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The impact of financial crisis on employee relationships in the workplace

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Abstract

Unemployment is rising and its high percentages compress the content of labor relations that are subject to deregulation and serious degradation. This study examines the impact of financial crisis on employee relations in the workplace as this is expressed via emergent regulations & procedures which impact work climate, via creation of conflicts, via negative influence on established interpersonal relationships, on competitiveness among colleagues, on solidarity among people, on feelings of suspicion, on pluralism, on employee interest in performing additional work, on employers and colleagues' behaviour, on freedom of expression, on freedom of initiatives, on work communication and dissemination. The study applies a critical literature review and an empirical case study method examining a sample of 176 employees in Greece and adopts a mixed qualitative and quantitative analysis via use of descriptive statistics and cross tabulation of examined variables. The study confirms the impact of economic crisis on employee relationships in the workplace as this is expressed through the aforementioned ways and indicates that in some cases demographic characteristics of employees can either contribute to minimization of the negative impact or to the opposite.

Keywords: employee relations, economic crisis, impact, work behavior, work climate

1 Introduction

The political instability due to economic uncertainty causes great loss of profits devastating whole sectors of business and commerce. Beyond that, unemployment rates have reached high records and austerity measures have taken place in order to prevent defaulting. The work conditions nowadays regard more workload, non-defined working hours, job insecurity & stress, harassment, many types of contracts which are often not clear and many other. Employees often are forced to accept lower salaries for harder and more work, to accept unreasonable wage cuts, non promotion and many other. There is higher work intensity, deterioration of work–professional & family life imbalance- which increases stress at work, risk of harassment, growth of the outlaw economy and constant changes & increase to migration patterns.

This research, examining the case study of Greece, investigates the relations of employees during the period of the economic crisis which enforces employees to adapt to the evolution of relations under the new political and economic circumstances. The aim of the present study is the examination of how a crisis affects employee relationships and via a critical literature review and empirical study methodological approach explores the ways the economic crisis impacts employee relations ; the knowledge of the ways an economic crisis can influence employees challenge towards a further thinking about possible changes in order this impact of the crisis to be addressed, and these changes to promote improvement of relationships in the workplace.

Tracking the changes which affected working conditions since the crisis began such as loss of job positions, temporary employment and part-time work, migration, negative quality of work–life, intensity of employees' work, work accidents and low satisfaction rates employees get from their jobs, this research aims also to reveal that average trends can hide complex effects, as well as, to show that the crisis has not affected all groups of employees.

2. Economic crisis , employment & psychological contract

Halkos and Bousinakis (2017) in their study investigated the impact of stress and dissatisfaction on employees during the crisis in Greece. Primary data was collected through a random sample of 172 employees in the private and public sector of Greece using two-step

sampling. Based on this sample and the collected variables, they were able to model a series of qualitative variables for the first time as features that represent the crisis (such as anxiety, dissatisfaction, migration, reorientation, and behavioral changes). Some new findings on the causes of stress regard wage cuts, hours worked, economic migration, behavioral changes between executives and employees, adjusting priorities and minimizing career opportunities (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2017).

Fernandes and Ferreira (2017) studied the limitations of fixed-term finance during the 2008-9 economic crisis. Conclusions were made on the impact of the 2008-9 economic crisis on decision-making on the composition of employment of enterprises when it is possible to choose between permanent employees and fixed-term employees. Data from private sector companies in Portugal was used. It was found that businesses, in financial crises, employ a higher percentage of fixed-term employees than permanent employees. Their results suggest that the crisis has led businesses to use more intensively more flexible fixed-term contracts (Fernandes & Ferreira, 2017).

Sigursteinsdóttir and Rafnsdóttir (2015) showed in their study “Sickness and sickness of the rest of the employees in municipalities in Iceland” that the economic crisis had a negative impact on health civil servants. The negative impact has increased over time. Finally, the study focuses on the importance of protecting the health and well-being of all employees after the economic crisis. This is of practical importance to health and safety at work, as most western countries experience periodic economic crises, resulting in pressure on employees (Sigursteinsdóttir & Rafnsdóttir, 2015).

Sønderstrup-Andersen and Bach (2017) presented their conclusions on “Managing preventive occupational health and safety activities in Danish enterprises during a period of financial crisis”. It is a fact that with the onset of the financial crisis in 2008, pressure has been put on businesses, which in turn have been downgraded and reorganized. The conclusions of this study have shown that the economic downturn affects the psychological and behavioral health attributable to the problems of the working environment. In addition, this study focuses on a survey on occupational safety at work. The conclusions that have been discussed support the need to pay particular attention to the management of preventive health and safety at work in enterprises during a period of economic recession (Sønderstrup-Andersen & Bach, 2017).

Pratt and Hutton (2013) studied the relationship between the creative economy and the economic crisis. The authors argue that the weak conceptualization of the nature of the creative

economy, and the lack of clarity about what the creative economy is, have overturned the debate on this important issue. The findings of their research include four main points: the first introduces the field of the creative economy, the second tries to clarify what they mean by the term economic crisis. They also highlight the multifaceted nature of the financial crisis and the variable impact on the whole field of the creative economy. The third section describes the range and diversity of the real relationships between the creative economies. In the fourth section, they examined the (real and expected) effects of the financial crisis on the creative economy (Pratt & Hutton, 2013).

Voon and Ma (2014) developed a study on the Global Economic Crisis and Perceptions of Job Safety. They found that the perception of job insecurity (PJI) in China was significantly correlated with the 2008 global financial crisis. The decreases in income and wealth stemming from the crisis were also significantly correlated with the perception of job insecurity (PJI). Also, the Chinese Government's expansive policies seem to be effective in improving employees' PJI. Finally, social developments, such as social security and income protection provisions, could also be used to reduce the perception of employees' insecurity (Voon & Mab, 2014).

Aniței, Chraif and Stoica (2013) presented in their study the impact of the economic crisis on the treatment of mental and physical health in an economic company. In many companies, stress is felt at both individual and organizational levels¹. The results approved the hypothesis ($p < 0.05$) and the regression model applied for the pressure of the financial crisis (Aniței, Chraif, & Stoica, 2013).

Hijzen, Kambayashi, Teruyama and Genda (2015) presented a study on the Japanese labor market during the global financial crisis and the role of non-standard labor. They concluded that the frequency of non-standardized work has increased significantly, that the turnover of employees is much higher among non-standardized than normal employees and that adjustments to working time are less important for non-standard employees. They also demonstrated that employment responses to the global crisis would be lower if the impact of non-standardized work remained at the level observed during the 1997 crisis. The relatively small response to employment observed during the global financial crisis. However, it is not

¹ Current research aims to illuminate the impact of the economic crisis on the predictive power of the variables: satisfaction, physical health, mental health, anxiety reactions, and addressing employees' performance in a financial banking unit.

necessary to increase the frequency of non-standard work (Hijzen, Kambayashi, Teruyama, & Genda, 2015).

Anifantis, Bustas and Karageorgiou (2016) studied the maintenance of occupational safety and health levels during the economic crisis. It has been found that the current financial crisis has put considerable pressure on the labor market and working conditions while at the same time challenging occupational safety and health. Significant organizational functions such as training, equipment purchase and innovation are important (Anyfantis, et al., 2016).

Tennant (2011) refers to his study of the factors that influence whether and how businesses respond to signs of early warning of economic and financial turmoil. Many of the discussions that are taking place around the recent global crisis are based on the political reactions of the respective governments to the economic and economic recession. In addition, much less attention has been paid to how private sector businesses have responded to the crisis. The study identified responses to the crisis and used regression accounting techniques to analyze the factors. International transmission mechanisms, key business features, management experience, and expectations of changing conditions in the finance, production and input markets were investigated as explanatory variables. The results that are presented are important, as the timely response of businesses to the economic and financial crisis often determines the extent of the final outcomes on people's means of living in a country (Tennant, 2011).

Fuente, López, González, Alcántara and Ritzel (2014) studied the impact of the economic crisis on occupational injuries. They analyzed all workplace accidents that occurred in Spain during the period 2000-2009 and the possible impact of the current economic crisis on occupational accidents rates and the severity of accidents. The results of the survey confirm that professional accidents in Spain are affected by the current economic crisis, which caused a sharp decline in both the number of accidents and the possibility of accidents. This may be justified by a number of factors such as age, gender, length of service, size of business, and employment stability of the injured worker. Economic crises appear to be causing a sort of «natural choice» in the labor market (Fuente, López, González, Alcántara, & Ritzel, 2014).

2.1 Psychological contract at work and financial crisis

In recent years, and due to the economic crisis, the issue of labor relations has emerged in the foreground. Government policy is constantly producing fiscal adjustment and austerity measures (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014). One of many measures has also affected labor relations. This gave rise to research in the context of the diploma thesis of the Master's Degree Program in Business Administration, a survey on labor relations in the midst of an economic crisis in Greece.

2.1.1 Psychological contract

As far as the subject of the psychological contract is concerned, the existing literature is particularly extensive. The psychological contract as a very general concept describes labor relations. The psychological contract is defined as «individual beliefs that are shaped by the organization and concern the terms of a mutual exchange agreement between individuals and organizations. The key issue here is the belief that a promise has been given and a price is offered in return» (Voon & Mab, 2014). However, in spite of the size and variety of literature, due to the specific period, the economic crisis is increasingly affecting the various organizations, some data have changed and employees are increasingly less important in the psychological contract and in the whether it is violated (Probst, et al., 2018).

The psychological contract is the opinion of employees has about what they owe to the organization, but also what the organization owes to them, and in their case «burdened» by the effects of the economic crisis. For example, the employee may think that the organization has agreed on certain things, such as providing security and opportunities for promotion, in exchange for hard work and employee loyalty, but what happens when unpredictable external factors such as the financial crisis of the last years that plagues our country. However, this does not necessarily mean that the senior members of the organization agree or have the same understanding of the psychological contract and are not affected by the aforementioned unusual external factors of the economic crisis.

The psychological contract is a type of pre-agreed contract and consists of three strands (Figure 2.1 (Anyfantis, et al., 2016):

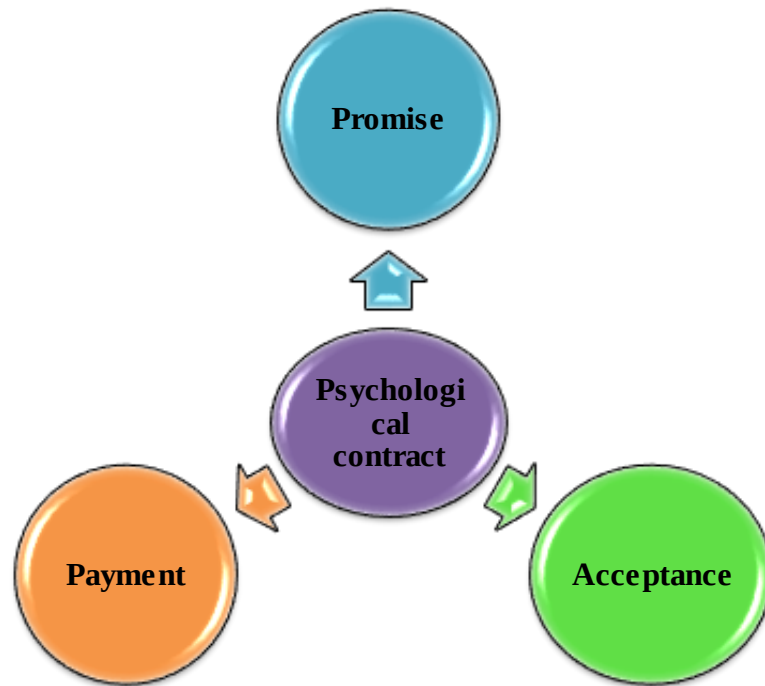


Figure 0.1: The psychological contract.

Source: (Anyfantis, et al., 2016).

1. Promise, payment and acceptance. The promise is a commitment to a future course of action. At an individual level, the psychological contract is based on promises made to the employee by the organization, but they are not necessarily based anywhere.
2. Payment occurs when something is offered in return for a promise from the employee. For example, when the organization rewards employees in a way that is consistent with perceptible promises, this is a fulfillment of the organization's debts and may lead to further pay expectations on the part of employees.
3. Finally, acceptance reflects the voluntary agreement to participate in the terms of the contract. Acceptance implies that both sides are responsible for the terms of the psychological contract, once they have chosen to participate in this agreement. Therefore, both employees and the organization are responsible for the performance of the contract.

2.1.2 Satisfaction of a psychological contract

It has been observed that fulfilling the expectations of the psychological contract affects the various stages of the work. The satisfaction of the psychological contract reflects the quality of the «exchange» process between the employee and the employer, for example that individuals are more or less obliged to the organization in exchange for the incentives they have received from the employer.

Research has shown that satisfying the psychological contract creates feelings for employees to be valued by the organization, which leads to positive results. Fulfilling the promises is likely to (Anyfantis, et al., 2016):

- create positive effects on work,
- improve employee performance,
- «revive» the moral
- brings the worker closer to the organization, in the sense that the employee will have feelings of sympathy and dedication to the employer.

This feeling arises from the person's perception that by giving something, the employer will recognize his offer to the organization.

Thus, once employees base their attitudes on the perception that what they are doing will lead to a specific reward from the organization, either in the short or long term, they unintentionally help the organization to serve its need for employment of loyal and responsible employees (Rajalakshmi & Naresh, 2018).

2.1.3 Violation of a psychological contract due to financial crisis

However, when the framework is not well defined, it is sometimes unclear what one side owes to each other, and this makes debts more difficult, and even when there is financial difficulty in the organization. This usually leads to a violation of the psychological contract and, by extension, to negative results mainly on the part of the employees (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2017).

The violation of the psychological contract is defined as «the organization's failure to fulfill one or more of the debts of an employee's psychological contract». This violation, of course, for the employee is more than a simple failure of the organization to meet its expectations. Reactions are intense because respect and codes of conduct are questioned, because virtually a promise has been «broken» and the person now perceives it as something personal. As a result, the relationship between employee and employer turns into a transaction, but how far it will go depends on the power of the violation.

Violation of the psychological contract can lead to a number of reactions and behavioral changes. These reactions may be (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2017):

- Decrease of commitment to the organization,

- reduction of work satisfaction,
- performance
- increase cynicism.

Labor cynicism has been defined as a negative attitude and involves the belief that the organization has no integrity, causes negative emotions and the tendency of employees to criticize the organization.

2.2 Results of a psychological barrage

Commitment of the employee to the organization

Research has shown that a violation of a psychological contract may have a serious negative effect on the employee's emotional commitment to the organization. According to the theory of «social exchange», this negative effect may be due to the fact that employees generally tend to seek a fair and balanced exchange with the organization. Therefore, if employees feel that the organization has failed to fulfill its commitments, they will tend to limit their own contribution to the organization in order to restore balance. This can be expressed through a lower level of commitment to the body (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Violation of a psychological contract

There is a conceptual distinction between the perceived burglary of a psychological contract and the experience of violating the psychological contract, which is an emotional state that is very likely to accompany the perception of burglary. It is stated with certainty that there is a positive relationship between contract breaches. In addition, in trying to determine the strength of the relationship between burglary and violation, it is certain that immediately after the burglary the employee tries to perceive the situation. This interpretation process determines the intensity of the negative emotions the worker experiences and which creates problems in his / her relationship with the other employees (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Attitudes and behavior of employees

Breaking a psychological contract has a major impact on attitudes and behavior of employees. Negative events in the workplace cause negative emotional responses such as anger and frustration. These feelings affect employees' perceptions of their work and their level of effort. Also, to restore the balance of joint exchanges with the organization, they may reduce their levels of contribution to the organization (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Exhaustion

Breaking the psychological contract is a very important factor that affects the burnout of employees. It threatens the predictability and sense of control that people think they have on their environment. Breaking a psychological contract can cause professional burnout, as it alters reciprocity and mutual trust, which are crucial to sustaining work and well-being. It has been observed that contract disruption is more intense among highly qualified staff and is likely to increase professional burnout (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Intention to withdraw

The intention to withdraw reflects the subjective likelihood that an individual will leave his body within a certain amount of time. The intention to withdraw can serve as an indicator of someone's psychological attachment to the body. It is less constrained by external factors, such as the availability of an alternative work, and therefore more accurately reflects a person's attitude toward the organization. The intention to resign is a common reaction to negative events that have to do with work, so the burglary of a psychological contract, as a negative event for employees, can increase their tendency to leave. So the break-up of a psychological contract is negatively related to the intention to leave (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Behavior of an organizational citizen

Previous researches have shown that behavior of an organizational citizen can be negatively affected by the organization's failure to adequately fulfill the employees' psychological contract. For example, employees whose psychological contracts were not fulfilled by their employers were less likely to show good behavior by a citizen.

According to the reciprocity rule, when employees feel that the organization has fulfilled its obligations towards them, they will retaliate by helping the organization. Conversely, when employees feel that promises have not been fulfilled, they will only pay back their basic services. So the burglary of a psychological contract is negatively related to the behavior of an organizational citizen (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Unreliability

An emotional response to the violation of a psychological contract is also mistrust. Trust has an emotional component and people make emotional investments in relationships of trust. The strong magnitude of the impact between burglary and distrust makes sense because of the uncertainties involved in social exchange relationships. Social exchanges require the

individual to trust the opposite side to fulfill their obligations. There are cases where the fulfillment of obligations is not possible on the opposite side and so the individual reacts with distrust, which can cause negative emotions and behaviors. Because the burglary of a psychological contract is a negative event for many employees, the emotional component of mistrust may outweigh sensible judgments in decision-making and other cognitive processes (Anyfantis, et al., 2016).

Compared to emotions such as anger and sorrow, distrust leads to feelings of betrayal and revenge and is therefore a more specific reaction to the burglary. So the disruption of a psychological contract is positively related to distrust.

Satisfaction with work

The perception of a psychological barrage represents an imbalance in the relationship of social exchanges between the employee and the employer and stimulates the worker to repel through negative attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. The height and level of negative attitudes and attitudes at work resulting from perceived contract breach are likely to arise from the practical consequences of negative attitudes and behaviors. Job satisfaction is said to be a function of the interrelated relationship between what one wants from a person's job and what the person perceives as an offer. The inconsistency between what has been promised one side and what the other has taken is likely to lead to feelings of dissatisfaction. So the burglary of a psychological contract is negatively related to job satisfaction (Anyfantis, et al., 2016).

2.3 Job satisfaction and economic crisis

Satisfaction with work is the degree to which work needs are met and how much of this performance is perceived by the employee. It is a positive or negative valuation judgment that someone is doing for the job or professional situation of someone else. So job satisfaction is a combination of what a worker feels about his job and what he knows about the various aspects of his work.

Three types of explanation have been proposed for assessing the change in employee satisfaction (Voon & Mab, 2014).

- A. The first formula tried to explain this change exclusively on the part of the employees and tried to create a relationship between adaptation measures and job satisfaction.

- B. The second explanation sees the change in work satisfaction only in relation to the differences in the nature of the work that people perform.
- C. Finally, the satisfaction a person derives from his work is a function not only of the objective attributes of that job but also of the individual's motivation.

According to theory, total work satisfaction includes several aspects. In particular, five aspects of satisfaction, pay satisfaction, occupational safety, colleagues, supervision, and opportunities are considered (Figure 2.2). The Hakman and Oldman (1980) work patterns model states that when employees see certain features of their work as enjoyable, they will develop higher levels of satisfaction and work motivation.

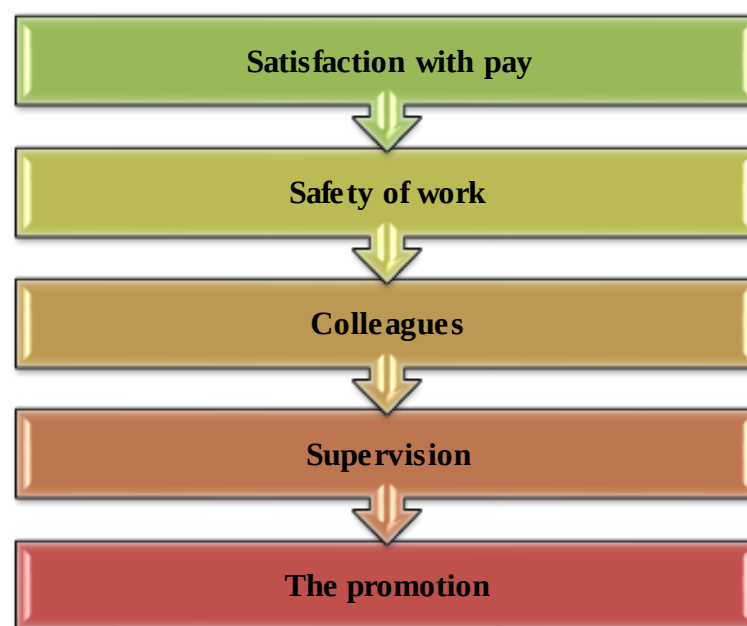


Figure 0.2: The five aspects of job satisfaction.

Source: (Voon & Mab, 2014).

In a highly labor-intensive environment that offers levels of pay higher than the industry average, one could expect employees to develop not only higher levels of pay satisfaction but also their satisfaction for supervision and promotion opportunities.

The negative effects of a psychological contract disruption on job satisfaction are well documented in the literature. Breaking of a psychological contract results in reduced work satisfaction for a variety of reasons. These include (Anyfantis, et al., 2016):

- ✓ Unfulfilled expectations,
- ✓ loss of confidence,
- ✓ loss of consideration,

- ✓ feelings of injustice and
- ✓ obstacles to progress in meeting targets.

For most of the above factors, the underlying cause is the economic crisis. Thus, unfulfilled expectations and promises can reduce the satisfaction of employees' work, and this reduction is expected to affect other outcomes such as employee engagement.

There are researches that claim that work satisfaction is the result of work commitment. Of course, total job satisfaction is a positive outcome of employee engagement. However, it acknowledges that long-term studies are required which will provide definitive conclusions on the causal effects of employee engagement and the extent to which social exchange explains these relationships.

Other studies argue that work satisfaction is predictive of work commitment. Employees who are satisfied with their work are expected to be committed to their work for a variety of reasons. Employee satisfaction is constantly shaped by exchange relationships within the organization. High exchange of employees and the organization lead to high job satisfaction and organizational commitment. That is, a positive emotional and cognitive assessment of work is expected to prompt employees to engage in work in return for job satisfaction. Several studies identify a strong correlation between work satisfaction and occupational well-being, where low work satisfaction increases occupational well-being (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

There is a lack of studies on the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace, which has been covered in recent years with the advent of the 2008 World Financial Crisis.

3. Labor Relations and Financial Crisis

3.1 Conceptual Identification of Labor Relations

The term industrial relations were first used in Great Britain and North America during the 1920s by John Rogers Commons (1920). Then Robert F. Hoxie (1925) linked them to the concepts of Personnel Management and Human Resources Management. All three concepts denote a practical activity, which is the management of people according to John D. Rockefeller (1930) (Lixouriotis, 2017).

At academic and bibliographic level, their foundation is the corporate claim that «people are the most important asset for a business or organization». However, it is necessary to separate (at academic level) the concept of Labor relations from the concepts of Personnel Management and Human Resource Management and to analyze how it approaches their common research fields. The labor relations were initially focused on some parts of the economy. They have slowly expanded both in the public sector and in the private sector, in small and medium-sized enterprises. The focus is on employment: all forms of economic activity in which the employee works under the supervision of the employer and receives a salary in return for his work.

The term labor relations excludes housework and also self-employed and freelancer. Contractual relationships between self-employed and their clients are not working relationships. According to Allan Flanders and Hugh Clegg (1950), an important element is paid or paid work, which is a working relationship between an employer and a worker. For the employee, remuneration is a key factor in his survival. However, there are also working conditions that enter into an employer-employee relationship, such as the opportunity for development, training, security and freedom of expression and action (Leat, et al., 2009).

Labor relations have developed particularly since the Second World War. Although there were widespread changes in the balance between employers and trade unions within the work systems, reflecting the changing economic environment of the era, various sociological writers (Clarke, Bamber and Lansbury (1998)) argue that these changes were not and so radical.

Labor relations are a sector of social and economic sciences. Their object is to study the factors that influence and determine the working behavior of individuals and groups within a system of dependent wage work. The term labor relation implies, in the first place, any formal and informal employment relationship between employees and employers. Thus, labor relations mean multidimensional relationships between employers, employees, trade unions and state institutions. Therefore, labor relations are «triangular» between the three «social partners» (i.e. employers, employees and the state) (Figure 3.1) (Danos, 2011).

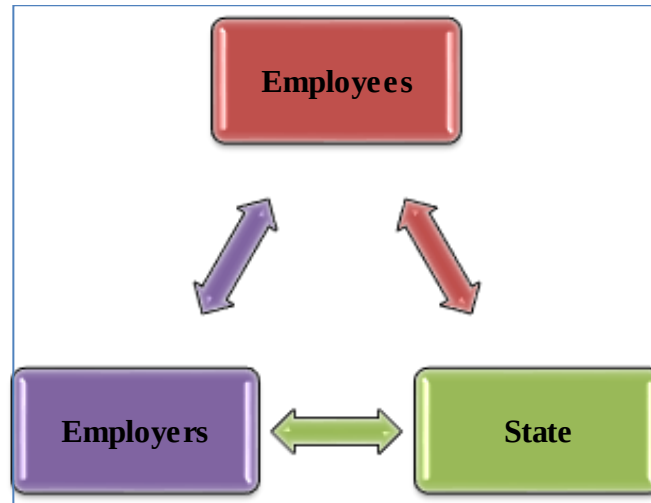


Figure 3.1: «Social Partners» of labor relations.

Source: (Danos, 2011).

International relations have been dominated by labor relations, since workplace relationships have been the subject of a systematic study since the Industrial Revolution. The term labor relation was first established with articles and studies in the 1970s. The term labor relations, not labor relations, were chosen.

In addition to labor relations, labor relations are also targeted at salary, wages, employment, unemployment, collective bargaining, collective bargaining, strikes, and related issues such as the impact of new technology on employment, labor relations and productivity, etc. As a result of the development of industrial relations, the creation of new working conditions and conditions, which are resulted not only in the improvement of the position of the employees in the labor market, social and economic reality, but also the development of people's living standards (Leat, et al., 2009).

3.2 Theories of labor relations

Labor relations from the point of view of academic teaching and research use many elements and methods of sociology, history, legal and political science.

Initially, the social scientists McGregor and Taylor, through the motivational theories they developed, formulated a set of principles related to employment and labor relations. Although their theories are not purely focused on labor relations, they are considered to be the basis for their subsequent academic analysis (Piteroglou, 2006).

The most recent major theoreticians of labor relations, unlike Taylor and McGregor, use in their analysis mainly historical data related to the phenomenon of the development of trade union movement and collective bargaining. According to a broad ranking, these academic teachers and scholars, together with economists Thorstein, Veblen, Mitchell and Commons, are considered to represent the so-called institutional school. In the same school, but with new interpretations and analyzes adapted to more recent data, Priore, Dolringer and Bluestone are included. The latter emphasize the segmentation of the labor market and the effects of social and institutional data such as class and racial discrimination, etc. Institutional analysts, of course, reject the neoclassical view of maximizing profits and avoid using or minimizing mathematics and indifference curves in their analyzes, which are considered as key analytical tools for classical economic thinking (Piteroglou, 2006).

Schumpeter (1951) and Commons (1957) then articulated the pluralistic approach that the concept of pluralism implies the participation of many social groups in the power and wealth through a network of values, norms and institutions. Pluralist theory argues that organized interests are expressed through bodies (trade unions, representative committees).

Moreover, the systemic approach is the most comprehensive view on the issue of labor relations. It is introduced by Dunlop (1958), who argued that labor relations are necessarily a social system with specific institutions and rules. The system of labor relations consists of a hierarchy of managers with their representatives, a hierarchy of employees with their representatives, a hierarchy of state bodies, and various intermediary bodies that take up a regulatory role in collective bargaining. Craig (1980) extended Dunlop's theoretical background, considering the following subsystems in the wider system of labor relations: political / legal system, ecological system, economic system, social system. The process of negotiation is determined by specific factors, such as the internal structure of the actors involved, the institutional framework, etc. Wages, working conditions and additional benefits are considered to be the results of the negotiation.

The neo-classical school has as its main object and priority the functioning of labor markets which determine the level of wages and the distribution of labor. The roots of this school refer to Adam Smith's classical economic theory. Since the 1950s, a prominent representative of the neoclassical faculty is Milton Freedman as well as Theodore Schultz and Alber Rees. The latter even thoroughly analyzed the trade union economics. The operation of enterprises, trade unions, tradition and culture, social classes, wealth distribution, social

inequalities, etc. are considered to be given and mutually exclusive and are not seriously taken into account. Neoclassical theory emphasizes the goals of the average man, who seeks to maximize the level of his life, always striving for the best result, according to the possibilities that exist. Based on this rational behavior, the main objective is to maximize the economic result, i.e. the largest possible result at the lowest possible cost (Mitropoulos, 2017).

Finally, there is another school, the Neo-Marxist or radical school that has been influenced by Marxist analysis. The main representatives of this school are Allen, Gordon, Beaverman and Hyman, who argue that instead of working relationships, labor contradictions, as expressed by modern class contrasts, should be talked about. Radical theory derives from Marxist thinking and was developed mainly by Hyman (1972). According to this theory, the constitution of trade unions exercises significant influence in collective bargaining. The capitalist system had to impart some freedoms to the employees. The state is in favor of employers and entrepreneurs at the expense of the interests (Piteroglou, 2006).

a. Increasing tension and insecurity in terms of employment

The prolonged crisis in the labor market has shaped a number of negative developments in the quality of work. More specifically, it is based on the latest available OECD data showing the income quality enjoyed by employees; Greece is in the 21st position. Income quality is assessed taking into account both the distribution of income and income inequality within the workforce (Mitropoulos, 2017).

OECD data show that in Greece the most important component determining its position is low average income, as our country belongs to the lowest average income class within OECD countries.

An important problem of the Greek labor market is also the high labor insecurity. It is based on OECD data; employees in Greece are experiencing a combination of higher unemployment and low security from unemployment. This combination leads to higher job insecurity compared to all OECD member countries. It is noted that the risk of unemployment is related to two parameters (Figure 3.2) (Panagopoulos, 2017):

- a) First, with the unemployment rate and,
- b) Second, with the duration of unemployment.

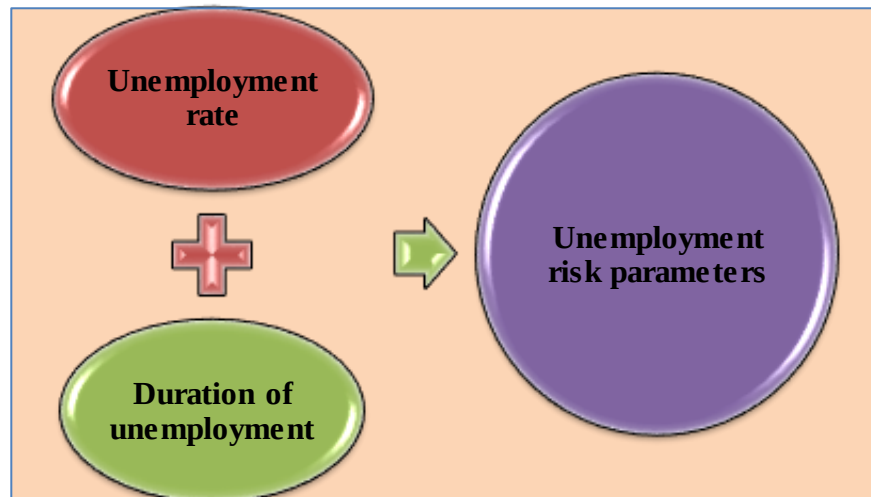


Figure 3.2: Unemployment risk parameters.

Source: (Panagopoulos, 2017).

Accordingly, the degree to which employees are secured from unemployment depends on the size of the unemployment benefit and the coverage it achieves.

Two elements to be noted are (Mitropoulos, 2017):

- a) Firstly, with the exception of Spain, the other OECD member countries do not show a correspondingly high risk of unemployment.
- b) Secondly, the unemployment insurance in Greece is one of the lowest in the OECD countries.

In other words, the labor force in Greece faces the greatest risk among developed countries to remain unemployed, without at the same time providing a satisfactory system of protection for the unemployed as there is no real concern for the protection of the long-term unemployed.

A second statistic in which Greece stands out in a negative way compared to other developed countries is the very high labor intensity. In particular, Greece is at the forefront of labor intensity as a result of an explosive combination of high employers' demands for employees and, on the other hand, little access to the resources needed to successfully carry out their work. It is particularly daunting that the class of high work demands is related not only to the time available to the worker to carry out his work, which, according to the OECD, is inadequate in the case of Greece, but also with the health risk resulting from the work, which is particularly high.

Accordingly, the category of «scarce resources» available to employees to carry out their work is affected by their ability to demonstrate autonomy in the performance of their work, particularly as regards the hierarchy of tasks and the method of work, as well as the possibility of obtaining training at work. In addition, it is affected by the support that employees receive in their work. In other words, employees in Greece are faced with a double difficulty: on the one hand, the high demands of employers and, on the other, the lack of adequate means to achieve the objectives assigned to them, which they leads to high labor intensity with immediate negative consequences for their health.

Lastly, it is noted that, also on the basis of the OECD data, there is a time-barred erosion of the legal protection of work - in particular, there is deterioration in the legal protection of work, both in the category of worker protection from individual dismissal and in the category of protection temporary work. On the contrary, there is relative stability in legal protection from collective redundancies, which is at risk, however, that it will be overturned by future changes in the relevant legislation.

b. Labor relations during the economic crisis

i. Changes in labor relations in Europe of the economic crisis

The impact of the global economic crisis on labor relations and especially on social security has begun to become visible in all countries. Adopted employment policies have an impact on the protection of wage-earners, who have been in a difficult position because conditions that run counter to the traditional requirements of labor law are prevailing. The intensity of the crisis in Europe, its developments and its impact in the field of labor relations are of a particular nature, creating negative effects on employment and work. Labor relations are changing and the economic crisis is being used to a great extent and as a cause for these painful changes (Gambroudis, 2012).

A common denominator of the measures taken is the reduction of labor costs and the further development of the flexibility spectrum, such as facilitating redundancies, expanding flexible forms of work and working hours, changing the collective bargaining system and shaping the wages. In most countries, the measures have at their hearts to increase flexibility while at the same time limiting the flexibility and security link, as the search for «safeguards» for employees in times of economic crisis seems to be a luxury. At the legislative level, judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Communities contribute to the creation of

conditions for the deregulation of labor and social rights. The question of the principle of equal treatment in employment and labor relations, paid annual leave, sick leave, and the introduction of higher retirement margins are some elements that characterize the contemporary landscape of labor relations.

In some countries, labor relations regimes are similar in all sectors of economic activity, while others differ considerably from sector to branch, and some sectors have similar labor relations regimes, regardless of country. Labor relations are more diversified by industry and less by country, i.e. the differences between industries within countries tend to be greater than the differences between countries in the same industry. The telecommunications industry has the highest similarities among the 27 EU countries.

According to the scientific report of the Economic and Social Development Observatory on labor relations for the years 2009-2017, the following trends in Europe and Greece are reflected in the new measures implemented (Panagopoulos, 2017):

1. The conversion of full-time posts into part-time jobs, the extension of temporary work contracts, the extension of the duration of test contracts terminated without payment of compensation, as in the case of Greece (from 2 to 12 months) and in Portugal (4 months) and the development of the rotation of work with limited working days within the week (three-day, four-day).
2. The facilitation of redundancies on the grounds of strengthening the competitiveness of enterprises. Specifically in Greece the facilitation of redundancies has been as follows:
 - The limit for collective redundancies has increased, as for businesses over 150 employees it has increased by 150% (from 2% to 5%) and for enterprises from 20-150 employees by 50% (from 4 to 6 employees).
 - The cost of compensation has been reduced by reducing the warning time from 24 to 6 months.
 - The test contract period has been extended from 2 months to 12, so no compensation is paid.
 - The conditions for the validity of the contracts of employment complained of have been relaxed, as evidenced by the increase in the number and reduction of the amount of compensation payments due to dismissal.
3. The liberalization of working hours and the flexible management of working time. For example, in France, business operations have expanded on Sunday, resulting in a 30%

increase in the number of employees on Sundays. In Greece, the cost of overtime is reduced, since any form of work extension (overtime and overtime) is subject to a 20% reduction in wage increases.

4. Changes in the system of collective bargaining and collective agreements, the main feature of which is the deregulation of wage formation conditions and the wider content of labor relations.
5. Unemployment is on the rise and is the main expression for almost all European countries, as few countries seem to have not been hit hard by this. Indicative unemployment rates for various Euro zone countries for 2017 are:

- a. The Member States with the lowest unemployment rates:

- Czech Republic: 2.9%
- Germany: 3.6%
- Malta: 4.2%

- b. The Member States with the highest unemployment rates:

- Greece: 21.2% (first place in the ranking).
- Spain: 17.1%

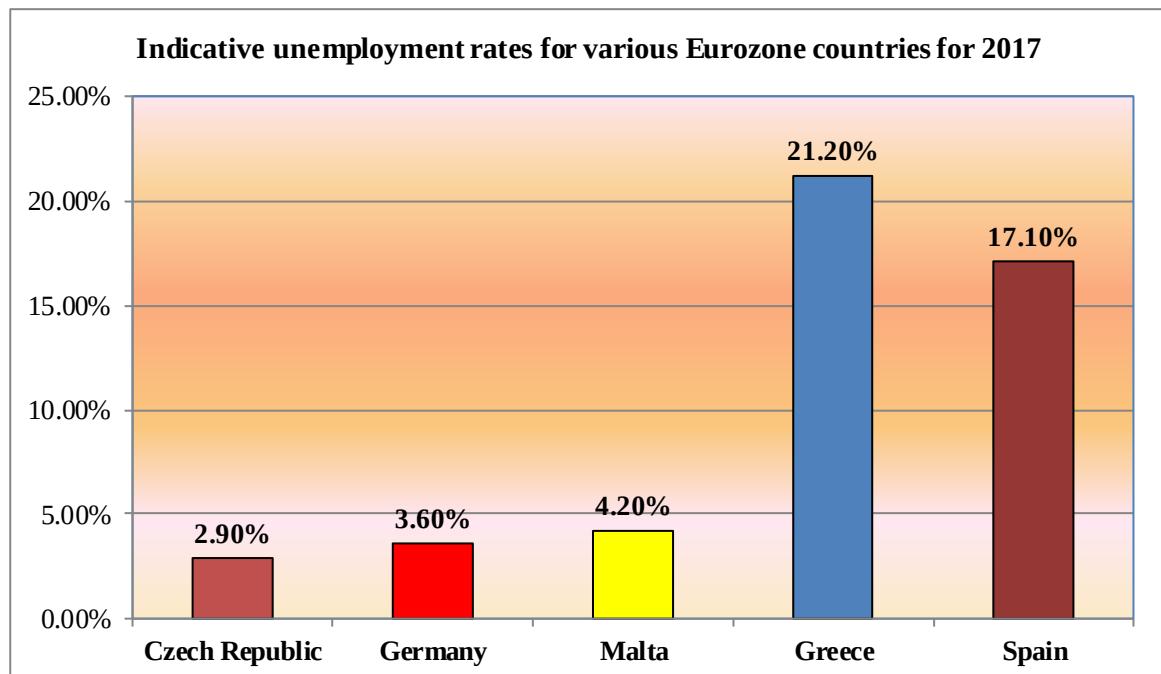


Diagram 3.1: Indicative unemployment rates for various Euro zone countries for 2017.

Source: (Panagopoulos, 2017).

6. Work flexibility is always on the agenda as a central choice of employment policies, seeking to reduce labor costs, but the result is that it leads to increased job insecurity. For example, in the Netherlands 45% of employees are part-time employees.
7. Vocational education / training policies continue to be key choices in the context of active employment policies, but the results at this level are not particularly important. These policies are complemented by strengthening the role of lifelong learning as a tool for boosting employment.
8. Significantly boosting the presence of private promoters of employment detracts from the role of public bodies.
9. The wage policies pursued in Europe during the crisis are characterized by constraints that are mainly reflected in the reduction and containment of employee wages. Larger reductions are recorded in the public sector due to the reduction of public deficits. In Greece, in the public sector, with successive laws, there has been a drastic and horizontal reduction in earnings, squeezing the purchasing power of employees to more than 30%. Reducing the role of the public sector leads to a reduction in employment (in Greece the ratio of recruitment and retirement to the public sector is 1:5) and the shrinking of employees' rights, and these consequences are of course more visible in the countries that have borrowed internationally through loan agreements (memoranda), such as Greece, Romania, Hungary and Latvia.
10. The decentralization of collective bargaining and collective bargaining agreements is a particularly widespread practice that is intensifying during the crisis period, which undermines the role and the validity of centralized collective agreements mainly for the operational and local collective contract.
11. The deterioration of health and safety conditions in a large number of countries. An example is Latvia, which shows an increase of 47.6% in industrial accidents and related disabilities in one year.
12. Low trade union density and its reduction even in countries with a high level of unionism are special features of the modern European context, although we are in a period when wage labor is strongly tested by the crisis. Trade unions are looking for new conditions for their more effective intervention either through organizational restructuring and strengthening the autonomous role of trade union action, or through internationalization practices of the trade union movement. The most obvious impact of the economic crisis on

labor relations - as a result of the decline in the size of the workforce - was the reduction in participation in trade unions.

13. Strikes show a significant increase, especially in countries where the symptoms of the crisis are stronger.
14. Social security continues to be subject to severe cuts in employees' rights with consequent repercussions on pensions. Changes in social security are manifested by shrinking insurance rights, raising retirement ages and introducing disincentives to early retirement. In Greece, the full retirement age is raised to 67 years and to 60 for reduced retirement, while the required number of pensionable years increases and the replacement of 35 years to 40 years for full retirement.
15. The period of the crisis and the threat of job losses greatly trigger the availability of institutions and impose new relevant regulations.

ii. Changes in labor relations in Greece of the economic crisis

Labor relations in Greece follow the general pattern of labor deregulation, as in the rest of Europe. In Greece, a productive model based on low labor costs (low wages) is applied, which favors the deterioration of labor relations. The use of flexible practices in working time and pay forms is a practice promoted by policies pursued at national and European level, with a «declared» goal of tackling unemployment, increasing employment and enhancing competitiveness. However, the consequences of using flexible practices at work are the division of labor, the existence of multi-speed employees and the weakening of trade union action (Gambroudis, 2012).

The economic crisis in Greece has aggravated this situation as it is linked to measures in the field of the labor market and labor relations. The main elements in Greece are job insecurity, unemployment and shrinking business activity.

In the public sector cuts have been implemented, which were considered necessary to reduce public deficits and a necessary condition for the support of the Greek economy by international organizations, so did the private sector for the economic rationalization of enterprises. In addition to wage cuts, financial support provided for significant changes in collective bargaining and collective bargaining agreements.

Employees' unions have responded immediately to the announcement of new measures, arguing that employees are not responsible for the expansion of the budget deficit, and that

these measures will not contribute to the achievement of the goals set. The shrinking purchasing power of employees means reducing consumption and demand and thus further down turning the economy.

In terms of contracts, it is possible not to apply a more favorable collective agreement, in case of a collusion of collective agreements, by introducing the possibility of erosion of the sector with worse operational as well as national general, with worse collective agreements. In this way, the principle of a more favorable collective welfare regulation is overthrown, which is a fundamental principle in the system of collective bargaining and employment contracts. The national general collective agreement on the minimum wage for young people under the age of 25 does not apply while annual apprenticeships are introduced for young people to whom the minimum wage will not apply. Unemployment benefits are replaced by forms of education, training and subsidizing the employment of unemployed people by enterprises as a separate active employment policy (Mitropoulos, 2017).

New measures have also been introduced to reduce the payment of redundancy payments, to increase the limit for collective redundancies, to redefine the maximum term of fixed-term contracts, to remove restrictions in the closed professions, to consider lifting permanence in the public sector, on the basis of which permanence follows the job and not the employee. The social security system is treated as a fiscal issue, with the result that the level of social efficiency is subordinated to achieving the sustainability of the insurance system rather than to the needs of citizens.

The rise in unemployment, wage cuts and collective redundancies has become concepts that describe the landscape in the labor market and labor relations in Greece. With the country's integration into the financial support mechanism and the signature of the Memorandum, a rigorous fiscal adjustment program is being implemented to reduce public spending and increase public revenues. Measures are envisaged for fiscal consolidation, financial sector regulation, and reforms to make the Greek economy competitive. Part of these reforms is also the ongoing interference in the functioning of the private labor market and in particular in the field of individual and collective labor relations as they have been shaped by labor law and collective labor agreements.

The intensity of the economic crisis and the new measures shape a new situation in the labor market and a new working landscape strongly differentiated compared to the picture before the crisis. The changes that take place in the Greek labor market as a result of the

economic crisis are a continuation of the changes in the workplace that have taken place over the last 20 years in Greece with gradual and complementary interventions aimed at enhancing competitiveness and reducing labor costs. Introducing a wide variety of measures to encourage and develop labor flexibility.

Developments in the field of labor relations in Greece are a consequence of the economic crisis and the imposition of the memorandum. The aim of the memorandum is the public sector, which, through the depreciation it accepts, is pressed to give in to private interests. The implementation of the Memorandum seeks to deregulate the system that determines wages and general industrial relations. Very low labor costs are consolidated, while collective and sectoral contracts are abolished. Employees have no protection against layoffs, resulting in increased unemployment through collective redundancies and significant wage cuts.

At the same time, the reforms of the Memorandum are being developed and are aimed at permanently achieving labor market flexibility and labor relations, and in particular the facilitation of (Panagopoulos, 2017):

- Flexibility in the size of employment: facilitating redundancies and recruitment and reducing the relative costs of these.
- The flexibility of the employment content: flexible forms of work, temporary and part-time work, employee lending, «independent service» employment, teleworking.
- Flexibility in working time organization: working time adjustment, working time calculation on an annual basis, overtime limitation.
- Flexibility in wage formation: reduction in age-differentiated minimum wages, local, sectoral or national level unemployment, wage formation at enterprise level and not industry or occupation, and consequently decentralization of the level of collective negotiation.

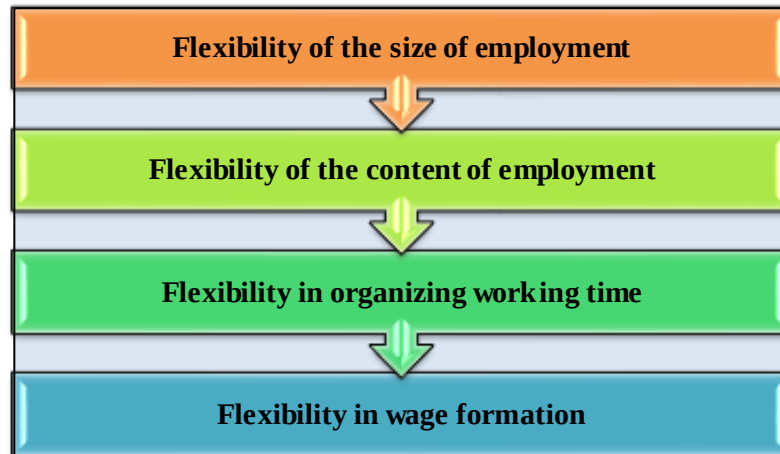


Figure 3.3: Flexibility in the labor market and labor relations from the reforms of the Memorandum.

Source: (Panagopoulos, 2017).

Deregulation of labor law is an important development from the measures taken during the economic crisis and the memorandum. This development is the result of the deregulation of the collective bargaining and collective bargaining system, reinforcing the prospect of personalizing labor relations while at the same time relaxing the employee's «protection laws» from dismissal. Also the unlimited full-time contract of employment is consolidated. Deregulation of labor relations and a reduction in wages lead to a violent downgrading of the content of work.

c. Working relations and job satisfaction

Labor relations are an area directly related to Human Resource Management and Human Resource Management. Labor relations have been greatly influenced by the economic crisis and rapid changes at all levels worldwide. At the same time, labor satisfaction in countries that have signed loan agreements (e.g. Greece) has significantly decreased (Randstad Workmonitor survey for the first quarter of 2011), which confirms the research that supports the direct relationship of labor relations and work satisfaction (Lixouriotis, 2017).

Participation in trade unions and employees' unions is directly related to labor relations and to the process of control by the management or superiors. The existence of this relationship links job satisfaction with the unions. Berger, Olson & Boudreau (1983) argue that trade unions have a positive effect on job satisfaction regarding wages, hourly wages and special privileges that employees can achieve through their active participation. However, their operation can cause problems and a small degree of job satisfaction in relations between colleagues (co-

operation) or with the superiors, with a major problem of supervisor's behavior towards trade unionists.

Employees participating in trade unions are encouraged to participate because of their small work satisfaction. Employees understand that employees' associations have achieved improvements in earnings and job security and are trying to involve them to gain more rights in their work. Their main objective is mainly to increase wages, which offer greater job satisfaction rather than job security.

At the same time, Lillydahl & Singell (1993) argued that employees accept that trade unions and associations have a positive effect on pay, while they can solve other problems such as reducing racial discrimination. Employees in associations are only satisfied in terms of earnings and job security, while in other areas of their work they are not very satisfied.

According to Renaud (2002), participation in or unions and employees' associations does not affect job satisfaction in a given, stable working environment. Bryson, Cappellari & Lucifora (2004) argue that no safe conclusions can be drawn as to whether employee participation is linked to job satisfaction. For more valid conclusions, additional attributes are required (Mira & Mylonopoulos, 2014).

Relationships with management are a very basic factor in job satisfaction. Employees enjoy autonomy in their work and wish their assessment and discretionary supervision by the administration, while not accepting close monitoring. Good relations with supervisors and frequent discussions on labor issues, while encouraging employees to express their opinions and suggestions, create an increase in work satisfaction. Communication with supervisors and frequent support from management increases job satisfaction.

As to the form of work, employees could accept more compromises in their work if they knew they would be employed for a long time in the company they are working for. Casual or temporary work does not satisfy either employees or employers, but the lack of alternatives leads to collaborations of this kind. Part-time employees have a lower degree of job satisfaction than full-time employees, both in terms of pay, as well as on occupational safety and work.

A significant change in work patterns due to flexible forms of employment is flexible working hours, where working hours are not strictly defined, with the result that employees are employed for more hours, without any remuneration. Employees with high job satisfaction consciously work overtime without wishing to pay for them. Generally speaking, overtime that

is not paid affects employees' psychology negatively. Women give more weight than men to the negative impact of unpaid overtime on their total earnings, while men consider that overtime can help them to have a future development within the company they are working for (Lixouriotis, 2017).

4. Research Methodology

In recent years, and due to the economic crisis, the issue of labor relations has emerged in the foreground. Government policy is constantly producing fiscal adjustment and austerity measures. One of many measures has also affected labor relations. This gave rise to research on labor relations amidst the financial crisis in Greece.

4.1 Methodology

The research process of this work has been based on quantitative research, because relationships between different factors are sought (Kiochos, 2000). The statistical method, on which quantitative research is based on the investigation of factors, is supported by statistical methods, mathematical models and numerical data. A representative sample of subjects - active employees - will be used in this research and will be widespread in a wider population. The data collection will be sampled with questionnaires as a kind of structured protocol and the questions will be closed-ended. According to Alexandraki (2008) a general trend will emerge from the research process to verify the research questions (Alexandrakis, 2008).

So the purpose of quantitative analysis is to discover the causes of the change of social phenomena through objective measurement and numerical analysis, i.e. in our case, to create working relations amid the economic crisis in Greece. According to Martin (2008) this type of research typically uses Deductive reasoning, i.e. the researcher begins with an existing theory - expects a response (Martin, 2008). Quantitative analysis aims to verify a case through numerical data. It is a fact that social life, as well as working relationships - governed by social rules - has regularity and is not a mess. Therefore, the aim of this research is generalization (general principles). That is, we come to generalizations and empirically founded theories, through research affairs. The theory in empirical research means the criterion of scientific logic, that what we see and not what to see (Robson, 2007). It is based on numerical data or characteristics of cases or subjects showing the connection between social reality and theory.

According to Babbie (2011) the characteristics of quantitative research methods are as follows (Babbie, 2011):

- Allows connection of two or more features for a large number of cases
- Shows general trends
- It allows research to be a large sample (representative) of the population
- Theoretical hypotheses are subjected to tighter and more valid control (using a large sample)
- Structured in a matrix of variables (i.e. in characteristics that are differentiated in the cases included in the sample)
- The characteristics are correlated for the purpose of finding general trends
- Verification of theoretical hypotheses / queries

They usually focus on very specific queries that translate into linking specific variables.

4.2 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship / impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

The research questions that will be asked will include the concepts we negotiated in the theoretical part. The study will focus on the negative effects of the economic crisis as it is attributed to workplaces and specifically to employee relationships.

In particular, we are interested in looking at workplace routines in the workplace, influenced by the economic crisis.

Employees' relationships at the workplace will be studied through the following axes: the regulations and procedures governing the working climate, any quarrels, interpersonal relationships with colleagues, communication and dissemination of work information, freedom workplace initiatives, freedom of expression at work, work objectives, colleagues' behavior, employers' behavior, labor supply, pluralism among employees, suspicion among employees, solidarity with colleagues, bad competition, competitiveness, and finally the general impact of the economic crisis.

In this context, the research questions that will be raised will address the following issues:

1. Influence of regulations and procedures governing the working climate
2. Creating conflicts / quarrels and quarrels
3. Established interpersonal relationships with colleagues
4. Existence of communication and dissemination of work information
5. Freedom of initiative at work
6. Freedom of expression at work
7. Work objectives
8. Behavior of colleagues
9. Behavior of employers
10. Job offer
11. Pluralism among employees
12. Misconception among employees
13. Collective solidarity
14. Bad competition
15. Competitiveness
16. General influence of employees on the economic crisis

The two main pillars of the questionnaire relate to the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace and the demographics of respondents.

4.3 Research instrumentation

The information collection tool is the questionnaire. According to Dimitriadi (2000), the questionnaire presents advantages by offering a simple approach to the issues they explore, they can be generalized for any kind of human population, they can be completed in any place and time and are characterized by anonymity (Dimitriadi, 2000). In addition, Kiochos (2000) notes that the drawbacks of using the questionnaires refer to problems arising in terms of data quality, sincerity and severity of responses, low fill rates and the risk of misinterpretation (Kiochos, 2000).

By studying Greek-language and foreign-language literature, there was no questionnaire covering the needs of this research to be used without change. This created a questionnaire with questions in key points of the axes being studied. The questionnaire is addressed to active employees. The questionnaire includes 23 questions pertaining to the

purpose and the research questions, of which 7 questions relate to the demographics of respondents. Questions represent all issues related to content axes in order to ensure validity.

The encoded five-step Likert interval was used. According to Morrison, Manion & Cohen (2008), hierarchy scales are very useful mechanisms for the researcher as they incorporate a degree of sensitivity and differentiation of responses while at the same time yielding quantitative data. The scale of the questionnaire was as follows:

- 1: Not at all
- 2: A little
- 3: Enough
- 4: Very much
- 5: Too much

Alexandrakis (2008) adds that questionnaire questions should be short & focused. The questions in this questionnaire are structured and focused to limit the issue, facilitate decoding and provide information objectively. All the above will help to accurately measure the data. The language used is simple and unambiguous questions have been avoided.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a letter presenting the purpose and subject of the survey, the importance of teacher participation, and it became clear that the questionnaire was anonymous and did not constitute an assessment or control tool. A preliminary check was carried out to ensure the objectivity, reliability and validity of the questionnaires and the level of difficulty of the questions. According to Dimitriadi (2000), the preliminary test is a test version of the actual research (Dimitriadi, 2000). The pilot test was done and provided feedback. Pilot audiences responded to questions about the effectiveness of the questionnaire that were as follows:

- How long did you need to complete the questionnaire?
- Was the questions clear?
- Was there any difficulty answering some questions?
- Did the questionnaire appear tasteful and pleasant?

The questions after the audit were made clear, simple and understandable without any difficulties or misconceptions. Attention was given to the appearance of the questionnaire in order to be of interest to the respondent and to contain interesting questions.

The distribution of the questionnaires started in April 2018 and was completed in May 2018. Formed questionnaires were originally printed and distributed. At the same time, the questionnaire was sent electronically to an electronic link to a google docs² file form for employees across Greece. The e-mail also helped to record responses from remote employees from the researcher's place of residence. The collection of the questionnaires was carried out by the researcher herself. During the survey, some employees were asked not to participate in the survey.

The electronically completed questionnaires were stored in a digital envelope with appropriate coding along with the manuscripts so that no duplicates can be found. Until 31/5/2018, a total of 176 questionnaires, leaflets and electronics were collected.

4.3.1 Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is a standardized plan for the collection and recording of specialized and relevant information topics with relative accuracy and completeness (Martin, 2008). In other words, it guides the process of collecting information and promotes its recording in a systematic manner.

The questionnaire is the interface between the researcher and the respondents, directly or indirectly, according to the method of data collection (Babbie, 2011).

For the preparation of the questionnaire of this survey, the following actions were taken:

- Identifying and specifying the objective of research,
- Choice of method of data collection;
- Understand the characteristics of respondents.

The questions that were generated for our research questionnaire are «closed-ended», which are given in advance - and the possible answers between the interviewee. With this method (closed-ended questions), the results from the question are ready and do not require further processing, i.e. grouping the answers and coding them (with all the difficulties involved in these lengthy tasks), which is the case for «open-ended» questions.

Of course, with the «closed-ended» questions that have been used, the possible answers have been studied in advance so as to fully cover the issue negotiated by the question but also

²<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNrixk1eOBHuYst8ROVg62TO7AfZWzSg6iaESxx6O6gILf9g/viewform?c=0&w=1>

to draw safe conclusions on the impact of the economic crisis on the relations of employees at their workplace. This, of course, does not mean that the corresponding «open-ended» questions should not have identified the possible answers in advance, according to which each respondent's answer should be grouped.

According to Babbie (2011) a further prerequisite for the «closed-ended» questions is the completeness of the answers (Babbie, 2011). So I tried to provide exhaustively all the possible answers, totally distinct from each other, so that there are no overlaps. A satisfactory and often used solution to the above problem is, after exhausting the most frequent answers or those of interest, to put the answer «Other».

The questionnaire was structured as follows:

At the beginning, there were 7 questions concerning the demographics of employees. Respondents were asked to answer questions about gender, age, and level of education, job position in their company hierarchy, type of employment contract, years of service, and finally their financial situation.

Subsequently, the questionnaire focused on the main focus of the survey, the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at their workplace, with 16 questions, such as: the general influence of employees on the economic crisis, the suspicion among employees and the collegiate solidarity, poor competition and competitiveness, pluralism among employees, labor supply, the behavior of colleagues and employers, work goals, freedom of expression at work, liberty initiatives at work, communication and diffusion work existence information, create interpersonal relationships with colleagues, creating conflicts / quarrels and fights and finally the effect of the regulations and procedures governing the working environment.

4.3.2 Sample

The survey involved a total of 176 active employees. After the questionnaire was collected, the check was completed and entered into the database to begin processing.

To extract the results of the survey, the SPSS 22 statistical package was used. In the software, a database was created where each line represents a questionnaire and each column represents the answers of the respondents to a particular questionnaire (Norusis, 2011). So every column is a variable that we need to analyze.

3.3.3 Checking the reliability of the questionnaires

The reliability of the 16 main survey questions, i.e. the impact of the economic crisis on employee relationships at their workplace, was tested by the Alpha method through the Cronbach's Alpha internal affinity factor (Norusis, 2011). The result shows a strong internal relevance of the 16 question components, because there is a very high index of $\alpha = 0.913$ as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 0.1: Reliability Statistics with the Alpha method.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,913	16

Then choosing the Split-half method is calculated, among other things, the Guttman split-half reliability and Spearman-Brown reliability factors as well as the Alpha coefficient for each half (Norusis, 2011).

Table 0.2: Reliability Statistics with the Split-half method.

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	,801
		N of Items	8 ^a
	Part 2	Value	,903
		N of Items	8 ^b
	Total	N of Items	16
Correlation Between Forms			,717
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		,835
	Unequal Length		,835
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			,821

a. The items are: 8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?, 9. Do you feel more competitive because of the economic crisis?, 10. Do you consider that there is bad competition among employees due to the economic crisis?, 11. Do you consider that there is no solidarity between employees due to the economic crisis?, 12. Do you feel that there is suspicion among employees due to the economic crisis?, 13. Do you think there is pluralism among employees due to the economic crisis?, 14. Has the financial crisis affected your mood for an extra offer on your job?, 15. Do you think that the financial crisis has adversely affected the behavior of your employers?.

b. The items are: 16. Do you think that economic crisis has changed the behavior of your colleagues?, 17. How has the financial crisis affected the objectives of your working group?, 18. How has the economic crisis affected the freedom of opinion to better organize your work?, 19. How has the economic crisis affected the freedom of initiative for a better working relationship?, 20. How has the economic crisis affected the communication and dissemination of information horizontally and vertically?, 21. How has the financial crisis affected interpersonal relationships with your colleagues?, 22. How has the economic crisis affected the regulations and the procedures governing the working climate?, 23. Because of the economic crisis, are there quarrels in your work?.

Also, there appears to be a strong internal relevance of the 16 questions / high reliability component, and more specifically the second half, because there is a very high index $\alpha = 0.903$ compared to the first half $\alpha = .801$ as shown in Table 4.2. The Correlation Between is 0.717 and indicates good reliability, the Spearman-Brown coefficient is 0.835 and indicates very good reliability, the Coefficient is 0.835 and indicates very good reliability and finally the Guttman Split-Half coefficient is 0.821 and indicates very good reliability.

4.3.3 Findings of the survey

In summary, the main findings of the survey are as follows: for 53.4% of the sample is accepted that the financial crisis did not affect the relationship with colleagues. Of course, the remaining 46.6% is not negligible. However, 46% of the sample feels more competitive due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 54% do not; 59.7% of the sample considers that there is bad competition among employees working in the company due to the economic crisis while the remaining 40.3% believe that there are noble starches; 56.9% of the sample considers that there is no «solidarity» between employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 43.1% believe it exists; 63.6% of the sample feels that there is suspicion among employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 36.4% believe it does not exist; 53.4% of the sample considers that there is pluralism among employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 46.6% believe it does not exist; 65.3% of the sample feels that the financial crisis has affected availability for additional work, while the remaining 34.7% do not feel the same; 74.4% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has adversely affected the behavior of its employers, while the remaining 25.5% consider the opposite; 56.3% of the sample considers

that the economic crisis has adversely affected the behavior of its colleagues; the opposite holds the rest of 43.7%. Also, 72.2% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the objectives of their working group; the opposite holds the rest of 27.8%. Also, 43.7% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the freedom of opinion to better organize their work, while the remaining 56.3% consider the opposite. The responses to the extent to which the financial crisis has affected the freedom of initiative for a better working relationship are shared. 54.5% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the communication and dissemination of information horizontally and vertically in the workplace; the rest believes the remaining 45.5%. 45.5% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has influenced interpersonal relationships with colleagues, the opposite holds the remaining 54.5%. Finally, 67.6% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the regulations and procedures governing the working climate, the opposite hold the remaining 32.4%. 46.7% of the sample thinks that because of the economic crisis there are quarrels and quarrels in their work, the rest believes the remaining 53.4%.

5. Findings - Descriptive Statistics

This will present the results of quantitative research on the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace. As mentioned above, questionnaires were used to conduct primary research. Thus, in this part, we will analyze the results of the 176 questionnaires that were answered during the survey (the sample N = 176 consists of active employees).

5.1 Socio-Demographics / Profile of the sample

Regarding the sample (176 employees), 116 are women (65.9%) and 60 are men (34.1%); 66 (37.5%) belong to the age group «Up to 30 years», 88 (50%) belong to the age group «31 to 40 years old», 17 (9.7%) belong to the age group «41 to 50 years old», and the remaining sample of 5 (2.8%) belong to the age group «51 to 60 years old»; 12 (6.8%) have Level of Education «Graduate Secondary Education», 9 (5.1%) have «Graduate IVT/LFEA», 41 persons (23.3%) have a «Graduate Tertiary education», 111 (63.3%) have a Master of Postgraduate / PhD degree, and the remaining sample of 3 (1.7%) «Other». No one answered the «Graduate Primary Education» option. Also, 53 people (30.1%) belong to the Work position in the company «Lower», 91 persons (51.7%) belong to Work position in the company hierarchy «Medium», 9 people (5.1%) belong to the Work position in the company's «Upper» hierarchy, and the remaining sample 23 people (13.1%) belong to some «Other» Work position in the company hierarchy. Regarding the contract of employment, 108 (61.4%) have a contract of employment «Full-time contract for an indefinite period», 42 (23.9%) have Contract of employment «Full-time fixed-term contract», and the remaining sample 26 persons (14.8%) have Contract of employment «Other». Nobody answered the options «Part-time contract for an indefinite period» and «Part-time fixed-term contract». Regarding the years of service, 94 people (53.4%) have Years of service «Up to 5 years», 37 (21%) have Years of service «6 to 10», 40 people (22.7%) have Years of service «11 to 20», and the remaining sample of 5 people (2.8%) have Years of service «21 to 30». No one answered the «31 years and over» option. Regarding the economic situation of the participant employees, 3 persons (1.7%) have Economic status «Very good» negligible, 85 (48.3%) have Economic situation «Good» 72 people (40.9%) have Economic status «Moderate», and the remaining sample is 16 (9.1%) Economic status «Bad».

5.2 The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Employees' Relations at the Workplace

The tables below and the corresponding charts represent the degree of influence of the surveyed employees / respondents from the economic crisis.

Degree of influence on the relationship with colleagues from the economic crisis

Regarding the answers to the question «Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?» out of 176 employees, for 23 (13.1%) employees, the degree to which the financial crisis has affected their relationship with colleagues is «Very» ; for 35 (19.9%) the degree to which the economic crisis affected their relationship with colleagues is «Enough»; for 76 people (43.2%) the degree to which the financial crisis has affected their relationship with colleagues the answer is «A little bit»,; and for the remaining 42 (23.9%) the degree to which the financial crisis has affected their relationship with colleagues is «Not at all».(Table 5.8) No one answered the «Very much» option, which is encouraging for industrial relations.

Table 5.8 : Degree of influencing the relationship with colleagues from the economic crisis.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very	23	13,1	13,1	13,1
Enough	35	19,9	19,9	33,0
A little bit	76	43,2	43,2	76,1
Not at all	42	23,9	23,9	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Competitiveness

Regarding the question : «Do you feel more competitive because of the economic crisis?», out of the 176 employees, 9 (5.1%) employees feel Competitiveness with colleagues due to the economic crisis at the degree of «Very much»; 29 (16.5%) feel Competitiveness with the fellow Members at the degree of «Very»; 44 people (25%) feel Competitiveness with colleagues at the degree of «Enough»; 60 people (34.1%) the degree that has affected the economic crisis Competitiveness with colleagues is «A little bit»; and the remaining sample of

34 people (19.3%) has influenced the economic crisis Competitiveness with colleagues is «Not at all».(Table 5.9)

Table 5.9 : Competitiveness.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	9	5,1	5,1	5,1
Very	29	16,5	16,5	21,6
Valid Enough	44	25,0	25,0	46,6
A little bit	60	34,1	34,1	80,7
Not at all	34	19,3	19,3	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Bad competition

Regarding the question: «Do you think that there is a bad competition among employees due to the economic crisis?» out of 176 employees, 14 (8%) chose «Very much», 16 (9.1%) chose «Very», 75 (42.6% 30.7%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample 17 (9.7%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.10).

Table 0.1: Bad competition.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	14	8,0	8,0	8,0
Very	16	9,1	9,1	17,0
Valid Enough	75	42,6	42,6	59,7
A little bit	54	30,7	30,7	90,3
Not at all	17	9,7	9,7	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Collective solidarity

Regarding the question «Do you think that there is no solidarity between employees due to the economic crisis?» out of 176 employees, 20 (11.4%) chose «Very much», 80 (45.5%) chose «Very», 67 (38.1%, and the remaining sample of 9 individuals (5.1%) chose «Not at all». The «Enough» proposal was not selected.

Table 0.2: Collective solidarity.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very	20	11,4	11,4	11,4
Enough	80	45,5	45,5	56,8
A little bit	67	38,1	38,1	94,9
Not at all	9	5,1	5,1	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Misconception among employees

Regarding the question : «Do you feel that there is suspicion among employees due to the economic crisis?» out of 176 employees, 8 (4.5%) opted for «Very much», 37 (21%) chose «Very», 67 (38.1% 31.3%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 9 (5.1%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.12)

Table 0.3: Misconception among employees.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	8	4,5	4,5	4,5
Very	37	21,0	21,0	25,6
Enough	67	38,1	38,1	63,6
A little bit	55	31,3	31,3	94,9
Not at all	9	5,1	5,1	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Pluralism among employees

Regarding the question «Do you think there is pluralism among employees due to the economic crisis?» , out of 176 employees, 7 (4%) chose «Very much», 16 (9.1%) chose «Very», 71 (40.3% 36.9%) chose «A little bit» and the remaining sample 17 (9.7%) chose «Not at all».(Table 5.13).

Table 0.4: Pluralism among employees.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	7	4,0	4,0	4,0
Very	16	9,1	9,1	13,1
Valid Enough	71	40,3	40,3	53,4
A little bit	65	36,9	36,9	90,3
Not at all	17	9,7	9,7	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Job offer

Regarding the question: «Has the financial crisis affected your mood for an extra offer on your job?» out of 176 employees, 17 (9.7%) chose «Very much», 30 (17%) chose «Very», 39 (22.2%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample 22 people (12.5%) chose «Not at all». (Table 5.14)

Table 0.5: Job offer.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	17	9,7	9,7	9,7
Very	30	17,0	17,0	26,7
Valid Enough	68	38,6	38,6	65,3
A little bit	39	22,2	22,2	87,5
Not at all	22	12,5	12,5	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Behavior of employers

Regarding the question «Do you think that the financial crisis has adversely affected the behavior of your employers?» out of 176 employees, 21 (11.9%) chose «Very much», 58 (33%) chose «Very», 52 (29.5%), «Enough», 17%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample 15 (8.5%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.15)

Table 0.6: Behavior of employers.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	21	11,9	11,9	11,9
Very	58	33,0	33,0	44,9
Valid Enough	52	29,5	29,5	74,4
A little bit	30	17,0	17,0	91,5
Not at all	15	8,5	8,5	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

i. Behavior of colleagues

Regarding the question «Do you think that economic crisis has changed the behavior of your colleagues?» out of 176 employees, 18 (10.2%) chose «Very much», 39 (22.2%) chose «Very», 42 (23.9%) chose «Enough», 61 (34.7%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 16 (9.1%) chose «Not at all» .(Table 5.16)

Table 0.7: Behavior of colleagues.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	18	10,2	10,2	10,2
Very	39	22,2	22,2	32,4
Valid Enough	42	23,9	23,9	56,3
A little bit	61	34,7	34,7	90,9
Not at all	16	9,1	9,1	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Work objectives

Regarding the question «How has the financial crisis affected the objectives of your working group?» , out of 176 employees, 14 (8%) chose «Very much», 40 (22.7%) chose «Very», 43 (41.5% 24.4%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 6 people (3.4%) chose «Not at all». (Table 5.17)

Table 0.8: Work objectives.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	14	8,0	8,0	8,0
Very	40	22,7	22,7	30,7
Valid Enough	73	41,5	41,5	72,2
A little bit	43	24,4	24,4	96,6
Not at all	6	3,4	3,4	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Freedom of expression of opinion at work

Regarding the question «How has the economic crisis affected the freedom of opinion to better organize your work?», out of 176 employees, 18 (10.2%) opted for «Very much», 22 (12.5%) chose «Very», 37 (21%), «Enough», 34.7% chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample 38 people (21.6%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.18)

Table 0.9: Freedom of expression of opinion at work.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	18	10,2	10,2	10,2
Very	22	12,5	12,5	22,7
Valid Enough	37	21,0	21,0	43,8
A little bit	61	34,7	34,7	78,4
Not at all	38	21,6	21,6	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Freedom of initiative

Regarding the question «How has the economic crisis affected the freedom of initiative for a better working relationship?» out of 176 employees, 21 (11.9%) chose «Very much», 10 (5.7%) chose «Very», 57 (32.4%) chose «Enough», 68 people (38.6%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample (20.4%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.19)

Table 0.10: Freedom of initiative.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	21	11,9	11,9	11,9
Very	10	5,7	5,7	17,6
Valid Enough	57	32,4	32,4	50,0
A little bit	68	38,6	38,6	88,6
Not at all	20	11,4	11,4	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Work communication and dissemination of information

Regarding the question «How has the economic crisis affected the communication and dissemination of information horizontally and vertically?» of the 176 employees, 15 (8.5%) chose «Very much», 10 (5.7%) chose «Very», 71 (40.3%) chose «Enough», 63 (35.8%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 17 (9.7%) chose «Not at all».(Table 5.20)

Table 0.11: Work communication and dissemination of information.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	15	8,5	8,5	8,5
Very	10	5,7	5,7	14,2
Valid Enough	71	40,3	40,3	54,5
A little bit	63	35,8	35,8	90,3
Not at all	17	9,7	9,7	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Interpersonal relations with colleagues

Regarding the question «How did the financial crisis affect interpersonal relationships with your colleagues?» out of 176 employees, 15 (8.5%) chose «Very much», 11 (6.3%) chose «Very», 54 (30.7%) chose «Enough», 74 people (42%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample 22 people (12.5%) chose «Not at all». (Table 5.21)

Table 0.12: Interpersonal relations with colleagues.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	15	8,5	8,5	8,5
Very	11	6,3	6,3	14,8
Valid Enough	54	30,7	30,7	45,5
A little bit	74	42,0	42,0	87,5
Not at all	22	12,5	12,5	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Regulations and procedures governing the working climate

Regarding the question «How has the economic crisis affected the regulations and procedures governing the working climate?» , out of 176 employees, 18 (10.2%) chose «Very much», 23 (13.1%) chose «Very», 78 (44.3%) chose «Enough», 50 (28.4%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 7 (4%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.22)

Table 0.13: Regulations and procedures governing the working climate.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	18	10,2	10,2	10,2
Very	23	13,1	13,1	23,3
Valid Enough	78	44,3	44,3	67,6
A little bit	50	28,4	28,4	96,0
Not at all	7	4,0	4,0	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Any quarrels

Regarding the question «Because of the economic crisis, are there quarrels in your work?» out of 176 employees, 13 (7.4%) chose «Very much», 14 (8%) chose «Very», 55 (31.3% 46.6%) chose «A little bit», and the remaining sample of 12 people (6.8%) chose «Not at all» (Table 5.23)

Table 0.14: Any quarrels

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very much	13	7,4	7,4	7,4
Very	14	8,0	8,0	15,3
Valid Enough	55	31,3	31,3	46,6
A little bit	82	46,6	46,6	93,2
Not at all	12	6,8	6,8	100,0
Total	176	100,0	100,0	

Discussion on the relationship between the social characteristics of the sample and the impact of the economic crisis on the labor relations of the employees

The tables below and the corresponding charts represent the discussion on the relationship between the social characteristics of the sample and the impact of the economic crisis on the labor relations of the employees.

Cross tabulation of gender relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

Table 5.24 and Chart 5.24 below show the cross tabulation of gender relations with the impact of the economic crisis on labor relations at the workplace. It is generally observed that both sexes do not consider that their working relations are affected, to a large extent, from the economic crisis; more specifically men are more «resilient» to the economic crisis.

Table 0.15: Cross tabulation of gender relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
1. Gender	Man	Count	7	10	30	13	60
		Rate	3,98%	5,68%	17,05%	7,39%	34,09%
	Woman	Count	16	25	46	29	116
		Rate	9,09%	14,2%	26,14%	16,48%	65,91%
Total		Count	23	35	76	42	176
		Rate	13,07%	19,88%	43,19%	23,87%	100%

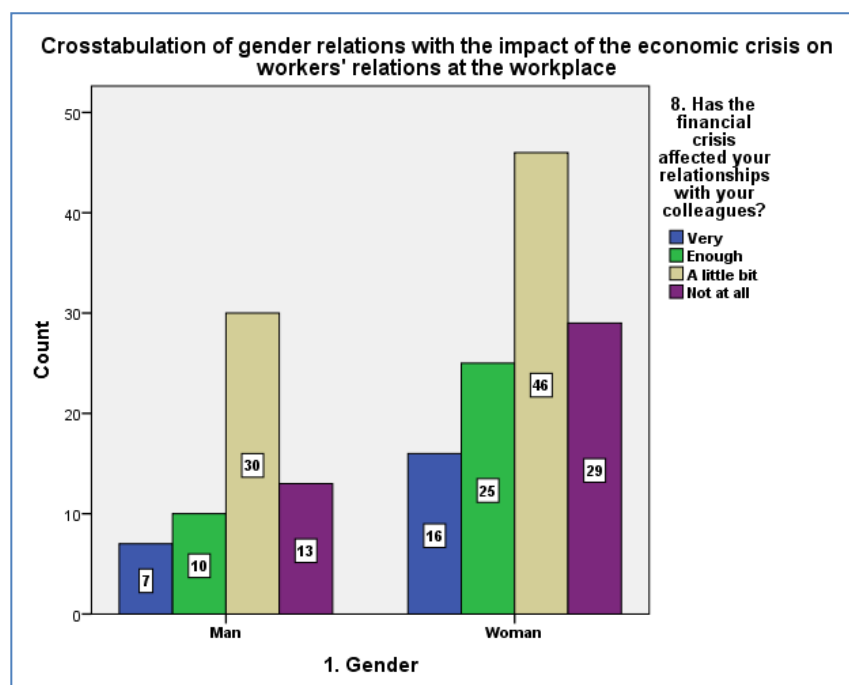


Diagram 0.1: Cross tabulation of gender relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of age relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

In the following Table 5.25 and the corresponding Diagram 5.25 the Cross tabulation of age relations with the impact of the economic crisis on labor relations at the workplace is observed, and it is noted that the age group «51 to 60 years old» did not affect the economic crisis at all their working relationships, the age groups «41 to 50 years old» and «31 to 40 years old», the percentages are shared in terms of the impact of labor relations from the economic crisis, and the younger age group «Up to 30 years» seems more optimistic, that is to say, the largest part of it, labor relations have no effected by the economic crisis.

Table 0.16: Cross tabulation of age relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
2. Age	Up to 30 years	Count	3	10	29	24	66
		Rate	1,7%	5,68%	16,48%	13,64%	37,50%
	31 to 40 years old	Count	15	25	38	10	88
		Rate	8,52%	14,20%	21,59%	5,68%	50,00%
Count			5	0	4	8	17

41 to 50 years old	Rate	2,84%	0%	227%	4,55%	9,66%
51 to 60 years old	Count	0	0	5	0	5
	Rate	0%	0%	2,84%	0%	2,84%
Total	Count	23	35	76	42	176
	Rate	13,07%	19,89%	43,18%	23,86%	100%

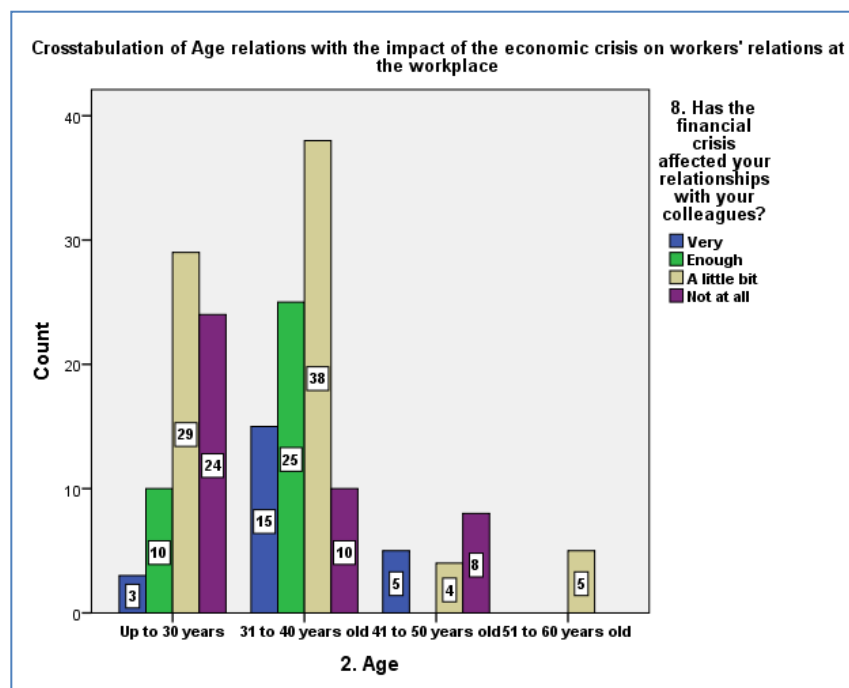


Diagram 0.2: Cross tabulation of Age relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of level of education relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

In the following Table 5.26 and the corresponding Diagram 5.2, the Cross tabulation of Level of Education Relations with the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Employees' Relations at the Workplace shows that the highest percentage of respondents in Level of Education «Graduate Secondary Education» «Graduate IVT / LFEA» and «Graduate Tertiary Education» did not affect their working relations with the economic crisis, most of the respondents in Level of Education «Graduate Secondary Education» did not affect their working relations with the economic crisis. Interesting observation is the significant percentage (32.96%) of the influence of labor relations from the economic crisis of the «Master of Postgraduate / PhD Degree» level of education.

Table 0.17: Cross tabulation of level of education relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
3. Level of Education	Graduate Secondary Education	Count	3	0	6	3	12
		Rate	1,7%	0%	3,40%	1,70%	6,82%
	Graduate IVT / LFEA	Count	0	3	6	0	9
		Rate	00%	1,70%	3,40%	0%	5,11%
	Graduate Tertiary education	Count	0	11	20	10	41
		Rate	0%	6,25%	11,36%	5,68%	41,0
	Master of postgraduate / PhD degree	Count	20	21	41	29	111
		Rate	11,36%	11,93%	23,30%	16,48%	63,07%
	Other	Count	0	0	3	0	3
		Rate	0%	0%	1,7%	0%	1,7%
Total		Count	23	35	76	42	176
		Rate	13,07%	19,89%	43,18%	23,86%	100%

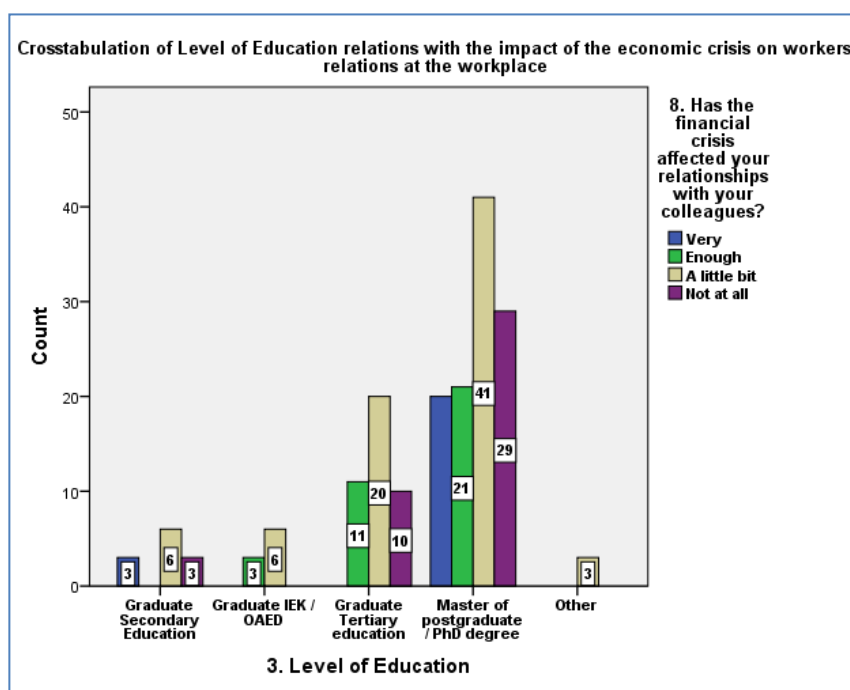


Diagram 0.3: Cross tabulation of level of education relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of work position in the company hierarchy relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

Table 5.27 and Chart 5.27 below show the Cross tabulation of Work Position in the Company's Hierarchy Relations with the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Employees' Relations at the Workplace, and it is noted that the majority of respondents to Work position in the company hierarchy «Lower», «Medium» and «Other» were not affected by their labor relations since the financial crisis, while Level Up Education is almost divided responses.

Table 0.18: Cross tabulation of work position in the company hierarchy relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
4. Work position in the company hierarchy	Lower	Count Rate	3 1,7%	18 10,23%	19 10,8%	13 7,39%	53 30%
	Medium	Count Rate	17 9,66%	11 6,25%	44 25%	19 10,8%	91 52%
	Upper	Count Rate	3 1,7%	0 0%	6 3,41%	0 0%	9 5,11%
	Other	Count Rate	0 0%	6 3,41%	7 3,98%	10 5,68%	23 13,07%
Total		Count Rate	23 13,07%	35 19,89%	76 43,18%	42 23,86%	176 100%

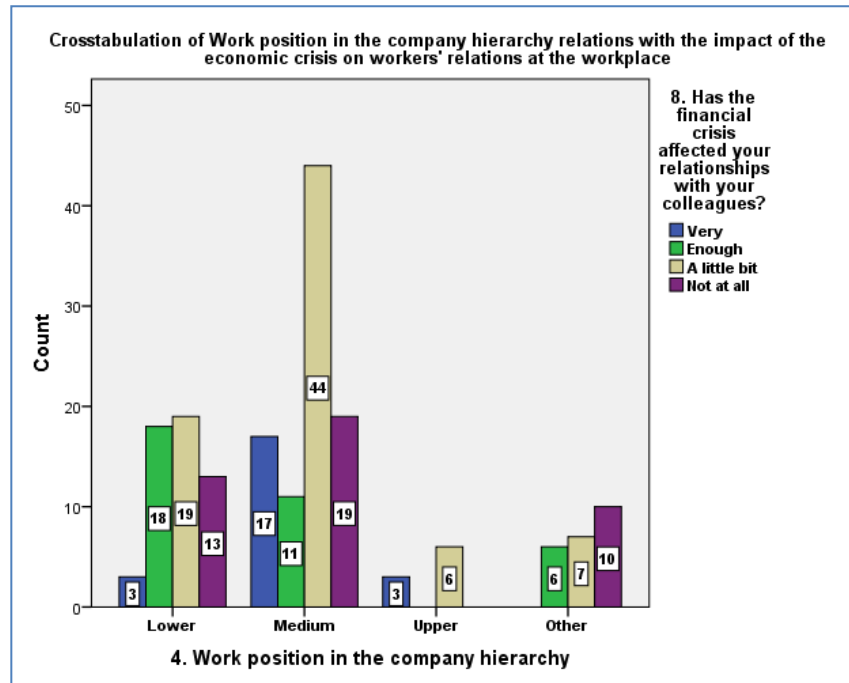


Diagram 0.4: Cross tabulation of Work position in the company hierarchy relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of Contract of employment relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

Table 5.28 and Chart 5.28 below show the Cross tabulation of Contract of Employment Relations with the impact of the economic crisis on labor relations at the workplace, and it is noted that the highest percentage of respondents with Contract of employment «Full-time contract for an indefinite period» and «Full-time fixed-term contract» have little impact on their employment relationships since the financial crisis, while employees with Contract of Employment «Other» are almost divided responses.

Table 0.19: Cross tabulation of Contract of employment relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
5. Contract of employment	Full-time contract for an indefinite period	Count	12	26	47	23	108
		Rate	6,82%	14,77%	26,70%	13,07%	61,36%
	Full-time fixed-term contract	Count	8	3	22	9	42
		Rate	4,55%	1,7%	12,5%	5,11%	23,86%
	Other	Count	3	6	7	10	26
		Rate	1,7%	3,4%	3,98%	5,68%	14,76%

Total	Count	23	35	76	42	176
	Rate	13,07%	19,89%	43,18%	23,86%	100%

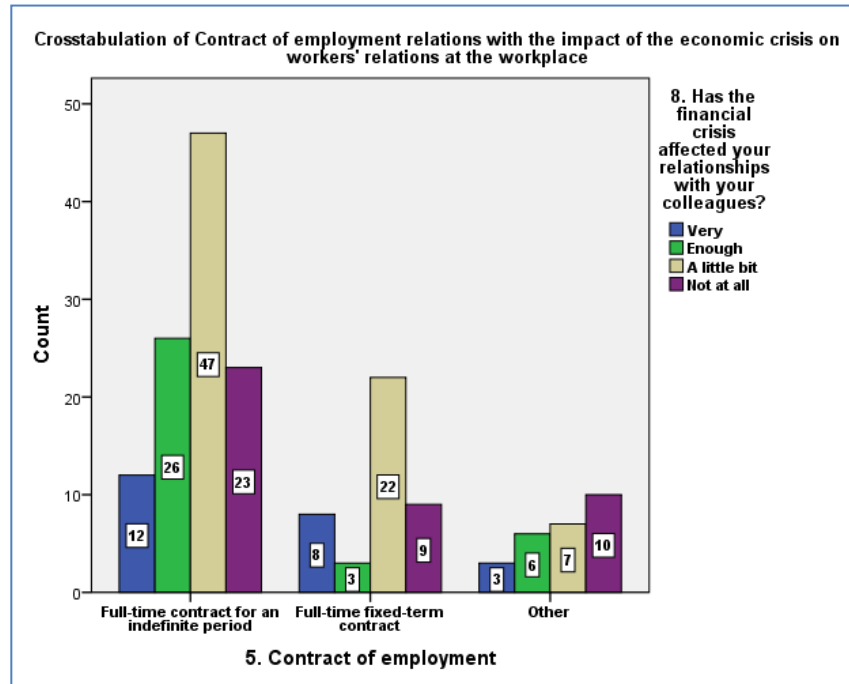


Diagram 0.5: Cross tabulation of Contract of employment relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of Years of service relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

Table 5.29 and Chart 5.29 below show the Cross tabulation of Years of Service Relations with the impact of the economic crisis on labor relations at the workplace, and it is noted that the highest percentage of respondents with Years of Service «Up to 5 years» and «11 to 20» have little influence on their labor relations since the financial crisis, respondents with Years of Service «21 to 30» have no influence on their labor relations since the economic crisis, while respondents with Years of service «6 to 10» have a great impact on labor relations.

Table 0.20: Cross tabulation of Years of service relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
6. Years of service	Up to 5 years	Count	5	24	40	25	94
		Rate	2,84%	13,64%	22,73%	14,20%	53,41%

	6 to 10	Count Rate	11 6,25%	11 6,25%	9 5,11%	6 3,41%	37 21,02%
	11 to 20	Count Rate t	7 3,98%	0 0%	22 12,50%	11 6,25%	40 22,73%
	21 to 30	Count Rate	0 0%	0 0%	5 2,84%	0 0%	5 2,84%
Total		Count Rate	23 13,07%	35 19,89%	76 43,18%	42 23,86%	176 100%

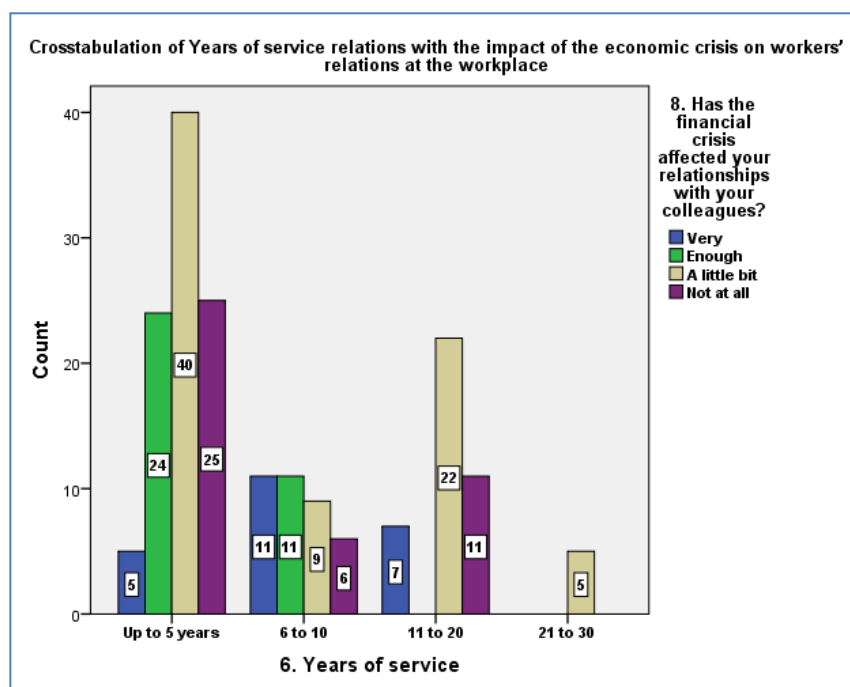


Diagram 0.6: Cross tabulation of Years of service relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

Cross tabulation of Economic situation relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace

Table 5.30 and the corresponding Chart 5.30 show the Cross tabulation of Economic Situation Relations with the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Employees' Relations at the Workplace, and it is noted that the highest percentage of respondents with Economic Situation «Good» and «Moderate» little influence on their labor relations from the economic crisis, the respondents with economic situation «Very good» have no influence on their working relations since the economic crisis, while those with economic situation «Bad» have a great influence on the labor relations.

Table 0.21: Cross tabulation of Economic situation relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

			8. Has the financial crisis affected your relationships with your colleagues?				Total
			Very	Enough	A little bit	Not at all	
7. Economic situation	Very good	Count Rate	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 1,7%	3 1,7%
	Good	Count Rate	17 9,66%	13 7,39%	36 20,45%	19 10,80%	85 48,30%
	Moderate	Count Rate	3 1,7%	18 10,23%	34 19,32%	17 9,66%	72 40,91%
	Bad	Count Rate	3 1,7%	4 2,27%	6 3,4%	3 1,7%	16 9,09%
Total		Count Rate	23 13,07%	35 19,89%	76 43,18%	42 23,86%	176 100%

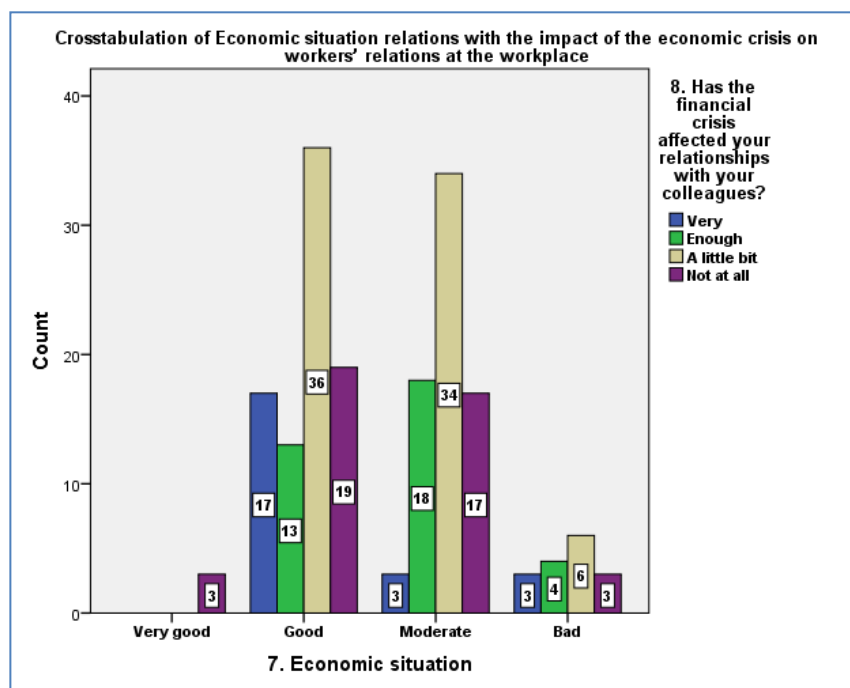


Diagram 0.7: Cross tabulation of Economic situation relations with the impact of the economic crisis on employees' relations at the workplace.

From the targeted questions and the analysis using frequencies, some very important conclusions emerge, such as: 53.4% of the sample did not affect the financial crisis the relationship with colleagues, encouraging good working relations. Of course, the remaining 46.6% is not negligible. 46% of the sample feels more competitive due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 54% do not. 59.7% of the sample considers that there is bad competition among employees working in the company due to the economic crisis while the remaining 40.3% believe that there are noble starches. 56.9% of the sample considers that there is no «solidarity» between employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 43.1% believe it exists. 63.6% of the sample feels that there is suspicion among employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 36.4% believe it does not exist. 53.4% of the sample considers that there is pluralism among employees due to the economic crisis, while the remaining 46.6% believe it does not exist. 65.3% of the sample feels that the financial crisis has affected its availability for additional work, while the remaining 34.7% do not feel it. 74.4% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has adversely affected the behavior of its employers, while the remaining 25.5% consider the opposite. 56.3% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has adversely affected the behavior of its colleagues; the opposite holds the rest of 43.7%. 72.2% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the objectives of their working group; the opposite holds the rest of 27.8%. 43.7% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the freedom of opinion to better organize their work, while the remaining 56.3% consider the opposite. The responses to the extent to which the financial crisis has affected the freedom of initiative for a better working relationship are shared. 54.5% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the communication and dissemination of information horizontally and vertically in the workplace; the rest believes the remaining 45.5%. 45.5% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has influenced interpersonal relationships with colleagues, the opposite holds the remaining 54.5%. 67.6% of the sample considers that the economic crisis has affected the regulations and procedures governing the working climate, the opposite hold the remaining 32.4%. 46.7% of the sample thinks that because of the economic crisis there are quarrels and quarrels in their work, the rest believes the remaining 53.4%.

From the grouping of questions and the analysis using Crosstabulation on the relationship between the social characteristics of the sample and the impact of the economic crisis on the labor relations of the employees, some very important conclusions emerge:

It is noted that both sexes do not consider their labor relations to a large extent affected by the economic crisis; in particular men are more resilient in the economic crisis. With regard to the age distribution, it is noticed that the age group «51 to 60 years old» was not affected at all by the economic crisis in labor relations, the age groups «41 to 50 years old» and «31 to 40 years old» rates are shared in terms of the impact of labor relations from the economic crisis, and finally the younger age group «Up to 30 years» seems more optimistic, that is to say, for the most part, labor relations have not been affected by the economic crisis.

Regarding the distribution of educational level, it is noted that most of the respondents with «Graduate Secondary Education», «Graduate IVT / LFEA» and «Graduate Tertiary Education» their relations were not affected by the economic crisis; Interesting observation is the significant percentage (32.96%) of the influence of labor relations from the economic crisis of the «Master of Postgraduate / PhD Degree» level of education.

With regard to the distribution of the job position in the company's hierarchy, it is observed that the majority of respondents in the work hierarchy «Lower», «Medium» and «Other» their labor relations were not affected by the economic crisis, while Level of Education «Upper» is almost shared responses.

With regard to the breakdown by type of employment contract, it is noted that the majority of contract staff of the «Full-time contract for an indefinite period» and «Full-time fixed-term contract» have little influence on their employment relationships from the financial crisis, while employees with Contract of Employment «Other» are almost divided responses.

Also with regard to the distribution of years of service, it is noted that the highest percentage of respondents with Years of service «Up to 5 years» and «11 to 20» have little influence on their working relations since the financial crisis, respondents with Years of service «21 to 30» have no influence on their working relationships since the financial crisis, while those interviewed with «Years of Service» «6 to 10» have a great impact on labor relations.

Finally, with regard to the breakdown of the economic situation of the employees, it is noted that for most of the respondents with the Economic situation «Good» and «Moderate» there was small influence on their working relations since the economic crisis, the respondents with economic situation «Very good» had no influence on their labor relations since the economic crisis, while those with Economic Situation «Bad» have a great impact on labor relations.

6.Conclusion

Labor relations - to a large extent - presuppose that employees are happy with their work and with their colleagues / superiors. Many studies focus on the job satisfaction examining the sense of achievement of goals and success at work. When there are good working relationships, the individual employee enjoys the job he/she does and he/she is productive & efficient. The issue of industrial relations is one of the key issues business administrators face daily, and even more nowadays due to the pressure of economic crisis.

The importance of industrial relations is undoubtedly high and the present study examines the context & degree of influential factors due to economic crisis on relations of the employees at the workplace . The local economic situation have an impact on labor relations since employees feel that they are working under uncertain conditions. Salary, education, development prospects, good relationships with management contribute to some extent in creating a better feeling about the work however the external pressure of an economic crisis still have impact on employees and work environments. This impact of the economic crisis is expressed via emergent regulations & procedures which impact work climate, via creation of conflicts, via negative influence on established interpersonal relationships, on competitiveness among colleagues, on solidarity among people, on feelings of suspicion, on pluralism, on employee interest in performing additional work, on employers and colleagues' behaviour, on freedom of expression, on freedom of initiatives, on work communication and dissemination.

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