

Exploring the Utilization of Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leaves Across Varieties of Capitalism

MASTER THESIS OF HUMAN RESOURCES
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Executive Summary

This Master thesis investigates the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves across different countries such as UK, USA, Canada, Australia, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Iceland, Cyprus, Spain and Greece. The objective of this study is to comprehend the influence of diverse varieties of capitalism on leave policies and how these policies manifest in different countries, since they are an essential component of work – life balance initiatives. The current research uses a quantitative approach utilizing data from the CRANET database and Executive Report on International Human Resource Management to analyse leave policies. Also, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression models are conducted to examine the relationships between the varieties of capitalism such as Liberal Market Economies (LMEs), Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs) broken down into Social Democratic Economies and Germanic Economies as well as Mediterranean Economies (MEs) in relation to the utilization of the leaves in each of these economies.

The key findings of the study appear to be that maternity, paternity and parental leaves vary significantly across different economic models specifically in LMEs, in CMEs which are identified into Social Democratic economies and Germanic Economies and MEs reflecting the differences in economic models and social policies. In addition, this study shows that countries with Social Democratic economies and CMEs such as Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Iceland, Austria and Germany tend to offer more generous parental leave policies than LME and ME. Consequently, policy makers can use these findings to craft more inclusive policies aiming to the enhancement of employee well - being and the advancement of gender equality within the workplace.

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Exploring the Utilization of Maternity, Paternity, and Parental leaves across Countries: Implications for Work Life Balance

Introduction

The concept of Work Life Balance (WLB) has recently come to the surface as people were in need for balancing their business duties and personal wellbeing, at a time that is characterized by fast – paced lives, increased labour demands and technological advancements. One can more freely describe WLB as to how one person can divide their time, between their personal life and their job obligations on a healthy manner for them. This can include the time they spend with their loved ones, how they manage their free time, how they take care of their personal health and other endeavours besides their work (Lockwood, 2003).

Even though WLB aims to give the opportunity to individuals to reach an equilibrium between their personal and work life, it seems that the modern work settings restrain them from doing so. It is no lie that the significance of rest, relaxation and family time can occasionally be overlooked by the pressure of performing well professionally (Skinner & Chapman, 2013). In addition, many companies fail to implement policies that aim at WLB because it seems that these policies are not beneficial and fitting with the goals of the companies (Lee, et., al., 2011:871). On that note, organizations play a very important role when shaping such policies, especially in the parental leave domain. Organizations that are successful in implementing family friendly policies can develop a culture that views both personal and working life as equally important for the employees' development and thus have more dedicated and satisfied employees (Frye & Breaugh, 2004).

So, the notion of WLB not only is complex, but also underpins the importance of balancing peoples' objectives for their professional lives along with their ambition of leading a happy life. Moreover, it appears that the main goal of WLB is based on the understanding that living a multifaceted and balanced life can increase peoples' physical, mental and emotional health.

Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leave policies in excess of statutory requirements in countries as WLB options for employees and how differently they manifest in organizations in the different varieties of capitalism. These include Liberal Market Economies (LME), Coordinated Market Economies (CME) and Mediterranean Economies (ME). More specifically, the different economic model of each country provides a framework for understanding the different approaches in regulating the labour market, the different social – policies and the WLB opportunities in relation to the maternity, paternity and parental context within each country.

Moreover, this study seeks to investigate the leave utilization among the countries specifically, whether a certain variety of capitalism utilizes maternity, paternity and parental leaves in excess of the statutory requirements. This attempt involves analysing the extent to which organizations in these countries offer additional leave benefits beyond what is mandated by law, indicating a commitment to supporting employees' Work Life balance.

Additionally, WLB offers a theoretical lens in analysing and interpreting the findings of the study. This theoretical framework aids in understanding how leave policies contribute to employees' ability to have control over their work and personal life responsibilities effectively, while taking into consideration factors such as the sector of the industry, the main market of the organization's products or services, if a works council is present in the organization, the extent to which trade unions have an influence in the organization and if there is an HR on the board.

Significance of the study

The current study has the potential to contribute valuable insights to both academia and practise by investigating the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leave policies among organizations across different countries from different varieties of capitalism. It also adds to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on how these policies are implemented and utilized in the diversity of the varieties of capitalism. As a result, these

different varieties of capitalism contribute to a deeper understanding of the intersection between different economic systems and WLB practises.

Moreover, the comparative analysis of leave utilization in the form of excess of the statutory requirements across the diversity of the varieties of capitalism offer a different perspective on how effective these varieties are. Particularly, the research findings if taken into consideration can inform decision making processes at a governmental, organizational and societal level contributing to the development of more supportive policies and practises aimed at promoting WLB and enhancing employee well – being. Lastly, this study has broader social implications by promoting the concept of gender equality, social inclusion and family – friendly work environments. Consequently, by exploring leave policies that support caregivers and facilitate WLB, this study contributes to building more inclusive and equitable societies in which people can reach their potential both personally and professionally.

Literature review

In this literature review, I examine the utilization of family leave policies across the LME, CME and ME economic models in the countries of UK, USA, Canada, Australia, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweeden, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Iceland, Cyprus, Spain and Greece. Family leave policies, including maternity paternity and parental leave manifest differently among the countries and play a critical role in supporting Work Life Balance and gender equality in the workplace. I use the theoretical framework of Hall & Soskice (2001) in regard to the Varieties of Capitalism and expanded my research with the theoretical framework of Bruno Amable (2015) regarding the existence of diverse types of capitalism. The purpose of this literature review is to explore existing research on family leave policies in organizations operating in different countries categorised under various economic models, including Liberal Market economies (LMEs), Coordinated Market economies (CMEs) and Mediterranean economies (MEs). This literature review is organised into several sections. First, I will provide an overview of the theoretical frameworks used to understand family leave policies in different economic contexts. Next, I will form a hypothesis of the leaves in accordance to the Varieties of Capitalism based on the key findings from the literature on family leave utilization in LMEs, CMEs and MEs economies.

WLB and its definitions

The Work Foundation of the UK defines Work Life Balance as “... about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business, and society” (2023). Another relevant definition that captures the nature of Work Life Balance (WLB) is that of the achievement of rewarding experiences across all domains of life that call for separate resources, such as energy, time, and commitment (Khateeb, 2021).

Based on the available literature, creating opportunities for balancing work and personal obligations seem to improve employee overall job satisfaction, minimize the feeling of burnout among employees and promote stronger connections among friends and family. Byrne (2005) suggests that by promoting a Work Life Balance among employees can boost the innovation and staff retention in companies. She also explains that it is hard for people to manage their personal life, including their friends and family and always be present at work with perfect health while still managing to make some time for the wellbeing of our mind and spirit. All these factors can be very stressful to people and can create toxic working environments in the organizations. Moreover, the last few years even more companies strive to minimize their expenses, by being pressured to downsize in human resources and change the operations of their management. This attitude of companies increases the pressure for employees to avoid underdelivering in order to keep their company going. Thus, it is important for organizations to prioritize policies that nourish Work Life Balance towards the employees because not only it benefits the employees but also the organizations. Additionally, organizations are just now starting to understand that in order to have a more productive and active personnel they must make them feel understood and valued, as it increases their levels of productivity, it minimizes absenteeism and helps in retaining skilled employees (Byrne, 2005).

WLB and leaves

Work Life Balance in correlation to family – friendly policies are growing in importance in the modern landscape of different work arrangements and non-traditional family structures as

a means of developing a more peaceful and supportive work environment. These policies, which strive to meet the diverse needs of employees, play a pivotal role in morphing the organizations' culture, increasing the employees' productivity and well – being.

As it is expressed by Butts et. al., (2013) work - family support policies have a favourable and significant impact on a variety of employee outcomes. Their study suggests that employees who had more organizational support in juggling work and family commitments reported better levels of job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions. Moreover, the same study showcased that work - family policies were linked to improved physical and mental health outcomes for employees. With that in mind, employees who had access to supporting policies reported less stress and a higher sense of overall well - being. The results show that companies can have a favourable impact on employee well - being, job satisfaction, loyalty and intention to stay by implementing and promoting work - family support programs. These regulations may lead to a better WLB and higher productivity among employees.

Additionally, Petts et., al., (2022), express that Americans advocate for enhanced and more accessible parental leave policies, reflecting a growing adoption of paid parental leave measures. However, despite these advancements, a significant portion of the American workforce still lacks access to parental leave. Furthermore, among those who have access, many refrain from utilizing their full leave amount due to concerns about potential penalties and social stigma associated with taking advantage of these policies. Also, the authors mention that utilizing the leave benefits may have differing implications for men and women, shaped by prevalent gender norms surrounding paid employment and caregiving responsibilities (Petts, et., al. 2022).

Moreover, Escobedo & Wall (2015), analyse that in Spain work - family policies have aimed to encourage mothers to return to work early, promote gender sharing of caregiving responsibilities and more recently support paternal use of leave. As their study mentions, following a legislative revision in 1999 that allowed mothers to transfer leave benefits to fathers, during the conservative government's tenure from 2000 to 2004, a monthly tax benefit of 100 euros was introduced in 2003 for employed mothers with children under 3. This benefit cannot be used in conjunction with full – time parental leave, which requires complete break from employment and a substantial benefit in a context with limited family

benefits. Following this, in 2007, leave policies underwent restructuring under a legislation of gender equality, introduced by the Socialist party. Also, paternity leave was extended from 2 to 15 days, with a commitment to increase it to one month by 2011 (Escobedo & Wall, 2015). In addition, the authors mention that in Greece, leave policies and regulations rely heavily on employer funding and collective bargaining resulting in a dual public and private sector leave system. More importantly, leave policies in Greece are notably more comprehensive and generous in the public sector compared to the private sector, where policy innovations often lag behind those in public sector (Escobedo & Wall, 2015).

Another important finding by Chandra (2012) is that the American / European multinationals offer many services when it comes to childcare and help with flexible work arrangements, backup childcare assistance, maternity and paternity leave programmes, online parenting resources and school - out programme, to name a few. When discussing maternity leave, in Nordic societies, parental leave is a legal right. For example, Sweden is one of the top countries in which employees can get up to 16 months of parental leave while paid (Chandra, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Xu et. al., (2021), compared to Germany the U.S has a clear lack of guaranteed paid leave and a very brief leave period when it comes to maternity leave. Except for the United States, other countries such as Germany provide paid parental and homecare leave for mothers to care for their children in addition to paid maternity leave. As an instance, the study suggests that the national policy in Germany requires 14 weeks of paid maternity leave at 100% of pay rate, in addition to weeks of paid parental and homecare leave that are typically paid at 65% of salary. When it comes to the lodging industry in the U.S, the maternity benefits go up to 12 weeks of leave period only, with 4-6 weeks covered in full by vacation or short-term disability benefits and the remaining leave time being unpaid or partially compensated. Moreover, maternity leave is typically only provided to full-time employees who meet the minimum employment requirements in terms of eligibility. For example, the Hilton hotels provide up to 10 weeks paid maternity leave that covers full time and part time employees, whereas a 2-week paid paternity leave is provided to fathers and adopting parents (Xu, et. al., 2021).

Additionally, in the article by Sayer & Gornick (2012) short work hours are highly valued in Nordic and continental European nations like Sweden and France respectively because they

can alleviate conflicts between work and childcare and/or decrease unemployment by job sharing. Thus, both male and female employees have equal opportunities in utilizing the parental leave policies to attend to their family needs. When it comes to fatherhood and the organizational structure in Sweden, the Swedish social policy has been founded on the principle that men and women should share the same responsibilities for producing family income and raising children (Haas & Hwang, 2007).

Moreover, as Haas & Hwang (2007) mention, for each child in Sweden, all employed fathers are entitled to two additional non-transferable months of paid parental leave, as well as the right to share an additional nine months of paid parental leave with mothers. In spite of that, Haas & Hwang (2007) mention that only a small portion of fathers take parental leave to care for their sick children whereas women are more likely to make adjustments to their work schedule to take care of their family. Also, because their employers view parental leave as interfering with "the orderly flow of work, causing difficulties for managers, supervisors, and coworkers," fathers who work in the private sector are significantly less likely to take a parental leave than fathers who work in the public sector (Haas & Hwang, 2007:58). Moreover, working long hours prevent men from being involved at home, and parental leave is insufficient to improve fathering practices (Warren, et., al., 2009). It appears that the sexual division among male and female employees is still evident within organizational cultures. Consequently, this attitude of managers towards employees expresses that the women's traditional confinement in the private sphere of the family will be maintained if the vast majority of corporations undervalue women's employment and keep being insensitive to the requirements of the dads, as suggested by Warren et., al. (2009).

In addition to the sexual division, referring to the Covid – 19 era, Rubery & Tavora (2020) express that, female employees in the UK, Germany and the USA were greatly affected by the pandemic regarding childcare in contrast to male workers, as it was more expected from the women to provide care to the family members. Moreover, the authors express that during the Covid-19 crisis, the ability of women to maintain employment depended on policies that enable parents to arrange childcare while safeguarding against job loss and financial hardships due to unequal distribution of unpaid work and additional childcare responsibilities brought about by the pandemic. Thus, when neither parent could offer childcare because of their working responsibilities, parental leave arrangements were the most widely used form of parental support in European countries. As it is showcased by Rubery & Tavora (2020), these leave programs were typically intended for parents with children under the age of 12

while Poland's age limit was lower at eight (8) and higher in Austria, Cyprus, France, Finland, and Malta (14 to 16). In a few instances, such as in Slovakia, Belgium, Cyprus and Portugal, leave could be utilized to care for an older impaired kid (Rubery & Tavora, 2020).

There was also substantial variation in how the leave was compensated among European countries, whether it required employer agreement, and if people taking leave had their employment protected. Based on that, if an employer refuses to give permission for leave, as is the case in countries like Austria, Belgium, Cyprus and the UK, one of the parents may be forced to resign. Due to their responsibility for childcare, as it was mentioned prior, women may be particularly impacted by this, in addition to the fact that they often make less money than their male partners and are more likely to be single parents (Rubery & Tavora, 2020).

Also, Den & Peper (2007) note that when referring to traditional gender norms, women seem to or feel more eager to accept the duties of childcare than men, and consequently, they will be inclined to use work - life policies when the situation requires it. Similarly with the expectations of the role of female workers in the Eastern countries, female employees in general are more likely to sacrifice their job potential in favour of childcare responsibilities since they will feel less entitled to assert their claim to provisions. However, men will prioritize their work over raising children (Todd & Binns, 2013).

In addition to the expectations of childcare responsibilities, the government plays an important role in giving men the opportunity to use WLB policies regarding childcare and paternity leave. National paternity regimes and policies towards fatherhood, workplace characteristics, and individual employee preferences, such as personal attitudes and financial situations are some of the factors that influence how men utilize paternity leave policies (Gregory & Milner, 2011). Parental leave laws, despite the global nature of the gender equality and inclusion debate, have mostly reflected national welfare systems and customs (Bamford, 2022).

When fathers feel entitled to use national paternity regimes, they are more likely to use WLB measures (Gregory & Milner, 2011). Also, if the government has set regulations allowing fathers to take time off work to be with their family, fathers may feel entitled to do so. Furthermore, fathers are more likely to adopt WLB measures that provide flexibility irrespective to gender norms. They are more likely to take advantage of these possibilities if they can cut their working hours or use flexible scheduling management without being constrained by traditional gender norms (Gregory & Milner, 2011). Moreover, the working

time scheme is another structural component that influences individual and organizational behaviour. For example, the British model of full-time male earner and part-time female caregiver puts pressure on males to work longer hours than their European counterparts (Gregory & Milner, 2011).

Additionally, traditional gender norms and the concept of “male breadwinners” are significant factors contributing to the gender disparities in employment. Across Southern European countries, women tend to work part – time more frequently than men, thus earning lower incomes and having fewer opportunities in securing high – ranking positions compared to men (Duvander, et., al., 2021). Particularly, Duvander et. al., (2021) mention that in Italy, Spain and Greece women’s employment rates fall below the EU average. Nevertheless, there is a gradual increase in female labour force participation, mostly from younger women. Consequently, this upward trend has led to a rising demand for paid caregiving services. Also, the authors explain that while Southern European nations differ significantly from their Nordic counterparts, there is a noticeable trend towards recognizing the diverse needs for working parents regarding work – life balance. In Greece, the availability of flexible work options remains limited, and disparities persist in parental leave policies between the public and private sectors (Duvander, et., al., 2021). Moreover, parental leave in southern European countries is permitted until the child reaches six years, although if both parents work for the same employer, they cannot utilize the leave at the same time. Notably, mothers predominantly utilize their parental leave rights even when both parents are eligible (Duvander, et., al., 2021).

Varieties of Capitalism

In this study, the notions of LMEs and CMEs from the studies of Hall & Soskice (2004) were used to further analyse the connection between maternity, paternity and parental leaves in organizations in regards to those provided by law. Hall & Soskice’s (2004) approach posits that companies interact with each other through a combination of market and non – market methods and gain their competitive advantage by solving cooperation issues across five spheres of interaction. These spheres include industrial relations which involve negotiations over wages and working conditions; corporate governance which concerns the flow of financial resources between firms and investors, vocational training and education referring

to the investments made by both firms and workers in developing specific skills; employee relationships which encompass the broader institutional dynamics within the workplace setting; and inter - firm relationships encompassing the coordination among firms suppliers, clients and competitors (Soskice, D., 2004).

More specifically, comparisons of national political economies can be made based on how companies tackle issues across these five spheres. Moreover, their analysis of modern capitalism highlights the importance of political and economic institutions in shaping two distinct structures of economic development. Thus, they categorize political economies into two main types: the Liberal Market Economies (LMEs), and the Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs) (Hall & Soskice, 2001).

According to Hall & Soskice (2001) within the LMEs, organizations predominantly manage their activities through hierarchical structures and competitive market frameworks. Moreover, when it comes to market interactions this entail the exchange of goods or services under competition and formal contractual agreements. Also, those participating in these markets adjust their supply and demand dynamics in response to price signals, often guided by the marginal calculations emphasized in neoclassical economies. However, in CMEs, organizations in order to coordinate their activities with other stakeholders and develop their core strengths rely more on non – market relationships. These alternative coordination methods often involve deeper relational interactions or incomplete contracts, along with network monitoring facilitated by sharing private information within networks. Moreover, there is a greater emphasis on collaborative rather than competitive relationships to enhance the capabilities of the organization in its abilities and performance. In contrast to LMEs where company's behaviour is primarily shaped by demand and supply conditions in competitive markets, the authors suggest that CMEs view companies coordinating around equilibrium points that arise from strategic interactions among firms and other stakeholders (Hall & Soskice, 2001). However, the present study uses more from the theoretical framework of the Varieties of Capitalism from Amable (2015) because the descriptions of the different Varieties of Capitalism are more nuanced. Amable (2015) breaks down the CMEs in the Social Democratic model along with the “archetypal” Coordinated economic model of Germany. These descriptions are discussed next in the study.

The Diversity of Modern Capitalism

Amable (2015) discusses the concept of institutional complementarity in the comparative analysis of capitalism, acknowledging that this concept is too “static and functionalist”. At the same time, the author argues for the usefulness of institutional complementarity in order to explain institutional change. Moreover, he proposes that to effectively incorporate this notion into a theory of constitutional change, a political economy of complementarity is needed that views institutions as socio – political agreements made between social and political entities within particular historical contexts. Deriving from the theoretical findings of Hall & Soskice (2004) and from the existing characterizations of capitalism in literature, Amable (2003) proposes the existence of five distinct types of capitalism. Namely, he proposes the Market based model, the Social Democratic model, the Continental European model, the Mediterranean model and the Asian model. For this study, the focus is placed upon the Market based model, the Social Democratic model, the Continental European model and the Mediterranean model.

According to Amable (2003), product – market competition is vital in a market – based economy. It makes companies more aware of negative changes that cannot be entirely managed through price changes, making quantity adjustments in product or service, important. This means that labour – market flexibility is essential for competitiveness, enabling firms to respond quickly to shifting market conditions. Moreover, financial markets play a key role in helping companies adapt and give people various ways to manage risks, which is especially important when a strong Welfare State is lacking.

In addition, Social Democratic economies are characterized by specific features related to product – market competition, the wage – labour nexus and social protection. These economies prioritize quality competition in product market with significant state involvement. They rely on coordination mechanisms beyond market signals and are generally open to foreign competition and investment. In terms of wage – labour, these economies typically have moderate employment protection, engage in coordinated or centralized wage bargaining, implement active employment policies, have strong unions and foster cooperative industrial relations. Also, social protection is a key aspect, with a high level of state involvement and emphasis on the welfare state in public policy and society.

The Continental European model reflects specific traits related to product – market competition, the wage – labour nexus and social protection. These mechanisms place moderate importance on price competition but prioritize quality competition, often involving public authorities. They exhibit relatively high non – price coordination and have lower protection against foreign firms and investment. In terms of wage – labour nexus, there is high employment protection, limited external flexibility, job stability and sometimes contentious industrial relations. These economies also implement active employment policies, have moderately strong unions, coordinate wage bargaining, and emphasize social protection, with a high degree of state involvement and a strong focus on social protection (Amable, 2003).

Mediterranean economies typically engage in price – based competition rather than quality - based competition, with notable state involvement and limited non – price coordination. They have moderate protection against foreign trade or investment and often highlight the importance of small businesses. In terms, of wage – labour nexus, there is high employment protection for large firms, but dualism exists with a more flexible margin of employment in temporary and part – time work. Moreover, industrial relations may involve conflicts, and there is generally no active employment policy. Also wage bargaining tends to be centralised and social protection is moderate (Amable 2003). Despite the need for labour force flexibility due to intense external competition, achieving this is not solely through layoffs and market – driven adjustments. Instead, it involves a combination of moderate employment protection, extensive social safety nets, and easy access to retraining facilitated by active labour – market policies (Amable 2003).

The Continental European model exhibits similarities with the Social Democratic model in some respects. Amable (2003) suggests that it relies on stronger employment protection but has a less developed welfare state. Moreover, while bargaining is coordinated and there is a commitment to a solidarity – based wage policy, nonetheless it is not as extensive as in the Social - Democratic model. However, workforce retraining is not as readily available as in the Social – Democratic model, thus limiting the potential for proactive labour market flexibility. In contrast to Coordinated Market Economies, the coordination of economic activities and investments in Labour Market Economies relies on market mechanisms, leading to investment in assets that can be easily transferred, whereas in CMEs coordination is achieved mainly through non – market methods, known as strategic coordination, which encourages investments in specific assets (Amable, 2003). Lastly, the Mediterranean model

of capitalism prioritizes stronger job security but offers less social safety nets compared to the Continental European model. Amable (2003) mentions that this emphasis on job security is made possible by relatively lower levels of competition in product markets and the centralized financial system's absence of short – term profit pressures. Although, it is mentioned that the workforce's limited skills and education pose challenges for implementing an industrial strategy centered on high wages and advanced skills (Amable, 2003).

Given the aforementioned discussion, the subsequent hypothesis that has been developed goes as follows:

H: The utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves in organizations beyond those provided by law will differ based on the Varieties of Capitalism specifically LMEs, Social – Democratic economies, Germanic economies, MEs.

Methodology

Below, the methodology of the current study is outlined based on the analysis of data obtained from the CRANET database and information obtained from the Executive Report on International Human Resource Management. These sources provided comprehensive information, allowing for an examination of the utilization of leave policies across the LMEs, Social – Democratic economies, Germanic economies and MEs. This section begins by describing the CRANET database and the Executive Report. Also, this section addresses the ethical considerations of CRANET when conducting the questionnaire and releasing its findings. Moreover, the limitations of the present study are discussed at the end of this section.

CRANET Network

To identify the maternity, paternity and parental leaves in organizations across countries in the context of Work Life Balance, the CRANET database and Executive Report on International Human Resource Management were used in detail. The CRANET Research Network is a multinational research network brought together by a common interest in

examining similarities and differences in HRM policies and practises through time and space. The network includes by now over 40 countries that have been collecting data from medium to large enterprises across the world since 1989 (CRANET Executive Report, 2023).

As a result, the largest and most comprehensive dataset on HRM is produced, which includes important HRM practises such as screening, hiring, paying, providing benefits, career development and utilisation of performance evaluations. The Report (2023) includes the structure of the HRM role such as outsourcing its operations, handing off responsibility to the line managers, utilizing technology to deliver Human Resource Management, and the features of HRM professionals such as their academic background, and providing organizational details such as industry details and staff size. In 2021 data were collected from 5,899 HRM experts working in organizations with more than 100 employees from 38 countries in the survey evaluated in this research. Even though certain nations are not included in the CRANET Network and dataset, the survey's findings and data offer a systematic analysis of HRM worldwide (CRANET Executive Report, 2023).

Methodology of the CRANET Research Network and its Design

When it comes to the methodology of the study, in order to conduct its international comparative survey, CRANET employs a strict approach that includes members' assistance in data analysis, a systematic evaluation of the formation and design of the questionnaire, building a dataset and collecting the data. For a more comparative analysis, the 38 participating countries were split into seven geographic groups and gathered information between March 2021 and May 2022. However, data collection was halted in 24 countries in 2021 and in 14 countries in early 2022 (CRANET Executive Report, 2023).

Concerning the design of the CRANET survey, in 1989, HRM specialists collaborated to create the CRANET questionnaire, drawing on existing literature and scholarly discourse for guidance. As a result, it has changed with two primary goals in mind: a) preserving uniformity between data collecting cycles and b) remaining up to date by incorporating essential advancements in the field. In its overall form, the CRANET study examines the significance of striking a balance between the requirement of thorough and representative

research and the necessity of taking sample relevance and local context into account when designing surveys.

According to the CRANET Executive Report (2023), in order to ensure that the 2021 questionnaire had the most relevant inquiries for documenting advancements in global HRM, it was slightly modified from prior years. Moreover, the questionnaires were distributed in each nation's official language. Also, to ensure accuracy and create linguistic equivalency throughout all participating nations, the surveys followed proper translation – back translation processes and then evaluated by CRANET researchers. It is important to mention that teams of researchers from each nation contribute an insight to the local context of the nation being surveyed for the purpose of achieving conceptual equivalency. In addition, in order to establish comprehension, verify equivalency, and identify the most appropriate time and methodology for data collection, local researchers are vital.

The survey targeted larger firms with at least 100 employees in smaller nations and at least 200 employees in bigger nations. Companies in the private sector make up 71% of the respondents, followed by 21% in the public sector, the not – for – profit sector (5%), and the mixed sector (4%). Regarding the data collection method, the 38 countries that participated in the 2021 survey round used various approaches to collect data, with each local research team implementing the approach that operated best in their particular setting. The majority of nations used an electronic method to administer the survey, occasionally integrating it with phone conversations or physical meetings. However, the most senior HR managers in each of the participating nations were contacted by utilizing an identical questionnaire. Furthermore, a considerable percentage of the organizations in nations (42%) that carried out an online or in – person survey notified the organizations beforehand before distributing the questionnaire, typically through letters in the mail. Also, about 81% of the organizations in the countries carried out further investigation actions, such as reminders through phone calls, emails or social media posts, to enhance the number of responses and provide an adequate sample size. Due to the length of the questionnaire and the increased ‘survey fatigue’ among the HR managers in numerous countries, these additional steps were essential.

The highest – ranking HRM specialist or a representative of them is regarded as the primary source of information in the CRANET study. According to the CRANET Report (2023), reliable data are gathered by directing the survey toward those with the greatest expertise and solely posing factual questions. Additionally, each country's local research team created a

mailing list of organizational addresses and decided on the best sampling methods. The majority of countries (42%) contacted all organizations on their lists (census sampling), 21% selected organizations based on size or sector (stratified sampling) and 11% used a random sampling from their mailing list.

A total of 8,680 questionnaires were returned by the participating countries out of the 304,126 that were sent out, yielding a 3% overall response rate. Moreover, due to the option to contact a larger number of potential participants in the survey through mass emailing, the percentage of participants who responded was lower than in past survey rounds. Consequently, many of the participating nations made the decision to enhance their outreach initiatives in an attempt to lessen the probability that obtaining replies during the pandemic era could become challenging. Correspondingly, the majority of countries implemented strategies to increase their response rates with various methods, such as informing participants in advance, making the survey accessible to everyone, developing the elements of the survey very carefully, as well as offering the results to the participants.

Moreover, incentives were used by more than half of the 38 countries to enhance response rates. The incentives provided as mentioned in the CRANET Report (2023), consisted of obtaining an overview of the results of the survey, a gift card ticket, miles for frequent travellers or vouchers for discounts. For example, Iceland in order to encourage the rates of replies, provided a brief overview of the survey's initial findings as well as their company's perspective on essential HRM topics. Following up with the participants, 37% of the research network's member countries identified that the primary causes of the low response rate were the survey's duration, the respondents' disinterest in the topic, problems related to COVID – 19, and the survey's questions requesting private information about the organization (CRANET Executive Report, 2023).

It is crucial to note that the international dataset for the years 2021 – 2022 has fewer responses than in prior years. The recent epidemic seemed to have affected the nations' ability to achieve high response rates from their participants comparable to those of prior years and made it more difficult for the survey participants to take part. Additionally, the participating countries carried out their study in 2021 – 2022 at different points during the COVID – 19 pandemic. During the lockdown period, the replies gathered made up only the 19% of the countries that participated in the survey. Consequently, the pandemic's full effects were still apparent, thus forcing many organizations to close or function from outside of their

central offices. Data were gathered from about 50% of the countries during the pandemic period when some companies had to remain closed and work remotely. However, data was gathered by 31% of the countries during the pandemic when the impact of the COVID – 19 on business' operations was minimal.

Ethical Considerations

The team of CRANET Report when constructing the questionnaire and releasing its findings took into great consideration the ethical aspects of conducting such detailed research. With that in mind the team ensured that the guidelines followed ensured the rights, the well – being and self – respect of the participants as well as promoting honesty as the core value of the research. In addition, various key ethical considerations were utilised when producing the research such as informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and privacy, data security, use and purpose of data as well as fair treatment and equity.

More specifically, researchers obtained informed consent from the participants of the survey prior of their involvement in a study. In addition, all participants were provided with detailed information about the purpose of the study, the potential risks and benefits in completing the survey, the procedures involved as well as the right to withdraw their participation at any time without facing consequences. Thus, participation in the survey was voluntary, and the participants were not forced to complete its procedures. Moreover, regarding the confidentiality and privacy of the survey, the personal information about the participants was kept confidential and their privacy was protected. All the data used during the data collection process were kept anonymous in order to protect participants' information and identification.

Furthermore, the data retrieved from the survey were being safeguarded and secured. Finally, the researchers communicated how the data will be utilized in the survey and treated fairly all those who participated in the survey without being biased or discriminating against people based on their gender, race, ethnicity or socioeconomic background.

Limitations of the current study

Due to the fact that this study is empirical, the CRANET database was the main source of information for completing it. This study uses only the existing questions of the CRANET database to investigate the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves in the Varieties of Capitalism. Also, the survey asks only for factual data thus there is no insight on the employees' side of information on the topics discussed in the questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire is superficial meaning that the analysis of the findings is not in depth but rather provides a superficial overview of the results. Finally, the CRANET dataset may introduce implicit bias in regard to the responses from the organizations participating in the survey because the enterprises were not randomly selected, thus may introduce bias to which companies responded to the survey and which did not.

Data Analysis and Results

In this section of the study, the focus builds upon the analysis and presentation of the outcomes of the CRANET questionnaire. In order to examine how different countries are utilizing policies regarding maternity, paternity and parental leaves beyond those provided by law, the results from the CRANET dataset were analysed in a software for a quantitative analysis, like SPSS. It is important to note that the outcomes of this data analysis were thoroughly evaluated against the stated hypothesis. Also, the countries that were examined for this study were divided by their economic models specifically: the UK, the USA, Canada and Australia are classified as LMEs; Austria and Germany are classified as Germanic economies; Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Iceland were classified as Social Democratic economies; and Cyprus, Spain, Greece were classified as MEs. Moreover, the dependent variables in this study are the maternity, paternity and parental leaves, the independent variables are the Varieties of Capitalism (LMEs, Social Democratic economies; Germanic economies and MEs. The control variables of this study are the industry in which organizations operate, the sector, the main market of the organizations' products or services, if the organization has an HR department, the extend to which trade unions influence the organization, the stage in which the person responsible for HR is involved in its development and if the organization has a joint consultative committee or works council.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation

This section plays a crucial role in the overall analysis of the study as it provides a summary of the main characteristics of the data such as distribution, central tendency, and variability. It also helps in identifying patterns, outliers, and anomalies in the data that may require further investigation. Moreover, descriptive statistics provide the foundation for testing the initial hypothesis of the study as stated in the literature review. With the same logic the correlation analysis examines any patterns or trends among the variables as it allows the exploration of how variables relate to each other and whether they gravitate towards opposite directions.

Table 1
Summary of Descriptive Statistics and Correlation

Variables	Mean	S/D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Do you have an HR department?		0,26												
Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	0,82	0,38	0,010											
HR on the board	0,49	0,50	-0,017	.163**										
Industry (services / other)	0,70	0,45	-0,002	-.054**	0,032									
Sector (private / other)	0,75	0,42	.056**	.042*	0,009	-.229**								
Market (international / local)	0,35	0,47	.111**	.057**	0,020	-.343**	.267**							
Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	1,81	1,31	-0,017	.187**	.105**	-0,015	-.254**	-.088**						
Joint consultative committee or works council	0,70	0,45	.044*	.128**	.047*	-0,030	-.181**	-0,013	.447**					
VARIETIES	2,51	0,95	.089**	.128**	0,025	.181**	.054**	.062**	.060**	0,006				
Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements	0,52	0,50	.083**	0,010	-0,014	-.053**	.041*	.082**	-0,017	0,022	-.150**			
Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements	0,47	0,49	.094**	0,012	0,009	-.040*	.051**	.081**	-0,014	.062**	-.125**	.811**		
Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements	0,40	0,49	.048**	0,008	-0,023	-0,022	0,009	.054**	-0,002	.037*	-.127**	.557**	.545**	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 1 the existence of an HR department in the organisation appears to be positively correlated among the sector (Pearson corr. ,056), the market (Pearson corr. ,111), the joint consultative committee or works council (Pearson corr. ,044), the Varieties of Capitalism (Pearson corr. ,089) as well as the maternity (Pearson corr. ,083), paternity (Pearson corr. ,094) and parental leave (Pearson corr. ,048). The findings suggest that the presence of an HR department is positively correlated with the sector, showcasing that organizations across different sectors are more likely to have HR departments. Similarly, there is positive correlation between the existence of an HR department and the market, suggesting that organizations that operate in different markets tend to have HR departments. Also, the organizations that have a joint consultative committee or work council are more likely to have an HR department. Additionally, the findings show a positive correlation of the existence of HR departments in the Varieties of Capitalism. Moreover, the positive correlation between the presence of HR departments and the provision of maternity, paternity and parental leaves implies that organizations with HR departments are more likely to offer these types of leave to their employees. Overall, the findings highlight that the presence of an HR department is associated with various organizational, economic and policy – related factors, suggesting its importance in employee welfare and organizational management.

Also, the table showcases that the person responsible for HR issues having a seat on the Board is positively correlated among the business / service strategy (Pearson corr. ,163), the market (Pearson corr. ,057), the influence of trade unions in organisations (Pearson corr. ,187), the joint consultive committee (Pearson corr. ,128), the varieties of Capitalism (Pearson corr. ,128) and the sector (Pearson corr. ,042). However, there is a negative correlation among the industry on services (Pearson corr.-,054).

Moreover, the table demonstrates a significant correlation among the person responsible for personnel / HR involved in its development with the extend to which trade unions influence organizations (Pearson corr. ,103) and a positive correlation with the joint consultative committee or works council (Pearson corr. ,047). This suggests that as the responsibilities of the person for HR issues increase there tends to be an increase in the presence of joint consultative bodies within organizations. Overall, these correlations note the connections between HR participation in strategy development and other organizational factors, including the existence and influence of trade unions. Also, they imply that these factors often fluctuate alongside HR involvement in strategy and development, potentially impacting organizational decision – making and employee relationships.

In addition, the table showcases that the industry variable has a negative correlation among the sector (Pearson corr. $-.229$), the market (Pearson corr. $-.343$), the maternity leave (Pearson corr. $-.053$), a negative correlation with the paternity leave (Pearson corr. $-.040$) and a positive correlation with the Varieties of Capitalism (Pearson corr. $.181$). The negative correlation suggests that the services are more likely to be in the public sector and the market is more likely to be local.

Also, as the correlation table demonstrates, the sector variable has a positive correlation among market (Pearson corr. $.267$), the Varieties of Capitalism (Pearson corr. $.054$), paternity leave (Pearson corr. $.051$) and maternity leave (Pearson corr. $.041$). However, there is a negative correlation between trade unions (Pearson corr. $-.254$) and the joint consultative committee or works council (Pearson corr. $-.181$). The negative correlations between trade unions suggest that the more active or influential the trade unions are within an organization the less likely it is that a joint consultative committee or works council will be active or influential regarding the public sector. The positive correlations suggest that the organizations in the private sector tend to utilize more the maternity and paternity leave policies among the Varieties of Capitalism.

Furthermore, the market variable, demonstrates a positive correlation between the economic models of each country (Pearson corr. $.062$), the maternity leaves (Pearson corr. $.082$), the paternity leaves (Pearson corr. $.081$), the parental leaves (Pearson corr. $.054$). However, there is a negative correlation among the influence of trade unions (Pearson corr. $-.088$). The positive correlations suggest that the market of the organizations is international. More specifically, when considering the economic models and their approach to maternity, paternity and parental leaves, the positive correlations suggest that organizations operating in international markets can have distinct implications. More specifically, organizations operating in LMEs may offer enhanced leave benefits to attract and retain talent in a competitive global market, whereas organizations in CMEs may further strengthen their already comprehensive leave policies, ensuring compliance and consistency in the global market. As for organizations in MEs, when exposed to international markets may possibly lead them to improve and standardize their leave policies to meet global norms. Nonetheless, the negative correlation among the market and the influence of the trade unions implies that organizations with less influence of the trade unions are more likely to be international. This could happen because there might be a conflict in market dynamics between the trade unions and organizations who operate in global markets. For example, organizations which are more

market – oriented may prioritize flexibility and efficiency in the way they operate, which may create conflicts with the influence of trade unions that advocate for more secure and stable working conditions.

Additionally, when it comes to the extent to which trade unions influence organisations, the table demonstrates positive correlation among the joint consultative committee or works council (Pearson corr. ,447) and the diversity of economic models across the countries (Pearson corr. ,060). These findings imply that as the influence of trade unions increases, there tends to be an increase in the presence of joint consultative bodies within organizations. Similarly, there is a positive correlation between the extent of the influence of trade unions and the diversity of the various economic models across Europe. This means that as trade unions become more influential, there tends to be greater diversity across the various economic models adopted by different countries. In a nutshell, these correlations indicate that the influence of trade unions within organizations is associated with the presence of consultative bodies and the diversity of economic models in countries.

Likewise, the joint consultative committee variable appears to have a significant correlation with the paternity leaves (Pearson corr. ,062) and with parental leaves (Pearson corr. ,037). By applying the same logic from the previous statements, these correlations indicate that as the presence or the activity of joint consultative committees increases, there tends to be a corresponding increase in the utilization or the accessibility of paternity leaves. Similarly, as the activity of joint consultative committees increases, it is more likely to be an increase in the utilization of parental leaves. In brief, these correlations show that the activity or the presence of joint consultative committees within organizations is associated with higher accessibility or utilization of paternity and parental leaves above and beyond the law.

Equally important are the negative correlations among the diversity of economic models in countries and the maternity leave (Pearson corr. -,150), the paternity leave (Pearson corr. -,125) and the parental leave (Pearson corr. -,127). These correlations imply that as the variable of the diversity of economic models across countries changes, there is matching change in the utilization or the availability of paternity, maternity, and parental leaves. In other words, not all countries offer the same provisions for these leaves due to the economic model in which they operate in. Some countries may offer fewer or less generous arrangements when it comes to these types of leaves.

Moreover, the maternity leave is positively correlated with the paternity leave (Pearson corr. ,811) and parental leave (Pearson corr. ,557). These correlations suggest that companies that provide more generous maternity leave policies are also likely to offer more generous paternity and parental leave policies. In accordance with the hypothesis of the study, the findings suggest that policies promoting maternity leave tend to be accompanied by complementary policies promoting paternity and parental leave.

Finally, there is a highly positive correlation between paternity leaves and parental leaves (Pearson corr. ,545), meaning that the companies or countries who provide more lavish paternity leave policies are also likely to offer more generous parental policies.

On the next page, there is an ANOVA test ran in SPSS software to analyse the differences between the economic models of the countries marked as Germanic (1), LME (2), Social Democratic (3), and ME (4) regarding the three categories of: maternity, paternity and parental leave. This analysis aids in determining whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of the economic models of the countries to compare and detect which of these models make use of which categories of leaves.

Table 2
Post Hoc – Scheffe between leaves and Varieties of Capitalism

Scheffe	(I) VARIETIES	(J) VARIETIES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements	1.00	2.00	0.021	0.027	0.896	-0.05	0.10
	1.00	3.00	.218*	0.024	0.000	0.15	0.29
	1.00	4.00	.140*	0.031	0.000	0.05	0.23
	2.00	3.00	.198*	0.022	0.000	0.14	0.26
	2.00	4.00	.119*	0.029	0.001	0.04	0.20
	3.00	4.00	-.078*	0.027	0.037	-0.15	0.00
	1.00	2.00	0.062	0.027	0.153	-0.01	0.14
	1.00	3.00	.171*	0.024	0.000	0.10	0.24
	1.00	4.00	.155*	0.031	0.000	0.07	0.24
Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements	2.00	3.00	.109*	0.022	0.000	0.05	0.17
	2.00	4.00	.093*	0.030	0.020	0.01	0.18
	3.00	4.00	-0.015	0.027	0.956	-0.09	0.06
	1.00	2.00	0.009	0.026	0.989	-0.06	0.08
	1.00	3.00	.222*	0.024	0.000	0.16	0.29
	1.00	3.00	.213*	0.022	0.000	0.15	0.27
	2.00	4.00	0.060	0.029	0.221	-0.02	0.14
	2.00	2.00	-.213*	0.022	0.000	-0.27	-0.15
	2.00	4.00	-.153*	0.026	0.000	-0.23	-0.08
Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements	1.00	2.00	0.009	0.026	0.989	-0.06	0.08
	1.00	3.00	.222*	0.024	0.000	0.16	0.29
	1.00	3.00	.213*	0.022	0.000	0.15	0.27
	2.00	4.00	0.060	0.029	0.221	-0.02	0.14
	2.00	2.00	-.213*	0.022	0.000	-0.27	-0.15
	2.00	4.00	-.153*	0.026	0.000	-0.23	-0.08
	3.00	4.00	0.060	0.029	0.221	-0.02	0.14
	3.00	2.00	-.213*	0.022	0.000	-0.27	-0.15
	3.00	4.00	-.153*	0.026	0.000	-0.23	-0.08

1: Germanic 2: LME 3: Social Democratic 4: ME

In detail, organizations in Germanic economies use more maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. Moreover, organizations in LMEs seem to use more maternity leave than organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. However, it appears that organizations in MEs tend to utilize more maternity leave benefits compared to organizations in Social Democratic economies. As for the paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements, organizations in Germanic economies tend to utilize this benefit more than organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. Moreover, organizations in LMEs use statistically more paternity leave benefits than organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. As for the parental leave in excess of statutory requirements, organizations in Germanic economies use statistically more this benefit than organizations in Social Democratic economies. Also, organizations in LMEs appear to use more parental leave benefits than organizations in MEs. However, the table shows that organizations in MEs use statistically more parental leave in excess of statutory requirements.

In a nutshell, organizations operating in Germanic economies use statistically more maternity leaves than organizations in Social Democratic economies or MEs. Also, organizations in LMEs are more likely to utilize maternity, paternity and parental leaves in excess of statutory requirements compared to organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. In addition, organizations in Social Democratic economies seem to utilize less leaves in excess of statutory requirements compared to organizations in Germanic economies and LMEs. Finally, organizations in MEs appear to utilize less leaves compared to organizations in Germanic economies and LMEs.

In addition to conducting ANOVA tests, I ran twelve (12) regression models in order to investigate how different economic models (Germanic, LME, Social Democratic, ME) influence the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves. I used a regression model for the variables because it is a powerful tool that can help in determining the extent to which of these economic models predict leave utilization. Additionally, regression analysis can control confounding variables that may influence the relationship between economic models and leave utilization. Thus, the impact of economic models on leave policies can be better assessed. Moreover, for each section of the analysis, an ANOVA table is going to be presented along with the regression models of each category of the leaves to show that the regression models are statistically significant.

Table 1: Regressions between Varieties of Capitalism and Maternity leave

ANOVA^a

VARIETIES	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Germanic	1	Regression	3.473	7	.496	2.316	.026 ^b
		Residual	72.834	340	.214		
		Total	76.307	347			
LME	1	Regression	8.803	7	1.258	5.785	<.001 ^c
		Residual	121.518	559	.217		
		Total	130.321	566			
Social Democratic	1	Regression	8.483	7	1.212	5.058	<.001 ^d
		Residual	184.235	769	.240		
		Total	192.718	776			
ME	1	Regression	1.673	7	.239	.978	.448 ^e
		Residual	53.744	220	.244		
		Total	55.417	227			

Dependent Variable: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model of the Varieties of Capitalism showcase that ME economies appear to be not statistically significant. However, the relationship between the maternal leave policies and all other Varieties of Capitalism are statistically significant.

**Regression Model 1: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among
Germanic economies VS all other Varieties**

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.224	.076		2.959	.003
	HR on the board	-.062	.025	-.063	-2.517	.012
	Industry (services / other)	.002	.029	.002	.061	.952
	Sector (private / other)	.037	.032	.031	1.152	.250
	Market (international / local)	.038	.028	.038	1.371	.171
	Do you have an HR department?	.212	.054	.098	3.925	<.001
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.043	.035	.032	1.240	.215
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.110	.030	.093	3.710	<.001
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	.006	.011	.016	.559	.576
	Joint consultative committee or works council	-.017	.031	-.016	-.556	.578
	Germanic	.175	.035	.131	5.047	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model for Germanic countries shows that organizations in these countries are more likely to use maternity leaves in excess of statutory requirements compared to organizations in the other Varieties of Capitalism.

**Regression Model 2: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among LMEs
VS all other Varieties**

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.243	.076		3.203	.001
	HR on the board	-.044	.025	-.044	-1.756	.079
	Industry (services / other)	-.010	.029	-.009	-.346	.730
	Sector (private / other)	.058	.032	.049	1.809	.071
	Market (international / local)	.045	.028	.045	1.595	.111
	Do you have an HR department?	.178	.054	.082	3.275	.001
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.025	.035	.019	.736	.462
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.074	.030	.063	2.490	.013
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.002	.011	-.005	-.172	.863
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.049	.032	.045	1.517	.129
	LME	.057	.015	.104	3.894	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model for LME countries demonstrates that organizations in these economies are more likely to use maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to organizations in other Varieties of Capitalism.

Regression Model 3: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among Social Democratic economies VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.326	.073		4.448	<.001
	HR on the board	-.057	.024	-.058	-2.335	.020
	Industry (services / other)	.011	.029	.010	.373	.709
	Sector (private / other)	.039	.032	.032	1.223	.222
	Market (international / local)	.045	.028	.044	1.614	.107
	Do you have an HR department?	.176	.053	.081	3.302	<.001
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.038	.034	.028	1.111	.267
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.088	.029	.075	3.032	.002
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	.004	.011	.011	.388	.698
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.072	.031	.066	2.312	.021
	Social Democratic	-.069	.009	-.208	-8.001	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The regression model for organizations in Social Democratic economies reveals that they are less likely to use maternity leaves in excess of statutory requirements than in organizations in the other Varieties of Capitalism.

**Regression Model 4: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among MEs
VS all other Varieties**

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.302	.075		4.047	<.001
	HR on the board	-.056	.025	-.057	-2.258	.024
	Industry (services / other)	-.022	.029	-.021	-.760	.447
	Sector (private / other)	.045	.032	.038	1.400	.162
	Market (international / local)	.029	.028	.029	1.020	.308
	Do you have an HR department?	.191	.054	.088	3.518	<.001
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.021	.035	.016	.617	.537
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.087	.029	.074	2.970	.003
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	.000	.011	.000	.015	.988
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.013	.031	.012	.431	.666
	ME	.009	.010	.024	.944	.345

a. Dependent Variable: Maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model of the utilization of maternity leave in organizations in MEs shows that the significant is statistically insignificant compared to all other Varieties.

Table 2: ANOVA for Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

ANOVA^a

VARIETIES	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Germanic	1	Regression	7.236	7	1.034	4.676	<.001 ^b
		Residual	75.166	340	.221		
		Total	82.402	347			
LME	1	Regression	5.023	7	.718	2.955	.005 ^c
		Residual	135.753	559	.243		
		Total	140.776	566			
Social_Democratic	1	Regression	8.210	7	1.173	4.921	<.001 ^d
		Residual	183.257	769	.238		
		Total	191.467	776			
ME	1	Regression	.889	7	.127	.498	.835 ^e
		Residual	56.107	220	.255		
		Total	56.996	227			

Dependent Variable: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

This table shows the overall Varieties of Capitalism in terms of Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements. It appears that the use of the paternity leaves among organizations in Germanic economies, LME and Social Democratic economies is statistically significant. However, the use paternity leaves in organizations in MEs is not statistically significant.

Model 5: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among Germanic economies VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.204	.077		2.650	.008
	HR on the board	-.025	.025	-.025	-.999	.318
	Industry (services / other)	.000	.029	.000	-.004	.997
	Sector (private / other)	.051	.033	.042	1.552	.121
	Market (international / local)	.047	.028	.046	1.671	.095
	Do you have an HR department?	.163	.055	.075	2.976	.003
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.022	.035	.016	.618	.537
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.092	.030	.077	3.068	.002
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.001	.011	-.004	-.128	.898
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.022	.031	.020	.713	.476
	Germanic	.161	.035	.119	4.554	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model demonstrates that organizations in Germanic economies are more likely to use Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 6: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among LMEs VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.239	.077		3.102	.002
	HR on the board	-.011	.025	-.012	-.453	.651
	Industry (services / other)	-.014	.029	-.013	-.476	.634
	Sector (private / other)	.067	.033	.055	2.040	.042
	Market (international / local)	.049	.029	.048	1.724	.085
	Do you have an HR department?	.137	.055	.062	2.477	.013
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.005	.035	.004	.145	.885
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.064	.030	.053	2.112	.035
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.008	.011	-.021	-.731	.465
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.070	.033	.064	2.148	.032
	LME	.034	.015	.062	2.290	.022

a. Dependent Variable: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model illustrates that organizations in LMEs are more likely to use Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 7: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among Social Democratic economies VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.291	.075		3.865	<.001
	HR on the board	-.020	.025	-.020	-.781	.435
	Industry (services / other)	.000	.029	.000	.010	.992
	Sector (private / other)	.055	.033	.045	1.680	.093
	Market (international / local)	.050	.028	.049	1.765	.078
	Do you have an HR department?	.135	.055	.061	2.462	.014
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.013	.035	.010	.385	.700
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.072	.030	.060	2.425	.015
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.004	.011	-.011	-.384	.701
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.088	.032	.080	2.761	.006
	Social Democratic	-.046	.009	-.136	-5.161	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model shows that organizations in Social Democratic economies are less likely to utilize Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 8: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements among MEs VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.273	.076		3.594	<.001
	HR on the board	-.017	.025	-.017	-.658	.511
	Industry (services / other)	-.019	.029	-.018	-.638	.524
	Sector (private / other)	.062	.033	.051	1.888	.059
	Market (international / local)	.043	.029	.042	1.508	.132
	Do you have an HR department?	.147	.055	.067	2.666	.008
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.005	.035	.004	.143	.887
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.072	.030	.061	2.408	.016
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.007	.011	-.018	-.630	.529
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.044	.031	.041	1.421	.155
	ME	-.005	.010	-.012	-.463	.643

a. Dependent Variable: Paternity leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model indicates that the use of paternal leaves in organizations in MEs are statistically insignificant compared to all other Varieties.

Table 3: Regressions between Varieties of Capitalism and Parental leave

ANOVA ^a							
VARIETIES	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Germanic	1	Regression	8.071	7	1.153	4.982	<.001 ^b
		Residual	78.696	340	.231		
		Total	86.767	347			
LME	1	Regression	13.833	7	1.976	8.673	<.001 ^c
		Residual	127.376	559	.228		
		Total	141.210	566			
Social_Democratic	1	Regression	4.641	7	.663	3.148	.003 ^d
		Residual	161.987	769	.211		
		Total	166.628	776			
ME	1	Regression	1.332	7	.190	.752	.628 ^e
		Residual	55.663	220	.253		
		Total	56.996	227			

Dependent Variable: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model of the Varieties of Capitalism showcase that ME economies appear to be not statistically significant. However, the relationship between the paternal leave policies and all other Varieties of Capitalism are statistically significant.

**Model 9: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements among Germanic economies
VS all other Varieties**

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.280	.077		3.622	<.001
	HR on the board	-.045	.025	-.045	-1.762	.078
	Industry (services / other)	.020	.030	.019	.685	.493
	Sector (private / other)	.024	.033	.020	.743	.457
	Market (international / local)	.033	.029	.032	1.142	.253
	Do you have an HR department?	.043	.055	.020	.783	.434
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	-.001	.035	.000	-.017	.987
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.094	.030	.079	3.119	.002
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.001	.011	-.003	-.096	.924
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.025	.031	.023	.786	.432
	Germanic	.127	.035	.094	3.588	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model shows that organizations in Germanic economies are more likely to use parental leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 10: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements among LMEs VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.250	.077		3.260	.001
	HR on the board	-.023	.025	-.023	-.917	.359
	Industry (services / other)	.019	.029	.018	.657	.511
	Sector (private / other)	.048	.033	.040	1.462	.144
	Market (international / local)	.047	.029	.046	1.654	.098
	Do you have an HR department?	.006	.055	.003	.115	.908
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	-.012	.035	-.009	-.341	.733
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.057	.030	.048	1.917	.055
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.008	.011	-.022	-.756	.450
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.102	.032	.093	3.153	.002
	LME	.085	.015	.153	5.710	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model demonstrates that organizations in LMEs are more likely to use parental leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 11: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements among Social Democratic economies VS all other Varieties

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.367	.074		4.976	<.001
	HR on the board	-.042	.025	-.042	-1.713	.087
	Industry (services / other)	.042	.029	.040	1.476	.140
	Sector (private / other)	.021	.032	.017	.654	.513
	Market (international / local)	.044	.028	.043	1.568	.117
	Do you have an HR department?	.008	.054	.004	.151	.880
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	.003	.034	.002	.091	.928
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.078	.029	.066	2.684	.007
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	.000	.011	-.001	-.033	.974
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.121	.031	.111	3.891	<.001
	Social Democratic	-.085	.009	-.256	-9.875	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements

The Regression model exhibits that organizations in Social Democratic economies are less likely to use parental leave in excess of statutory requirements compared to all other Varieties.

Model 12: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements among MEs VS all other Varieties

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.342	.076		4.507	<.001
	HR on the board	-.045	.025	-.045	-1.781	.075
	Industry (services / other)	-.002	.029	-.002	-.069	.945
	Sector (private / other)	.025	.033	.020	.745	.457
	Market (international / local)	.019	.029	.018	.645	.519
	Do you have an HR department?	.024	.055	.011	.426	.670
	Does the person with responsibility for HR issues have a seat on the Board or equivalent?	-.021	.035	-.015	-.594	.552
	Does your organisation have a written personnel/HR strategy?	.078	.030	.065	2.599	.009
	Extent to which trade unions influence organisation	-.005	.011	-.014	-.467	.641
	Joint consultative committee or works council	.056	.031	.051	1.785	.074
	ME	.027	.010	.072	2.781	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Parental leave in excess of statutory requirements

Although the Regression model indicates that organizations in ME economies are more likely to utilize parental leave in excess of statutory requirements, the overall ANOVA model is not statistically significant. In turn we cannot take the significant in Model 12 into account.

Discussion of Findings

The extensive analysis of the data from the CRANET database, offers significant findings in the current study regarding the manifestation and utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves in the Varieties of Capitalism.

Regarding the initial hypothesis, the findings from the Correlation, ANOVA and Regression tables show that the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves beyond those provided by law manifest differently in organisations of different Varieties of Capitalism. Particularly, organizations in LME countries, where the market competition and individualism are emphasized, organizations offer maternity, paternity and parental leaves primarily as voluntary benefits rather than mandated by extensive government regulation. The utilization of these leaves appears to be prominent in these organizations (Chandra, 2012). For this study, organizations in CMEs are divided into two categories, the Germanic and the Social Democratic, deriving from Amable's (2015) theoretical framework. This distinction offers interesting results in which organizations seem to utilize the leaves differently.

Based on the study's results it is evident that the utilization of maternity leave in excess of statutory requirements, organizations in Germanic economies use statistically more of these leaves compared to organizations of Social Democratic economies and MEs. Furthermore, the utilization of maternity leave in organizations in LME, compared to Germanic countries is statistically more than in organizations in Social Democratic economies and ME. Also, it appears that organizations in Social Democratic economies have a lower utilization of maternity leave compared to organizations in Germanic economies and LME. Finally, organizations in MEs have a higher utilization of the leaves compared to Social Democratic economies yet the overall ANOVA model shows that the results are not statistically significant.

As for the paternity leave utilization, organizations in Germanic economies use statistically more of the leaves compared to organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. Moreover, organizations in LMEs use statistically more the parental leave benefits compared to organizations in Social Democratic economies and MEs. In contrast, organizations in Social Democratic economies use statistically less the paternity leave benefits compared to

organizations in Germanic economies and LMEs. When it comes to the utilization of the leaves in organizations in ME the results appear to be non-significant.

For parental leave utilization, organizations in LMEs and Germanic economies appear to utilize these benefits more compared to organizations in MEs. Organizations in Social Democratic economies are less likely to utilize this benefit compared to organizations in LMEs and Germanic economies. However, organizations in LMEs and Germanic economies use more parental leave benefits than organizations in MEs. The results in organizations in MEs appear to be not statistically significant.

The findings suggest that organizations from Germanic countries tend to utilize significantly more maternity, paternity and parental leaves than organizations from Social Democratic countries. This utilization happens possibly because the organizations emphasize cooperation between employees, employers and the state in order to provide comprehensive maternity, paternity and parental leave benefits. This cooperative approach suggests a system where the interests of all parties are aligned to support WLB and family responsibilities. However, organizations of Social Democratic economies tend to have strong welfare states and social protections, thus having extensive family – friendly policies are mandated by law (Amable, 2015). Consequently, organizations do not have a gap to fill in in contrast to organizations in countries of different economic backgrounds (Amable, 2003).

Moreover, in organizations of Mediterranean economies, the utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves are impacted by economic and social factors as mentioned in the literature review (Escobedo & Wall, 2015). The organizations tend to provide more limited or basic family – friendly policies due to the emphasis on cost control and the prevalence of dual labour market. This effect results in lower utilization rates of parental benefits compared to countries with more extensive social welfare (Escobedo & Wall, 2015).

Therefore, the study highlights how the Varieties of Capitalism influence utilization of maternity, paternity and parental leaves. Organizations in Germanic economies and LMEs show higher utilization of these leaves, driven by their respective frameworks. In contrast, organizations in Social Democratic economies rely heavily on state – mandated benefits, resulting in lower additional utilization by organizations. Organizations in MEs appear to show inconsistency, reflecting their less developed welfare systems and potential gaps in policy implementation.

Suggestions for application of the findings

The study findings can inform decision – making processes and be used at multiple levels, such as organizational, governmental and at societal level assisting in the development of more supportive policies and practises related to maternity, paternity and parental leaves.

Organizations can use these findings to compare their family leave policies with economic and industrial standards. For example, organizations in LMEs can adopt more flexible work arrangements such as job sharing, remote work opportunities and flexible working hours. Also, they can promote the provision of on – site childcare facilities, reducing the burden on working parents. Organizations in MEs can promote the adoption of best practises from other economic models, by emphasizing the importance of family – friendly workplace policies and flexible working arrangements to improve family leave utilization and WLB.

The governments can use these findings to assess the effectiveness of current family leave policies and consider adjustments or expansions based on utilization patterns across organizations from different economic varieties. In addition, governments can assess the effectiveness of current family leave policies, by understanding utilization patterns and identifying gaps and areas of improvement. For instance, organizations in LME countries where leaves are not mandated by law, governments may explore incentives or regulations that encourage a broader adoption of family – friendly policies. Governments in LMEs might explore providing tax breaks to companies that offer extensive family - leave benefits. This can incentivize organizations to go beyond statutory requirements, thereby supporting employees in balancing work and family life. Moreover, the findings related to Mediterranean economies can direct the revision of legislation to strengthen family - leave benefits and ensure a more equal access to leave benefits for all employees in order to promote fairness and improvements in WLB.

Finally, societal norms and values around family roles can be influenced by the findings of the current study. For instance, major disparities in paternity leave utilization in Mediterranean economies may spark conversations about gender equality and responsibilities in caregiving. Furthermore, campaigns can be developed of public awareness to promote the importance of parental leave and address existing barriers of their utilization. Campaigns can educate the public about the benefits of parental leave, not just for families but for society as a whole. In addition, highlighting success stories and providing information on how to access

leave can empower more employees to take advantage of these benefits. Finally, public awareness initiatives can address misconceptions and stigmas associated with taking leave, particularly for fathers. Consequently, promoting the idea that taking leave is beneficial for both career and family life can encourage higher utilization rates.

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