⁵

Regarding the second approach of Epistemology, Positivism is a philosophical system based on the fact that knowledge and theory pre-exist of the research.¹⁰⁶ Positivism only accepts the observable events, those that can be measured and calculated as facts. For Positivism reality exists, whether it is perceived by the researchers, or not.¹⁰⁷ The main aim of the knowledge is the description of phenomena

¹⁰³ C. A. Pechlivanidis "Realism and antirealism in the philosophy of science". (2007). AO (Newsletter of the Alexander S. Onassis Institute of Architecture Association)

¹⁰⁴ Mantzaris G., Scientific Research: Writing-Configuration-Presentationscientific papers, Thessaloniki: self-publishing, 2012

¹⁰⁵ Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). Scientific Education research methodology, Athens: Metechmio

¹⁰⁶ Robson, C. (2003). Real World Research. Oxford: Blackwell.

¹⁰⁷ Polonsky, M.J. & Waller, D.S. (2011) "Designing and Managing a Research Project: A Business Student's Guide" 2nd edition, SAGE

under a quantified approach.¹⁰⁸ Crossan notes that Positivism is linked to the quantitative research method.¹⁰⁹ The effect of positivism on science emerged the deportation of the theory and the shift to the research of the facts, which will be based on experience, observation, experiment and mathematics.

The classifying of a theory as scientific requires it to be verifiable, while the research is mainly done to keep the control between the hypotheses and their consequences, from where information may be arisen for the further development of research. Therefore, in the positivist philosophical doctrine, research consists of an organized and deliberate effort to collect new information or use the existing knowledge to a new purpose.¹¹⁰ Positivism has been chosen for the purposes of this research. This research is based on a bibliographic overview in combination with the existing theoretical models and the assumptions emerging from them. So, the facts are based on logical arguments and assumptions, with the intention to find objective results after a thorough research. At first, they've been studied articles and books and then they've been used objective tools such as questionnaires and scales in order to end up to safe conclusions in relation to the subject under consideration.

3.2. Research Techniques

There are two main categories of research: The deductive and the inductive approach. In the deductive approach the researcher puts one or more hypotheses through the theory and then he or she investigates them with the appropriate research tools. The deductive method is based on receiving a selected sample which is then generalized for the whole population. Furthermore, it uses specific data collection tools such as the observation, the experiment, the questionnaire and the interview.¹¹¹ In this kind of approach the researcher assumes that reality consists of a set of

¹⁰⁸ Philosophy of research (2006). Real World Research.
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/philosophy.php>

¹⁰⁹ Crossan, F. (2003). Research philosophy: towards an understanding. *Nurse Researcher*, 11(1), 46-55.

¹¹⁰ Kyriazopoulos P & Samantha Ir. (2011), "Methodology of research papers, Athens, Modern Publishing

¹¹¹ Kyriazopoulos P & Samantha Ir. (2011), "Methodology of research papers, Athens, Modern Publishing

objectively defined events which establishes a cause/effect relationship and tries to control all the possible research variables that have an impact on the theory.¹¹²

On the other hand, the inductive method is about collecting data and developing a theory or searching an existing one in which the elements match with each other. The main objective of this approach is to reveal relationships between the phenomena through a discovery process. The researcher starts from some general principles and then draws conclusions by using a multitude of empirical data collection tools which allow him/her to formulate a theory that supports its validity through the observation and the open interview process.¹¹³ The Inductive Approach follows the following figure: Examination, Template, Test Case, Theory. In this kind of approach, the researcher collects the data and then develops theories, because as it has been mentioned before, it is based on the discovery of the relationships between the phenomena.¹¹⁴ According to Mc Daniel C. and Gates R. the inductive method seeks to extract conclusions through a large size of data, while deductive method attempts to develop a rational argument that will evolve from a general context into something specific.¹¹⁵ For the present research, the method which has been used was the deductive one. As a result, the assumptions which had been developed, were based on the theoretical background and this process was followed by the research in which they've been used the appropriate research tools. It is essential to use data and information in the research process which arise from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are searches that have been conducted to collect data on a specific topic over a specific period of time, while secondary sources are the sources that contain data from studies and surveys which have been carried out in the past. A research from secondary sources is usually being done in libraries or via the Internet, from books or scientific journals. In the present research they have been used both primary and secondary data. The secondary data where used in the theoretical

¹¹² Bryman, A. and Cramer, D. (1990) *Quantitative Analysis for Social Scientists*, London: Routledge

¹¹³ Kyriazopoulos P & Samantha Ir. (2011), "Methodology of research papers, Athens, Modern Publishing

¹¹⁴ Henwood, K. L. & Pidgeon, N. F. (1993), "Qualitative research and psychological theorising", pp. 14-33 in Hammersley, M. *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics & Practice*. Sage Publications, London.

¹¹⁵ Mc Daniel C & Gates R (1995) "Marketing Research Essentials", West Publishing Company

approach while examining our subject and the primary data were used while conducting the research part.

3.3. Types of research

For the proper conducting of any research study, a specific research process is required in order to determine the results of the research but also guarantee their validity. Depending on the purpose that has to be pursued each time, surveys are divided into categories.

To begin with, a research study could be exploratory or conclusive. The exploratory type of research is often based on bibliographic research or on conducting interviews to organized groups in order to identify the key issues and the variables. Exploratory research aims to solve a problem which is clearly defined and contributes to better planning. It also helps to find the definition of the subject and the data collection method. All the conclusions must be exported with a lot of attention.¹¹⁶ Considering its fundamental nature, the exploratory research often ends up to the conclusion that a perceived problem does not really exist. Exploratory research acquires an interactive character through the Internet.¹¹⁷

On the other hand, the conclusive type of research is the one which provides information that are useful in drawing conclusions and making decisions. To a great extent the conducted results are quantitative, in the form of numbers. Conclusive research is based on both secondary data, as well as on primary data, specifically for this study. This type of research may be descriptive or causal and it is selected in cases where the knowledge considering the examining subject is already available.¹¹⁸ The descriptive research (survey) aims to identify specific objectives and features of a given situation which need to be properly organized and designed. The researcher should be impartial and properly trained to be able to find the correct results.¹¹⁹ Descriptive research attempts to accurately describe the phenomenon and aims to the

¹¹⁶ Bell, J. (1997). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. Athens: Gutenberg.

¹¹⁷ Babbie, E. (2011). *Introduction to Social Research*. Athens: Kritiki

¹¹⁸ Bell, J. (1997). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time. Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. Athens: Gutenberg.

¹¹⁹ Robson, C. (2007). *Real World Research*. Athens: Gutenberg.

determination and the assessment of the characteristics of a situation which is given, while the causal research attempts to determine the effect of one variable to another one.¹²⁰

This is a conclusive, descriptive research (survey) since the first thing which had been developed was the theoretical background, then the research objectives and finally, the research questions. After this process, it was possible to find the framework within which the data would be collected and analyzed.

3.4. Research Methods

The two basic approaches regarding the conducting of a scientific research are the quantitative and qualitative approach. Each researcher has the ability to choose depending on the object, the means that he or she has on his/her disposal, but also the goals that had been set. The quantitative method uses statistical tools to analyze the results. In this method, the researcher collects systematically information and data associated with a problem in order to convert them into numerical or statistical data, in order to compare the various variables and arrive into objective interpretations of the causes and find the relationships between these variables. The most common tool used in the quantitative method for collecting information and data is the questionnaire.¹²¹ On the contrary, in the qualitative method the researcher seeks to explore in depth, to seek, but also to understand the subjective attitudes and beliefs of some individuals about a phenomenon. The qualitative method consists of the following elements: the in-depth interview, the group-focus of interest, the obscured techniques and the observation.¹²² The quantitative method was the one chosen because it collects figures and represents them in numerical form after the statistical analysis¹²³. In this way, the quantitative method gives the ability of comparisons and

¹²⁰ Neelankavil, J. P. (2007). *International Business Research*. M.E.Sharpe, Inc, New York

¹²¹ Giacomini M & Ccook D (2000), "Use guides to the medical literature: XXIII. Qualitative research in health care: Are the results of the study valid?" *I Am Med Assoc*, Vol. 284, pp 357-362.

¹²² Wadeley, A. (1995). *Ethics in Psychological Research and Practice*. Athens: Ellinika Grammata

¹²³ Sibanda, N. (2009). *Quantitative research*:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/postgradlife/downloads/quantitative%20seminar18Aug09.pdf>

group classification.¹²⁴ Another reason that has contributed in order to use the quantitative method is the researcher's high degree of objectivity comparing to the qualitative method of research. This is because in the quantitative method, the researcher collects the data and analyzes them by statistical methods without affecting the respondent or being affected, as it would be happened through this interaction during an interview.

3.5. The aim of this research and research questions

The aim of this research is to embed the terms of personal development, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence in the public sector by examining their implementation in the Greek case. Primary sources for this research are literature references on public administration with historical and cultural references of the Greek public administration system.

Behavioral public administration research as proposed by Tummers et al.,¹²⁵ is based on the science of psychology in the European framework. As such, the micro-perspective of the individual behavior and attitudes acclaim strong significance for the efficiency of these systems both for the organizations as well as for the employees therein. Since, this research is focused on the side of the employees, the terms of personal development, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence are selected as key concepts of organizational psychology in order to assess the efficiency of the system towards the employees.

The selection of the Greek case offers significant challenges in this research. First, the existing structure of the public administration was never based on

¹²⁴ Blessing, L.T.M., Chakrabarti, A. (2009). *DRM, a design research methodology*. Luxembourg: Springer.

¹²⁵ Olsen, A., Tummers, L., Grimmelikhuijsen, S., Jilke S., (2017), Behavioral Public Administration: Connecting Psychology with European Public Administration Research, in (eds) Ongaro, D., van Thiel, S., eds (2017), *The Palgrave Handbook of Public Administration and Management in Europe*, p. 2.

organizational behavior but on a hierarchical structure with no clear performance targets and thresholds. Second, because of the reforms of the memoranda, the organizational and psychological negative effects are evident in a previous “wealthy” system both in terms of remuneration and number of personnel as well.

Therefore, the questions tested in this research are the following. Is it possible in a hierarchical system, such as the Greek one, to apply organizational behavior approaches in the public administration? If this application is forced from above, such as in the present case in times of economic and social crisis, what are the limitations that we need to overcome in order for this approach to be successfully implemented? Last, organizational psychology offers a wide range of terms examining micro behavior and attitudes. Are self-efficacy, personal development and emotional intelligence the only terms that need to be examined?

3.6. Study Hypotheses

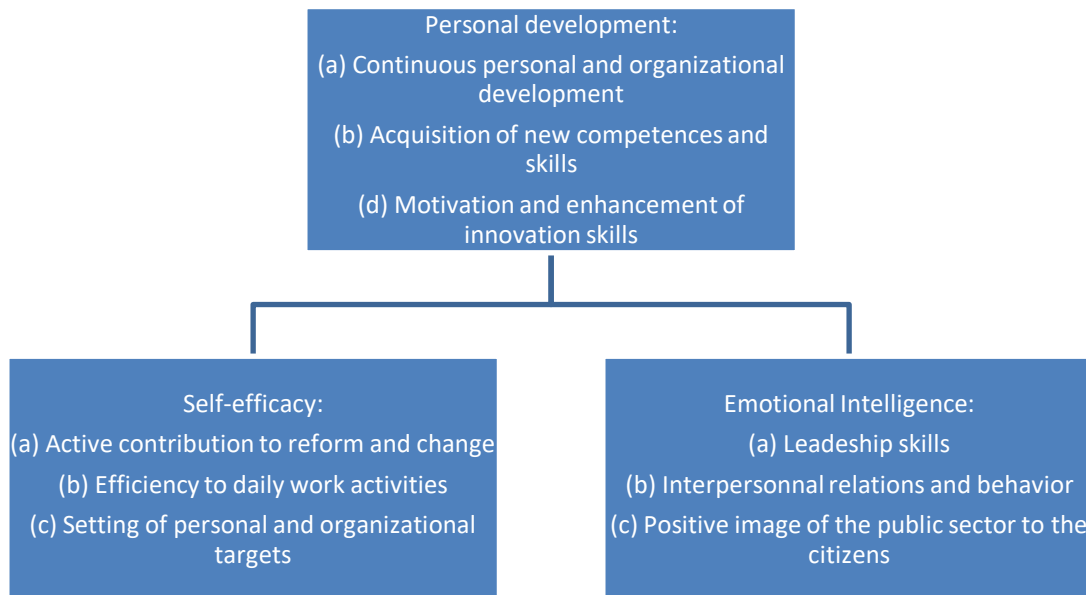
Taken as a whole, the existing research, it suggests that workers’ EI and self-efficacy are associated with personal development (Image 1). We propose the following:

Hypothesis 1. Public officers’ personal development will be positively related to general self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 2. Public officers’ personal development will be positively related to emotional Intelligence skills (appraisal of emotion in self, appraisal of emotion in others, use of emotion, emotion regulation).

Hypothesis 3. Public officers’ general self-efficacy will be positively related to emotional Intelligence skills.

Image 1. Research structure



4. Method

4.1. Research Design

The survey was conducted electronically. The questionnaire was created with the Google Docs program and then published in social media. It has been firstly published on the personal social media accounts of the researcher and secondly, on public administration staff groups. In the introductory text, the researcher presented the purpose of the questionnaire, ie the exploration of the views of the public administration officers on their personal development and the perception of their self-efficacy. To ensure the ethics of research, it was stressed that the questionnaire completion was made anonymous and the data collected would be used exclusively for research purposes. The questionnaire was notified several times and, once the required number of participants was completed, the data was stored in an excel file.

4.2. Participants

Participants were 120 employees in the public administration (72.7% women, 22.3% men). In terms of age, 12.4% of participants were up to 30 years of age, 12.4% of 31-40 years of age, 37.2% of 41-50 years of age and 38% of 50 years of age. Regarding the years of service, 24% of the participants had 0-10 years of service, 37.2% 11-20, 28.1% 21-30 and 10.7% over 30 years of service. The employment status is represented as follows: 74.4% were permanent, 8.3% had an indefinite contract and 17.4% had a fixed-term contract. Concerning the level of education, only the 6.6% had a certificate of secondary education, while 54.5% of the participants had a bachelor's degree. Also, 33.9% had a postgraduate degree and 5% had a PhD degree. Finally, 81.8% of the participants had certified ICT knowledge and 99.2% use a computer (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample

Demographic Category	N=120	Rate
SEX		
Men	33	22.3%
Women	88	72.7%
AGE		
Up to 30 years	15	12.4%
31-40 years	15	12.4%
41-50 years	45	37.2%
More than 50 years	46	38%
WORK EXPERIENCE		
0-10 years of work experience	29	24%
11-20 years of work experience	45	37.2%
21-30 years of work experience	34	28.1%
More than 30 years of work experience	13	10.7%
EMPLOYEMENT STATUS		
Permanent	90	74.4%
By contract of indefinite duration	10	8.3%
By a fixed-term contract	21	17.4%
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
Certificate of secondary education	8	6.6%
Bachelor's Degree	66	54.5%
Post graduate Degree	41	33.9%

PHD Degree	6	5%
CERTIFIED ICT KNOWLEDGE		
Yes	99	81.8%
No	22	18.2%
ICT USE		
Yes	120	100%
No	-	-

4.3. Measures

Personal Development. According to Robitschek (1998), “the Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS) is a self-report instrument that yields a single scale score for personal growth initiative”. Personal growth initiative is defined as the intention of a person to be actively and intentionally involved in changing and developing himself. The scale was designed from an outcome measure for a program in a uninhabited area with the participation of adults going through a crisis or transition and wanting to grow and change the situation positively¹²⁶. Regarding the items for the PGIS, they were generated with this population in mind. As a result, some items in the PGIS were not particular to intentional growth or pertinent across all life domains. Additionally, the PGIS was unidimensional regardless of the theoretical claims of cognitive and behavioral components in PGI¹²⁷. The PGIS includes nine items that are rated on a Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree. Item scores are summed to obtain a total PGI score. There is evidence that the PGIS is strongly positively related to psychological well-being and negatively related to psychological distress.

¹²⁶ Robitschek, C. (1998). Personal growth initiative: The construct and its measure. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 30, 183-198.

¹²⁷ Robitschek, C., Ashton, M. W., Spering, C. C., Geiger, N., Byers, D., Schotts, G. C., & Thoen, M. (2012). Development and psychometric properties of the Personal Growth Initiative Scale – II. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59, 274-287

The scale is available in:

http://fetzer.org/sites/default/files/images/stories/pdf/selfmeasures/Self_Measures_for_Personal_Growth_and_Positive_Emotions_PERSONAL_GROWTH_INITIATIVE.pdf

Self-Efficacy. The General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer, & Jerusalem, 1995) is a psychometric scale consisted of 10 items and it is designed to assess optimistic self-beliefs to cope with a variety of difficult demands in life. The scale has been originally developed in German by Matthias Jerusalem and Ralf Schwarzer in 1981 and has been used in many studies with hundred thousand of participants. The scale was designed to assess a general sense of the perception of self-efficacy, aiming to predict coping with daily difficulties as well as adaptation after experiencing all kinds of stressful life events. The construct of Perceived Self-Efficacy reflects an optimistic self-belief¹²⁸. This is the conviction that one can perform tough undertakings or adapt to difficulty in different spaces of human working. Perceived self-efficacy encourages objective target setting, exertion venture, tirelessness in face of hindrances and recuperation from difficulties. It very well may be viewed as a positive opposition asset factor. Ten items are created to tap this development. Every item alludes to effective adapting and infers an inner stable attribution of achievement. Perceived self-efficacy is an agent development, i.e., it is identified with consequent behavior and, along these lines, is significant for clinical practice and behavior change. There is a Greek Adaptation of the General Self-Efficacy Scale. It was made by Ekaterini Glynou, Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem in 1994. It is accessible in <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/greek.htm>.

Emotional intelligence. In this case, it was used the self-report Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002; in Greek, Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). The scale incorporates 16 items and has four subscales relating to the four parts of EI, as proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997). The Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA) subscale measures individuals' self-perceived capacity to comprehend their own feelings (e.g., "I have a decent feeling of why I have certain

¹²⁸ Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston, Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio. Causal and control beliefs (pp. 35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-NELSON.

sentiments"). The Appraisal of Others' Emotion (AOE) subscale measures a man's capacity to see other individuals' feelings (e.g., "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings"). The Appraisal of Others' Emotion (AOE) subscale measures a person's ability to perceive other people's emotions (e.g., "I always know my friends' emotion from their behavior"). The Use of Emotion (UOE) subscale measures the self-perceived propensity to propel oneself to improve performance (e.g., "I would always encourage myself to try the best"). The Regulation of Emotion (ROE) subscale measures individuals' capacity to manage their very own feelings (e.g., "I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally")¹²⁹.

4.4. Data Analysis

For the testing of the hypotheses correlation analysis was applied. Personal development was the dependent measure, while measures of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence were the independent measures. It was used SPSS.24 for Statistics.

5. Results

All variables were analyzed internally by the Cronbach marker. Table 2 shows the reliability of the variables. As shown, all variables show high internal consistency (from $\alpha = 0.81$ to $\alpha = 0.91$). Also, table 2 shows the averages and the standard deviations of all variables.

¹²⁹ Kafetsios, K., & Zampetakis, L. A. (2008). Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction: Testing the mediatory role of positive and negative affect at work. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 44, 710–720.

Table 2. Reliability indices, averages and standard deviations of all variables

Variables	Alphas	Mean	Standard
N = 120	a > 0,5		Deviation
1. Personal Development	a = 0.91	4.58	0.76
2. Self-efficacy	a = 0.87	3.15	0.44
3. Self-Emotion Appraisal	a = 0.81	5.65	0.93
4. Appraisal of Others' Emotion	a = 0.86	5.47	0.98
5. Use of Emotion	a=0.87	5.51	1.00
6. Regulation of Emotion	a = 0.86	5.01	1.08

Table 3 presents the correlations between the following student variables: 1. Personal Development, 2. Self-efficacy, 3. Self-Emotion Appraisal, 4. Appraisal of Others' Emotion, 5. Use of Emotion, 6. Regulation of Emotion. In order to check the correlations between the variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated, and its statistical significance was checked.

Table 3: Correlations between variables

N=120	1.Personal Development	2. Self-efficacy	3.Self-Emotion Appraisal	4.Appraisal of Others' Emotion	5. Use of Emotion	6. Regulation of Emotion
1.Personal Development	-					

2. Self- efficacy	0.614**	-				
3. Self- Emotion Appraisal	0.634**	0.499**	-			
4. Appraisal of Others' Emotion	0.444**	0.432**	0.662**	-		
5. Use of Emotion	0.672**	0.726**	0.634**	0.461**	-	
6. Regulation of Emotion	0.588**	0.436**	0.718**	0.554**	0.600**	-

$p < 0.01$

Analysis showed some strong positive correlations. More specifically:

1. There is a strong positive relationship between Personal Development and Self-efficacy ($r = 0.614$, $p < 0.01$).

2. Personal Development has a strong positive relationship with all the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence, that is Self-Emotion Appraisal ($r = 0.634$, $p < 0.01$), Appraisal of Others' Emotion ($r = 0.444$, $p < 0.01$), Use of Emotion ($r = 0.672$, $p < 0.01$) and Regulation of Emotion ($r = 0.588$, $p < 0.01$).

2. There is a strong positive relationship between Self-efficacy and all the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence, that is Self-Emotion Appraisal ($r = 0.499$, $p < 0.01$), Appraisal of Others' Emotion ($r = 0.432$, $p < 0.01$), Use of Emotion ($r = 0.762$, $p < 0.01$) and Regulation of Emotion ($r = 0.436$, $p < 0.01$).

6. Discussion

From the analyses carried out, all three assumptions of the present investigation were verified. In particular, with regard to the first hypothesis it appeared that the higher the perceptions of self-efficiency of employees in public administration, the higher they perceive their personal development. Given that personal growth refers to skills used when one is actively engaged in the process of cognitive, behavioral, or affective change (Robitschek, 1998), the results demonstrates the idea that employees in public administration who have enough efficacious abilities that they could succeed, they also aim to their personal improvement.

Moreover, with regard to the second hypothesis the higher the emotional intelligence capabilities of employees in public administration, the higher they perceive their personal development. Taking into consideration Mayer and Salovey's construct of Emotional intelligence (1997), we realize that personal development depends on how well an individual can react to the negative or positive information that has an impact on his or her emotional perspective.

From these results, it is clear that the perceptions of employees in public administration are influenced by personal perceptions and individual abilities, how effective they feel in general, and how they perceive and manage feelings of their own and others. This finding is very important, because it shows courage and power reserves to the public administration employees in Greece of the crisis. Despite the problems faced by public servants in our country, with their wage reductions and heavy tax rates, however, their personal development is linked to individual factors. In other words, they feel that if they have high emotional abilities themselves and feel effective in all areas, they can also achieve personal development. This finding is quite hopeful, because it essentially disconnects the personal development of employees in public administration from the objective difficulties and makes it a personal affair.

With regard to the third hypothesis, it appeared that the higher the perceptions of self-efficiency of employees in public administration, the higher the emotional intelligence they have in all their dimensions in understanding and managing feelings of oneself and others. Thus, in the present study, the close relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence (Sahoo, & Sia, 2015).

7. Limitations, Practical Implications and Future Recommendations

According to a publication of Dr. Rammata(2018)¹³⁰, Greek Public Administration present a plethora of limitations regarding its functioning as well as its performance. To begin with, the existence of centralism with emphasis on hierarchical control and internal accountability and the decision-making systems which are governed by a heavy bureaucracy, which ensures that legitimacy and strict hierarchical control are respected. Secondly, the huge bureaucracy, the slow decision-making and response to emerging problems (social, immigration, capitalist rise and the development of a particularly demanding private sector in terms of public services, etc.). According to a rich legislative work based on the OECD report (2010), a number of 17,000 laws passed after the regime change and recognition of 27,318 responsibilities, as well as 9,816 supportive responsibilities shared by Ministries with each other. This kind of data show that the Ministries are far from the vision of establishing Ministries-Headquarters. (White Paper on Governance, 2012). Persistence in formalism, institutional standards of action in the context of a "regulatory culture" that emphasizes the "elitist" view of institutions and the observance of processes stemming from the regulatory framework against efficiency is a crucial and an overtime problem. In this direction, there is a process of "pattern maintenance" of the public sector as it is at every cost on the part of the users. There are also particularly strict boundaries of action distinct from the external world while respecting the principle of neutrality and equal distances with users, as well as the impossibility of forming networks of partnerships and also isolationism and distance from the other subsystems that operate in the society in question, in application of the peculiar characteristics of the Napoleonic State which it adopts. Another limitation, is the indifference to the growing needs and problems of society, approaching the model of uniformity as well as the conservatism in integrating new technologies and standardizing procedures to keep up with new and pioneering standards of administrative action. Finally, the inability to partition between politics and

¹³⁰ Rammata, M., (2018), «Reform attempts in Greek public administration».

administration with a strong influence on political will in policy making and development, which goes beyond the area of responsibility of the administrative services. Against the background of the above-mentioned traditional model adopted by the Greek public administration, public administrations, from the 1970s to the 1980s, seemed unprepared to respond effectively to a series of challenges: technological, social, demographic, political, many of which have been driven by globalization, the spread of the financial crisis and the emergence of new global problems (terrorism, migratory flows, technological developments, etc.)¹³¹

Except the limitations presented regarding Greek Public Administration, there are also some others regarding the conducted research. The small number of the sample as well as the period of time which was specific could be considered as limitations. It might be possible to conduct a larger research carried out by the central public administration over a longer period of time. At a practical level, central public administration could organize seminars and trainings for those who would cultivate emotional skills in order to help the employees to achieve their goals and have high levels of performance. In future researches, it is also suggested to consider other emotional parameters, such as positive and negative emotions and anxiety of employees.

8. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the personal development of public administration officers and their perceptions of self-efficacy, in combination to their emotional intelligence capabilities. In particular, regarding the first hypothesis it appeared that the higher the perceptions of self-efficiency of employees in public administration, the higher they perceive their personal development. Regarding the second hypothesis, the higher the emotional intelligence capabilities of employees in public administration, the higher they

¹³¹ Rammata, M. (2018). “ Employee Development through Learning in Modern Greek Public Administration ”.

perceive their personal development. To sum up, we realize that there is a direct relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. Moreover, self-efficacy is an integral part of personal development. An individual who show high levels of self-efficacy present increased levels of personal development. An individual with the sentiment of personal development significantly high manages to be balanced between work life and personal life and constitutes an employee who shows good performance. The increase of the individual performance of the employees concerning the productivity of work and as a result the overall development of the organization is a matter of continuous and systematic training of its staff. There must be workshops and training which reinforce the psychological term of self-efficacy which enhance personal development and has very positive outcome to the performance of the employees. Since the research was conducted in the public sector the results showed that the employees present high levels of self-efficacy and personal development. In the public sector there is a life-long income in an era where the economy is not developmental, an era of economic stagnation with a high unemployment rate. The stable income in combination to the fixed working hours and the existence of special allowances make the employees feel secure and show high self-efficacy and personal development rates. In contrast with the private sector, where wages are often lower than those in the public sector, the income might not be stable, working hours are often more and in many cases, there is no payment of legal compensation for additional hours of work. Thus, it would be interested in the future, to conduct this research repeatedly, in a larger sample with environmental factors included in the private sector.

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Scales

- Personal Development Initiative Scale (PGIS) (Christine Robitschek, Ph.D.)

Using the scale below, circle the number which best describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

- 1 = Definitely disagree
- 2 = Mostly disagree
- 3 = Somewhat disagree
- 4 = Somewhat agree
- 5 = Mostly agree
- 6 = Definitely agree

1. I know how to change specific things that I want to change in my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I have a good sense of where I am headed in my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3. If I want to change something in my life, I initiate the transition process.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I can choose the role that I want to have in a group.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5. I know what I need to do to get started toward reaching my goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6. I have a specific action plan to help me reach my goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7. I take charge of my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8. I know what my unique contribution to the world might be.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9. I have a plan for making my life more balanced.	1 2 3 4 5 6

- General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) (Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-Efficacy scale).

Using the scale below, circle the number which best describes the extent to which you believe each statement is true.

1. Not at all true 2. Hardly true 3. Moderately true 4. Exactly true

1.) I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough

1.

2.

3.

4.

2.) If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

1.

2.

3.

4.

3.) It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

1.

2.

3.

4.

4.) I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.) Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

1.

2.

3.

4.

6.) I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

1.

2.

3.

4.

7.) I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

1.

2.

3.

4.

8.) When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

1.

2.

3.

4.

9.) If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution

1.

2.

3.

4.

10.) I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

1.

2.

3.

4.

- Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002; in Greek, Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008)

The questions below relate to how you manage your feelings in general. Mark with a circle the extent to which each sentence expresses how you feel from 1... Totally disagree to 7... Totally agree.

1.) Most of the time I understand (I have a good feeling) why I feel the feelings I feel (the way I feel).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2.) I can always understand how my friends feel about their behavior

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2.) I always set goals for myself and then I do my best to achieve them

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3.) I can reasonably control my anger and overcome the difficulties.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4.) I have a good understanding of my emotions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5.) I am a good observer of the feelings of others

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6.) I always say to myself that I am a worthy and competent person.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7.) I am perfectly able to control my emotions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8.) I always understand how I really feel

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9.) I am sensitive to the feelings and emotional state of other people

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10.) I am a person with strong motivations

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11.) When I get angry, I can always calm down quickly

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12.) I always know if I'm happy or not

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13.) I have a good understanding of the feelings of people around me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14.) I always encourage myself to do the best

1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 ... 6 ... 7

15.) I have good control of my emotions

1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 ... 6 ... 7