

EdD thesis

# Managing educational change in a time of social and economic crisis in Greece

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, this thesis is entirely my own work and no material from this thesis has been used or published previously. I confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

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## ABSTRACT

Since the late 1980s, Greek governments have sought to address school evaluation and teacher assessment in state education. Still, where such reforms had been introduced they were met with consistent resistance from teachers. In 2013 the government considered the economic crisis as an opportunity to pursue educational changes on school evaluation and teacher assessment in a perspective of the overall restructuring of state education. Teachers' resistance was weak and school evaluation was implemented in 2014. It lasted less than a year as it was suspended in February 2015. This study focuses on secondary teachers' attitudes towards the recent reform and examines how these were reshaped by the crisis. The study suggests that compliance was achieved for the crisis has altered teachers' priorities, rendering them susceptible to policies they traditionally opposed. It also identified a widely held implicit disapproval under teachers' superficial consent. The major impediment to the endorsement of the policy has been their mistrust of the state. Greece is clearly behind many fellow OECD members, not due to any deficiency in resources, but rather by reason of a mistrusted state that fails to inspire its citizens to keep up with the demands of modern trends. The study suggests that unless trust of the state is established, any evaluation reform will be trapped in a cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy, failing to achieve its potential. Moreover, what this study has brought into light for the first time is a new dynamic force of a proportion of teachers who are favourably disposed towards school evaluation and teacher assessment.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This is a study about schools and teachers. It is about the way they approach educational change in times of economic and social crisis. The study focuses on educational change which may be multi-layered and cover a range of activities within the educational domain. The school improvement agenda may often involve changes in pedagogy, curriculum or assessment. Here, the focus is on pedagogical change or changes concerning the way teachers teach. As learning is the centre of attention in any educational system, classroom practice is strongly related to student learning and well-being. Changing teachers' practices has commonly been assumed as one of the hardest reform goals to achieve, but also one of those which together with poverty and socioeconomic status ultimately have the biggest impact on pupil learning (Riley and Khamis, 2005, p. 121). Consequently, pedagogy occupies a dominant place in any educational setting. Thus, a significant proportion of change initiatives focus on bringing about change in pedagogy. To a great extent, change in pedagogy is being attempted 'via a proliferation of policies' (Ball, 2012, p. 9). It involves legislation, national strategies and mandated policies by the central state. To a lesser extent, pedagogical change may emanate from a lower hierarchical level, that of headteachers or teachers themselves.

However, changing pedagogy is a highly convoluted and contested issue. Top-down mandatory change is not always followed in the ways that it is enacted. On the other hand, bottom-up change requires motivating teachers, a prerequisite that is sometimes hard to achieve. In both cases though, implementing change becomes even more complicated when those involved, have a professional identity which has been shaped by a culture that lacks any monitoring of or intervention into classroom practice for more than a generation, as is the case in Greece.

The empirical context of the study is placed within the public secondary education sector in Greece. The international context where the study takes place has its own particularities as far as the structure and functioning of the educational system is

concerned. A prevailing feature that differentiates the particular education system from others is the absence of any professional development strategy. The teaching profession has experienced a considerable degree of de facto autonomy since 1982 (Georgiades, 2005; Charalambous and Ganakas, 2006) with no performance management processes in place. Secondary school teachers have experienced isolation in classroom and pedagogical autonomy for almost three decades.

Greece is one of only a few countries in Europe without external assessment of learning or external evaluation of schools and teaching or indeed any other comparative mechanism of quality assurance.

(OECD, 2011a, p 14)

The facts that school inspection and teacher appraisal were abolished resulted in the absence of any pedagogical control of classroom practice until relatively recently (Hawkesworth et al., 2008, p. 108; OECD, 2011a, p. 14). What is more, teachers were granted tenure after a probationary period of two years. Furthermore, remuneration depended entirely on the years of service.

Yet, there is a contradiction though between teacher and school autonomy. Teacher autonomy in pedagogy does not imply the same autonomy in curriculum or student assessment. Teacher autonomy has been enjoyed in a context of minimum school autonomy within the Greek education system which is highly centralised. The Ministry of Education operates as a typical government bureaucracy, allocating resources and giving policy directions –mainly on curriculum and assessment of students- from the centre (OECD, 2009, p.124). Thus, all matters concerning schooling such as curriculum and examinations are controlled by the ministry (Kazamias, 2009). There is a National Curriculum and standardised national testing so that there are no differences between schools. As the OECD notes, ‘Greece remains one of the most centrally governed education systems in Europe’ (2011a, p. 14). In a highly centralised system such as this, change in schools is typically a top-down process where the role of the headteacher is restricted to implementing and

monitoring new policy directives and guidelines, which emanate from the Ministry of Education and channelled through regional structures reach schools.

It is clear from the above that the combination of permanent employment and the absence of any monitoring have resulted in the establishment of a strong culture of classroom autonomy. As a consequence, any governmental policies implying interventions in classroom practice were strongly opposed and although enacted in name they were never implemented in practice. A recent example of such resistance to change is illustrated in the case of a self-evaluation scheme introduced in schools by the Ministry of Education in 2010 (OECD, 2011a, p. 44). The scheme was one of the few government initiatives referring to evaluation since 1982. It introduced self-evaluation in schools. This was a pilot scheme for the external evaluation of schools that also involved teacher assessment. Nevertheless, at that time, a common belief among teachers was that self evaluation paves the way for the introduction of external evaluation. Teachers commonly believed that the scheme was introduced to make the acceptance of evaluation easier and to gauge resistance. The project was conducted on a pilot-volunteer basis, resulting in a lack of any participating schools. As a result, heads of local authorities sustained pressure from the Ministry of Education in order to pursue pilot schools. Pressure was put on headteachers and consequently on teachers. Eventually, a few schools volunteered to participate. Even in those schools that did agree to participate, limited progress was made and the scheme proved controversial and was discontinued. According to the OECD:

The issue in Greece is not just that problems are unknown or that solutions are lacking. Perhaps most important, proposals for change and legislation by successive governments have not been implemented or have not been implemented effectively.

(2011a, p. 14)

However, the context of pedagogical autonomy and resistance to any intervention in classroom practice has changed dramatically since the economic crisis surfaced in 2008. The crisis opened up a set of policies that have been vigorously pursued by the

government. School staff redundancies, significant wage cuts and a rise in the number of working hours have been some of the austerity policies adopted in response to the debt and currency crisis of the past six years (OECD, 2011b, p. 16). The impact of those changes on teachers has been immense. Teachers traditionally belonging to the middle class have fallen into the ranks of low-income earners. They now live with insecurity, the fear of dismissal and uncertainty of what the future holds (OECD, 2013, p. 35). Among the policies vigorously pursued by the government there were several new education policies introduced. In particular, as far as pedagogical interventions are concerned, in March 2013 a new legislative act on teacher assessment and school evaluation was introduced. This policy is the focus of the present study. It took almost a year for it to be introduced in schools, but surprisingly in January 2014 the evaluation scheme challenged the existing school culture and operated in schools throughout the country until January 2015 despite organised – teacher union - or independent – teachers' blogs - voices of resistance.

Indeed, there had been certain voices of resistance to the education reform on evaluation. Some schools had initially refused to follow the legislation. These cases however, were not widespread, and sooner or later voices of resistance to the reform ceased. Nevertheless, the study does not wish to investigate the exceptions. This could easily be the topic for another investigation. The researcher deemed it to be more interesting for the study to focus on the vast majority of teachers who accepted change and to investigate the ways they have chosen to approach it. This focus stems from the fact that analytical importance is primarily attributed to teachers' social conduct on a seemingly unpopular policy, spatially and temporally situated within the economic and social crisis. Yet, when voices of resistance were identified within the research setting, they were recorded and taken into account. It is indeed this catholic acceptance of the evaluation policy that stimulated the investigation of this particular case of educational change in Greece at a time of crisis or austerity. Being a secondary school teacher himself, the researcher entered a school culture of classroom autonomy when he moved from the private to the state sector. He experienced previous governmental attempts to introduce evaluation in the state sector and was surprised by the fierce opposition of his fellow teachers.

Therefore, the introduction and implementation of the recent evaluation policy formed a landmark for school teachers.

What was striking though and proved to be the stimulus for this research was the fact that teachers' resistance to the recent evaluation reform was weak, almost invisible in comparison to previous years. This has been the initial stimulus for the present study. The chosen research setting comprised the researcher's wider professional setting. Being a 'researcher-practitioner' his choice was made for obvious reasons of familiarity with the research context. His professional geographical area secured an initial convenience sample and attracted the attention of other teachers who willingly agreed to participate in the study. It became a topic of discussion among teachers from different schools, even from different local education authorities and although initially received with a certain degree of suspicion, it soon attracted the attention of the regional professional communities. The results of the study are expected to be of interest to those engaged in the study and also by other education practitioners concerned with contemporary educational issues. Feedback from the local community stimulated the researcher to investigate even more thoroughly the topic and also resulted in a substantial expansion of the initial research sample. His vision for the study is to disseminate its results primarily to those directly involved and most importantly to a wider audience. This might hopefully motivate others – practitioners and academics - to engage with research in this particular field as well. Although several research studies have been conducted on the Greek economic crisis, only some are concerned with the effects of the crisis on the Greek education and even fewer with the recent evaluation reform in Greek schools. This study wishes to become one of the first on this topic.

The Ministerial Act on Evaluation was issued in March 2013 and took effect in January 2014. It remained active until January 2015. The teacher assessment and school evaluation policy was a straightforward change to pedagogy, the first after quite a long period of trust attributed to teachers. It seems that an unanticipated change has occurred in the way evaluation reforms have been approached by school teachers in Greece over the last 30 years as the country sinks into a deepening

economic crisis and climate of austerity. Unlike previous years, the absence of any vigorous resistance from teachers indicates that the school workforce seems to have reconsidered its stance towards interventions in classroom practice and pedagogical autonomy.

In view of that, the topic that the proposed study deals with is the way that teachers approached pedagogical change within the wider context of austerity and economic and social crisis. Was this an indication that conditions have matured in schools to endorse evaluation? Has the school workforce endorsed evaluation as a necessity and did they perceive it as an opportunity that had been missing for so long? Have school teachers been convinced by the Ministry of Education of the necessity and benefits of evaluation so that resistance was minimum? Was the timing the difference between this attempt and previous failing ones? Have the crisis and the alterations in the professional context of teachers that followed played any role in the implementation of the evaluation policy? These are the questions that this study deals with. The overall data collection strategy applied predominantly involves interviewing supported by a questionnaire survey of a sample of teachers. In brief, the ways change is perceived and interpreted by those affected, in other words, how teachers approach change, is illustrated in Chapter 6. The data for understanding those issues need to be carefully presented (see Chapter 5 Presentation of Data) in a reliable and valid way which depends on the methods followed (see Chapter 4 Research Design and Methods). Our understanding though cannot be limited to findings within an isolated setting, but has to include the broader and multilayered context (see Chapters 2 and 3 Literature review) within which the particular setting operates.

To elucidate, the rest of the study is laid out in the following way. Chapters 2 and 3 illustrate the theoretical framework. In particular, Chapter 2 considers the two main concepts of 'change' and 'crisis'. The notion of change and the notion of crisis are individually discussed and subsequently examined together, in order to analyse the interrelations and connections between them. Initially, the concept of change is examined through its multidimensional features by addressing theories of change

from dominant scholars in the field. Afterward, change is scrutinised more holistically at the level of systemic change which is conveyed by the term reform. At that point, the discussion focuses on global players that help shape the current trends in education. The chapter emphasises on the significance of the wider context of the change process either at the school or institutional level or the reform of a system. It demonstrates the interconnectedness of processes across the different organisational levels of change - school, district, national, and transnational. The chapter also analyses the dominant ideology that fosters this interconnectedness and directs reforms globally. The focus of discussion then moves on to the recent crisis that shook the global *status quo* and shaped the context within which change is experienced. The chapter elaborates on how the contemporary global context was affected by the 2008 crisis and how and in what ways the crisis relates to educational change. Chapter 3 follows on from the previous chapter. It outlines the significance of globalization in the change process and the impact of the recent economic crisis with reference to the Greek education system. It also provides an account of the ways through which the crisis influences educational reforms, facilitates compliance with new policies, and accelerates change. This is also where the research questions are presented.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, aims to clarify and make explicit the researcher's rationale for and the purpose of using the research design for this study, by offering at the same time an illustration of the basic details of fieldwork conducted. Hence, it describes and discusses how the structural elements of this research, namely purpose, research questions, methods for collecting data and approach for analysing them, integrate. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the reasons for selecting and designing the particular elements of the research framework and consists of three sections. The first offers an account of the choices made on the design of the research pathway, whilst the second describes and explains the selection of the core setting of the study. The third section discusses the ethical implications deriving from the designed research pathway and core setting, and delineates the steps taken to ensure that the study conforms to ethical guidelines. Subsequently, the second part of this chapter provides an illustration of

the collection and analysis of data. It comprises two core sections: how data were collected by explaining the use of the data-gathering tools; and the methods for analysing data, the use of instruments for data analysis and the steps taken and in what order using several examples from the data.

Subsequently, Chapter 5 presents the main findings of the study. It is divided into two parts, each considering a separate theme. The first demonstrates the different approaches to the newly-implemented school evaluation policy which range from an enthusiastic endorsement to strong disagreement. Therefore, findings are presented under three headings: supporting the reform; opposing the reform; and keeping a critical stance. The second theme displays teachers' accounts of their stance towards the reform. The content of this part of the chapter attempts to depict teachers' approaches to change using their own words. The findings are categorised according to the accounts that teachers offered to explain their social practices and include the following: the influence of the teacher union; pressure from society for change; the conditions created by the crisis and their effects on teachers; the role of senior officials; the fear of sanctions; obedience to the law; and finally the tacit belief that nothing will actually change. The chapter ends with a brief summary and the implications of the main findings are discussed further in the next chapter.

The sixth chapter further analyses and discusses the findings of this research study. It offers explanations on teachers' social interactions and is divided into four themes. The first theme focuses on teachers' compliance with the evaluation reform. The second theme discusses whether the lack of an open confrontation leads to transformation or reproduction of the existing conditions of the education system concerning school evaluation and teacher assessment. The third theme explores possible ways in order to achieve change. The final theme discusses how the recent political change in Greece constituted a notable unexploited opportunity for the evaluation reform to overcome all previous difficulties and be endorsed by teachers.

The final chapter concludes by summarising the main argument of the thesis. In particular, it illustrates the implications for further study generated by the current

work. Furthermore, it discusses improvements that would have been made if the researcher were to repeat the study. Implications for the professional role of the researcher and the wider professional context are also included. It then presents how, to whom and for what purpose the dissemination of the findings will take place. Finally, it offers a final comment on all the basic points in the researcher's argument and reflects on how well the research question has been answered by the particular enquiry.

## CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK PART I

This is the first of two chapters illustrating the theoretical framework of the study and considering the two main concepts of 'change' and 'crisis'. The notion of change and the notion of crisis are individually discussed and subsequently examined together, in order to analyse the interrelations and connections between them. Initially, the concept of change is examined through its multidimensional features by addressing theories of change from the dominant scholars in the field. Afterward, change is scrutinised more holistically at the level of systemic change which is conveyed by the term reform. At that point, the discussion focuses on the global players that shape the current trends in education. The chapter imparts the significance of the wider context of the change process either at the school or institutional level or the reform of an educational system. It demonstrates the interconnectedness of processes across the different organisational levels of change - school, district, national, and transnational. The chapter also analyses the dominant ideology that fosters this interconnectedness and directs reforms globally. The focus of discussion is next on the recent crisis that shook the global *status quo* and shaped the context within which change is experienced. The chapter elaborates on how the contemporary global context was affected by the 2008 crisis and how and in what ways the crisis relates to educational change.

### School change

The area of educational change management has received extensive attention over the last decades. Numerous and diverse approaches to understanding change exist, the majority of them tend to share a number of common key elements. Moreover, the different approaches tend to supplement each other. The diversity of approaches to change according to Fullan (2007, p. 29) emanates from the fact that change is a 'multidimensional' entity. For the researcher of this study, change is almost certainly more than a single entity and in any endeavour to analyse and clarify its meaning, it is probably necessary that we follow the process of 'identifying and describing its main separate dimensions' (*ibid.*, p. 29). Despite this, and due to

the limitations of this study, it might be possible to reach a widely accepted perception of change as this is articulated by different scholars, without getting into a thorough analysis of its attributes. In this study change may be defined as a ‘dynamic and continuous process of transformation, a flow from one state to another, either initiated by internal or external forces, involving individuals, groups or institutions’, resulting in a realignment of existing values and outcomes (Morrison, 1998, p. 13). This process of transformation might be either pre-planned and predictable or, continuous and open-ended (Mitzberg, 1987). In both cases, it has commonly been assumed that the process of change is not linear. However, the majority of researchers according to Fullan (2001, p. 50) identify three broad phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and continuation. This mode of processing change is comparable to Lewin’s (1958) three-step model of change, developed over 60 years ago. It comprises the following steps: unfreezing the present situation, moving to the new situation and refreezing the new situation. First, unfreezing requires the assumption of the presence of an obsolete element as part of a problematic condition. Secondly, moving involves subverting the existing *status quo* and flowing from the former state to the new one. Finally, refreezing implies sustaining the new state of affairs and avoiding the return to the obsolete one.

Analysing educational change using the above three different phases it may possibly seem to be a linear process. In such a linear process with rational steps to follow, change might seem effortless to implement. By contrast, empirical evidence suggests that change ‘is difficult and complex to manage successfully’ (Earley, 2013, p. 5). Likewise, Fullan (2011, p. 5) contends that ‘most change initiatives fail’. At this point, one question that needs to be asked is: why is it suggested that it is so challenging to create effective and sustainable change? Fullan (*ibid.*, pp. 5-6) has addressed this question, arguing that most change initiatives fail for three reasons. First, people cannot be forced to change. Secondly, ‘rewards are ineffective’ as they buy ‘superficial, short-lived change at best’. Thirdly, inspiration is not as powerful as people think it is, because it ‘fails to reach enough people’. On the other hand, Earley (2013, p. 5) addressing the same issue, offers an explanation that stresses the

importance of school culture. He states that 'in-depth and lasting change involves alterations in people's attitudes, values and beliefs, and hence in the culture of the school'. He also points out that one of the main reasons that change is remarkably difficult to achieve is: 'because of this [alterations in school culture], change is destabilising...frequently involves conflict'. Equally, Ball, Maguire and Goodson (2012, p. 10) hold the view that 'policy enactments will also depend... on the degree to which particular policies will 'fit' or can be fit within the existing ethos and culture of the school or can change ethos and culture'. Taken together, these views suggest that when attempting to bring about change in schools, the new policy targets the school culture, either implicitly or explicitly, and challenges it. As a consequence, it appears that the interaction between the existing culture - this is how things are here - and the innovation introduced - this is how things should be - embraces in its nature conflict and dispute. Moreover, the importance of institutional culture for effective and sustainable change can be illustrated briefly by the National College for School Leadership (2009, p.25): 'for sustainable success...if there is any toxicity in the culture you cannot move, it will be impossible to overcome the challenges without addressing the culture'.

The views reported above appear to support the assumption that institutional culture plays a crucial role in the process of change. Importance might also be attributed to school culture for another reason. As Supovitz and Weibaum (2008, p. 153) suggest, change processes become 'adjusted repeatedly as they are introduced into and work their way through the school environment'. Morrison (1998, pp. 14-15) illustrates this point clearly:

From the mid-1970s onwards there is a clear literature to suggest that change possesses certain characteristics...The principal feature that run through these characteristics is that change concerns people more than content. This is a critical factor, particularly in the human services like education. Change changes people but people change change!

One possible suggestion for these views might be that not only school culture is crucial to the success or failure of change, but also that policies for change are filtered through it and even if they seem implemented, they might have been altered, subverted or diverted.

From the previous discussion it can be seen that the process of change in an institution is influenced by its unique culture. However, there are limits to how far the concept of school culture can be taken. There are two likely causes for this limitation. First, it is believed that schools ‘are not de-contextualised organisations into which various policies are slipped or filtered into place’ (Ball, 2012, p. 5). Secondly, the fact that each institution has its own unique culture does not suggest that the latter is a solid, immune and isolated dimension of an organisation. Those two points may be summarised in Glover and Coleman’s (2005, p. 252) comment that ‘each institution, has its own unique culture, although this culture will be influenced by the context of the wider culture of the society in which the institution sits’. This seems to suggest that the influence of the wider societal culture upon school culture could not be ignored even in the exceptional case of a single school that introduces a bottom-up change initiative. A possible explanation for this might be that nearly always, schools operate in the wider social, cultural and economic context. Returning to the issue of educational change, the list of factors to address in order to forge ahead with a change initiative is almost endless (Fullan, 2001). The variables that could be included in such a list derive from different levels - classroom, school, district, national – which all comprise distinctive layers of the wider context.

The importance of the wider context may become greater when change exceeds the reach of a school or a group of schools, by constituting a reform that engages all schools of a country. A possible explanation for this may be that the implications of reform cannot be studied by merely examining multiple individual school cultures. Ball (1997, p. 259) addressing the issue of the politics of reform holds the view that it is crucial not to perceive the changes in education ‘simply as located in heads [headteachers] and in schools’. The reason for this as Fullan (2000, p. 15) suggests is that factors ‘in the wider context can help or hinder sustained reform. These may be

negative school cultures, unstable districts, and uncoordinated state policies. They are fateful for sustained reform'. However, such explanations tend to overlook the fact that identifying factors in the wider context and taking them into consideration does not guarantee the success of a change initiative nor its sustainability. It has commonly been assumed that successful change also requires the understanding of the way patterns interrelate and interact. Datnow and Stringfield (2000, p. 199) contend that:

Implementation and sustainability, and school change more generally...are the results of the interrelations between and across groups in different contexts, at various points in time. In this way, forces at the state and district levels, at the design team level, and at the school and classroom levels shape the ways in which reforms fail or succeed.

This point supports the assumption that institutional change should be perceived in the context of the national education system that each school operates within, especially in cases of centralised education systems. In addition, it is important to bear in mind that institutional change is probably announced through reform policies. As a consequence change could be viewed 'in the context of policy statements and the conditions into which they are introduced' (Grimaldi, 2012, p. 447). Stephenson and Ling (2014, p. 10) elaborate further on this by arguing that we cannot examine the 'micro context of the policies of a particular country or system of education without considering the impact on that micro context of each of the other domains as they interact with it'. To exemplify this, they have developed an interpretative framework in order to understand the complex contexts and the impact of the 'other domains' on education. This framework is illustrated by Stephenson and Ling (*ibid*, p. 215) as a theoretical onion (see Figure 2.1). Its multiple layers represent the domains which interact with each other. The outer layer represents the global domain which involves contemporary dominant ideological movements. The succeeding inner (macro) layer represents the political trends that result from the dominant global ideological movements. Stephenson and Ling convey significance to the macro domain as this, they suggest, drives educational policy and derives as a result of interaction with the global domain. The meso layer

represents the concept of 'official knowledge' as this is expressed in academia. The final inner layer (micro) represents the specific policies and practices taking place in different countries. Consequently, Stephenson and Ling conclude that investigating the way educational change is processed and approached by schools, requires taking into account the multiplicity of layers that surround educational change.

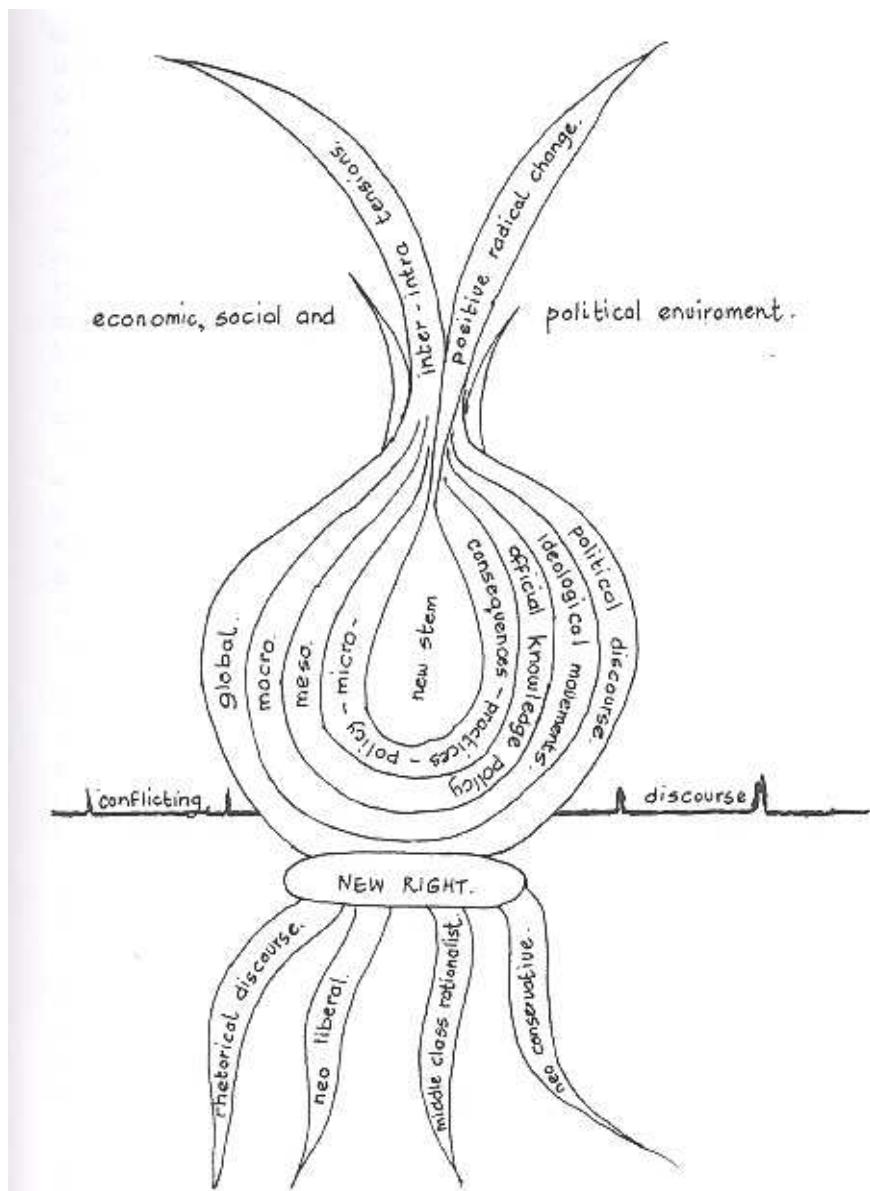


Figure 2.1 The interpretative framework as a theoretical onion. (Stephenson and Ling, 2014, p. 215)

If education policy researchers fail to take account of the ways in which education is embedded in a set of more general economic and political changes, then, echoing Ball's version (1997, p. 268), they 'close down the possibilities for interpretation and

rip the actors who feature in the dramas of education out of their social totality and their multiple struggles'. From this point of view, it can be seen that reforms should be comprehended holistically within the policy framework in which they happen. This policy framework can be loosely described as the school and governmental policies which interact in a national environment that is part of a globally competitive, interconnected and interdependent world. As a consequence, when studying change at school level or entire system reforms, change might need to be placed and scrutinised within a broader context than the local or even the national; it needs to be perceived with a global perspective.

## Globalisation

It is most common that studies on educational change (Fullan and Boyle, 2014; Stephenson and Ling, 2014; Turner and Yolcu, 2014; Hargreaves *et al*, 2010; Burnes, 2009; Fielding, 2009; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009; Coleman and Earley, 2005) refer in their introductory sections to the established notion of globalisation, summarised in Coleman and Earley's (2005, p. 1) words: 'schools and colleges are not seen in isolation, but are contextualised in relation to their external environment at local, regional and global levels'. The notion of globalisation has become widespread since the 1990s as a means of analysing social change (Ramler, 1991). This approach, whether studying 'government-led change' (Barber, 2010, p. 264) or school-based change appears to require a significant degree of understanding the dynamics of globalisation in relation to education. It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by the term globalization. The present study will use the definition suggested by Waters (1995, p. 3) who saw it as a social process of two kinds: first, a process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede; and second, a process in which people become increasingly aware that these constraints are receding. This study also agrees with Burnes (2009, p. 477) that globalisation derives from the economic and technological development across the world, but it is also driving it.

Having defined what is meant by globalisation, it is now important to examine how this notion is seen as related to education. Globalisation embodies a multitude of

concepts which are manifested through rules and trends that are set by supranational bodies. National educational policies are influenced to a great extent by these transnational organisations through the trends that they promulgate (Apple, 2014; Gamble, 2009). However, these rules and trends do not constitute a single formal global policy programme. They rather seem to form a multi-layered educational agenda which Sahlberg (2011, p. 99) calls the ‘Global Educational Reform Movement’ (GERM):

GERM has emerged since the 1980s and is one concrete offspring of globalization in education. It has become accepted... within many recent education reforms throughout the world, including reforms in the United States, many parts of Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, some Scandinavian countries, and increasing number of countries in the developing world.

An earlier, more comprehensive study of this phenomenon was carried out by Hargreaves *et al* (2001, p. 1) who referred to these global trends as ‘the new educational orthodoxy’ and identified its promoters across the globe:

A new, official orthodoxy of educational reform is rapidly being established in many parts of the world. This is occurring primarily in predominantly Anglo-Saxon countries, but through international funding organizations such as the World Bank and the global distribution of policy strategies, elements of the orthodoxy are increasingly being exported to many parts of the less-developed world as well.

Among the most influential organisations which shape and promulgate global trends are the European Union (EU), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). For OECD (2013b, p. 10) the role of these organisations is ‘the widening, deepening and speeding up of connections across national borders’. However, approaches of this kind are rather controversial. Ball (2008, p. 201) interprets ‘connections across national borders’ differently. He suggests that ‘the competition and free trade policies...insinuate themselves into, or at times simply override, national policy-making agendas’. In

order to do so, strategies to exert influence to national governments could be systematic and multi-layered. It is believed that one of the most influential strategies involves the comparison of different educational systems by measuring their quality. For example, the European Union through its statistical office EUROSTAT provides statistical evidence on the member-state educational systems. UNESCO on the other hand, has developed the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) that involves comparisons of education statistics and indicators across countries on the basis of uniform and internationally agreed definitions. The UNESCO's Institute for Statistics is working closely with Member States and partner organizations, such as OECD and EUROSTAT (UNESCO, 2014).

Probably the best known example of this strategy is provided by the OECD, which emphasises international comparisons of educational performance. Within this framework, it has organised the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) to compare the educational performance of students. This programme seems to be increasingly adopted as a global measure of achievement. PISA results have frequently become highly influential and indisputable. This is evident in the case of Finland where due to its consecutive successful PISA results it has attracted global attention as the best international performer according to OECD standards (Sahlberg, 2010, pp. 330-331).

An additional strategy is probably the promulgation of global trends in education through publications. OECD circulates periodic reports concerning educational issues, in different countries such as the *Trends Shaping Education* (OECD, 2013b; 2010; 2008) or *Education at a Glance* (OECD, 2013a; 2012). These are highly influential publications with frequently impact on national education policy agendas through the global trends they promulgate. Their normative ideals initially become widely accepted and then taken for granted. This can be seen in the case of Spain's Fundamental Education Act. A major global trend in education according to Coleman and Earley (2005, p. 1) is 'the impact of the move to site-based management for educational institutions'. This trend is linked to greater accountability and a culture of performativity. In Spain, the culture of accountability and performativity has been

endorsed by the enactment of the current Fundamental Education Act, which was based, as Pinar et al (2014, p. 89) argue, on suggestions made by the OECD report *Education at a Glance* (2012).

Having discussed the most common strategies applied by global organisations, the influence of globalisation upon national policy-making needs re-examining. The forming of educational policy under the influence of global organisations is manifested even at the highest political levels of decision making. For example, in the UK, although different political parties have been in office, their political compass in terms of educational policy-making has nearly always remained the same. This can be illustrated in several cases, from the speech of the British Prime Minister James Callaghan in 1976 stating that ‘in today’s *world* higher *standards* are demanded than were required yesterday and therefore we demand more from our schools than did our grandparents’ (Barber, 2010, p. 262, emphasis added); to the New Labour leader Tony Blair in 1997 presenting their approach to education policy: ‘as a process of transformation and an adaptation to the necessities of the global economy... appropriate to new social and economic conditions’ (Ball, 2008, p. 194); to, finally, the leaders of the Coalition Government declaring in the 2010 Schools White Paper:

So much of the education debate in this country is backward looking: have standards fallen? Have exams got easier? These debates will continue, but what really matters is how we’re doing compared with our international competitors. That is what will define our economic growth and our country’s future. The truth is, at the moment we are standing still while others race past.

(Department for Education, 2010, p. 3)

As was pointed out, the impact of globalisation is more than a contemporary phenomenon. Additionally, it is unlikely that it is identifiable merely in the higher levels of political governance in the UK. An example of a case in the Republic of Ireland tends to support this suggestion. In 1991, the OECD published a report on

Irish Education under the title *Review of National Policies for Education* (OECD, 2006, p. 129). The government responded with no delay to the OECD's suggestions by publishing a discussion paper with proposals for educational change in all sectors, called the Green Paper. The OECD's impact was so immense that within the following three years the government presented the new White Paper, *Changing our Education Future*, which formed the legislative framework for the change agenda (*ibid.*). The OECD report had not only generated educational initiatives for new policies, but according to Clarke and Killeavy, (2014, p. 114) all its suggestions were endorsed in the major policy papers. Indeed governments tend to invite transnational organisations to report on their systems. This can be illustrated briefly by the case of Wales in 2013 when the Welsh government invited the OECD to review the quality of education in the country and examine if its reforms were effective (TES, 2013).

This section has, using appropriate evidence, suggested that educational change is strongly linked to globalisation and national economic competitiveness, and more importantly, that it could be influenced by transnational organisations. Such global trends emanating from transnational organisations confront various reactions worldwide, ranging from severe resistance to uncritical acceptance. The principles underlying global trends and globalisation are discussed in the following section.

### **Neoliberalism**

Across different countries and throughout different periods of time all recent major education reforms share something in common: their underlying philosophy. This is unsurprising, as almost all contemporary systemic reforms in education are influenced by a few particular organisations. These supranational organisations enshrine the dogmas of the dominant ideology, neoliberalism. These dogmas, according to Gamble (2009, p. 75), have established themselves as 'the leading ideas in the thinking of international agencies such as the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF since the 1970s and 1980s'.

The common feature that the majority of systemic reforms share is the impact of neoliberalism (Stephenson and Ling 2014; Fielding 2011; Coleman and Earley, 2005). As Apple (2014, p. xi) notes, all too many nations and regions have instituted policies that bear the hallmarks of the neoliberal agenda that has been pushed in schools for years. Similarly, Spring (2013) links the market ideology to human capital economics as the driving force in the globalisation of education. He contends that ‘by the twenty-first century, most national school systems had adopted human capital goals of education for economic growth and personal pursuit of increased income’ (*ibid.*, p. 20). Their dominance is illustrated by Smyth *et al* (2000, p. 1), who add that there is negligible public debate and discussion on whether this might be a desirable path to follow or not, as ‘it has become an unquestioned and unchallengeable article of faith’. The above quotes indicate that neoliberal doctrines are generally seen as being incorporated in major reforms and although ‘experienced differentially throughout the world, these trends are an influence on the development of educational institutions globally and on their management and leadership’ (Coleman and Earley, 2005, p. 1). Consequently, to make sense of change needs connecting it to the dominant global trends. Thus, research on change requires understanding and reflecting on neoliberal philosophy prior to any further analysis of change processes.

Neoliberal philosophy is based according to Bottery (1992, p.86) upon two basic assumptions: that the market and hence competition between people, is natural to the human condition; and that humanity is composed of individuals, who are basically selfish. In accordance with these two assumptions the market ‘merely gives expression to a basic urge’. In that way, the disciplines and effects of the market present themselves as natural laws and become legitimate. Therefore, the market should be as unrestricted as possible. This is the ‘new freedom or new liberalism’ (Turner and Yolcu, 2014, p. xiii). But why does such a discourse on market freedom take place in relation to the education domain? There are two reasons why the market is interested in education: education is a huge sector of people, institutions and services; and it is an essential service field. Those two attributes increase its value as a potential market with huge potential economic activity (*ibid.*, p. xvi).

What is more, as long as the humanity is composed of selfish individuals, the politics of the market are rooted in a social psychology of 'self-interest'. This powerful notion of self-interest is the incentive for material progress that according to Newman 'teaches us to respect results not principles' (1984, p. 158). Thus, phenomena of unemployment or poverty are seen as personal failings that 'can be overcome by improved training and more entrepreneurship' (Turner and Yolcu, 2014, p. xiv). Within that context, according to human capital theory (Burnes, 2009), individuals should invest in themselves. In order to do so, individuals turn to education. As Tomlinson (2001, p. 2) explains:

Governments around the world...were discovering human capital theory, with individuals told to invest in themselves in a life-long process of learning and reskilling in order to get or retain any kind of job. Teachers were being gradually stripped of their professionalism and policed by new inspection regimes. Schools, teachers and local education authorities were increasingly held responsible not only for failing individuals, but also for failing to make the national economy competitive in the global market.

Subsequently, the school takes up the role of equipping individuals for the economy by providing the educated workforce for industry in globally competitive markets. In this manner, the education system enables the nation to compete in the global market. Therefore, the education system in order to perform successfully its economic role needs to increase the quality of provision and standards achieved. In that spirit, UK's former Prime Minister Gordon Brown (TLRP, 2008, p. 4) emphasises that education is an investment for a country in a global economic competition:

The challenge this century is a global skills race and that is why we need to push ahead faster with our reforms to extend education opportunities for all...In a globally competitive national economy, there will be almost no limits to aspirations for upward mobility. Globalisation dictates that the nations that succeed will be those that bring out the best in people and their potential.

Bringing out the best in people and their potential is achieved according to the neoliberal theory of choice through competition. When this theory is applied in education it suggests that as competition makes private businesses successful, it may operate in the same way across schools. However, what blocks competition is that schooling is controlled by the people who produce it rather than by the people who consume it. The resolution of the markets is to place schools and teachers at a crossroad. It offers the possibility of success or the threat of failure and closure, and it is this combination of opportunity and threat (Ward and Eden, 2009, p. 28) which sustains pressure to stakeholders and drives improvement. Within this neoliberal theory of choice through competition, success or failure is determined for example through teacher assessment and school evaluation mechanisms. In that way, economic competitiveness and economic objectives are the guiding principles in education. As a consequence, 'efficiency, competition, standards, human capital, accountability, assessment, autonomy, decentralisation, flexibility, mobility and so on' (Durru-Bellat, 2014, p. 32) have become common terms in education discourse. These orientations are instilled in education through what scholars tend to call 'neoliberal policies' (Ball, 2013). As noted, these policies were formulated and adopted in western societies 'in the late 1970s and gained dominance in the early 1980s' (Turner and Yolcu, 2014, p. xiii). According to Boas and Gans-Morse (2009, p.143) scholars tend to characterise three sets of policies as being neoliberal:

those that liberize the economy, by eliminating price controls, deregulating capital markets, and lowering trade barriers; those that reduce the role of the state in the economy, most notably via privatization of state-owned enterprises; and those that contribute to fiscal austerity and macroeconomic stabilization, including tight control of the money supply, elimination of budget deficits, and curtailment of government subsidies.

Educational policies can be easily identified as part of the second set of policies that allow greater intervention of the private enterprises within the education domain. What is more, contemporary education policies are also affected by a wider set of policies which involves fiscal austerity and macroeconomic stabilisation. Such

policies are predominantly identified across the world as a response to the 2008 global economic crisis.

### **Global crisis and change**

The most recent global economic crisis occurred in 2008. It has been reported that its impact has superseded the Great Crash of 1929 (Gamble, 2009). A likely explanation is that due to the current globalised economy, its repercussions have not been limited to the United States but have influenced economies across the world. As a consequence, it has commonly been assumed that the crisis influences sets of policies which relate directly or indirectly to education, and shapes both the national and the global context within which educational change takes place. Even before the advent of the recent crisis, this assumption had been addressed by several studies. Smyth et al (2000, p. 1) stressed the connection between crisis and change when arguing presciently that worldwide reforms of teaching require a narrative or convincing story to carry them, with recent ones tending to coalesce around the notion of crisis. What also suggests a strong link between crisis and change, is the fact, according to Cizek and Ramaswamy (1999, p. 497), that 'a crisis presents a decisive moment in which whatever decision is made results in decisive change'.

From the previous views, it can be seen that the notions of crisis and change seem to be related and combined. This raises questions on whether to include the notion of crisis in discourses on contemporary education reforms. As an answer to the question, the current study assumes that investigating change without addressing the global crisis is likely to undermine the understanding of the change process and lessen the quality of its analysis. Moreover, although change can be brought about by many factors, it has commonly been assumed that the economic crisis comprises one of the most important mechanisms for change. This shows a need to be explicit about exactly what is meant by the word crisis.

The term 'global crisis' as used in the study refers both to its social and economic elements. This implies a preliminary assumption made by the researcher that the crisis is almost certainly a social phenomenon, not a natural one and as such it is

'socially constructed and highly political' (Gamble, 2009, p. 38). Moreover, its naming is a significant political act. According to Clarke and Newman (2012), within the world of critical political economy exist competing narratives of the crisis involving different views. In this study the crisis as a term by itself suggests 'either that there is a critical situation, a political emergency, a moment of danger, or that an impasse of some kind has been reached. In either case, extraordinary actions may be required to overcome it' (Gamble, 2009, p. 65). The necessity of 'extraordinary actions' to overcome the crisis entails the notion of change. It implies the urge for rapid change as an immediate response to the crisis effects.

However, there is not just one crisis. It comprises more than just an economic or financial problem as initially appeared. The crisis initially concerned the financial sector, but rapidly not only became global but also affected most social structures. Ball, Maguire and Goodson (2012, p. 3) explain: 'In autumn 2008 the financial system appeared to be on the point of collapse... causing potentially huge disruption to the international economy, to public order and to political stability'. This critical situation has multifaceted economic, political or social effects, with an immediate consequence the imposition of severe austerity measures. In response to the crisis governments had to take measures to reduce expenditures. As a result, in a short period of time austerity has affected the educational domain in both direct and indirect ways. This seems unavoidable because major crises, as the 2008 one, shape the global context within which educational change takes place. Gamble (2009, p. 7) conveys considerable importance to the dynamic of the crisis for change and adds that 'they [crises] come retrospectively to be seen as major turning points. Their outcomes have been new institutions, new alignments, new policies and new ideologies'. As this study suggests, the turning point that Gamble refers to is the understanding of the crisis as a chronologically defined stimulus that generates major reforms, in terms of duration and magnitude.

Reflecting on the three broadly accepted phases of change, it is the success and the duration of the third phase – continuation - that allows researchers who study change retrospectively to draw conclusions on whether a crisis is a major turning

point or not. In terms of the recent global crisis though, it is too early to draw such conclusions. Currently, reforms generated due to the crisis are either in the initiation or the implementation phase of the change process. The dynamic of the two first phases however appears to be a strong indication that the 2008 crisis will be a major turning point for several education systems across the globe. From New Zealand to Latin America, governments are reforming their education systems in radical ways as they address challenges arising from the global economic crisis (Turner and Yolcu, 2014; Ball, Maguire and Goodson, 2012; Hargreaves *et al*, 2010).

Change emanating from the current crisis is largely based on a duality of standpoints. It might constitute the outcome of two forces coming from different angles and converging on a single point which represents change. The first angle symbolises a passive attitude towards the effects of crisis. When the crisis deepens, it causes economic stringency and recession on state economies. Consequently, recession transforms the priorities of political discourse. It places the austerity discourse on cutting public expenditure and allocating better resources on top of the political agenda. In that sense, the economic and social impact of the crisis entails the stimulus for large-scale reform. Thus, the crisis provides the opportunity for governments around the world to stress the need for restructuring the public sector and transform it into an affordable and thus sustainable service. As it will be described in the subsequent section, in the case of Greece the crisis became the central element of the political rhetoric of reforms to the public sector (Lynn, 2011, p. 4). The government attempted to legitimise all scheduled reforms calling on the impact of crisis. Other countries follow this rhetoric in a similar way or advocate for developments in education which however may entail the desire to cut costs as the underlying rationale for reforms. For example, this rhetoric can be seen in the UK through austerity and the need to balance budgets. Also Ireland illustrates this point clearly. In the case of Ireland, the country was severely hit by the global crisis which subsequently generated a wave of public sector reforms that also affected the education domain. The reforms were aligned to the OECD's Economical Survey of Ireland (2011) and fully complied with the EU and the IMF's Programme of Financial Support for Ireland (Clarke and Killeavy, 2014, p. 116). Thus, the crisis in the sense

demonstrated above urges for public spending cuts and as a consequence it facilitates the introduction of reforms in the public sector and subsequently to the education domain.

The second angle denotes ‘an appreciation of the connection between economic success and education’ (Brown et al, 2008, p. 2). Education could be seen as the remedy to the crisis, by developing the human resources and providing a well-educated and skilled workforce. This will make a nation-state more competitive globally, thus allowing it to overcome the impact of the economic crisis more rapidly and with fewer side-effects. It represents the hope or wish that education should play a pivotal role in getting the nations out of the global crisis. This is increasingly the case as the world economy becomes even more knowledge-based. In such conditions new initiatives emerge or as Hartley (2012, p. 23) explains, ‘financial crises bring into sharp focus the anomalies which had hitherto gone unnoticed; or even if they had been noticed, they were ignored’. As a consequence, such agendas may involve the radical reform of the education system. Gamble (2009, p. 98) argues that ‘the politics of recession often leads to the questioning of current orthodoxies and a ruthless reassessment of former beliefs and assumptions. The discrediting of a dominant set of assumptions creates new opportunities and new narratives’. In this way, governments see periods of recession as an opportunity to accelerate educational reform that focuses on increasing efficiency in educational systems (Van Damme, 2011).

This is not to say that reforms would not happen if the global crisis had not occurred. It is possible and also quite apparent that certain reforms might have been designed and scheduled before the onset of the crisis. However, even in that case the crisis has a central role, by defining the timing of their introduction. Simsek (2005, p. 1) analysing the relationship between economic cycles and educational reform, explains that:

Large-scale educational reforms comprising a new educational philosophy, pedagogical principles, curricular revolutions and management innovations have

come during the time of major economic, social and political revolutions caused by a clear Kondratieff crisis of capitalism about every 50 years in the last two hundred years of the Western capitalism.

Periods of deep economic crisis may provide the suitable timing for governments to bring about substantial change to the existing *status quo*. Therefore, major reforms have often been observed happening after the advent of a crisis. Ball (2008, p. 57) illustrates this point clearly. He describes the years between 1976 and 1997 in the UK, as a period of economic crisis and mass unemployment, during which, the neoliberal government reduced professional autonomy for teachers and schools. A similar example can be seen in the case of the ongoing educational reform in Greece. It is a good illustration of how the crisis created the conditions of austerity that would introduce change which previously had been considered as impossible to implement. In the words of the OECD Secretary-General at the launch of the OECD Report on the Education Policy of Greece in 2011:

...in view of the current economic and social situation, there is a need to accelerate the timeline for implementing the recently announced administrative reforms. Education is indeed key for the future of Greece. It is time to equip this country with a modern and efficient education system...

(Gurria, 2011, p. 1)

As it will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the crisis exposed the economic weaknesses of the country and caused the intervention of international lenders who imposed radical change in the public sector through severe austerity measures.

## CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK PART II

This chapter refers to the Greek education system and provides an account of the ways through which the crisis influences educational reforms, facilitates compliance with new policies, and accelerates change. The research questions are also presented.

### The case of Greece

Greece is a typical example of how a crisis can accelerate educational change. When the global crisis of 2008 impinged on Greece in 2009 the country faced the risk of default on its debts (Tsafos, 2013; Lynn, 2011). In need of resources and struggling with debt, the government turned to those who provide solutions for short-term problems in emergency cases for a bailout. These were the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECM). The IMF offered to provide assistance:

One of the IMF's aims is to make resources available (with adequate safeguards) to members experiencing balance of payments difficulties. The IMF provides technical assistance and training to help member countries strengthen their capacity to design and implement effective policies. Technical assistance is offered in several areas, including tax policy and administration, expenditure management, monetary and exchange rate policies, banking and financial system supervision and regulation, legislative frameworks, and statistics.

(IMF, 2014a, p. 1)

A payment calendar was determined and the IMF started providing stability packages. As a result, Greece became the biggest borrower from the IMF, in March 2014 (IMF, 2014b). In the same year, the IMF concluded that the default risk for Greece was not a short-term hazard, as it involved structural problems at the macroeconomic level. As a consequence, the lenders applied structural adaptation plans, which the government was obliged to adopt. When the deal was finally put into place, the Prime Minister in a televised address stated: 'Economic reality has

forced us to take very harsh decisions ... I want to tell Greeks, very honestly, that we have a big trial ahead of us' (Smith, 2010, p.1). It was obvious that the price of being bailed out was to accept neoliberal constraints on the policies that could be followed, to the oversight of national reform agendas. Such arrangements involved the diminishing of state's expenditure on social areas, reducing public enterprises and the number of staff (Lynn, 2011, p. 5). Austerity policies were depicted in a shared statement made by the European Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) –known as the Troika- on Greece in March 2014:

The authorities are making progress on structural reforms to improve the growth potential and flexibility of the Greek economy and help create a fairer and more supportive environment for investment, growth, and job creation. They are committed to implementing a very large majority of product market reforms identified by the recent OECD study.

(IMF, 2014b, p. 1)

This statement confirms the central role that the state holds in the reform process. While policies may be dictated by the international lenders, the latter lack any legislative authority to impose change. When the reform framework is defined, then, a democratically elected government is needed to undertake the process of implementation. Similarly, Gray (1998, p. 17) explains that government interventions are necessary for free-market economics to happen:

Free-markets are a product of artifice, design and political coercion. Laissez-faire must be centrally planned: regulated markets don't just happen. The free-market ... is an end-product of social engineering and unyielding political will.

Almost all reforms cannot reach organisations or people by themselves. They probably require political underpinning and political intervention. This can be illustrated by Hartley (2012, p. 22) who identifies the central role that the state

plays, and emphasises on the proper timing for radical reform to happen: ‘In the downturn which follows the collapse of an expansionary phase, it is necessary for the state to intervene...it is during this period that the most radical organisational and social innovations occur. State intervention though is risky’. His remark supports the view that the proper timing for radical reforms is nearly always that of a crisis. In such cases, incremental change is usually inadequate for a system or an organisation to respond to challenges. Alternatively, transformational change is what is probably needed to address new conditions created by a crisis, and as a result such conditions offer the stimulus for radical reforms.

However, this assumption has a number of limitations. A financial crisis could frame the context for neoliberal pursuits, without however implying that the process of change is followed by the force of habit or unconsciously in times of crisis. The reason is that a crisis does not lead to change spontaneously. Its significant involvement in the change process is that it forces governments to borrow from international banks and agencies under the prerequisite that they would follow the lenders’ agenda. Then, the path of reform is followed by national governments through mechanisms of political ascendancy.

This is certainly true in the case of Greece, for two reasons. First, the government’s fear of political cost that can impede or even defer change was neglected during the crisis, under the pressure of achieving an agreement with the international lenders. Secondly, when the crisis reached Greece by the end of 2009, it, caused the demise of the trust in the state, and generated a strong public belief that the state had failed (Lynn, 2011). As a result, with its society and economy in a poor state close to default on its own debt, the country has been shaken by a notion that change is needed. The government channelled the pressure for neoliberal reforms by the international lenders, and the pressure for change by the public, into rhetoric that better days would come in the longer term through the reconstruction of the public sector. The words of the Greek Minister of Education in 2011 are a good illustration of how reforms were politically presented as the remaining course of action:

The multifaceted and multi-layered crisis that we experience can become the *catalyst for change* of our timeless problems. I am deeply convinced that the time has come. The Prime Minister has put education as the dominant priority of the national plan for the regeneration of the country. We change education, we change Greece: to change our educational system, to change attitudes, to change Greece.

(OECD, 2011a, p. 14, emphasis added)

However, what was not mentioned above was that change would come through an agonising and painful process of austerity. Reforms were introduced amongst consecutive rounds of austerity measures and bailouts during the years 2009-2014. (Palaiologos, 2014; Papadimitriou et al, 2013). Core welfare state programmes have not escaped such treatment. In this short period, higher taxes have been imposed (Tsafos, 2013) and many departments have faced severe cuts (Greece, Ministry of Finance, 2013). As a result, the damage inflicted to public services has been excessive (Lynn, 2011, p. 6). Teachers have paid the price too. According to the OECD (2013, p. 3):

Several reductions in teachers' benefits and allowances affected teachers' salaries in 2010 and 2011. As a result, gross salaries fell by 17% in real terms between 2009 and 2011, while in the OECD area teachers' salaries fell by around 2% on average during that period. In addition, Greek teachers also saw their net salaries shrink due to the creation of a solidarity tax, increasing the level of taxation.

A 17% reduction in salaries was not the end of teachers' contribution to the austerity measures. What is more, tenure was abolished and 2,000 state teachers were amongst 15,000 public servants discharged in August 2013 (Associated Press in Athens, 2013).

Apart from the imposition of public spending cuts that affected teachers, education reform has been significant too. Large-scale reforms aimed at restructuring the entire education system have been initiated since 2013 (Greece, Ministry of Finance,

2013). One of the first market principles imposed by the lenders related to accountability, teacher evaluation and pedagogical control. These trends, as previously described, can be seen at work throughout the world. They are mediated by certain supranational organisations and applied in different settings which vary in their 'educational traditions' (Turner and Yolcu, 2014, p. xvii). In the case of Greece, the educational tradition on evaluation and accountability has developed under a state of pedagogical autonomy, alien to any performance culture or accountability requirements. This tradition shares a number of similarities to the UK education setting in the way that it was organised and run until the early 1970s (Adams, 2014; Wilkins, 2011; Whitty, 2006). To elaborate, the teaching profession in Greece had experienced a considerable degree of de facto autonomy since 1982 with the absence of performance management, school evaluation and teacher assessment of any kind (Charalambous and Ganakas, 2006; Georgiades, 2005). In the majority of cases, teacher development was the preserve of the individual teacher. Also, teachers were seen as the trusted professionals aiming for a more equal society with opportunities for all. By contrast, teacher autonomy was enjoyed in a context of almost minimal school autonomy. The reason is that the Ministry of Education has been operating as a typical government bureaucracy, allocating resources and giving policy directions – mainly on curriculum and assessment of students - from the centre (OECD, 2009, p. 124). This has resulted in a highly centralised education system where the Ministry of Education is running all state schools in Greece and shapes the curriculum for both state and private schools, in an attempt to guarantee equality for all students (Kazamias, 2009).

These characteristics of the Greek education system can be identified in the first two categories of educational change as described by Hargreaves and Shirley (2012; 2009). They argue that there are four distinct ways of educational change. The 'First Way' characterised the late 1960s and the 1970s. Consequently, the 'Second Way' followed the oil crisis of the 1970s and dominated the Thatcher and Reagan eras (*ibid.*, 2012, p. 6). As a hybrid of those two, the Greek education system is considered to be outdated according to recent OECD reports (2011). In *Education Policy Advice for Greece* (OECD, 2011, p. 3), OECD emphasises that speaking about

the Greek education system we refer to an ‘outdated, ineffective centralised education structure... [that] lags behind many OECD countries in performance on PISA’. In the same Policy Advice, evidence is presented to support this view. Part of the evidence presented, refers to ‘average teacher-student ratios and class-sizes in Greece [that] are significantly lower than in most European countries’ (*ibid*, p. 14).

The major problem seems to be that

Greece has many small, isolated communities in mountainous regions and on small islands... teachers in Greece teach significantly fewer hours per year than virtually every other country in Europe. Even though teachers’ salaries are below the OECD average, salary costs per student are above the OECD average. Greece is one of only a few countries in Europe without external assessment of learning or external evaluation of schools or indeed any other comparative mechanism of quality assurance. Greece remains one of the most centrally governed education systems in Europe.

Paradoxically, the Greek education system has managed until recently to keep a distance from neoliberal policies. Hence, with regard to the dominant global trends, it remains old-fashioned. In Salhberg’s (2014) terms, the ‘GERM’ of neoliberal education policies seemed not to have infected Greece. Actually, it could be argued that the GERM has infected Greece several times during the last decades but the rapid immune response of the school workforce had never left any symptoms. Surprisingly for such a long period of time, the school workforce had successfully resisted change for almost three decades.

#### *Teacher resistance*

Resistance to change in Greece has been demonstrated in several attempted reforms that targeted teacher autonomy in the 1990s and onward. Prior to the latest evaluation reform, a self-evaluation scheme was introduced in schools by the Ministry in 2010 (OECD, 2011a, p. 44). The scheme was one of several government initiatives towards school evaluation, which had a disappointing and ineffective

conclusion. It was conducted on a pilot-volunteer basis, resulting in the lack of any participating schools.

This case demonstrates a shared attitude among Greek school teachers who successfully opposed evaluation and any intervention in their pedagogy for almost three decades. One of the ways of achieving such strong opposition was probably due to their gathering around a single union. Their support for the union was demonstrated on every occasion with high rates of participation in strikes and demonstrations. Any political party in office on the other hand, tended to avoid any serious confrontation with the powerful teacher union. The most likely cause of this stance is the significant political cost anticipated as the outcome of any such confrontation. It is thought that confrontations between the unions and the state have primarily been focused on neoliberal policies. This suggests that neoliberal policies 'provide a face and a place to focus that resistance, primarily been taken up by teacher unions, along with their allies who share the importance of public education as a central institution of democracy and enquiry' (Kuehn, 2008, p. 54). However, such explanations tend to overlook the fact that teachers' dissent and resistance to neoliberal policies might not be purely ideological, as several other practical considerations in teachers' everyday practice are associated with resistance to change. Fullan (2007, p. 35) challenges the above widely held view:

Teachers are often more concerned about how the change will affect them personally, in terms of their in-classroom and extra-classroom work, than about a description of the goals and supposed benefits of the program.

This is what Evans (2000, p. 186) refers to when discussing 'pragmatic considerations' in the process of change. These considerations involve teachers who assess the impact of specific changes upon their own working lives. Teachers who are satisfied with their working conditions have no incentive to disrupt the status quo or follow stressful processes. Therefore, if their experience suggests that they should avoid stressful processes, it is most likely that they decide to resist change. Thus, in terms of an entire school, when change comes to destabilise the embedded

culture it frequently involves conflict (Earley, 2013), which is then summoned by the unions to confront the state. The previous points suggest that teachers' resistance might relate to issues of interest and power. As Gamble (2009, p. 98) contends '[t]he old order does not give up without a fight, since powerful interests have become associated with it and they resist change, and maintain that there is no reason why things should not go on in the old way'.

Subsequently, it might be argued that the demonstrated political strength of teachers through their union has a number of serious drawbacks. Particularly in the case of Greece, one criticism of teachers' negative approach to any evaluation reform is that it implies conservatism and unprogressiveness. This criticism denotes attitudes that teachers would be reluctant to confirm publicly. What is more, perhaps, the most serious implication of teachers' stance is that resistance may be associated with self-interest emanating from the combination of Greek teachers' pedagogical autonomy and lifelong tenure. To elaborate on this supposition, it has commonly been assumed that teachers have traditionally taught what they wanted to teach in the ways they preferred. Therefore, the long-existing culture of classroom autonomy, and the relations of power that this culture has established in favour of teachers could be a strong reason for opposition.

A serious weakness with this long-existing culture of autonomy, however, is that these particular features of tenure and autonomy, might have allowed tolerance of a scope of professional attitudes ranging from relaxed working conditions to unsatisfactory teaching performance. As demonstrated later when discussing the mechanisms of compliance, these attitudes enabled rhetoric against teachers to flourish. Teachers during the crisis are presented as a conservative force in society wishing to maintain the status quo that serves their own interests. In view of this, in order to rationalise their opposition and ensure its legitimacy, teachers had to deploy a rhetoric which harmonises with the public mood and dismantles any notion of unprogressiveness due to self-interest. The rhetoric they used resonates with Evans' (2000, p. 186) view that teachers' responses to change are partly determined 'by the extent of compatibility between their own ideologies, values and beliefs and

those reflected in the changes they encountered'. In that sense, as any reform is arguably the outcome of a particular political stance and implies certain values and beliefs, it is expected by the researcher that some of those affected by the reform would share different values and ideologies. The extent of the agreement between values implied by policies and teachers' values has an impact on the decision to endorse or oppose change. However, Gamble (2009, p. 142) reminds us that

...there are always many different kinds of ideas in play. Ideas are sometimes thought of as general concepts which float free and unanchored above ordinary life, and remain remote from it. But there are many different kinds of ideas. All practical life involves ideas, and the opposition that is often supposed to exist between ideas and interests is an unreal opposition because the interests which individuals pursue have to be articulated as ideas before they can be pursued as interests.

Here Gamble appears to suggest that agreeing or opposing change is more than a matter of ideological debate. Resistance to change might relate to the set of values of those who design policy and those who are subjected to it. Nevertheless, this resistance may well relate to the interest of both the former and the latter. During this process, interests on the one hand, and sets of values, on the other, merge into a single unit articulated mainly as an ideological artefact grounded as much as possible on fundamental human principles.

### *Professionalism*

One of the fundamental principles that Greek teachers seem to have applied to their ideological artefact when opposing change, was the notion of professionalism. Resistance to reform was supported by the discourse on de-professionalisation. It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by professionalism. While a variety of definitions of the term professionalism have been suggested, this study will use the definition suggested by Hargreaves (1994, p. 19) who sees that professionalism is grounded in 'notions of esoteric knowledge, specialist expertise and public status... [and involves] the exercise of discretionary judgement within conditions of unavoidable and perpetual uncertainty'. It is exactly this role of teachers and its

potential undermining that constituted a significant argument for resistance. A threat was identified in new policies constituting teacher professionalism in new ways as a global project that will erode teachers' professional identity. Critiques of neoliberal policies around the world seem to support this view. Teachers' professional identity was particularly related to the preservation of a 'social service' form of professionalism, an expression used by Hanlon (cited in Whitty, 2000, p. 69). According to Whitty, in this specific form of professionalism, professional experts were trusted to work in the best interests of everyone and the resources were made available by the state to support them do so. In education, social service professionalism has been challenged as a result of policies of 'marketisation' (Whitty, Power and Halpin, 1998). Hanlon identifies these policies as 'commercialised professionalism'. This kind of professionalism responds more to the needs of profitability and international competitiveness. Within this remaking of teaching, teachers are presented as units of labour to be managed (Mahony, Menter and Hextall, 2004).

In the UK, when the 1988 Education Reform Act brought in the national assessment system with teacher assessment (Ward and Eden, 2009, p. 99) there were critiques of the government for 'de-professionalising' teachers by taking away their ability to make their own judgements on their practice. Sharing the same view, Stobart (2008) argues that assessment became an instrument of enforcement. Ward and Eden (2009, p. 101) add that in the UK teaching has been transformed 'from a professional activity which depends on informed and sophisticated judgements in different contexts and with different individuals into one in which a series of prescribed activities will deliver standards'. This is what Bottery (2000) named as the 'proletarianisation' of teaching. Similarly, Hargreaves and Shirley (2012, p. x) referring to the United States context argue that a profession that once was dignified as the achievement of years of long and rigorous training, due to marketplace models is being recast as something that can be done by anyone trained and equipped with the skills. Smyth *et al* (2000) contend that in this way, the teacher's role is merely restricted to that of a technician employed to carry out national

government policy rather than that of an individual professional trusted to make judgements about the needs of the community and individuals.

On the other hand, these claims have been strongly contested in recent years by a number of writers (e.g. Tooley, 2005, 2003; Friedman, 2002; West, 1994). One criticism of much of the literature on de-professionalisation of teachers is that the latter concerns a ‘quasi-market’ (Whitty, 2008, p.179) rather than an idealised ‘free’ market. To clarify, neoliberal education policies are susceptible to critique for being unsuccessful in tackling the problems of inequality in and through westernised education systems. However, westernised education systems do not reflect fully neoliberal ideas. Proponents of neoliberal doctrines promulgate that societies work best when individuals are free to pursue their private interests without governmental intervention through public funding (Tooley, 2003).

Conversely, contemporary ‘quasi markets’ in education enshrine the dogma that education is a public responsibility. This is opposed to neoliberal ideas which reject the notion that education should be provided by the state. Thus, quasi markets are distanced from the idea that education should be transformed from a government to a market system (Friedman, 2002), in other words that education should be privatised, or forced to compete in an open marketplace. In reality, education is still not free from government regulation through curriculum, assessment and inspection. The state retains overall strategic control by setting the outputs that providers need to achieve. For that reason, advocates of marketisation in education argue that currently, experience of purely free market education systems is limited and that neoliberal ideas are tested and critiqued in a quasi market environment that restricts them. Therefore, much of the critique against neoliberal policies in education draws upon weaknesses stemming from government regulation rather than free market strategies.

This section has reviewed the key aspects that it is believed to cause resistance to educational change, with a particular focus on Greek teachers. The leading ideological instruments that teachers use in resisting change and their weaknesses

were described. Also possible alternative explanations of the teachers' stance were presented. This raises questions on the methods that the state employs in order to deal with teachers' resistance and manage change in challenging conditions, which will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

### Mechanisms for compliance

Resistance to change is nearly always expected by those who wish to implement change, but particularly in a period of economic crisis, resistance is expected to be intensified. One of the main reasons might probably be that during a crisis, governments are an apparent and accessible target for public anger. According to Gamble (2009, p. 102) a period of crisis 'makes recessions usually a hard time for incumbent governments...No incumbent government will be safe during the crisis and many will fall'. For example, in New Zealand in the 1980s, the Labour Government launched one of the most ambitious neoliberal programmes attempted anywhere in the world, with large-scale reforms. It involved massive cuts in subsidies, tariffs, spending and taxes, privatisation of state assets, and the announcement of intentions to move towards a flat tax and minimum income scheme. The experiment was halted due to the social and political crisis that emerged and led to the dismissal of the government (*ibid.*, p. 82). In a similar case in Greece, the restructuring of the state sector as a response to the global crisis has generated political turbulence, resulting in three different prime ministers in quick succession since 2009. Although there are a number of similarities between New Zealand and Greece, there is an area where significant differences can be found, namely the outcome of the proposed reforms.

The significant difference is that in Greece, despite the dismissal of the government, reforms were not halted. The global crisis is generally seen as a factor strongly related to it. It is likely that the crisis momentum has generated radical and unprecedented change, characterised by consistency of political will. However, acknowledging the political instability and the long tradition in resisting educational change, it might have been reasonable to expect the failure of reforms introducing evaluation in schools. On the contrary, teachers have proved hesitant to resist and

thus unable to halt educational change successfully as in previous years. It seems that certain mechanisms of compliance were applied to defy teachers' resistance.

#### *Ensuring consistency in political will*

It is believed that when state reforms are introduced, compliance is endeavoured through strategies for dealing with resistance. These strategies evolve from a set of neoliberal ideas. The 'idea of depoliticisation' (Gamble, 2009, p. 88) is one of them. According to this idea, progressively more decisions ought to be transferred from the control of elected national governments to unelected agencies. This model, as Bourdieu (2005, pp. 10-11) explains, rests on two postulates:

...the economy is a separate domain governed by natural and universal laws with which governments must not interfere by inappropriate intervention; the market is the optimum means for organizing production and trade efficiently and equitably in democratic societies.

This relates to the theory of disciplinary neoliberalism, according to which the imposition of policies on countries derives from two sources. First, as noted earlier, it derives from the international agencies, and secondly from the financial markets. Those two factors direct policy and impose sanctions if policies which are outside those prescribed are pursued. With respect to the sanctions imposed, Gamble (2009, p. 88) explains that '[t]he sanctions of the institutions are direct and political, but the sanctions of the markets are impersonal, willed by no one single person, but created by the decisions of numerous investors and companies'. This is how power to unelected experts is handed. In that sense, Gamble argues that 'the quango-state became an important instrument through which neoliberal policies were delivered' (*ibid.*). Thus, political will to pass reforms is guaranteed by lending governments on the risk to default. Moreover, the binding of national policies to the lenders' agenda could continue even with different political parties in office. For example, a radical reform in Greek education, such as school evaluation and teacher assessment, is unlikely to be a one-off event.

Recent reform paradigms also indicate that even if the succeeding government is not as neoliberal as the one that introduced the evaluation reform, the possibility of carrying on the same reform agenda should not be neglected. This is evident in the case of the UK, which presented a strong continuity in education policy across Conservative and New Labour governments since the late-1970s. In England during the 1970s, there was growing antipathy towards the swollen state, which in the case of education was focused on the role of the educational establishment and particularly to the left leaning teaching unions (Whitty, 2008, p. 179).

Accordingly, the approach to public sector management that emerged during the 1980s was initially conceived as a temporary response to economic downturn. It seemed that the central debates on what public education should be for, and how it should be organised, was shifting towards the idea that education is primarily a means to increase the nation's economic productivity rather than to develop well-rounded democratic citizens (Hersh, 2009, p. 152). Thus a tendency was observed at that time towards re-conceiving education to aid the economy to function as efficiently as possible.

Nonetheless, although the market invasion in education started in the late 1970s, it did not stop when other political forces came into office. To clarify, in the 1997 election manifesto of New Labour, the then Prime Minister made explicit the continuity of certain policies inherited from the previous government: 'Some things the Conservatives got right. We will not change them' (Blair, 1997). Accordingly, teacher assessment in England was preserved and expanded and teachers did not enjoy their previous levels of autonomy even with a new government. Additionally, suspicions that the New Labour government 'was in fact the Tories in disguise as far as education was concerned' (Fullan and Boyle, 2014, p. 107) were strengthened in 2000 when the idea of 'private schools funded by the taxpayers returned like a boomerang' (*ibid.*). As a result, the continuities in UK education policies from Conservatives to New Labour preserved the market-led initiatives such as teacher assessment. Thus neoliberalism reappeared within the current push to adopt neoliberal education policies. Moreover, as Whitty argues not only was Old Labour

welfarism unsuccessful in tackling the problems of inequality in and through education, but ‘a simple return to it would be politically unthinkable’ (2008, p. 179).

Similarly in Greece in 2011 the government realised a bold agenda and sought advice from an OECD task force, on the development and implementation of reform proposals that reflect best practices in OECD countries (OECD, 2011a). In the meanwhile, two different Prime Ministers came into office. Nevertheless, the OECD education policy advice was enshrined in each of their reform agendas (Greece, Ministry of Finance, 2013), presenting a strong continuity in education policy across different governments.

This part demonstrated the importance of preserving consistency in policy agendas despite any governmental changes and how the focus on neoliberal policies is achieved. The subsequent part moves on to discuss in greater detail the methods that might be applied in order to follow a neoliberal reform agenda and how the narrative of crisis is employed in this process.

#### *No alternative*

This section follows on from the previous one, which outlined that continuity in educational policy can be solidified by applying the idea of depoliticisation. Subsequently, political will ‘has to be prepared to break the resistance of any group which demands market protection or subsidy through the state’ (Gamble 2009, p. 80). In this case, the notion of necessity acts supplementary to depoliticisation and comprises a strong stimulus for passing reform. As Ball (2012, p. 79) suggests, ‘[t]he rhetoric of necessity legitimates, generates and naturalises a varied and complex set of practices and values’. An example of this point is the idea that there is no alternative to the markets, known as the TINA thesis as the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher famously called this (Saltman, 2007, p. 12). The TINA concept, as it is widely been assumed, can manipulate public opinion and force change. A reason for this widely held view might be that in such a context, reforms appear natural and hence unquestionable. In that case, change is directive and coercive. As Burnes (2009, p. 215) suggests when looking at approaches to organisational change a

distinction may be made between two kinds of change, participative change and coercive, directive change. In the same manner, Ball (2012, p. 92) divides policies into imperative and exhortative. At this point, it might be interesting to examine how imperative forms of change are linked to the rhetoric of necessity, particularly when this is applied in the middle of a crisis. During a crisis, a notion of urgency is almost certainly present; therefore approval or compromise with proposed change appears to be the only option. As a consequence, the urgency for change underpinned by the crisis undermines any exhortative or participative approach to reforms. In that way, it might be argued that new policies that appear during a crisis, are promoting directive or imperative change. However, it should not be overlooked that there are cases where TINA is not persuasive enough. Then, the dilemma of approval or paying the price is possibly applied. The first option relates to preserving one's post, whereas resistance to a new policy relates to further job insecurity and probably job loss. Crisis plays a significant role in decision making on this dilemma. As recessions 'are great breeders of insecurity' (Gamble, 2009, p. 109), compliance with new policies is easier to achieve. The UK's 2012 Skills and Employment Survey, revealed that:

In the past both fear of job loss and fear of unfair treatment at work were far more common in the private than in the public sector. In 2012 fear of job loss was higher in the public than in the private sector, while fear of unfair treatment had become more similar to the level in the private sector. Fear of status loss was also higher in the public sector.

(Gallie *et al*, 2013, p. 1)

Gamble calls the crisis 'a moment of danger and insecurity, a leap in the dark' (2009, p. 112). In 2012, the UK's Health and Safety Executive described teaching as one of the three occupations reporting the highest incidence of stress and depression, at a rate of 1,780 cases per 100,000 employees (Strendwick, 2013, p. 420). Apparently, employees are feeling more insecure and stressed at work than at any time in the past. The crisis re-shapes the constraints and possibilities of the education domain by providing the rationale for salary reductions, redundancies and additional

workload. Similarly, the 2012 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher reports sharp decline in teachers' satisfaction in their jobs and increase on teachers who are thinking of leaving the profession (2012, p. 3-4). In addition, the social crisis that follows creates a set of pressures that works through the education system in a top-bottom direction, from the Ministry of Education to each school. Subsequently, power shifts away from teachers and concentrates into the state.

Accordingly, the newly formed relations of power have as a primary aim to ensure compliance. Those who resist are often marginalised. This can be illustrated briefly by Cummings and Worley's (2009, p. 508). In their six steps to culture change, the fifth step labelled as 'Terminate deviants', refers to ceasing resistance. It focuses 'on getting rid of those who oppose or cannot fit in with the new culture, putting supporters in key positions and ensuing that reward systems reward those who support the new culture'. This can be seen in the case of Greece. The current educational reform is commonly supported by headteachers and school advisors. The headteacher assumes the role of the person that introduces change in school, guarantees compliance, supervises the process and monitors performance. Their role is supported by the school advisor, a senior education officer. On the one hand, headteachers are called by Ball (2012a, p. 53) 'entrepreneurs' and assume the role of the narrator, the person who carries out the 'work of policy advocacy within schools'. On the other hand, school advisors play a supporting role in the introduced policy, and in Ball's (*ibid.*, p. 55) terms they are the 'outsiders' 'LA advisors, consultants...introducing or interpreting policies and initiating or supporting translation work'. They work with headteachers to clarify aspects of the new policy, solve problems, and address resistance. As Whitty (2000, p. 69) sets it, those who are prepared to manage on behalf of their employers may gain enhanced status and rewards, but those pursuing the traditional welfarist agenda are no longer trusted and need to be controlled more directly. For example, in the Greek education context, those complying with the introduction of evaluation in schools secure their places and are rewarded. Rewards for teachers involve job maintenance and perhaps higher salary. Rewards for the senior staff include preserving high status posts and opportunities for advancement in the hierarchy.

Having discussed how the rhetoric of necessity might be used by the state to minimise resistance and achieve compliance of the school workforce, the final section of this chapter addresses additional ways of reducing resistance.

### *Blaming teachers*

This section also follows the discussion of methods that might be applied in order to follow a neoliberal reform agenda, with a particular focus on the Greek context. Radical educational reforms, as the ones happening in the context of a resistant culture as the Greek one, are likely to require carefully designed preliminary steps. These probably facilitate the process of implementation, so when a new policy introduces an accountability system that assesses teachers, lack of accountability needs to be emphasised in advance. The aim of this method is to turn teachers opposing reform, not against the state that introduces it, but against the rest of the community. As Apple (2014, p. xi) describes ‘a culture of shaming schools and the people who work in them has evolved’. A notable example was the educational reform in the UK in the 1980s. It has been reported that teachers were very much objects of criticism by the then government, and were blamed for the weaknesses and failures of the education system (Ball, 2008, p. 144).

Additionally, Whitty (2000, p. 66) suggests that a view emerged in the 1970s that teachers had abused this licensed autonomy to the detriment of their pupils and society. Consequently, teachers were subjected to tighter control and intervention into their work. In the time of economic crisis, the public sector is seen as being responsible for enormous expenditure and sovereign debt. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012, p. x) argue that ‘the communications coup following the global economic collapse has brilliantly turned public anger away from bankers and on to public sector workers and particularly teachers’. Identifying weaknesses of the system, stressing failures and blaming teachers for this, provides a framework for legitimating policies for accountability and assessment with a minimum political cost. Identically, in Greece, the strategy followed has been that of vilifying teachers and

undermining their professionalism, for example through stories in the news media. This is a strategy that has been tested successfully in the past.

Blaming teachers has become over the last 30 years a political blood sport. This is the easiest way for politicians to deflect attention away from the failures of policy. We have ended up with a teaching work force that is weary, wary and fearful.

(Ball, 2013, p. 33)

In a similar vein Gamble (2009, p. 113) asserts that in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s it was political parties of the right that were most successful in constructing narratives of the crisis that put the blame for the state of the economy on confrontational trade unions. The lack of accountability is especially emphasised due to the current crisis. The economic and social crisis creates a force to change the existing *status quo* of the public sector, within which education holds a place. Thus, accountability, quality assurance, teacher assessment and school evaluation appear necessary to the public, and they become a common sense issue. In that way, they might limit the range of or even diminish resistance. Therefore, the reforms are broadly welcomed by the public and the news media. Additionally, opposition from individual teachers or unions is nearly always disapproved by both media and public, and interpreted as vested interest and a stance against the wellbeing of the nation. That allows the government to present reforms as innovations for the common good. The involvement of the media constitutes a powerful force that succeeds to displace the meaning of the crisis from anything that the crisis implies, and direct it in ways that justify new reform agendas. In Ball's terms (2013) educational reforms in the UK were presented by the Labour government at that time, as an innovative response to the failures of public sector schooling and traditional forms of governance in areas of social disadvantage. This became the government's rationale for a major change programme in education.

### Research Questions

This chapter described and discussed the interrelations between the concept of change and contemporary ideas that form part of the social reality of this study. It

has been demonstrated that globalisation, neoliberalism and economic crises are all playing a significant role in the process of change. These concepts were employed in discussing the reforms happening in the Greek educational context. The issue of school workforce resistance was analysed and contrasted with the strategies applied by governments in order to minimise resistance and implement reforms. Accordingly, what is interesting to explore in the case of Greece, is why a strong tradition of opposing any new policy on assessment failed. For this reason, research questions need to be asked to those who actually preserved this tradition and analyse the explanations they offer. There is also a need to investigate how their approach to change has altered and whether the economic crisis influenced their decisions. Thus, the main research question of the study is framed as follows:

*How do teachers in Greece approach change in a time of economic and social crisis?*

Secondary research questions include:

To what extent has the crisis influenced teachers' ability to resist change?

What are the reasons for complying with the new reform on evaluation?

Does compliance with the reform agenda guarantee change will be sustainable or long-lasting?

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter aims to clarify and make explicit the researcher's rationale for, and the purpose of using the research design for this study, by offering at the same time an illustration of the basic details of fieldwork conducted. Hence, it describes and discusses how the structural elements of this research, namely purpose, research questions, methods for collecting data and approach for analysing them, integrate. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the reasons for selecting and designing the particular elements of the research framework. It consists of three sections. The first offers an account of the choices made on the design of the research pathway, whilst the second describes and explains the selection of the core setting of the study. The third section discusses the ethical implications deriving from the designed research pathway and core setting, and delineates the steps taken to ensure that the study conforms to ethical guidelines. Subsequently, the second part of this chapter provides an illustration of the collection and analysis of data. It comprises two core sections: how data were collected by explaining the use of the data-gathering tools; and the methods for analysing data, the use of instruments for data analysis, and the steps taken and in what order using several examples from the data.

### Part I. Section1. The design pathway

This section explains why the researcher selected the particular research approach in answering the study's research questions. Specifically, it demonstrates how the ontological standpoints and epistemological assumptions of the researcher are embodied in the research design. The main assumption that influences the designated research pathway is that the research questions are positioned at the heart of the design (Robson, 2011). Therefore, the primary focus of this design is to explore the social phenomenon of the way teachers approach change. This is explored through the main and secondary research questions presented in the previous chapter. If Hume's (1910) principle of verification is applied to the research questions, then, it can be stated explicitly that answering those questions is based

principally on explanations that are deficient in any ‘abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number’ (*ibid.*). By contrast, the leading approach used to answer such questions accepts as valid the thoughts, imaginings and empathies that are engaged, and is widely known as ‘interpretivist’ (Thomas, 2013, p. 113). Thus, due to the nature of the questions priority is given to the qualitative aspect of the study.

Nevertheless, the latter point hardly suggests a binding obligation of the present study to be purely interpretivist. In contrast, it has commonly been assumed (Robson, 2011) that combining research approaches produces a more complete and comprehensive picture of the research topic. This assumption seemed to apply in this research. The reason is that the research questions are barely seen by the researcher as subservient to the methods, but rather the opposite. Therefore, although, words were principally used to answer the research questions, also numbers were employed, for example, when the researcher wanted to measure the percentage of teachers agreeing with the proposed reforms. Words and numbers appeared to complement each other. Counting and some kind of simple statistics were included in several cases. As a consequence, there was a substantial element of both qualitative and quantitative data collection in this project. This duality classifies the research design to the ‘multi-strategy’ (Robson, 2011; Bryman, 2004) or ‘mixed methods’ design as this term is also commonly used.

Another reason for the selection of the multi-strategy design was that the current research is placed in a real world setting and thus examines a phenomenon of a complex nature. For example, although the study examines teachers’ approaches to the evaluation reform in Greece, it does not overlook the fact that there is more than one policy circulating in schools and the enactment of each one may inhibit, contradict or influence the enactment of others (Elmore, 1996). Besides, the research is realised within a context of economic and social crisis described by Gamble (2009, p41) in the following way:

Political and economic events are extremely complex phenomena, and our knowledge is highly provisional and very incomplete...the social world is unlike the

natural world in the key sense that in the social world the way human beings perceive events forms part of the reality that social scientists are trying to explain. The complexity of social phenomena means that anyone seeking to understand what is going on in a global financial crisis finds that, while the range of disagreement can be reduced, there will always be a number of arguments, models and perspectives which offer different accounts.

Therefore, the study required a wide range of perspectives and research questions which could be addressed by a combination of research approaches. For example, a wider range of perspectives might be achieved, if a qualitative approach was used to explain data generated from a quantitative approach. By this way, as Bryman (2006) argues, the multi-strategy design could neutralise the limitations of each approach while building on their strengths. The researcher espouses a ‘pragmatic approach’ so the choice of the multi-strategy design was a consequence of ‘pragmatism’ (Denscombe, 2008) which underpins the epistemological position of this research.

In terms of the typology of the multi-strategy design, Creswell (2003) classifies it into six broad types of which two are identified in this study. The researcher follows this typology as it proves to be valuable to his deeper understanding of multi-strategy design. Nonetheless, the main limitation of this typology is according to Maxwell and Loomis (2003) that it fails to capture the actual diversity of designs. Still, the researcher acknowledges these limits and uses this typology to reflect on broader decisions about the type of his research. Thus, the research design for the specific study shares common elements from two of the six types of multi-strategy design. The first one is the ‘sequential exploratory design’ Creswell (2003). This design is applied when a phenomenon is explored and priority is given to the qualitative aspect of the study. The second one is the ‘concurrent triangulation design’ (*ibid.*) where qualitative and quantitative methods are independently and concurrently used. In this type, results are subsequently compared to assess their convergence. Elements of the concurrent triangulation design are adopted by the current study as they could enhance the validity of the findings. This section has reviewed how the

research design was selected, but how were choices made concerning the empirical setting?

## **Section 2. The choice of the core setting: time, place and people**

This section offers a description of where, when and with whom the research was conducted. More significantly, it aims to present the researcher's rationale for establishing the empirical setting. A widely held view exists that in research conducted by practitioners the setting itself motivates the research (Dowling and Brown, 2010, p.7; Holliday, 2007, p. 33; Robson, 2002, p.535). The researcher supports this view as he works as a secondary school teacher in Greece, and his professional setting has motivated his research focus to address the way secondary school teachers in Greece approach reforms. Thus, the setting is connected closely to the research questions. There are two possible reasons for the connection between the empirical setting and the research questions. The first reason concerns the fact that the research questions emanate from the researcher's study focus which sequentially originates from the empirical setting. The second reason might be that the setting itself provides an environment in which the questions may be answered. Accordingly, in terms of the current study, the way teachers approach reforms can be investigated within the context that they seem to operate. This context comprises their institution, their local educational authority and their local community.

Nevertheless, the boundaries of the context that teachers seem to operate in, could be subjected to scrutiny. Consequently, if this context is adopted by the researcher as the empirical setting, it needs to be assured that he fully acknowledges the significance of the subsequent aspects. First, it needs to be acknowledged that the empirical setting is barely an isolated entity. For reasons that have been outlined in the previous chapter, even the context of a single institution is arguably influenced by national and global trends. As a result, the empirical context of this study, which is wider than that of a single institution, is probably subjected to national and global influences. The second aspect that needs to be acknowledged by the researcher

relates to the size of the empirical setting. It is recognised that answering the research questions involves examining the phenomenon of reform happening on a large national scale. However, it was decided that the empirical setting should be limited in a local scale. This discrepancy between the ideal and the actual scale of the setting could be attributed to one of the necessary criteria for research settings described by Holliday (*ibid.*, p. 34). According to this particular criterion, the setting should be sufficiently small in order to be logically and conceptually manageable. Therefore, particularly in the case of a sole researcher, a research setting of national scale would be unwieldy and unfeasible.

Furthermore, part of the researcher's rationale for establishing the empirical setting contains the assumption that the setting has to demonstrate clearly its boundaries (*ibid.*). In this way the readers of this study can be clear on the data presented and analysed. For the above reasons, and recognising the limitations of the selected empirical setting, this section can now move on to describe it in terms of time, place, and people included.

#### *Time*

The research setting is placed chronologically between March and June 2014. The reform that this study focuses on was enacted in March 2013, and the early policy directives that were issued according to the new law, have reached schools in January 2014. Since then, the reform on evaluation and assessment has been a major issue of concern and debate, within the education community. In March and April 2014, new policy directives elaborating the implementation process of the reform were delivered to schools, setting the deadline for the completion of the evaluation project in May 2014. The empirical setting is placed at the heart of the introductory phase of the reform in schools and offers an insight of the phenomenon as this was evolving.

#### *Place*

The empirical setting has also a sense of boundedness in terms of geographical space. It comprises two neighbouring counties in Central Greece, called Dafnos and

Ptelea (see Appendix V). Each one is administered by its own Local Education Authority. The particular geographical area was selected as the empirical setting for several reasons. First, both counties are easily accessible to the researcher. Unhindered access to respondents stems from the fact that the researcher lives in one of these counties and has been working in both of them for several years. This has facilitated the process of finding a sample and achieving a high response rate in the survey. Another reason access is ensured, is that institutions in this area have already experienced participating in projects conducted by the researcher in the past. Moreover, the setting is relatively small, thus logically manageable.

As a final point, each county preserves its own distinct educational and social culture due to geographical, political, historical and other reasons. This diversity suggests different illustrations, facets and viewpoints that might have an effect on the richness of the study.

### *People*

Before proceeding to examine the people involved in the study, it is necessary to clarify that the terms ‘participants’, ‘respondents’ and ‘informants’ are used interchangeably and epitomise people engaged in this research independently of the mode of their engagement. Yet, those particularly involved in interviewing, are additionally referred to as ‘interviewees’ when it is necessary to discern participants. The sample was partly opportunistic or a ‘convenience sample’ as it is called by Robson (2005). Difficulties to engage participants in either interviewing or completing surveys were identified almost immediately; hence, the initial core of participants was formed by people who already knew the researcher. This element carries clear advantages and weaknesses. The latter is delineated in the final chapter, where the limitations of the study are addressed. Despite that, the option of a convenience sample was selected to begin with, because of the widespread professional insecurity among schools. This has resulted in teachers being suspicious of research that investigates issues related to the newly introduced conditions of teaching. Subsequently, after establishing an initial group of participants, the researcher benefited from the participants’ networking to increase the number of

contributors to the research. Overall, 20 people were involved in interviews and 106 in the survey.

Yet, securing participation in the electronic survey has proved more manageable. The difference with the previous sampling process was that a significant number of informants were strangers to the researcher. They were approached electronically and the vast majority of them agreed to participate in the research. This implied an increased interest by teachers in the research topic and possibly indicates that e-surveys convey a greater notion of anonymity, thus scoring higher participation.

Equally, access to senior education officials was achieved through headteachers' networking with school advisors. Accessing people higher in the hierarchy was pursued with the aim to capture the dynamics of reform across and between levels - classroom, institutional, LEA, regional - what Ball (1994) calls a 'policy trajectory' approach.

### **Section 3. Ethical Issues**

This section addresses the ethical implications deriving from the designed research pathway and core setting, and the way they influenced the methods of data collection, data analysis, and dissemination of results. Although the study was undertaken outside the UK, it adhered to the same ethical standards as research in this country. The Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research of the British Educational Research Association were followed throughout (BERA, 2011). The pursuit of knowledge and understanding in a context which entailed colleagues of the researcher and senior education officers was particularly challenging in terms of ethics. The guidelines helped the researcher to weigh up all aspects of the process of conducting his educational research, and reach an ethically acceptable level in which his actions were considered moral and acceptable. As a result of this, all research activities were conducted within an ethic of respect for the person, democratic values and knowledge. Participants were treated with dignity, respect

and impartiality regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, social and cultural status, role in school, or any other difference as far as the researcher was aware.

Primarily, voluntary informed consent was the prerequisite for informants to engage in the research study. Previous to the research getting underway, participants were informed about the project in full detail. The process in which they were to be engaged was described, including what was its aim, how it would be used, and to whom it would be reported. A short monologue was used to present the above issues which subsequently generated a discussion to ensure that the informant had understood in-depth every aspect of the research plan.

In addition, a written consent form was offered to interviewees to read and write their name on, as it was significant for the respondents to hold a reference of the project and what they had agreed to. Therefore, the written consent form was presented as a document that they could refer to whenever they had a query or they wanted to revise any parts of their initial discussion with the interviewer. A distinct feature of this research was that informants were asked to write their name on the form rather than sign the paper. This diversity to the usual consent process was due to a culture of suspicion against signing documents, particularly dominant in public servants. Writing their name on the form instead of signing it was seen as a relatively less formal commitment. In that way, teachers could easily dispute it in the exceptional case that the project promulgated findings unpleasant to the government and potentially jeopardise their post. The particular attitude is possibly a throwback to a previous authoritarian regime. Thus, this option was widely preferred and probably allowed a more honest expression of ideas and views. Finally, the last step of the process of getting a written consent form involved making a photocopy of the form and returning it to the participant.

A priority of this process was to reduce the sense of anxiety and put informants at their ease. For this reason, the consent form directed the attention of respondents to any course of action, especially to the audio-recording of the interviews, which was anticipated to be an issue of concern for the participants. Thus, if audio

recording was causing distress or discomfort, the alternative method of collecting data was to keep notes. It was also stressed that the audio recorder would be turned off whenever they asked, and that interviewing would continue by taking notes. They were also reassured that if they deemed any part of the discussion as inappropriate to be used as data, it would be deleted at the end of the interview. Although none of the informants demanded any of their data to be deleted, on some occasions participants requested that the audio-recorder be turned off before they articulated a view. Nevertheless, even such incidents offered the researcher valuable insights of what O'Toole and Beckett (2013, p. 121) call 'negative data' or 'silent voices', analysed in the following chapters.

In order to keep these cases to a minimum, the issues of anonymity and confidentiality were stressed rigorously to the participants. The study aligned with the above rights and recognised the respondents' entitlement to privacy unless they specifically and willingly waived those rights. Real names were excluded from the text and interviewees were referred to by pseudonyms. It was also clarified that the study would be available initially to the examiners of the thesis and later to the public. Participants were also aware of the possibility that the study may be presented in a conference, and shared with students, teachers, the entire school, the wider community and the educational community at national level. In terms of storage and use of personal data, the study complies with the legal requirements as set down by the 1998 Data Protection Act. The original records were anonymised and only seen by the researcher or in an exceptional case by the assessors of the thesis. Interviewees were informed that their personal data were stored in a secure place. Regarding the interrogation of documents absent from the public domain, permission was asked by the researcher to access them and take notes. Still, permission was denied to quote or cite them directly. As a result, data derived from these documents were scrupulously used, anonymised and referred to, merely as school documents.

In addition, participants were informed about their rights to withdraw. It was clarified that they could leave the project at any point during the research process

without any obligation to offer an account of their decision. Furthermore, when applicable, it was explicitly explained that refusal to participate in the project or withdrawal from it, would not affect their established relationship with the researcher. This might have been the most problematic aspect of the study, in terms of ethics. Almost all informants of the convenience sample stated that they would be hesitant to participate in a research dealing with this topic if conducted by an unknown person, implying in that way that their friendship of the researcher influenced their decision. Given the broader feeling of job insecurity, the reliability of this statement may be high. As a consequence, a great part of each initial researcher-participant meeting was devoted in underlining the ethical issues of the study. For the same reason, potential respondents were always approached as discreetly and tactfully as possible, to avoid imposing pressure on their decision-making. With regard to online participants, almost all of them were invited to participate in the online survey in the absence of any previous acquaintance with the researcher. The request to engage with the project and the consent form were sent electronically. A reply email confirming their agreement to participate in the research was asked to be returned to the researcher's email address.

## **Part II**

Having discussed the research design of this study, and the ethical considerations emanating from it, the rest of the chapter aims to illustrate the collection and handling of data. It contains two sections: the first provides a detailed description of the methods of data collection, whereas the second discusses the methods of data analysis.

### **Section 1. Methods of data collection**

The methods selected are divided into two broad categories: fixed and flexible. The first involved a survey and a statistical documents examination. These methods served the purpose of collecting evidence that could be quantified. For example, evidence consisted of numerical data showing in absolute figures the number of redundant teachers since the onset of the economic crisis, and the percentage of

reduction in teachers' salaries. It also comprised quantitative data generated from the survey, which then were investigated in depth through interviewing a sample of respondents. In this case, the researcher assumed the role of the distanced outsider and pursued a fixed predetermined research design.

The second category of methods used in the study involved mainly interviews, observations and the examination of documents. These methods served the purpose of identifying and collecting unquantified and uncounted evidence related to perceptions, feelings, ideas and actions. For example, evidence contained interview transcripts, survey results of open-ended questions, and data from the researcher's diary. In these qualitative methods, the researcher assumed the role of the insider, interacting with participants, and following a flexible research design.

#### *Quantitative methods*

##### **Official statistics and other numerical data**

The study drew on relevant statistics on economic and social affairs. Data were derived mainly from the *Hellenic Statistical Authority* website, the *Office for National Statistics* website, and the *World Factbook*. Also, numerical data concerning regional and local school workforce were derived from the author's personal research in the archives of the Local Education Authorities kept in the Local Administration Offices. Access to the archives was negotiated and achieved with the head of the statistics department of one of the two Local Education Authorities involved in the study.

##### **Questionnaires**

A questionnaire was designed to target the secondary school teachers of the two LEAs. The sample consisted of female and male teachers of Greek origin and different age, years of service, and political orientation and may be divided into three groups: a purposive sample, a convenience sample, and an electronic sample. The number of respondents was 106. Fifty two of the 106 respondents were approached by the researcher as former or contemporary colleagues. They formed a 'convenience sample' (Robson, 2005, p. 264) because as Robson indicates, it engages the most convenient persons to act as respondents. The sample may look

homogenous in terms of ethnic origin, race, cultural background but this is due to the fact that the school workforce in Greece is homogenous in terms of origin. Yet, there are other attributes such as age, gender, political beliefs that differentiate participants. Within the opportunistic sample the response rate was very high, almost 100 per cent. This can be probably explained as the result of the existing relationship between the researcher and the respondents.

A further 32 teachers were approached through their headteachers who participated in the study. They consisted of the workforce of two different schools. Lilea School is a typical semi-urban school with 15 teachers and the headteachers. Lefki School is a typical urban school with 31 teachers, the head and two deputy heads. The samples from the two schools were deemed as purposive. The aim was to check out any differences in the response rate between the convenience and the purposive samples. Results through different sampling methods, convenience and purposive, were observed separately and contrasted to identify any possible differentiations. The response rate was similar in both samples and close to the convenience sample response rate. Moreover, as it will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the researcher also observed analogous results between convenience and purposive samples. Although the samples are not considered large, the correspondence in answers supports the validity of the results of the convenience sample. It shows that although the convenience sample has its weaknesses in relation to who gets sampled, the results acquired are similar to those from participants who are not related in any way to the researcher.

There was also a third distinct sample used. This was atypical of a convenience sample as the respondents were unrelated in almost any way with the researcher. It comprised a cohort of teachers who attended an ICT on-line seminar in one of the two LEAs of the study. The ICT cohort consisted of 23 teachers from different secondary schools distributed in the Local Education Authority of Ptelea. They were invited electronically by the researcher to participate in the survey. Emails were sent to all members of the cohort and 22 of them replied to the questionnaire.

In terms of the aims of the survey, the questionnaire served two broad purposes: to collect data on facts, for example the number of teachers participating in self-evaluation groups in schools; and to record attitudes on the evaluation reform in schools. Consequently, an online questionnaire, with ten closed-type questions and a final open-type question, was designed using Google drive and administered to all participating teachers. The question format of the closed questions was that of a Likert scale. The number of open-ended questions was limited to one, as this would increase the chances of responding to it.

Accordingly, the questionnaire was disseminated to the informants in four distinct manners. First, the questionnaire was sent electronically to those familiar with IT technology along with a personalised covering letter (see Appendix II). It was designed using Google, and participants had the chance to edit their answers and check results. Secondly, for those unfamiliar with IT, the questionnaire was printed, photocopied and administered to. Their answers were input in the electronic version by the researcher. Thirdly, in certain cases, the questionnaire was read out face-to-face by the interviewer. This particular manner was applied in cases where respondents willing to participate, were nevertheless reluctant to provide answers through the previous modes of dissemination of the questionnaire. In this manner, each question was read by the researcher, followed by the possible answers. Despite the disadvantage of being a time consuming process for the researcher, the response rate was 100 per cent, and the researcher was there to exemplify any query from the informant. This process involved face-to-face contact either during school visits or outside school. The answers were again input in the electronic version by the researcher. Finally, the fourth mode of distributing the questionnaire was carried out by two of the headteachers who participated in the research as interviewees. This process is widely called ‘snowball sampling’ (Thomas, 2013, p. 137; Robson, 2005, p. 264). During the interview, the headteachers were informed that a survey was also in progress and that the researcher was in search of additional respondents. In both cases, they offered to promote the questionnaire to their teachers. The questionnaire was printed in multiple copies and distributed by the heads. Filled-in questionnaires were returned to the headteacher and received by

the researcher in the next visit. They were then input electronically by the researcher. The distribution of the questionnaire in those four modes, except for the online mode, was time and resource consuming, required negotiation and in some cases, multiple visits to the informants' workplace. Still, it was worthwhile as through this process, a high response rate was achieved and the number of participants reached over 100.

### *Qualitative methods*

#### **Interviews**

Interviewing comprised the main research method of this study for identifying and recording opinions and attitudes. Twenty interviews were conducted; 15 interviews with in-school personnel and five with senior education officers. One-to-one interviews rather than group interviews or focus groups were preferred for three reasons: group interviews were difficult to organise, due to time and place constraints; validity of responses might have been undermined by the presence of other interviewees; and finally, the interview's focus was on perceptions and attitudes, rather than behaviours to be observed.

More explicitly, the group of interviewees comprised five headteachers, one female and four males. The five headteachers presented significant differences in terms of years of school leadership, years of service, size of school, number of school staff and geographical location of school, rural or urban. The number and length of interviews were negotiated because of their demanding schedule. In addition, ten teachers, five female and five male, from eight different schools were interviewed. Getting consent from teachers was anticipated to be complicated; thus, a certain strategy was pursued. Initially, the topics of discussion were sent to the teachers before the interview. Interviewees were assured that they would have access to raw data at the end of the interview and only if they agreed with them, these would be used as data. Furthermore, five school advisors, one female and four males, were interviewed. These comprise part of the senior personnel of their counties or districts. Hierarchically, they are positioned at the same level as the head of the local

education authority. Their role covers the professional rather than the administrative part of responsibilities.

Regarding the way the 20 individual interviews were conducted, three distinct modes were applied. Eighteen of the interviews were face-to-face. One was conducted on-line and one on the telephone. It can be clearly seen that the majority of the interviews were face-to-face, although the researcher's original intention was to conduct interviews either on telephone or on-line, because of the savings in time and resources. However, few of the interviewees were familiar with IT. Moreover, on-line interviewing might have been convenient for the researcher but it is more time, effort, activity, and energy consuming for the respondent than the face-to-face conversation. It hence appeared to be the least desired option by the informants. On the other hand, telephone interviews were equally desirable, but almost all of the respondents preferred face-to-face meetings. On the other hand, particularly those unacquainted with the researcher chose to have a personal meeting before arranging an interview. This process was additionally time and resource consuming. Nevertheless, the expense was equalised by ultimately achieving an adequate sample of interviewees, following up interesting responses, and taking notes of non-verbal cues that offered a better understanding of verbal responses.

In terms of the type of interviews conducted, semi-structured interviews were selected. A fully structured type of interview was rejected as this type carries with it a number of limitations as to how far the investigation of attitudes can be taken. The research questions of the present study needed a more in-depth investigation to build on initial responses and clarify and illustrate the meaning of the theoretical basis implied. On the other hand, unstructured interviews were also rejected as the research focuses on a clearly defined topic, rather than a general idea of interest and concern. Consequently, a list of predetermined questions and topics was initially employed in each interview. The interview schedule (see Appendix VI) was sent to participants before they offered consent to allow them time to think about their responses. The schedule was complemented by additional questions that kept

emerging during interviewing. However, incidents of participants finding emerging questions inappropriate to answer were scarcely recorded.

Interview questions initially addressed facts and behaviours and progressively concerned approaches and attitudes at a range appropriate for in-depth investigation. Questions kept revolving around attitudes in various wordings and structure. This contributed to the triangulation of the interview data. Whereas facts and behaviours can be triangulated and validated through survey data, interview transcripts and school documents, beliefs and attitudes are multifaceted and obscure and ‘appear particularly prone to the effects of question wording and sequence’ (Robson, 2005, p. 272). Therefore, paraphrased questions addressing the same issues were applied, producing data that were accordingly compared to each other. Answers were audio-recorded and complemented by written notes taken sporadically by the researcher. Only one interview was exclusively covered by note-taking, according to the interviewee’s demand. The notes contained emerging ideas, upcoming questions, and non-verbal clues that implied meanings to verbal responses.

#### Examination of documents

Three main forms of document analysis were involved in the study: interrogation of the schools’, the union’s and the government’s policy documents. The process has been carried out with reference to the widely held view that gathering data from documents epitomises an entirely different proposition from gathering data from people (Thomas, 2013, p. 204). The majority of the documents were in the public domain and were accessed online. School policy documents were reached by the researcher by visiting schools and taking notes on them.

#### Diary

The diary involved the researcher making a record of thoughts, conversations and actions generated by talking to other people. It consisted of the researcher’s interpretations on specific events and activities. These events related to meetings where the new reform policies were discussed. These were teacher union meetings,

unofficial teacher meetings out of school, and school workforce meetings within the institutions. Depending on the nature of each meeting, the researcher was either observing or interacting with other people. For example, in unofficial meetings with teachers, headteachers, and school advisors the researcher was an integral part of the situation, as those meetings entailed interaction that would enable the researcher to understand the situation. On the other hand, in teacher union meetings there was no attempt at involvement in the situation by the researcher.

## **Section 2. Methods of analysis**

Having discussed the methods of collecting data, the final section of this chapter addresses the methods for analysing the data collected. The aim of the methods applied was to enable the researcher to emerge with the meanings constructed by the participants. These meanings were contained in words, numbers and audios. Audios and numbers were converted into words. Their analysis has been mainly based on both Robson's 'template approach' (2002, p. 458) and Miles and Huberman's (1994) general framework for qualitative data analysis. The plan for the analysis included defining codes; explaining their dimensions; applying concepts and finally developing interpretative memos. Though, what stands behind this plan is the 'constant comparative method' (Thomas, 2011, p. 171). According to this method, the focus of the analysis was on the overall character of the corpus of raw data. Natural divisions which emerged as running through the totality of the data were identified. Then, the character of each division was determined by finding headings for these divisions and constructing themes to replace these headings. Such influence from a holistic approach as the constant comparative method resulted in avoiding certain limitations. There was a possibility that the interview questions could drive the entire research from the beginning to the end, culminating in the reporting of the responses to each question as results. This would have led to analyse the data by dividing them under the interview questions used as headings. Thus, according to Holiday (2007), the emergence of any possible independent realities different from or counter to the researcher's dominant preoccupations would have been inhibited.

It is now necessary to explain the course of the analysis. Major analytical importance was attributed to teachers' social conduct rather than their intentions. The analysis accorded a priority to the subject – teachers - over the object, or to action –teachers' compromise - over structure. The social system within which teachers' actions took place and the structural properties of this system defined the field of the analysis. The terms 'social system' and 'social structure' in the analysis are understood similarly to the usage of structuration theory (Giddens, 1979). Both terms are closely connected but they do not overlap. The concept of social system, in contrast to social structures exists in time-space and is understood as a 'structured totality' (*ibid*, p. 64). It involves regularised relations of interdependence between individuals or groups. This statement contains two concepts which need to be illustrated: relations and interdependence. Relations concern social practices and consist of social interactions. Interdependence is understood similarly to Etzioni's (1968) account as: the relationship in which changes in individuals or groups initiate changes in other individuals or groups, and these changes in turn produce changes in the individuals or groups in which the original change occurred. Consecutively, social systems are constituted by social practices which involve the situated interdependent activities of human subjects in the flow of time. Then, when human subjects are involved in social practices, they need to draw upon concepts and entities in order to produce social activities. Yet, it is impossible for them to draw upon the structured totality called the social system; therefore they draw upon certain properties of the system called structures. As a result, it becomes apparent that systems have structural properties or structures but they are not structures. Structures are necessarily properties of social systems and are characterised by 'the absence of a subject' (Giddens, 1979, p. 66).

With respect to this study, the human subjects researched are teachers and their approach to the evaluation reform constitutes their social conduct of focus. Initially, the researcher drew on a range of theoretical resources including Fullan (2011) and Earley (2013), and conducted a first reading of the totality of data to define key themes and codes. Temporary key themes covered three reasons that, according to

Fullan (2011), nearly always cause the failure of change initiatives. These are force, rewards, and inspiration. An additional fourth theme involves school culture, a factor stressed by Earley (2013) that influences change. Hence, the initial stage of the analysis consisted of four themes, which referred to the reasons identified in the literature that render change so difficult to achieve: i) force, ii) rewards, iii) inspiration, and iv) alterations in people's attitudes and beliefs (school culture). Each theme had its sub-themes. The theme 'force' involved the role of district and school leadership. The theme 'school culture' included the sub-themes 'toxicities in culture' (NCSL, 2009) and 'staff turnover' (Morrison, 1998; Fullan, 2011). The theme 'rewards' was further categorised into 'job security' and 'salary'. Finally, the theme 'inspiration' contained the sub-themes of 'moral commitment', 'empathy' and 'shared responsibility'.

Subsequently, two codes within each of the four themes and sub-themes further categorised the data sets. The codes addressed the way each theme is affected by the economic and social instability. The first code related to the reinforcement of each theme by the crisis and the second one to the weakening of each theme due to the crisis. The two primary codes consisted of several variables: limited school resources, loss of public servants' tenure, salary cuts, increase in teaching hours, and restrictions on days of leave and holidays. The initial codes served as a template for analysis. Coding generated some first intuitions, views, and ideas of how the crisis reinforced or attenuated the mechanisms that influence change. Nonetheless, the template was flexible. It initially included a small number of codes but these were subsequently modified and enriched with emerging ones, during the second reading of the data. Accordingly, segments of data were attached to the codes. At that stage, some temporary codes, which were barely reinforced in the rest of the data, were eliminated. The platform for analysing data was NVivo 10 qualitative software.

The next step was to identify similar relations, sequences, and differences that formulated a network-diagram of the preliminary and the successive codes, what Thomas (2013, p. 236) describes as 'network analysis'. Networking involved clustering, making contrasts and comparisons, noting relations among variables,

finding intervening variables and developing logical relationships. For example, it was explored how the variable ‘redundancies’ was related to the sub-theme ‘job security’ and how the same sub-theme interacted with ‘school leadership’, which belonged to the theme ‘force’. Networking also involved relations among the codes of the template, and facilitated the researcher identify and determine additional new codes or more general categories. Hence, ideas and intuitions were noted and labelled in order to be sorted and retrieved easily. Afterwards, the analysis continued by linking specific data to general concepts and categories. The aim was to build a logical chain of evidence. In that way the researcher produced a small set of generalisations that provided explanations of the way the network was formulated. Initially, the generalisations contributed to illuminating whether the crisis and the counter-intuitive conditions of collective despair that it has produced, served as catalysts for change. Secondly, the small set of generalisations contributed to the answering of the research question, how teachers in Greece approach change in a time of economic and social crisis. Finally, by creating links within the set of generalisations the researcher moved from data to conclusions with the intention to create a body of knowledge in the form of theoretical explanations of the investigated social phenomenon.

This chapter began by describing the rationale for the research design and illustrated the empirical setting. It then went on to discuss the ethical implications of this research. Finally, it demonstrated the use of the data-gathering tools and outlined the methods of data analysis. The next chapter presents the data by classifying and listing them in detail.

## CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF MAIN FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the main findings of the study. These suggested that in general terms, teachers complied with the policy of school evaluation and teacher assessment. However, the introduction of the new policy in schools shared various interpretations. It was discovered that a significant proportion of teachers opposed the idea of evaluation. Another proportion acknowledged the importance of evaluation but disapproved of the current reform, and a third part were strong proponents of the reform. Despite the revealed disagreement with the policy, teachers did not oppose change and preferred not to resist the newly implemented policy. In order to explain this particular social practice teachers offered several accounts and articulated several factors that influenced their stance. These included the role of the teacher union, their struggle to survive in disadvantageous conditions created by the crisis, their concern about sanctions, their compliance with the policy, and lastly their tacit belief that the reform would fail to become enacted.

With respect to the structure of the chapter, it is divided into two parts, each considering a separate theme. The first demonstrates the different approaches to the newly-implemented school evaluation policy which range from an enthusiastic endorsement to a strong disagreement with it. Therefore, findings are presented under three headings: supporting the reform; opposing the reform; and keeping a critical stance. The second theme displays teachers' accounts of their stance towards the reform. The content of this part of the chapter attempts to depict teachers' approaches to change using their own words. The findings are categorised according to the accounts that teachers offered to explain their social practices and include the following: the influence of the teacher union; the pressure emanating from the rest of society for change; the conditions created by the crisis and their effects on teachers; the role of senior officials; the fear of sanctions; obedience to the law; and finally the tacit belief that nothing will actually change. The chapter ends with a brief

summary and the implications of the main findings are discussed further in the next chapter.

### **Theme 1: Intrinsic diversity**

Observation of the outcomes of the implementation phase of the reform across the two local authorities of Dafnos and Ptelea recorded the successful introduction of the evaluation policy. Noticeably, absence of resistance to the implementation of the reform has been unusual when compared to previous history of similar reforms. Usually teachers had been ignoring policies which they disapproved, often openly opposing them. Resistance took a variety of forms and comprised strikes, denial to implement new policies, and refusal to cooperate. As a result, previous attempts to introduce performativity in a context with a dominant culture of resistance to any evaluation policy, had failed. As explained by two of the teacher interviewees several attempts were made during the last decades, almost every time a new Minister of Education came into office; then always the bill had been redrawn because of the fear of the political cost.

Conversely, the recent evaluation comprised a case distinctly different from any previous one. Data derived from both interviews and survey revealed that teachers complied with the new policy. In spite of the uniformity in teachers' social practices regarding the reform, findings suggest that the introduction of evaluation in schools shared various interpretations. Although survey data illustrated a clear tendency of teachers towards complying with the reform, interview data showed that teachers held varying views in relation to evaluation. There were those who opposed the whole idea of evaluation, those who acknowledged the importance of evaluation but disapproved of the current reform, and those who were strong proponents of the reform. The classification is purely used to serve the presentation of the findings.

#### *Pro-evaluation views*

The survey showed that those who agreed with the Ministerial Act that introduced evaluation in schools represented a small number - merely 10 per cent of the overall

teachers' sample, as shown in Table 5.1. On the other hand, a great majority of teachers (90%) said that they do not agree with this reform.

Table 5.1: Agreement with the policy

<u>Do you agree with the Ministerial Act 152 that introduces evaluation in schools?</u>										
	C-sample <sup>11</sup> N=52	C-Sample %	School 1 <sup>2</sup> N <sub>1</sub> =12	School 1 %	School 2 <sup>3</sup> N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort <sup>4</sup> N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample <sup>5</sup> N=106	Overall sample %
<b>Yes</b>	6	11	0	0	5	25	0	0	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>No</b>	41	79	9	75	14	70	<u>21</u>	<u>95</u>	<b>85</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>No response</b>	5	9	3	25	1	5	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers.

Pro-evaluation respondents offered a number of reasons to justify their stance. Most importantly, they emphasised that it needs courage to state openly such views. Constantine explains:

I believe that deeply inside them many teachers ask for an evaluation reform. Those who are really working are treated the same with those who underperform. Those who are consciously offering themselves in school are devalued.

Supporting views were also identified in the survey stating that evaluation is necessary for teachers to regain their professional and social status. In like manner, another survey respondent noted:

Now is the right time to implement change easily. Moreover, nowadays so many scandals come forward. There should be an assessment everywhere, including the

<sup>11</sup>1. C-sample: convenience sample.

2. School 1: Semi-urban school.

3. School 2: Urban school.

4. ICT cohort: Questionnaires administered only on-line.

5. Overall sample: Entails the total number of participants irrespectively of the way they were approached.

public servants who do not appreciate the fact that they have their job when most of the people are unemployed.

(Q<sup>2</sup> 87)

Furthermore, similar views were also expressed by four out of five headteachers and four out of five senior officials who were assigned the responsibility to implement the policy in schools. This can be seen in the case of Kamares School, an institution particularly hit by the crisis through staff redundancies. Antonis, the headteacher of Kamares School is a proponent of evaluation despite the fact that his school workforce suffered dismissals. He considers evaluation as a necessary element of schooling and that teachers should demand to be evaluated. In the same vein Spiros, a senior education official, viewed the new evaluation policy as a key innovation that would add value to the education system. Still, the rest of the teachers did not share similar expressions of support for this reform. Over and against the enthusiasm of the education actors higher in the hierarchy and a small proportion of teachers (10%) there was criticism of the reform throughout schools.

#### *Anti-evaluation views*

Survey results indicated that four out of five teachers responded negatively to the newly introduced evaluation scheme. Findings were similar across the four cohorts of the survey. Individual school percentages of disagreement ranged from seventy to ninety five per cent. Interview data also illustrated this point clearly. Seven out of ten teachers expressed their opposition vividly. However, in most of these cases, statements were restricted to personal views influenced by feeling or emotion, such as:

There are no arguments for evaluation. Nobody should control our pedagogy; we should be the kings in our classroom.

(Katerina)

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6. Abbreviation for ‘Questionnaire’. Each questionnaire included a final open-type question asking participants

Others raised concerns relating to particular aspects of the reform, for example focusing on headteachers' role in the evaluation process:

How can a headteacher assess me? Do you happen to know the level of injustice in their handling with school work force? Being evaluated by the head is the worst thing ever. Getting assessed by the senior official is of minor importance, he/she is a distant person; whereas the head is part of your daily routine. I'd like to evaluate my headteachers as well, why not? I don't think they [the government]'d dare get a private company assessing us.

(Maria)

Besides, others related the reform with the underlying conditions of economic crisis. For example, Agathe saw no point in the reform during the austerity period as there was insufficient funding available to amend identified weaknesses. Similarly, Nick noted that the timing to introduce the policy was not suitable. It would lead to dismissals, school closures, undermine existing schools.

What is worth mentioning though is that amongst those who opposed evaluation in this direct and absolute way there were voices that did agree with the general idea of evaluation or performance review, admitting the existence of problems typical to the absence of evaluation. However, they were against the contemporary reform.

#### *In favour of evaluation yet against the reform*

For a small proportion of teachers the current situation of complete lack of any teacher assessment and school evaluation – both processes are simply called 'evaluation' in this study- has been intolerable. Evaluation was seen as a necessity by a small percentage of teachers (10%) (see Table 5.1), and also by senior education officers and headteachers who openly expressed their alignment with the Ministerial Act that introduced evaluation. Additionally, many more teachers –eight out of ten interviewees, even those strongly opposing the reform, referred to the problematic conditions existing due to the lack of any systematic series of actions directed to evaluation. Indeed, they admitted that a deliberate and long lasting abuse of

professional autonomy created a culture difficult to change. This view was stressed by teachers of various political orientations, both left-wingers and conservatives:

It is also our fault. We've been finishing off school at 11am, when other people were still working. We devalued our social role. Nobody likes us. Since 1999, following some massive protests, the notion was that teachers were afraid of any innovation that the government introduced. This was magnified by the governments using the media. Evaluation should be perceived as something natural. It should have already been introduced. It would probably do good rather than bad.

(Constantine)

Others emphasised the effects of the crisis as a factor that increased pressure for public servants who enjoy a monthly payment to get assessed and work more effectively. They argued that the economic crisis brought an end to an extended period of relaxed working conditions for teachers.

Among those who opposed the evaluation reform, there was a proportion –four out ten teachers interviewed, and twenty six out of eighty-five teachers surveyed- who agreed with the general concept of evaluation but differed with the particular policy that introduces evaluation under the existing conditions. Those interviewed articulated this view clearly, and those surveyed expressed similar views when answering the open-ended question. They did identify benefits for teachers generated through an evaluation process. However, they seemed not to believe that the evaluation policy would work properly. Teachers were suspicious of the idea of a fair evaluation and in some cases they implied corruption. Nevertheless, eleven out of one hundred and six teachers shared the idea of evaluation as part of the school practice.

Equally, evaluation was deemed as a necessary reform that should be introduced in schools, but not through the particular policy being implemented by the government. Again, the element that raised concern was the timing of the reform.

Evaluation was strongly related to fears of redundancies and reductions in the number of state school teachers.

[I]n general, I'm in favour of evaluation, meritocracy and against uniformity. Evaluation and assessment are necessary, however under conditions of meritocracy and responsibility ...This evaluation reform, in the way that it was designed has nothing to do with evaluating properly. It aims to other directions...Evaluation should be compulsory. I disagree however with the current reform as it is just a mechanism of reducing school workforce.

(Q 68)

The timing of the evaluation reform appeared to play a crucial role in teachers' approach to change. Given the crisis situation, they became sceptical and subsequently this was magnified by their mistrust of the state. This notion was apparent in most of the interviews with teachers and headteachers. In addition, recent public spending cuts coupled mistrust with anger against the government and the political system in general. Teachers made detailed references to the lack of transparency in the state sector services, the uncertainty of the future conditions of living, and the culture among public servants of using political power in order to climb the hierarchy and gain promotion.

This is another ministerial attempt to show that they do something, whereas in reality they do nothing. They [the state] make fool of us, in everything. The state hates its citizens, the fact that they undermine health and education means they respect nothing. We've returned to the 1970s. We are a third world country at the moment.

(Maria)

It is because of mistrust in the system that we were opposing evaluation. In England or anywhere else that evaluation is carried out, someone has trust in. In our case, what kind of trust can anyone have when you see corrupted relations around you? We see how anyone can climb the ladder. Why should we trust the system? You've seen how teachers are transferred to more privileged schools, to more privileged

posts. You've seen those who have connections what they do. Who's going to guarantee me that when the evaluation programme gets implemented similar things won't happen?

(Petros)

Views concerning mistrust of the state were present even between headteachers. What was also striking was that some of their views concerning the state system were more radical than those expressed by teachers. As Yannis said:

In general, there is scepticism against any government. Not a single government ever supported teachers. Teachers have been afraid that evaluation would be carried out using political criteria, that's why they've always been negative. The state does not care about improving the education system. They are not interested in that. They are merely interested in saving money. Evaluation aims at saving money through redundancies and reducing the workforce. Why are they doing it now? Why haven't they done it in the previous years?

Moreover, views and notions of scepticism were even expressed by senior education officials. Some of them avoided admitting their mistrust whereas others expressed it clearly. They stressed that although the evaluation policy had no references in dismissals, teachers shared the opposite view. In their explanations for this notion, they included a lack of trust in the state both from evaluators and from teachers.

### **Theme 2. Does disagreement lead to resistance?**

The second theme of the chapter presents the data which describe teachers' social practices in relation to the reform and also examines the accounts teachers offered to justify them. Teachers' social practices were recorded through observations, interviews with senior education executives and examination of relevant documents. None of the schools within the research setting of the study officially opposed the implementation of the evaluation policy. Whereas four of the five senior officials stated that there were no schools opposing the reform in any official or public way, one of the senior officer interviewees clearly stated that in her locality there were

plenty of schools resisting evaluation. Further investigation though by the researcher found no such evidence, except for the case of a single school, Lyritsa School, where teachers in accordance with the headteacher initially refused to follow the ministerial guidelines. The researcher interviewed two of the senior officials that visited Lyritsa School, who stated that any turbulence was resolved. Within a short period after this incident, a ministerial newsletter was issued to address similar cases across the country, elucidating the compulsory aspect of the policy (Ministerial Note, 2014). The researcher additionally conducted a telephone interview with Demetra, a teacher belonging to Lyritsa School and also a member of the local union branch, which confirmed that the ministerial guideline would be followed. In sum, this was the only incident of resistance to the policy across the research setting of the study and even this ended with teachers' compliance to the reform.

In addition, survey data demonstrate that the vast majority of teachers complied with the law. The case of evaluation working groups within schools illustrates this point very clearly. As can be seen from Table 5.2, the great majority of teachers (77%) had been part of these working groups. Just over one-fifth (21%) stated that they do not participate in the evaluation teams. Examining each sample individually, the participation rate of teachers varied from seventy to ninety per cent.

Table 5.2: Participation

<u>Do you participate in the evaluation teams in your schools?</u>										
	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School 1 N <sub>1</sub> = 12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> = 20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
<b>Yes</b>	36	70	10	83	18	90	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>	<b>82</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>No</b>	15	28	2	17	1	5	<u>4</u>	<u>18</u>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>No response</b>	1	2	0	0	1	5	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Although participation was high, the level of endorsement of the policy was low. Table 5.3 shows that overall, just nineteen per cent of those who participated in evaluation working groups appeared to agree with the evaluation policy. On the other hand, four out of five teachers (81%) stated that they follow the policy for reasons other than agreeing with it. In particular, the proportion of those participating wholeheartedly with the policy ranged from ten to thirty-three per cent in the sample schools, whereas the proportion of teachers disagreeing but involved for other reasons ranged from sixty-seven to ninety per cent. These reasons are considered separately in the following sections.

Table 5.3: Compliance

<u>If you follow the policy, is it because you believe in it?</u>										
	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School1 N <sub>1</sub> = 12(-2)	School1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Yes, I do so because I agree with the policy	6	16	1	10	6	33	3	15	16	19
No, I do so because of other reasons	32	84	9	90	12	67	17	85	70	81
No response	14	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	20	

#### *Teacher union's influence*

Data from both the survey and the interviews indicate that the ability of the one and only teacher union to generate strong teacher opposition to legislations has declined dramatically. Union representatives received harsh critique, and their role was deemed as insignificant. On the contrary, their role was acknowledged as significant in the past. The influence of the union was withering:

This is a political issue. All political parties are together in this. There is no resistance, people are disappointed. There is no leader to step forward and organise resistance. The union representatives are all corrupted. They belong to the governmental parties. They have been disrespected by the teachers. If you go on strike, that's good for the government because they save money. The union has used its influence to promote those teachers that it favoured. That's how we've been used to see the union. The union board are all trying to become members of the parliament later on.

(Ioanna)

What is more, nine out of ten teacher respondents (91%) reported that the union failed to influence their decision about the evaluation policy with fifty-eight per cent stating that it had no influence on their decision making at all. A mere two per cent stated that the union influenced their practice (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Teacher Union influence

<u>What role did the union's directive play in your decision to follow or not the Evaluation Act?</u>										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=	Overall sample %
<b>Major role</b>	1	2	1	8	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Moderate role</b>	17	32	3	25	7	35	8	36	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>No role at all</b>	30	58	6	50	12	60	14	64	<b>62</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>No response</b>	4	8	2	17	1	5	0	0	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

Teachers clearly identified that the union power has diminished. The current conditions of crisis have decreased everyone's ability to follow the union's call to strike. Individuality has dominated teachers, thus reducing the influence of the union upon them. Teachers seemed to care for preserving their monthly salary and supporting their families. They simply could not afford any salary losses due to industrial action such as withdrawing their labour.

Moreover, the union's inertia towards designing its own evaluation scheme was also noted in teachers' comments. Teachers blamed their union for its stance over an extended period of time with reference to the evaluation policies. Union representatives' stance was limited merely to opposing any governmental initiative concerning evaluation. This resulted in teachers appearing as opposing collectively any kind of evaluation as they have never submitted any proposal. On the other hand, teachers deemed that the initiative for the beginning of a serious discourse on evaluation should have been taken by the union a long time ago. This might have been beneficial for teachers and might have achieved a better evaluation policy than the one introduced by the government.

### *Society against us*

Among the accounts that teachers offered for their compliance with the reform was the current trends of a society shaped by the crisis. When teachers referred to the mechanisms that form school policies, their accounts revolved around the Ministry of Education, the government, and transnational organisations such as the EU and the IMF. In almost all of their comments, the explanations offered on the timing and origin of the evaluation reform, comprised the matter of political pressure sustained by the government from the EU and the international lenders, often referred to as the Troika. Subsequently, teachers emphasised that due to the crisis there was a general trend in society towards changes in the public sector and increased accountability and surveillance of public servants. In that context the evaluation reform in the public sector was broadly welcomed by the media and accordingly by the public sector. Evaluation was not merely introduced in schools but in the public sector more widely. Teachers were reluctant to oppose society's trend towards quality assurance and effective performance management, as evaluation in schools became part of this narrative in the media:

There is a trend promulgated by the media that the cause of the crisis is the public sector. It's not like that. They bring to the light scandals; they show corrupted public servants, and unfortunately the public sector is on the front page. It's the media's

fault, the union's fault, the government's fault. The media are controlled by the government. Public opinion is against us.

(Constantine)

Teachers reported that they shared a notion of guilt against the rest of the society. Resisting evaluation would exacerbate this notion and increase social pressure upon them. The media have presented teachers as low performing public servants who oppose reforms in performance management. Thus any resistance would seem odd, if not embarrassing for teachers.

### *Crisis*

When teachers were asked for the causative effects of this new culture of change in the society, almost all of them addressed the issue of crisis as the turning point in their personal and professional lives. Their accounts concerning their everyday struggle to survive exemplify this notion. Nine out of 10 (90%) teachers believed that the crisis has affected their professional life to a considerable extent. Emphatically, the online cohort has been affected considerably (100%). Hardly any (3%) teachers stated that the crisis did not affect them at all, whereas another seven per cent stated that they were affected to a low level. (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Impact of the economic crisis in the professional life of teachers

<u>To what degree has the crisis affected your professional life?</u>										
	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School 1 N <sub>1</sub> = 12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> = 20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall I N=106	Overall I %
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0	0	3	15	0	0	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Little</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	1	8	3	15	0	0	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>To a considerable extent</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>91</b>	11	92	14	70	22	100	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>No response</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

All of the teachers interviewed – ten out of ten – stressed the unbearable conditions of living created by the crisis:

My psychological condition has changed. It is like having a knife at my back. Those teachers who were fired in summer were all my friends. It's like that happened to me. I feel professionally insecure. My salary is not adequate to travel to my school. I can't control my life. I have no idea to which school they'll send me next year. This is directly related to the crisis conditions.

(Demetra)

Consequently the crisis had generated major job insecurity among teachers. Just over three-quarters (77%) felt a considerable level of job insecurity. Another 20 per cent felt low job insecurity, whilst only 3 per cent of teachers felt that their job was secure (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Job insecurity

<u>Do you feel job insecurity due to the crisis?</u>										
	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School1 N <sub>1</sub> = 12	School1 %	School2 N <sub>2</sub> = 20	School2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %≈
<b>Not at all</b>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	0	0	0	0	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
<b>Little</b>	<u>10</u>	<u>19</u>	0	0	7	35	<u>4</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>
<b>Quite</b>	<u>39</u>	<u>75</u>	12	100	13	65	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>77</u>
<b>No response</b>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	0	0	0	0	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Teachers referred to the difficulties they confronted at a personal level because of the crisis. Within a context of social and economic crisis characterised by increasing unemployment, dismissals of public servants and growing job insecurity, teachers have been struggling to maintain their resources, morale, and sense of worth. This has significantly affected their capability to react, defy sanctions, and sustain pressure on the government through strikes and other forms of industrial action. In brief, they have lost their ability to negotiate on policies. Feelings of apathy identified in teachers are a representative illustration of this point:

It is the current climate, there is no reaction. The plot how the mass will accept reforms is well organised. First, they freeze your brain, and then they pass everything they want. The shock is the only thing that dominates your thinking, and then you become apathetic. Do you remember to what extent people used to protest at the beginning of the crisis? Nowadays, the policies are much worse but there's such inertia.

(Petros)

Accounts of the effects of the austerity addressed the issue of declining living standards:

Over the past years we had been on strike even for two months. No, in reality there are no actions of resistance. We don't go on strike because of the crisis. It will cost me too much. I see that everything we do is in vain. Strikes bring no results. The government passes any reform, they choose. Even if I react, this will have no results.

(Nick)

The advent of the crisis has challenged the standards of living of the middle class - including teachers. They identified themselves as exhausted, weakened and powerless, unable to react to any challenge. The feeling that the worst has yet to come was widespread as discussions of the imposition of new taxes had been held almost on a daily basis. They had experienced a gradual undermining of their daily living. Their priorities had changed; they felt that they had little choice but to focus on preserving their living standards. Thus, less significance was attributed to the evaluation reform. Their disempowerment made them vulnerable and susceptible to apathy and inertia. As they stated, lack of any protest against the evaluation reform was not because they agreed with it; this was a consequence of the fact that they expected even worst to happen and it did not. The crisis proved to be a major turning point in the life of teachers. In conclusion, teachers conveyed greater significance on how to earn their living rather than resist to the education reform that introduced evaluation.

### *Hierarchy*

The struggle to survive the crisis became teachers' first priority. Thus, initial resistance was replaced by inertia. Teachers benefited from any inconsistency in the policy documents in order to delay the effects of the reform in their daily routine. Although the evaluation policy was enacted in November 2013, until the first term of 2014, the evaluation process was moving at a relatively slow pace. Demetra, a

teacher from Lyritsa, a school that showed the longest delay in enacting the evaluation policy stated:

At school we all refused to form evaluation teams and follow the ministerial directions. The head is on our side. Perhaps if the reform becomes compulsory, then we'll obey.

It seemed that for a number of schools throughout the country the Presidential Act 154 (2013) introducing evaluation was not enough to generate action and ensure compliance. What followed was the release of additional directives on the reform by the Minister of Education. A ministerial newsletter with guidelines was issued in December 2013 (Ministerial Newsletter, 2013) and finally a supplementary Ministerial Note was released in April 2014. These guidelines emphasised the compulsory nature of the Act:

The application of the Evaluation Act **is compulsory** [original emphasis] and the responsibility of its application lies upon the headteachers who are supported by the school advisors in the scientific part of the process, and the directors of the LEAs in terms of the administrative part of the process.

(Ministerial Notice, 2014)

Through this final ministerial mandate responsibility concerning the new policy was devolved to the headteacher and that seemed to affect teachers' attitudes towards the mandate coming as it now was from the headteacher rather than an impersonal authority.

We did not oppose the policy, because a new ministerial guideline was issued that renders the headteacher responsible for the formation of evaluation teams. Headteachers should allocate teachers in groups, and this is compulsory. What should we [teachers] say? That we refuse to do so?

(Marina)

Teachers had not referred to the headteachers' role extensively. The findings suggest that teachers perceived the institutional role of the headteacher mainly as the carrier of new policies, and the person that connects the school with higher administrative levels of organisation. It is a widely held view that headteachers in the Greek educational context are neither leaders nor managers of their schools. A likely explanation is that headteachers generally assume the role of the administrator who operates within a highly bureaucratic system that allows limited scope for school autonomy. In some cases headteachers facilitated the implementation process. Teachers asserted that it is because of their relationship with the head that they did not want to oppose their suggestions. This applied mainly to small schools:

None of the teachers want to react, either because they are afraid of sanctions, or because of their respect to the headteacher, since the headteacher has given us this mandate.

(Zoe)

Respected headteachers with good staff relationships have managed to pass the policy easily in their schools. Then again, other headteachers were supported by school advisors in the implementation of the policy. In either case, the crisis shifted the relations of power between different stakeholders, facilitating compliance with new top-down policies. Thus, authority and power shifted the balance towards the endorsement of new practice.

#### *Law obedience and fear of sanctions*

Authority and power were closely related to the fear of sanctions. It was noticeable that the absence of resistance appeared to be related to issues of authority, rules, and sanctions. As can be seen from Table 5.7, seventy per cent of teachers stated that it is either 'very possible' or 'moderately possible' that those refusing to abide to the new policy will face remuneration sanctions, whilst a quarter (27%) rejected this possibility.

Table 5.7: Remuneration consequences

<u>How possible is it that those refusing to follow the evaluation policy will not be able to climb the remuneration scale?</u>										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
<b>Very possible</b>	16	32	5	42	5	25	6	29	<b><u>32</u></b>	<b><u>30</u></b>
<b>Moderately possible</b>	21	42	4	33	8	40	10	48	<b><u>43</u></b>	<b><u>40</u></b>
<b>Not at all possible</b>	13	26	3	25	7	35	5	24	<b><u>28</u></b>	<b><u>27</u></b>
<b>No response</b>	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>

This was also found to be the case for the fear of consequences that involved redundancies. As Table 5.8 demonstrates, nearly two-thirds (64%) believed that refusal to conform to the policy may lead to dismissals, whilst just over one-third (35%) believed that this was not at all likely to happen.

**Table 5.8: Redundancies**

<u>How possible is it that those refusing to follow the reform will face redundancy?</u>										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> = 20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
<b>Very possible</b>	15	28	4	33	5	25	5	23	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Moderately possible</b>	17	34	3	25	10	50	9	41	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Not at all possible</b>	20	38	5	42	5	25	7	32	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>No response</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Data from interviews offered more elaborate accounts of teachers' concerns about consequences and some of them related directly to sanctions and resistance.

Intimidation is present. I feel uncertainty of keeping my job. Everyone feels threatened and succumbs to the policy. The government fired teachers in the summer, I'm sure that if they find a law formula they'll repeat it. Teachers' reaction would be much greater if this environment of intimidation did not exist. Those schools that refused to follow the policy will definitely face consequences.

(Petros)

However, teachers agreed to participate in the tasks allocated to them because of the fear of consequences. The rationalisation of teachers' social practices comprised the normative component of law obedience. Although they were not able to articulate the content of rules concerning sanctions to disobedient public servants,

they regarded rules as having a major effect on their approach to reform. Obedience to the law appeared to be embedded in their practical consciousness.

We were scared and the policy passed. I expressed my view that we should refuse to follow the policy. Nevertheless, the rest of the teachers in my school were afraid, so I felt I was on my own. They replied that I should reject the policy as an individual rather than as the whole school. I did nothing; I wouldn't like to be the only one that would pay the price. In the end, we all unanimously accepted to follow the policy due to threats that we will suffer the consequences.

(Katerina)

'Consequences' was one of the reasons that appeared to justify compliance even amongst those who disagreed with the policy. Teachers' explanations included the obligation to follow the law as part of their civil servant tasks. In other words, their participation in the processes of evaluation was justified by the fact that they were public servants who had to follow the rules of the game. Otherwise they would have to quit or face the consequences which they anticipated involved salary penalties and dismissals.

Few teachers believe in it, they follow it as something compulsory, we are all scared. If I don't participate in the new policy, they [the government] might ask lists [of those who refused] and then they might dismiss the ones who resisted.

(Agathe)

In addition, the obligation to follow the rules was closely related to or even generated the idea of no alternative. This argument was extensively used by teachers, in an attempt to explain contemporary alignment to past resistance. To exemplify, teachers emphasised the legislation that regulates the behaviour of public servants towards the policies.

If I resisted it would be like opposing a voted law, thus it's like being illegal. There were teachers who said that they were intimidated. If they don't follow the new policy, they will be dismissed. I'm not in favour of the policy, but since it's a law you

can't act differently. How can I disobey? I'm not a hero; I can't pretend that I'm a hero.

(Zoe)

### *Nothing will finally happen*

It is interesting to note that teachers' statements on the evaluation policy being ineffective had become so numerous and so substantial at the very point when the cumulative impetus of change was beginning to acknowledge the more complex and more challenging push for compliance. In other words, teachers shared the belief that the policy would not get translated into the language of practice; whilst at the same time they admitted the necessity to comply with it.

Most of the people believe that the evaluation reform will not get implemented; it will be just as the previous policies, on paper. I do believe the same. You're not sure what will happen in the next few months. In my opinion, the new policy is just about getting European funding. They want to take the funding; they do not care about improving teachers and schools. That's why they brought the issue forward.

(Petros)

This notion was common among interviewees. Reforms were seen as an integral part of the political game in getting re-elected:

Many reforms will be suspended due to the forthcoming elections. This will be good for us, as in terms of labour reforms, many policies will cease. They [government] might promote staff without evaluating them before, just to convince us that the evaluation reform has no relation to promotions and pay. I can't be sure of their strategy.

(Nick)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a similarity between the headteachers' and teachers' views was identified. An additional explanation that headteachers offered when arguing about the ineffectiveness of the evaluation policy was that the school workforce would perform the minimum of tasks required, following typically the rules of the game. They also shared the tacit belief that the evaluation policy would not stand

long. To illustrate, Antonis, a headteacher emphasised:

I've seen so many controversial things the last years; I haven't studied the evaluation policy because a new government might come sooner or later and a new minister will take everything back. Therefore, I do not waste time studying the policy. We all know that policies change all the time.

(Antonis, headteacher)

Another headteacher, the oldest of those interviewed shared a similar belief.

In the first instance, the law will be repealed by a different government. This is what history indicates. Laws have been usually repealed by the following government or even in the period before the election.

(Alexandros)

Both teachers and headteachers devalued the importance of the evaluation reform as part of the political agenda of the dominant political parties. Moreover, they saw it as a mechanism, which would fail *per se* to produce the outcomes that it was designated for.

This chapter has analysed both the qualitative and quantitative data to bring out the key findings. These were presented under the themes of supporting and opposing views, and the factors making for compliance. It commenced by describing teachers' ideas regarding the reform, under the categories of those who support it; those who disagree with it; and those who promulgate evaluation but not in its current form. Then different accounts that teachers offered in relation to their social practices towards the evaluation reform were presented. These included the role of the teacher union, their struggle to survive in disadvantageous conditions created by the crisis, their concern about sanctions, their compliance with the policy, and lastly their tacit belief that the reform would fail to become enacted. The next chapter analyses these ideas and accounts and discusses possible meanings emerging from the data.

## CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings outlined in the previous chapter illustrated uniformity in terms of teachers' stance towards school evaluation and performance review. It was evident that there was a clear absence of active resistance to the policy. There were no schools or teachers within the study opposed to the new policy, neither by stating publicly their disagreement, nor by informing their superiors or higher administrative levels that they refused to pursue the ministerial directives. However, the high frequency of collective agreement with the policy was not a result of the cumulative effect of teachers' agreement to the policy. Teachers to a great extent, though not unanimously, demonstrated an unenthusiastic endorsement of the reform, which would justify the absence of any resistance in the sense described above. Indeed, a consistent disagreement with the policy was observed throughout the research sample. Thus the lack of any real resistance to the policy was largely a result of compromise rather than an endorsement of the new policy.

Bearing in mind the previous points, this chapter offers explanations on these social interactions and is divided into four areas. The first area focuses on teachers' compliance with the evaluation reform. Whether the lack of an open confrontation leads to the transformation or reproduction of the existing conditions of the education system concerning school evaluation and teacher assessment is next discussed. The third area explores possible ways in order to achieve change. Finally, how the recent political change in Greece constituted a notable unexploited opportunity for the evaluation reform to overcome all previous difficulties and become endorsed by teachers is discussed.

### **Why teachers did not resist?**

Teachers' resistance to the recent evaluation reform was weak, almost invisible in comparison to previous years. This section argues that teachers' social practice was far from an indication that teachers were constrained by conditions of social and economic crisis to such an extent that would define their approach to change. Although teachers were feeling disempowered to confront the government openly,

they preferred the way of compliance to achieve their goals. Indeed, teachers were both constrained and enabled by the structures. This argument is deployed in three main steps. First, teachers identified a shift of power from their professional group and their union, to the rest of the society and the government. Secondly, teachers calculated the risks of the price to be paid for opposing the recent reform and acknowledged that this price is too high compared to their claims. They calculated that the chance of successfully resisting the change was low. Thirdly, teachers employed the enabling aspect of abiding to the law. Following the rules involves obligations but also involves securing rights. Teachers by following the policy as an obligation of being public servants have also secured their post and continued to enjoy the benefits of being employed by the state i.e. a decent salary on a regular basis. Overall, they have interpreted the conditions created by the crisis and then transformed their claims in order to satisfy their interests in a more effective way. In pursuit of their modern claims teachers rejected a confrontation with the government and complied with the new policy. Thus, the following of rules was the medium for satisfying their claims.

With respect to the first point, power has shifted across four levels: the individual teacher level, the teacher union level, the society, and at the government level. At the individual teacher level, the crisis has worsened basic aspects of the professional life, such as job insecurity and reduced earnings. Teachers as all public servants were considered to be employed permanently. Tenure had never been an issue of concern for state school teachers who once employed, they would never leave their post unless they resigned or retired. However, even this fundamental right for teachers was meant to be dislodged due to the crisis. In addition, teachers during the first three years of the crisis have suffered a substantial loss in their income, whereas at the same time their tax contributions had substantially increased (OECD, 2015). These developments had occurred in a social and economic environment of massively increasing unemployment. Hence, teachers' foregoing capability to go on strike for an extended period of time was reduced to merely a few days if not diminished completely. The medium of pressure that teachers had used so

effectively for decades – the withdrawal of labour - had turned into a luxury which barely few could afford to deploy.

Consequently, at the teacher union level, the loss of power of every individual teacher resulted in an accumulated immense loss of power for the union. For the leadership, deciding and organising strikes has become an ineffective mechanism of protests with just few members of the union prepared to participate. Debbie illustrates this point clearly:

The union has not affected my decision. Due to the crisis, if you've got children, you can't go on strike. Everyone thinks for themselves at this point, my only concern is to earn my living

This was not the only challenge for the union. Equally corrosive has been the wide notion of increased mistrust of the union, or even feelings of anger towards the union board members, 'they [union] betrayed us' (Catherine). Teachers openly expressed their dissatisfaction to the leaders of the union. One of the most representative quotes exemplifying this notion comes from Emily: 'the union members are devalued. Through all these years the heads of the union then turn to become MPs. They sold us out'. Teachers considered them as mishandling the negotiations on evaluation, unworthy of their post, and even corrupt.

In addition, at the level of society, teachers have been the recipients of social pressure and critique during the last years. A crisis culture has developed within the society that comprises, for example, tracing corrupt employees, blaming the public servants for scandals and asking for accounts for taxpayers' money. Public opinion has turned its eyes to teachers with criticism since they enjoy a standard, monthly paid salary and has increased its expectations from them. This has become more intense since the vast majority of private sector employees do not enjoy regular monthly payments, and the number of unemployed people deprived of any benefits continues to increase. Moreover, taxpayers' contributions have been increased in the years of recession, and people demand that their money is used properly. In a

sense, teachers and all public servants are considered as privileged employees who despite their many benefits still underperform. Teachers are aware that societal pressure has increased towards adopting an accountability mechanism. As Richard puts it, ‘we enjoy a steady salary, the party is over; I’m obliged to teach effectively and get assessed’. Therefore, actions towards opposing the recent evaluation reform could hardly become justified in the eyes of the rest of the society. In addition, such an interaction would produce the false impression that teachers are refusing evaluation as they do not perform their duties properly and spend taxpayers’ money ineffectively.

Subsequently, at the level of the state, teachers have identified a shift in power relations due to the crisis. The state was inferred by teachers as more determined than ever to impose reforms, thus more powerful. As they explain, this was a matter of political will. They have seen a government different from any in the past, ready to dismiss teachers, force the closing of schools, and abolish teachers’ rights to go on strike. Within a period of a single year - from September 2012 to August 2013 - teachers experienced the following governmental actions: closing of schools in both primary and secondary education sectors; suspending teachers’ national strike as illegal in May 2013; and dismissing 2,000 secondary school teachers in August 2013 (Dabilis, 2013). In contrast, in previous years, governments would withdraw rather than confront a wider public sector group such as that of teachers. Teachers realised the shift of power from their union towards the government. What is more, having to confront a highly determined government bent on reforms has probably limited their possibilities for resistance. From an initial view, it seems the case was one where the less powerful *i.e.* teachers, were obliged to comply with the dictates of the more powerful *i.e.* the Ministry of Education.

The increase in governmental power and the Ministry’s determination to implement the reform relates strongly to the second step of the argument which suggests that teachers have calculated the risks of the price to be paid for opposing the recent reform and acknowledged that it is too high compared to the benefits of their claims or their chances of success. Teachers’ hypothetical claim to oppose the evaluation

reform and prevent it from being implemented in schools would lead to a direct confrontation with the government. Even during the first years of the crisis until 2012, teachers had enjoyed tenure and there was no previous experience of dismissals. Moreover, their previous experience of resisting governmental policies suggested that the government would sooner or later withdraw due to teachers' opposition which usually took the form of strikes. However, the government during the crisis had sustained enormous pressures from its external lenders, the Troika, to follow a detailed reform agenda. It had also demonstrated its decisiveness and determination to carry out reforms at any cost. On the other hand, although the union had repeatedly called for strikes against the reform, the participation of teachers remained at a minimum. Some individual teachers or even whole schools chose an alternative way of resisting, instead of participating in strikes. They preferred to disobey the law and ignore directives concerning the evaluation policy, such as forming evaluation groups and committees.

Nonetheless, disobeying and ignoring ministerial guidelines were scarce cases not conforming to the general rule. The vast majority of teachers were hesitant to follow such radical patterns of resistance. Much of this stance stems from the fact that public servants' dismissals were already a fact and teachers could no longer rely on security of tenure. Teachers were aware of these elements and realised that this was the first time ever that they risked to face sanctions, including dismissal. Therefore, if they decided to resist the reform, they would pay a disproportionate price to their possible gains. They were afraid that the consequences would vary from salary stagnation to dismissals. Thus, they calculated the risks involved in the enactment of a given form of social conduct and concluded that it should be avoided. Within the empirical setting of this study only one school originally refused collectively to follow the imminent policy. Nevertheless, when the compulsory dimension of the policy was emphasised by the Ministry, they then complied. Listening to teachers conveying significance to normative social practice was an important finding of this research. The reason was that rules regulating public servants' behaviour to policies existed long before the recent evaluation reform was introduced.

Past experience has demonstrated however that teachers had been ignoring rules during the last decades when evaluation reforms were attempted. Their defiance of rules was one of their main mechanisms of resistance that had been forcing governments to consecutive withdrawals. What this suggests is that teachers conveyed great significance to the concept of power, and that the normative account of teachers' social practice cannot be anchored simply in rules. Specifically, teachers perceived the strong political will of the government to implement change as the vehicle of power that affected their practice. This originates from a meticulous relation of interdependence between the rules to be followed and the power of the state to enforce them. The regulative aspect of rules isolated from power relations had been ignored by teachers until recently. The reason is that they had been aware that the normative 'institutionalisation' of conduct renders inapplicable without the actualisation of power. For teachers, rules under those circumstances had been 'a structure with a virtual existence' (Calhoun, 2007, p. 222). Therefore, rules appeared to have a minor effect on teachers' social practice prior to the crisis.

Subsequently, the advent of the crisis produced an effect on structures and re-established the relation between the normative institutionalisation of conduct and the actualisation of power. As a result, power capable of enforcing sanctions became a significant issue that altered teachers' attitude of neglecting rules to a stance that complied with them. In addition to that, as will be demonstrated next, the end to be achieved by teachers had become an inferior priority to emerging claims. In conclusion, the risk for teachers of submitting to sanctions was perceived as real, and clearly the price to be paid for achieving the suspension of evaluation was disproportionately high.

Turning now to the third key aspect of the argument, this study suggests a major shift in teachers' claims. These claims, either before or after the start of the crisis, related to maintaining the existing order of teachers' domination in schooling. Specifically, that order involved an asymmetrical distribution of resources that could be drawn upon to satisfy demands. During the years before the crisis, resources

corresponded to salary increases according to years of service, independently of teachers' performance. Also, resources comprised pedagogical autonomy that teachers could draw upon to satisfy needs. Yet the crisis had rendered these claims subsidiary, as teachers had to maintain their posts as civil servants in a wider environment of massive unemployment and dismissals both in the private and public sector. Accordingly, claims of the type of maintaining their post, avoiding dismissal, and receiving a monthly salary became a priority for teachers. In consequence, previous primary claims of retaining their classroom autonomy were superseded by claims for surviving the crisis and retaining their job at any cost. This has been a major shift caused by the crisis. Teachers realised that these claims would be best satisfied through conforming to the law, therefore social conduct that involved resistance to the policy, although tempting, was deemed as inappropriate.

To exemplify, evidence showed that the majority of teachers avoided opposing headteachers and senior executives in meetings, giving the impression that they are convinced of the arguments offered by their senior officers in favour of the reform. This resulted in the latter to misinterpret teachers' stance perceiving teachers' compliance as rational and anticipated stance to the evaluation reform. Senior officers interviewed supported the view that teachers have wholeheartedly endorsed the evaluation reform. They even discredited the outcomes of the survey that manifested the disagreement of teachers to the reform. Teachers kept their views regarding the policy within the boundaries of their own hierarchical level, giving the impression of endorsing change. In that way, they avoided a direct confrontation with their future evaluators, headteachers and senior executives.

From a structuralist perspective, the stance of compliance on the one hand and the normative account that teachers offered when referring to the law on the other, appear as a process of social structures constraining teachers' actions. In other words, teachers had no other choice than to obey the law, as they faced a very specific dilemma: either abide by the rules and preserve their post, or refuse to follow the new policy and get dismissed. As a result, teachers' agreement was not an issue of free will, because it followed the normative institutionalisation of conduct

(Parsons, 1964). To put it differently the fear of sanctions controlled teachers' actions. Ostensibly, the structures of the system, which comprise the power of the institutions to impose sanctions and the regulative rules, render the acquiescence of a state policy an obligation of the civil servant. According to that, it appears that structures constrained teachers to such an extent that they were left with no alternative other than to comply.

Nevertheless, a more comprehensive investigation would include the possibility that teachers' stance might have been part of their strategic conduct to achieve their aims with the minimum exposure to risk. This study argues that teachers' approach has been the outcome of 'strategical conduct'. The term is used here as 'the way in which actors draw upon structural elements - rules and resources - in their social relations' (Giddens, 1979, p. 80). To clarify, even under the strictest and most limiting circumstances of structural constraint as those of the current crisis, teachers had 'the capacity to act otherwise' (Giddens, 1990, p. 313). In other words, teachers had the capacity to choose what would best satisfy their claims. Claims might have been achieved through resistance in previous times, but at the particular time of social and economic crisis, the way towards achieving their claims was passing through compliance and becoming 'obedient'.

Under these limiting circumstances created by the crisis, teachers still preserved an amount of power, the subordinate's power. This power emanated from the rules they followed. This is because rules are not only an obligation; they also give teachers the right to claims. In that sense, obedience to the law as a norm has two aspects, rights and obligations. Law was the element referred to by almost all teachers, when offering accounts of their social conduct, as the major cause of acquiescence to the policy. The law they referred to comprised obligations and rights for public servants. Hence, teachers perceived obedience to the law as using the rights of this norm to realise their claims. Consequently, the realisation of those claims is contingent upon the successful mobilisation of obligations which included following the policy.

Therefore, the data reported in this study appear to support the assumption that teachers' reference to obeying the law represents 'claims' (Giddens, 1979, p.87). In fact, their claims were this time dissimilar to previous years, as a result of the crisis. Indeed, they involved preserving their jobs and receiving a monthly salary, avoiding the risk of massive unemployment in a country hit by the crisis. As an inference from this fact, teachers' approach of conforming to the law accompanies and supplements the notion that teachers were conscious of the resources and rules of the social system. In previous years, disobedience to the law was widespread, just due to the fact that the norm at that time had no claims to realise of the kind of securing their position and their regular salary with guaranteed increments. These claims were at that time taken for granted by teachers as there were no dismissals or any risk of unemployment. Thus, resistance to reforms was a social practice of low risk, attractive as a choice to the majority of teachers.

This section has reviewed the three key aspects of the lack of any resistance. Compliance was not merely the result of the shift in power that teachers were aware of. Additionally, there was a shift in teachers' priorities. The new primary claims were satisfied through obedience. Rules comprised obligations but also offered them rights. Secondly, the risk for secondary claims was assessed as high and therefore these were not pursued through the traditional way of opposition. The section that follows discusses whether compliance with the reform paved the way for sustainable change in schooling.

### **Will anything change?**

The area investigated here involves whether teachers' approach to the reform policy is capable of sustaining change and making a difference. It explains and offers an account on whether the implementation process will be followed by an equally successful sustaining phase of the reform that will yield positive outcomes. The main argument is that teachers' approach to the evaluation reform will miss the intended targets of the policy and probably fail to bring about significant change in schools. Much of this failure stems primarily from teachers' mistrust of the state and the senior executives who advocate the evaluation policy in schools. A consequence of

this is that although the implementation phase was achieved, sustainability of the evaluation reform is undermined by teachers' stance whose interpretation of the policy renders the reform inactive. Lastly but equally important, teachers' approach seems to act as a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure, preventing the effective enactment of policy.

In detail, the main impediment to sustaining change is teachers' notion that the reform serves purposes other than improving schooling. In almost all of the interviews at all levels, in all the schools, the timing of the reform in the heart of the crisis was identified as an indication that evaluation will render a mechanism for salary stagnation and further dismissals of public servants. Teachers preferred to interpret the meaning of the reform by ways other than drawing upon the policy document itself. Their interpretation of the new policy was much different from the reading of it. Whereas there is no indication in the policy text that evaluation is related to any sanctions, the making sense of this policy is actually the opposite. They constructed and articulated the meaning of the policy based on the structures of a social system shaped by the crisis.

To elaborate, teachers perceived the policy as part of the wider crisis. In particular, the economic crisis brought a political agenda of public spending cuts through redundancies and salary stagnation or reduction. It is not surprising then that teachers interpreted the evaluation policy as part of this strategy, although such a plan was not evident in any policy document. Therefore, they attributed to the reform a particular aim. They deemed that the narrative of the reform articulated by the Ministry of Education and the carriers of the policy, which were headteachers and school advisors, was only meant to cease any resistance and facilitate compliance with the policy. They believed that one of the immediate consequences of the evaluation reform was to provide a legitimate framework for dismissals of 'underperforming' teachers. Moreover, responses to the open ended questions of the survey illustrated the belief that the policy as it was crafted had no relation to 'the real evaluation' (q.no 44). In another questionnaire response we get an idea of what these intentions were believed to be: a) a mechanism to justify dismissals and

salary reductions. Teachers clearly produced their own interpretations of the policy text. Through their accounts, teachers might have attributed particular functions to education reforms involving maintaining the order of austerity imposed by the international lenders through their policies:

Perhaps the whole issue is a directive from the European Union which monitors our policies, it might be one of the terms of the loan, and thus the government is obliged to follow it.

(James)

Teachers have probably perceived that the particular social practice, the enactment of the evaluation reform, fulfils the central needs of the wider system in which this practice is embedded. This system is the Greek state, with a central need to reduce public spending through dismissals of public servants.

However, this notion could not be justified by teachers as there was no such evidence to draw upon in the reform policy document. It is likely that this notion was an implicit view held by teachers which emanated from their mistrust of the state. Their inner reservation which underlies their superficial compliance to the policy was possibly caused by their stocks of knowledge both discursive and tacit. It could be said that mistrust of the state comprised a grey area in the relation between the rational thinking of teachers and their stocks of knowledge gained through experience. On the one hand, their rational part of thinking comprised the demand for evaluation. With respect to that, they perceived evaluation as a normal process integrated to schooling. A proportion of interviewees expressed the view that the evaluation reform should have been introduced earlier. In addition, others claimed that the absence of any evaluation process was a deficiency that had been undermining their professional and social status. Taken together, such views suggest that teachers were not selfish individuals who desired to work less, enjoy autonomy and secure a stable salary without offering an account of their work. A possible explanation of these findings may be that teachers were knowledgeable of the problems of schooling and more importantly that they were probably aware that a

proportion of their colleagues might not behave professionally. This evidence suggests that they perceived evaluation as a way of potentially re-establishing their social status and worth within the local community and more widely. On the other hand, their tacit beliefs, generated from their experience of the state, undermined the above perspective. It seemed that teachers who deeply disagreed with the evaluation policy did so because of the spatial and temporal context.

There was a clear illustration of the notion of mistrust of the state generated by previous experience of an education system manipulated by former governments. Teachers had been experiencing corruption, lack of meritocracy, and domination of political and social networking for several decades. ‘Knowing people’ has been the means for achieving aims and climbing the ladder of social economic status. Hence, their implicit belief was that evaluation could be used as a mechanism that would promote teachers according to their political stance, their networking with higher posts of power, rather than according to merit or their professional performance. In that way, those teachers engaged in corrupt public mechanisms would be evaluated positively, whereas others would face the consequences of negative evaluation results.

The existence of this grey area of mistrust of the state accentuates another paradox. The evaluation reform should have been accepted as a lever of gaining their social status, as a carrier of meritocracy abolishing corruption. Instead it was seen as a mechanism that reinforces corruption. Due to the mistrusted carrier of the policy though – the state - the reform could not be perceived as a remedy or a solution to the challenge of raising standards in schools. In other words, the data reported here appear to support the assumption that the reform was not only situated temporally in the middle of an economic and social crisis, but was also situated spatially – in terms of space - and paradigmatically – in terms of social structures - within a corrupted state. These dimensions accumulatively evoked significant mistrust of the reform.

Furthermore, the notion of mistrust was reinforced by authoritarian modes of behaviour from senior executives at the early stages of the implementation process of the policy. This remark was made both by teachers and headteachers either for senior executives or for other headteachers. They articulated that senior executives had hailed the reform as they perceived it as an opportunity to seek revenge on teachers who disrespected them and devalued them in previous years. Such a notion was representative of the climate that existed among teachers with respect to the evaluation policy. Within this climate, teachers advocated that their colleagues or senior executives had been threatening the school workforce with negative evaluation reports. Thus, it could be said that the evaluation policy was also seen as a mechanism serving personal interests.

Teachers' mistrust of the state was not the only impediment to sustainable change. Change was also undermined by teachers' enactment of the policy that followed the introduction of the reform in schools. They adopted a certain stance towards the policy that was considered to be a way of achieving secondary claims. Secondary claims such as preserving classroom autonomy have been the main generators of resistance in the pre-crisis era. Then these claims were superseded by claims such as preserving one's post. Nevertheless, since this priority, to sustain their post, was accomplished through a superficial alignment with the evaluation policy that allowed them to evade sanctions for disobeying the law, teachers focused on satisfying their secondary aims. This practise was motivated by a sincere, if at times problematic, interest in claiming back their classroom autonomy. It aimed at maintaining their former daily routine as intact as possible.

Therefore, they attempted to gain advantage of the weaknesses of the evaluation policy. Thus, secondary aims were pursued in the crisis era in two ways which replaced traditional resistance to the policy: a) teachers held a passive stance; and b) they accomplished tasks superficially. Even more, through a typical following of the guidelines they would render the reform unable to adequately change their daily classroom routine. This stance was also supported by the belief that the policy would be deferred or even suspended sooner or later. A headteacher said prophetically:

'why should I read the law? It's a waste of time. Someone else is going to change it sooner or later'. In particular, while the vast majority of teachers have complied with the reform, this was not followed by an enthusiastic endorsement of the policy or its practices. Teachers approached change in a typical bureaucratic way. To exemplify, as observed in all schools visited by the researcher, headteachers and teachers showed inertia during the first months of the implementation of the policy. The forming of working groups illustrates this point clearly. According to the evaluation policy, the first task of the school workforce involved the formation of working groups each responsible for particular evaluation indicators. School teachers were initially left to form their own working groups. Teachers took advantage of the bureaucratic delays involved and avoided to perform the task. Following a period of inertia, ministerial guidelines rendered the headteacher responsible to allocate teachers into groups. This resulted in certain schools remaining inactive for several months. After passing three months from the time the policy was implemented in schools, the survey showed that there was still about one-fifth (22%) of teachers who were not yet allocated to evaluation groups (see Appendix IV, Table 5.3).

Finally, there is another factor that influences the sustainability of the reform. Teachers' approach is likely to create a cycle of 'self-fulfilling prophecy' (Merton, 1948). Particularly, the new policy was perceived by teachers as serving reasons other than improving schooling. Thus, it would fail to improve teaching and learning, and re-establish their social status and worth within the local community and more widely. One possible implication of this is that teachers have not engaged with the policy in good faith, which then led to a typical following of guidelines. Even more, an apathetic school workforce is less likely to produce positive outcomes. Taken together, these observations appear to support the assumption that teachers' stance to the reform may contribute towards their original hypothetical conception coming true. To clarify, if the policy fails to produce manifest outcomes and improve schooling, teachers will accordingly believe that their initial tacit belief was true. There is a strong possibility then that this belief will generate another cycle of passive engagement with the policy and superficial following of rules, which will correspondingly produce poor outcomes. This will support the notion of failure of

the reform, as illusions are real in their causal effects (Bhaskar, 2011). To rephrase it, if the reform enters a cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy, then teachers could be involved in a situation where as Thomas (1920) puts it, 'if men (sic) define situations as real then they are real in their consequences'. So, even in the case that the policy is thoroughly developed, if teachers implicitly believe that it will fail the chances of success are limited.

To summarise, this section has reviewed the key aspects that consist the impediments to sustainable change which include the mistrust of the state, the mistrust of the carriers of policy in school, and teachers' stance with a focus on satisfying their secondary claims. These aspects are part of the meaning teachers ascribe to the evaluation reform and entail the risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure that undermines sustainable and effective change.

### **What needs to be done?**

The problem of sustaining change effectively is next discussed and it is argued that there are two important elements that could facilitate this process of incremental change through a cycle of building trust: a developing dynamic for change recorded for the first time in the current study; and the absence of any previous experience of evaluation and assessment schemes.

In terms of the first element, the study identified the presence of a dynamic among teachers who are dissatisfied with the contemporary situation of schooling, as it fails to provide the professional environment and status that they desire. They realise that evaluation is a necessary element of any education system of the westernised world. This notion has been recorded possibly for the first time ever in the Greek context as evaluation has been a scarce topic for discussion: 'evaluation should be perceived as something natural - It should have already been introduced' (Greg), 'I'm a proponent of evaluation and assessment, however I want a proper evaluation' (Catherine). This study discovered that teachers seem to acknowledge that the continued absence of any evaluation process for decades has raised numerous problems: 'there was a kind of relaxed approach to our duties due to the lack of any

inspectors' (Heather). Also, it was observed that teachers related evaluation to higher professional status 'Teachers need evaluation to regain their professional and social status' (Q76).

These results would seem to suggest that the frequency of voices admitting the necessity of evaluation is probably high, although contemporary research within the Greek context has not provided any further evidence yet. Nevertheless, it might be argued that although teachers stressed the need for evaluation they disagreed with the evaluation reform. This approach, as previously demonstrated, emanates from the tacit belief of mistrust of the state. Teachers' disagreement has led them to engage typically with the evaluation policy. This is probably the major impediment to the sustainability of the reform. Still, disagreement with the current reform policy is not contradictory to the dynamic for change identified by teachers. This is due to the fact that teachers opposed the particular policy rather than the idea of an evaluation system per se. Despite that, their call for an evaluation scheme under different conditions reveals a motivating force for incremental change. Specifically, the dynamic developed among teachers could be a starting point for reform, which might then generate small incremental improvements in the process of implementing an evaluation scheme in schools.

Turning now to the second element of this section in all interviews there was no reference to any of the global trends - diversity, choice and competition, devolution and performativity, centralisation and prescription - which are part of the education debate in the rest of the westernised world, what is widely known as 'GERM' (Salhsberg, 2011) Teachers seemed to be unaware of the current global trends in education and thus failed to correlate the recent evaluation reform to the wider global education agenda, thus providing limited explanations. Specifically, the Greek education system has been sterile and probably isolated from global trends until recently. Within that context, Greek teachers involved in their interpretations transnational organisations such as the IMF or the EU in a very narrow spectrum. They assumed that transnational organisations dictate educational policies as part of a strategy merely to reduce public spending cuts through dismissals and salary cuts.

Besides, some accounts of teachers that involved the EU, equally carried with them the same limitations. To exemplify, these accounts reflect the view that the evaluation reform was related to EU funding, therefore the government brought this policy forward in order to receive EU funding: ‘the aim is to enable senior education executives to become richer’ (Q<sup>144</sup>), and ‘some will benefit from the funding coming from the EU’ (Q98). This has been a widely held view, identified in interview transcripts, survey results and observations. The main weakness of this interpretation however, is the failure to address global educational trends.

Particularly as it concerns the recent evaluation reform, this was based on an OECD report of 2011 demanded by the Greek government, but apparently teachers seemed to be unaware of the role that OECD played in shaping the national agenda. There were hardly any references to the concepts that globalisation embodies and are manifested through rules and trends that are set by supranational bodies. All too many nations and regions have instituted policies that bear the hallmarks of the neoliberal agenda that has been pushed in schools for years. Part of this neoliberal agenda is the concept of performativity introduced through evaluation reforms. Performativity as one of the key components of the marketisation development in education constitutes one of the unacknowledged conditions of change for Greek teachers. To sum up, teachers’ approach identified broader structures of the global system and related the reform to these structures, but overlooked other dimensions of the reform. It merely perceived the reform as a mechanism for reducing public spending and not as part of a wider global educational agenda.

A possible explanation for this might be that teachers had no previous experience of evaluation policies. To elaborate, the teaching profession in Greece had experienced a considerable degree of de facto autonomy since 1982 with the absence of performance management, school evaluation and teacher assessment of any kind. Also, teachers were seen as the trusted professionals aiming for a more equal society with opportunities for all. In that sense, teachers had never experienced global policy programmes which share the impact of neoliberalism. Such experience would relate the recent reform to the neoliberal agenda and generate a fierce

debate similar to that in the westernized world. This debate flourished in the Anglo-Saxon world few years after the implementation of neoliberal policies.

Yet in all interviews there was no reference to any of the global trends which are part of the education debate in the rest of the westernised world. These results would seem to suggest that teachers were not aware of this debate as they had no previous experience of neoliberal policies of performativity. Therefore, it seems possible that teachers in Greece have been a professional group distanced from the rhetoric against evaluation similar to that identified in other contexts. This observation appears to support the assumption that teachers either for or against evaluation did not share biases which emanate from previous experience of evaluation in different contexts. To conclude, it is possible that the Greek educational workforce lacked a significant impediment to reform, observed in several other countries.

These positive conditions, despite the eighty per cent disagreement with the current reform, render real change possible. It is necessary as a priority though to re-establish trust of the state. In this way, achieving sustainable change might be feasible if the conditions are followed by a trusted carrier of policy. The evaluation reform needs to be brought forward by a government disassociated from the political past of corruption, and independent from the international lenders who in teachers' perception imposed the evaluation reform. The advent of such a government that could be trusted by people would possibly enjoy teachers' support. As a result the notion of failure of the evaluation policy would significantly diminish. Subsequently the vicious cycle or the self-fulfilling prophecy of failure might possibly turn into a resurgent cycle of trust, leading to incremental change and finally transform into a virtuous cycle of success and improvement. Initial trust in the state is inspiring for teachers actively to engage with the policy, and produce outcomes which increase trust. Thus, trust of the state that introduced the policy and trust of the policy itself as one that has the capability to improve schooling will develop among teachers. This will in turn increase the extent of endorsement of the evaluation reform by teachers, inspire more teachers to engage wholeheartedly and

produce greater outcomes. As will be illustrated in the subsequent section, the opportunity for sustainable change appeared when the contemporary government came recently into power in 2015, but seemingly the opportunity was lost.

### New government

The final area of this analysis and interpretation of the empirical data provides a brief overview of the recent developments in Greece and discusses them in relation to the arguments outlined in the previous sections. As a first point, the evaluation reform, despite the possible weaknesses regarding its sustainability, comprised a successfully implemented education policy in a context that resisted change for more than three decades. Regardless of this, the picture of a successfully introduced reform as a paradigm of change in challenging environments had a limited span of existence. For, even though the evaluation reform seemed to be well implemented for the very first time since decades, people have used their power to transform this situation. Once more, it proved that the future is not pre-given and predicting social phenomena accurately is difficult if not possible. The recent general election in Greece - in January 2015 - has brought into power a new anti-austerity government (*The Guardian*, 2015) which in its pre-electoral manifesto regarding education made the commitment to abolish neoliberal policies. In one of his first announcements, the new minister of education discredited and suspended school evaluation reform, so that the 'undemocratic' policy is reviewed and transformed (*ToVima*, 2015). The course of evaluation that started in April 2013 with the foundation of the Quality Assurance Committee came to an end in less than two years, in February 2015, repeating an extended circular route similar in processes but not in duration to those of previous policies.

The processes of all recent evaluation reforms comprised three steps: a) development of the evaluation policy; b) attempt to be implemented; and c) suspension of the policy. However, there was a significant dissimilarity in the recent attempt. The new government differs substantially to any of the previous ones with respect to its starting point in terms of school evaluation. The reinstatement of school evaluation has been on the agenda of previous governments, but it has been

subjected to seemingly indefinite delay. Hence, the past government under the pressure of the external lenders has introduced school evaluation with success. This improvement constituted an advantageous starting point for the new government to bring into a more advanced state the evaluation reform as it found itself in a position of successful implementation of the reform by the previous regime. What is more, the evaluation reform would become embedded by a government that is unrelated to previous periods of governance and is not connected in any way with external international lenders. Owing to these facts, it is believed that the new government is extensively trusted by people and accordingly by teachers. Nonetheless, from this advantageous position, the government affirmed the renunciation of the policy.

Hence, it set the reform in a seemingly indefinite delay, which effectively equates to the removal of the evaluation policy from the educational reform agenda. One criticism of this stance is that such actions bring education in Greece back to the *status quo ante*. In particular, it seems as though it is reproducing the structures of an educational system that overtly requires change. Under those circumstances, the rush to suspend evaluation and return to past traditional conditions of schooling would seem to suggest that an opportunity was missed for the education system to move forward.

The suspension of the evaluation reform could not only be seen as a missed opportunity. It also indicates an incoherent national strategy on education. In fact, it contributes towards increasing mistrust of the state. That means that any challenging reform is seen by teachers as a policy with a limited life span which would sooner or later be displaced. Therefore, there is no need in engaging with it. The absence of a consistent strategy when developing reforms becomes apparent. Reforms are then conceived as introduced merely to satisfy external pressure. Furthermore, the notion that the evaluation reform was the product of a poorly planned attempt dictated by external forces or even worse in order to receive funding was implied in the suspension of the reform by the new government in office. More importantly, it reinforced the self-fulfilling prophecy of failure as teachers' notions of failure were confirmed by the state. Teachers proved to be

conscious of the structural properties of the system to a great extent, for the reason that their anticipations of the evaluation reform being suspended were realised.

Re-examining the survey and interview data collected for this study, it becomes apparent that teachers were not surprised by the consequences in the education sector due to the change of government. Although this study conducted almost a year before the election took place had identified views supporting the claim that the succeeding government in power would abolish the reform. Surprisingly, this notion was stronger as the hierarchical ladder was ascended. Hence this was an anticipated event for the school workforce: ‘it will be suspended [the reform] with the first chance, by a new government. My experience shows that evaluation reforms are suspended by the next government or even by the same that introduced it, just before the election’. This expectation was also offered as an account for the absence of resistance. Others had an implicit belief that the evaluation policy would not be carried out and that it would be abolished. Probably, experience from previous outcomes of similar policies has supported this view. However, this development indicates that teachers are experienced in succeeding governments suspending policies of the previous ones.

Correspondingly, the suspension of the reform designates the subordinates’ power to elect governments which satisfy their claims. It emphasises that subordinates are empowered to employ the existing structures to achieve their aims: ‘the law will not change if I refuse to obey it; it changes if we all act collectively’ (Caroline). It is unknown if the majority of teachers voted for this political change, neither it is appropriate to claim that the new government was elected owing to teachers. Though given a wide political victory, it can be assumed that teachers to a similar proportion supported the new government and contributed to the political change. This political change supported to an extent by teachers seems to ratify that nothing will actually change in the education field. Overall, the newest development means that teachers followed a strategic conduct complying initially with the reform securing in that way their prior claims. They then strategically used the structures as a medium to achieve a change in governance that would satisfy their secondary

claims. In other words, they used the structures to restore the *status quo*. Is it rational to assume that teachers have caused the change of government bringing in power a political party that would re-establish the pre-crisis conditions in education? Could this be considered as another way of resisting the evaluation reform? This may not be the case, nor is it the focus of this study. However the end of another attempt to introduce evaluation in Greek schools demonstrates the presence of strong structural mechanisms of power, which are consciously reproduced by the agents. The actors in this case are those who resist change in the form of an evaluation policy. It might be that teachers desire an ideal form of evaluation that would perform its role and keep the workforce satisfied. Indeed, teachers resisted change through a different way from the ones they used to for decades. They chose not to ignore the structures, yet they followed the policy without lively interest. They offered a tacit consent to it. They had the power and used it through their vote, which contributed to the election result that halted reforms.

In summary, this chapter started by exploring the factors that influenced teachers in their attitudes and approach of compliance with the reform. It went on to argue that under the particular teachers' approach change would not be sustainable and effective. It then suggested potential ways for sustaining change and concluded by offering an account of the recent developments with respect to the evaluation reform.

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, the researcher brings together his responses to the theoretical and empirical question of how teachers approach change, discusses the study's contribution to knowledge and its implications for further study, reflects on some of its merits and shortcomings, and presents how the findings are being disseminated.

### Contribution to knowledge

In the process of collecting the data, doing the thinking, analysing and finally writing this study new directions became evident, while others were abandoned. In the process of making decisions on what data to include, what to exclude, and even how to construct the chapters, certain issues seemed to be more significant than they initially appeared to be. At the same time, particular ideas and perceptions seemed no longer as compelling as they once did. Equally, a number of emerging theoretical possibilities in relation to the data have been explored. Overall, the study's argument articulates the way teachers approach change as being far from a straightforward and rational process. In other words, how teachers approach change may be a practical and pragmatic question, yet it also contains ontological overtones.

One idea that initially seemed compelling but as the analysis and thinking proceeded, gradually weakened and was finally abandoned is that a culture that has been created and developed over the years collapses rapidly during a period of economic and social turbulence. The researcher's motivation for the study emerged from this notion and satisfied the researcher at the time. Seemingly, the strong resistance to change that blocked any monitoring and management of performance for three decades has subsided due to the economic and social conditions produced by the crisis. Thus, the initial argument contends that change, even in the most challenging and unfriendly conditions, may be endorsed by the very people who resist it if the conditions that support them are undermined. This idea was based on a twofold argument. First, the timing to introduce change appeared to be suitable. The crisis paved the way for the advent of school evaluation and teacher assessment accordingly, within a context of a wider neoliberal reshape in education, health and

social security, public services and others. The school evaluation policy in particular has developed into one of the main priorities of educational reform in recent decades but has proved to be the most sensitive and challenging issue to address. Political agendas originating from the OECD finally seeped into the education system taking advantage of the challenging conditions created by the crisis. Secondly and closely related to the first standpoint is that teachers' resistance to the recent evaluation reform appeared weak, almost non-existent in comparison to previous years. Owing to increasing unemployment, dismissals of public servants and growing job insecurity, teaching has become an insecure profession. This has significantly affected their ability to react, defy sanctions, and exert pressure on the government through strikes. To put it another way, teachers have lost their ability to negotiate on policies. This became evident from the data which demonstrated rare and fleeting resistance to the evaluation policy and was mostly expressed during interviews or moments of political or trade union action.

Nevertheless, the above twofold argument was rejected after the data were examined and analysed. It gradually emerged that data from teachers' social practice were not able to support the assumption that teachers were constrained by conditions of social and economic crisis to such an extent that would define their approach to change. Since teachers felt powerless to confront the government openly, they preferred to comply with the government in order to achieve their goals. Indeed, teachers were constrained but simultaneously empowered by the surrounding socio-economic structures. First, teachers identified a shift of power from their professional group and their union to the rest of society and the government. Secondly, teachers calculated the risks of the price to be paid for opposing the recent reform and acknowledged that this price was too high compared to maintaining their current status. They estimated that the chances of successfully resisting change were low. Thirdly, teachers decided to abide by the law so as to reap the benefits of such a strategy. That is to say, following the rules means undertaking obligations but also involves securing rights. It could be said that teachers, by following the evaluation policy as an obligation of being public servants, have also retained a decent salary on a regular basis. Securing their post and

continuing to enjoy the benefits of being employed by the state appeared to be the new claims of teachers which replaced older ones related to less significant issues such as professional autonomy. Thus, the pursuit of the above claims rejected a confrontation with the government and involved compliance with the new policy. The evidence suggests, therefore, that teachers have interpreted the conditions created by the crisis and subsequently transformed their claims in order to serve their interests more favourably. In this case, the method for satisfying their claims firstly required the absence of any resistance and subsequently the following of the evaluation policy.

However, this stance proved incapable of bringing about profound change in the field of education. The impact of teachers' stance was reflected in the stagnation of the Greek Education system in relation to evaluation reform. One major finding of this study suggests that the evaluation policy introduced during the socio-economic crisis was not a turning point in Greek education with respect to school evaluation and teacher assessment. One reason why change failed, is that teachers, although intimidated by the conditions created by the crisis, found ways to render the reform inactive. Teachers' passive stance towards the policy, suggested that they had opted for an approach that hardly brings about any change in schools. The study found that teachers' mistrust of the state has played a vital role in approaching change in this particular way. A consequence of this is that although the implementation phase was established, sustainability of the evaluation reform was undermined by teachers' indifference.

In addition, the evaluation policy lasted no longer than a year as it was suspended by the subsequent government. It seems that the broader socio-political context exerted a significant influence upon the policy. Public frustration with the government that enforced austerity laws in response to the global crisis, culminated in a new government in February 2015, which subsequently abolished the school evaluation reform to name just one. As a result, Greece retracted to the position where it stood before the evaluation policy was enacted – the status quo ante. This development would seem to suggest that a process of change initiated more than

three years ago, ended up as an anticlimax. Consequently, it could be said that the evaluation failed to bring about profound change in schools.

To summarise, the researcher has identified and stressed two points. One is that teachers' behaviour could be distant from being the result of forces that teachers neither control nor comprehend. It is likely that teachers have not passively endorsed a policy, which they had been opposing for at least three decades, owing to the austerity conditions that emerged from the economic crisis. There is not enough evidence that teachers' approach to change has been simply the product of social structures imposed upon them. On the contrary, as this study has demonstrated, there is some evidence to suggest that teachers actively interpreted their surrounding reality and acted accordingly. They compromised, avoided a direct confrontation with the government, and adopted a passive stance during the implementation phase until the final abolition of the evaluation policy by the new government. This strategy, which has been portrayed in the findings, suggests that Greek teachers are probably rich of political insight. Indeed, teachers seem to perceive the political procedures which a new school policy entails, and they also seem to acknowledge, to some extent, that they are deeply implicated in the contemporary neoliberal and globalizing settlement.

Nevertheless, the researcher holds the view that the study's contribution to knowledge is not merely limited to illustrating Greek teachers' stance towards the recent evaluation reform. A new trend was identified among teachers which, as this study claims, may have been brought into light for the first time and probably has not been documented formally before. This trend pertains to a dynamic force of teachers who are favourably disposed towards school evaluation and teacher assessment. Although considerable research has been devoted to teachers resisting state interventions into classroom practice through evaluation and assessment, rather less attention has been paid to those teachers who might be *proponents* of performativity interventions into schools. In that way teachers' collective stance may be misinterpreted and incomplete as previous research in the field has neglected to consider the possible existence of a proportion of teachers who endorse evaluation

policies. Even though the researcher has initially tended to focus on those teachers who either actively or passively opposed the evaluation policy, a trend that endorses school evaluation and teacher assessment emerged from the data. If these results could be confirmed by subsequent studies they would provide strong evidence for the existence of a considerable proportion of teachers who are favourably disposed towards evaluation. In that way, these teachers could serve as a facilitating factor for the successful implementation of evaluation in Greek schools.

### *Limitations*

This study is not the end of the researcher's involvement with the topic. The researcher's theoretical thinking on teachers' approach towards change is not complete and in that sense, this study is not a finished product but a version of ongoing work. There are still plenty of matters that the researcher was unable to address owing to the fact that they were not covered during the fieldwork. The decision taken at the time of the fieldwork concerning these uncovered issues was either to avoid investigating them or in a number of cases the researcher failed to realise that it would be useful to explore them.

On the other hand, there are also certain aspects of the analysis that the researcher would have liked to expand on, but decided, for the sake of practicality and space, not to. In particular, the role of headteachers in the way teachers approach change was investigated as well as other aspects of the study. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the fieldwork was guided by a focus on teachers, interviews with headteachers and senior officers were merely complementary to the data obtained in teacher interviews. As a result, the study might have achieved a broader insight into the way teachers approach change; however other areas such as the role of leadership have been left unexamined.

Furthermore, were the researcher to repeat the study a convenience sample would be avoided. Approaches of this kind carry with them various well known limitations. However, limited time resources and the endogenous difficulties of the Greek education system such as the absence of a culture of research studies that would

encourage participation in research projects, left the researcher with little alternative than to initiate research by using a convenience sample. In this study, headteachers and teachers within the empirical setting of the study, who were familiar to the researcher, were preferred for the initial sample, as they were considered to be more likely to agree to participate in the project and advocate the project to others who had no previous acquaintance with the researcher. Again the issue of trust appeared to have an impact on selecting the study sample. Interviewees trusted the researcher in terms of securing their anonymity, and the researcher trusted the interviewees in terms of answering honestly. In a case where teachers had been more willing to participate in such a study, a simple random sampling would have been pursued. What is more, the response rate in a random sampling could also serve as an indicator of how critical the current education reform is considered to be for the education community. Additionally, in terms of the sample size, the intention of the researcher would be to increase it as much as possible, because in the case of a small sample size findings need to be interpreted with caution.

To conclude, if the study were to be repeated, several issues could have been dealt with differently. Numerous areas of interest and importance were not included due to the limitations to the length of this study. Also, emphasis could have been given to different parts of the data; therefore different themes could have been discussed. As a consequence this work could be seen as a set of starting points and openings for further studies.

### **Implications for further study**

As this study was conducted at the very initial stage of the evaluation reform, it only investigated policy introduction in schools. The study focused on the first stage of change which is the initiation and implementation. What is equally crucial is the investigation of the later stages of the change process – continuation or institutionalisation. However, the fact that the evaluation policy was suspended did not allow the investigation of further stages of the process. Nevertheless, despite

this development, several other issues related to the present study should be investigated. These might involve the role that the school leadership assumed during the implementation phase of the evaluation policy and also how schools adjusted to change in ways that actually did not affect the *status quo* in schools. Even if the particular change initiative concerning school evaluation and teacher assessment developed in different ways to that for which it was designed and was finally suspended, it may prove to be interesting to see how this initiative will progress as global trends will continue to increase their influence into national education policies. Greek schooling remains outdated in terms of its education system structure and functioning, so it will probably bring about several other change initiatives in the coming years.

### *Dissemination*

Findings will be disseminated by all possible means. The impression given by participants was that it is an issue of interest in the education community and they look forward to receiving feedback concerning the findings. Results will initially be disseminated to those who contributed to this research once they have been translated into Greek. Every opportunity to present the findings of the study in conferences either in Greece or abroad will be taken. Effort will also be made to produce and publish papers related to this research in education journals and would be another method of dissemination. In this way, the study will be accessible to the academic community including the UK and Greece. The primary purpose of disseminating the findings is to inform those involved in the study about the outcome of the research. Secondly, dissemination aims to encourage further research in the field.

### *Final comment*

Greece more than any other time needs to develop its education system by adopting procedures already established in the rest of the westernised world. It is clearly behind many fellow OECD members, not due to any deficiency in resources but rather by reason of a mistrusted state that fails to inspire its citizens to keep up with

the demands of modern trends. In Greece, it is a sad fact of life that mediocrity tends to prevail over meritocracy. State-run education is no exception. What is more, professional autonomy in schools involves the sharing of democratic values and ideas among the school workforce. By contrast, if those values are neglected, professional autonomy acts as an impediment to meaningful teaching and learning resulting in an outdated education system unable to meet modern global challenges. If this is so, then global trends of performativity become attractive to the public, because they appear to be a protective mechanism against a redundant education system with incompetent teachers, rather than a suppressive mechanism of monitoring and control of teachers. In this case then, the debate does not revolve around the content and character of evaluation policies but rather around the integrity of those who introduce the policy. Mistrust of the state has proved to be a significant impediment to the implementation of the evaluation reform and unless trust is established, any evaluation reform will be trapped in a cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy, failing to achieve its potential. Above all though, recent political developments indicate that political will in relation to political cost probably constitute the most significant factors in educational change in Greece.

#### *How well the question has been answered by the enquiry*

This thesis does not attempt to offer a definitive account of teachers' approaches to the evaluation reform, their causes and consequences. It simply offers a view from a particular perspective, which has limitations, as do all perspectives, 'arising from a particular place and a particular time' (Gamble, 2009, p. 42). Also, as Best and Kellner (1991) put it, probably the best way to investigate specific empirical questions is a 'multiperspectival' social theory which will take into account all possible interconnections between everyday life, culture, society, economy, polity who form a complex social system. It is definite that the application of a single theory has its weaknesses and there might have been issues that are left unresolved especially if examined from another perspective. Moreover, this research is a human endeavour and the researcher, like the subjects of research, is a social actor (Whyte, 1993, p. 279). Therefore the study should not be placed entirely on a logical-intellectual base, and probably cannot be read in isolation from the researcher's very

own principle that it is difficult if not impossible to have a single social theory of universal laws about empirical phenomena of social life. It is hoped that this study has shed light on at least one aspect of our complex social world.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### *Greece's unemployment in absolute numbers*



Data from the Hellenic Statistical Authority

(<http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE>). Data source:

<http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-consumerworks?inputA=5>

#### *Teachers' salaries*

#### **Annual statutory salaries in public institutions, minimum training**

*Equivalent USD converted using PPPs*

		2011 or latest available year									
		Primary education			Lower secondary education			Upper secondary education			
		Salary			Salary			Years to top salary	Salary		
		Initial	15 years	Maximum	Initial	15 years	Maximum		Initial	15 years	Maximum
Australia		34 610	48 522	48 522	34 746	49 144	49 144	9	34 746	49 144	49 144
Austria		31 501	41 633	62 129	32 973	45 105	64 510	34	33 398	46 317	67 444
Belgium (Fl.)		32 095	45 413	55 619	32 095	45 413	55 619	27	40 102	58 398	70 430
Belgium (Fr.)		31 515	44 407	54 360	31 515	44 407	54 360	27	39 230	57 071	68 803

Canada	35 534	56 349	56 349	35 534	56 349	56 349	11	35 534	56 569	56 569	
Chile	17 385	23 623	31 201	17 385	23 623	31 201	30	18 034	25 027	33 002	
Czech Republic	16 680	20 185	22 236	16 472	20 360	22 455	27	17 244	21 733	24 130	
Denmark	43 461	50 332	50 332	43 461	50 332	50 332	8	44 710	58 347	58 347	
England	30 289	44 269	44 269	30 289	44 269	44 269	12	30 289	44 269	44 269	
Estonia	11 621	12 306	16 985	11 621	12 306	16 985	7	11 621	12 306	16 985	
Finland	30 587	37 886	40 160	33 034	40 917	43 372	20	34 008	43 302	45 900	
France	25 646	33 152	48 916	28 653	36 159	52 090	34	28 892	36 398	52 352	
Germany	47 488	58 662	63 286	53 026	64 491	70 332	28	57 357	69 715	79 088	
Greece	22 803	28 184	34 037	22 803	28 184	34 037	33	22 803	28 184	34 037	
Hungary	10 654	13 115	17 497	10 654	13 115	17 497	40	11 642	15 515	22 083	
Iceland	23 988	26 991	28 145	23 988	26 991	28 145	18	22 628	27 159	28 412	
Ireland	33 484	54 954	62 166	34 604	54 954	62 166	22	34 604	54 954	62 166	
Israel	18 692	27 174	38 377	18 692	24 997	35 177	36	14 254	21 316	31 973	
Italy	27 288	32 969	40 119	29 418	35 922	44 059	35	29 418	36 928	46 060	
Japan	26 031	45 741	57 621	26 031	45 741	57 621	34	26 031	45 741	59 197	
Korea	27 581	48 251	76 528	27 476	48 146	76 423	37	27 476	48 146	76 423	
Luxembourg	64 043	93 397	112 997	72 499	100 013	125 962	30	72 499	100 013	125 962	
Mexico	15 081	19 590	32 136	19 252	24 910	40 886	14	..	..	..	
Netherlands	36 626	52 292	53 974	38 941	63 695	66 117	15	38 941	63 695	66 117	
New Zealand	28 225	41 755	41 755	28 251	42 241	42 241	8	28 277	42 726	42 726	
Norway	33 350	37 585	42 055	33 350	37 585	42 055	16	36 712	40 430	44 595	
Poland	10 362	16 506	17 200	11 663	18 806	19 600	20	13 181	21 518	22 429	

Portugal	30 946	39 424	52 447	30 946	39 424	52 447	34	30 946	39 424	52 447	
Scotland	30 078	47 984	47 984	30 078	47 984	47 984	6	30 078	47 984	47 984	
Slovak Republic	10 241	12 858	13 864	10 241	12 858	13 864	32	10 241	12 858	13 864	
Slovenia	26 486	32 193	33 817	26 486	32 193	33 817	13	26 486	32 193	33 817	
Spain	35 881	41 339	50 770	39 693	45 689	55 603	38	40 308	46 479	56 536	
Sweden	30 059	34 387	39 865	30 571	35 495	40 025	..	31 978	37 584	42 775	
Switzerland	47 330	..	73 585	53 599	..	83 105	27	61 437	..	94 038	
Turkey	23 494	25 189	27 201	..	..	..	..	24 053	25 747	27 758	
United States	37 595	46 130	53 180	37 507	45 950	56 364	..	38 012	49 414	56 303	
OECD average	28 854	38 136	45 602	30 216	39 934	48 177	24	31 348	41 665	50 119	
EU21	29 123	38 602	45 001	30 510	40 526	47 283	25	31 738	42 834	50 175	
Argentina	16 567	19 442	25 062	13 500	17 819	21 643	25	13 500	17 819	21 643	
Brazil	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Indonesia	1 638	2 072	2 361	1 764	2 361	2 565	32	2 019	2 615	2 849	
Russian Federation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	

Belgium (Fl.): Flemish community, Belgium; Belgium (Fr.): French community, Belgium.

Due to a change in the methodology used to convert teachers' salaries into USD, data are not directly comparable with the figures published in previous editions of Education at a Glance. Sources, methods and technical notes are available on:

[www.oecd.org/edu/eag](http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag).

Source: [Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2013_4675039_en.htm); data for Argentina are from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (World Education Indicators programme).

## *OECD Lower Secondary teachers' salaries 2012*

Teachers' salaries Lower secondary,15 years' experience, 2005=100, 2012

	Lower secondary,15 years' experience
Australia	105
Austria	102
Czech Republic	104
Denmark	108
Estonia	131
Finland	101
France	95
Greece	<b>77</b>
Hungary	65
Iceland	87
Ireland	112
Israel	114
Italy	96
Japan	93
Korea	96
Luxembourg	110
New Zealand	110
Norway	110
OECD - Average	101
Poland	120
Portugal	93
Slovenia	104
Spain	95

[<https://data.oecd.org/eduresource/teachers-salaries.htm#indicator-chart>]

## **Appendix II**

### *Invitation to participate in the survey.*

I am working on a research project on the self-evaluation policy introduced in schools this month. Your participation in this questionnaire would be greatly appreciated. Aggregate results will be used for my doctoral research study. Please read the information sheet and the participation consent form attached in this email before answering the questionnaire.

All individual responses are treated confidentially. Please participate by filling your responses online

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1NNql13IKLN1qtatUqIL-b0--8omruxq3H1BhJptuDXM/edit#>

This study has received ethical approval from the Institute of Education, University of London, UK; and the Greek Ministry of Education.

Many thanks

Thomas

*Research Project Invitation and Information Sheet*

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in this research project that investigates teachers' attitudes on the new reform policies on evaluation. The title of this research is: "Managing Educational Change in a time of Economic and Social Crisis in Greece"

As a matter of interest for participants, they will have access (via a request to the researcher) to the findings of this research. Participants are able to withdraw their data from the study if and when they decide before the end of the project phase by contacting the researcher in writing.

This project is supervised by: Thomas Georgas

Researcher's contact (including e-mail): [tgeorgas@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:tgeorgas@ioe.ac.uk)

*PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM*

- I have read the information sheet about this study
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study
- I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions
- I have received enough information about this study
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study:
  - At any time (until such date as this will no longer be possible, which I have been told)
  - Without giving a reason for withdrawing

I agree to take part in this study

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1NNqI13IKLN1qtatUqIL-b0--80mruxq3H1BhJptuDXM/edit#>

## Appendix III-

### *Interviewees*

Teachers	Type of interview	Length of service (in years)	Position / Subject	School
Maria	Individual	8	Maths	Kamares School/ Dafnos
Petros	Individual	6	Science	Troodos School//Ptelea
Agathe	Individual	12	Literature	Lefki School/ Dafnos
Constantine	Individual	21	Religious education	2nd Metohi College/Dafnos
Katerina	Individual	10	Literature	1st Perkos School/Dafnos
Marina	Individual	12	Business studies	2nd Drymos School/ Ptelea
Zoe	Individual	17	Literature-History	Lilea School/Ptelea
Nick	Individual	11	Assistant head teacher IT	Lefki School/ Dafnos
Ioanna	Individual	13	Maths	2nd Drymos School/ Ptelea
Demetra	Individual	7	Biology	Lyritsa School/Ptelea

Headteachers	Type of interview	Length of service (in years)	School / LA
Alexandros	Individual	28	2nd Drymos School/ Ptelea
Yannis	Individual	16	Troodos School//Ptelea
Antonis	Individual	19	Kamares School/ Dafnos
Panos	Individual	22	Lefki School/ Dafnos
Elene	Individual	13	Lilea School/Ptelea

<b>Senior education official</b>	<b>Type of interview</b>	<b>Length of service (in years)</b>
<b>Sofia</b>	Individual	15
<b>Spiros</b>	Individual	20
<b>Vasilis</b>	Individual	19
<b>Argyris</b>	Individual	21
<b>Angelos</b>	Individual	20

## **Appendix IV-**

### *Questionnaire*

#### Closed type questions

1. Do you agree with the Ministerial Act 152 that introduces evaluation in schools?
2. Do you participate in the evaluation teams in your schools?
3. If you follow the policy, is it because you believe in it?
4. To what degree has the crisis affected your professional life?
5. Do you feel job insecurity due to the crisis?
6. How possible is it that those refusing to follow the act will not be able to climb the remuneration scale?
7. How possible is it that those refusing to follow the reform will face redundancy?

#### Open ended question

In your opinion, why does the recent evaluation reform is successfully running in schools, whereas previous attempts to implement evaluation in schools failed? Has the economic crisis influenced the outcome of the recent reform?

## Appendix V

### *Survey results*

Table 5.1: Agreement to the policy

Do you agree with the Ministerial Act 152 that introduces evaluation in schools?	C-sample N=52	C-Sample %	School 1 N <sub>1</sub> =12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Yes	6	11	0	0	5	25	0	0	<u>11</u>	10
No	41	79	9	75	14	70	<u>21</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>85</u>	80
No response	5	9	3	25	1	5	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>10</u>	10

C-sample: convenience sample: Questionnaires administered as printed documents by the researcher, or sent by email. School 1: Semi-urban school. Questionnaires were printed and administered to teachers by their headteacher. School 2: Urban school. Semi-urban school. Questionnaires were printed and administered to teachers by their headteacher. ICT cohort: Questionnaires administered only on-line.

Overall sample: Entails the total number of participants irrespectively of the way they were approached.

%≈: Percentages are approximately described

Table 5.2: Participation

Do you participate in the evaluation teams in your schools	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School 1 N <sub>1</sub> =12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Yes	36	70	10	83	18	90	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>77</u>
No	15	28	2	17	1	5	<u>4</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>21</u>
No response	1	2	0	0	1	5	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

Table5.3: If you follow the policy, is it because you believe in it?

	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52 (-14)	C-sample %	School 1 N <sub>1</sub> = 12(-2)	School 1 %	Scho ol 2 N <sub>2</sub> = 20(- 2)	Scho ol % %	ICT coh or t N <sub>3</sub> =22 (-2)	ICT coh or t %	Overal l sampl e N=106 (-20)	Overa ll sampl e %
Yes, I do so because I agree with the policy	6	16	1	10	6	33	3	15	16	19
No, I do so because of other reasons	32	84	9	90	12	67	17	85	70	81
No response	14	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	20	-

Table 5.4: Teacher Union influence

What role the union's directive played in your decision to follow or not the Evaluation Act?										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=	Overall sample %
Major role	1	2	1	8	0	0	0	0	2	2
Moderate role	17	32	3	25	7	35	8	36	35	33
No role at all	30	58	6	50	12	60	14	64	62	58
No response	4	8	2	17	1	5	0	0	7	7

Table 5.5: Impact of the economic crisis in the professional life of teachers.

To what degree has the crisis affected your professional life?										
	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School1 N <sub>1</sub> =12	School1 %	School2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Not at all	0	0	0	0	3	15	0	0	3	3
Little	4	8	1	8	3	15	0	0	8	7
To a considerable extent	48	91	11	92	14	70	22	100	95	90
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 5.6: Job insecurity

Do you feel job insecurity due to the crisis	C-sample N <sub>c</sub> =52	C-sample %	School1 N <sub>1</sub> =12	School1 %	School2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %≈
Not at all	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Little	10	19	0	0	7	35	4	18	21	20
Quite	39	75	12	100	13	65	18	82	82	77
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 5.7: Remuneration consequences

How possible is it that those refusing to follow the act will not be able to climb the remuneration scale?										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Very possible	16	32	5	42	5	25	6	29	<u>32</u>	<u>30</u>
Moderately possible	21	42	4	33	8	40	10	48	<u>43</u>	<u>40</u>
Not at all possible	13	26	3	25	7	35	5	24	<u>28</u>	<u>27</u>
No response	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>

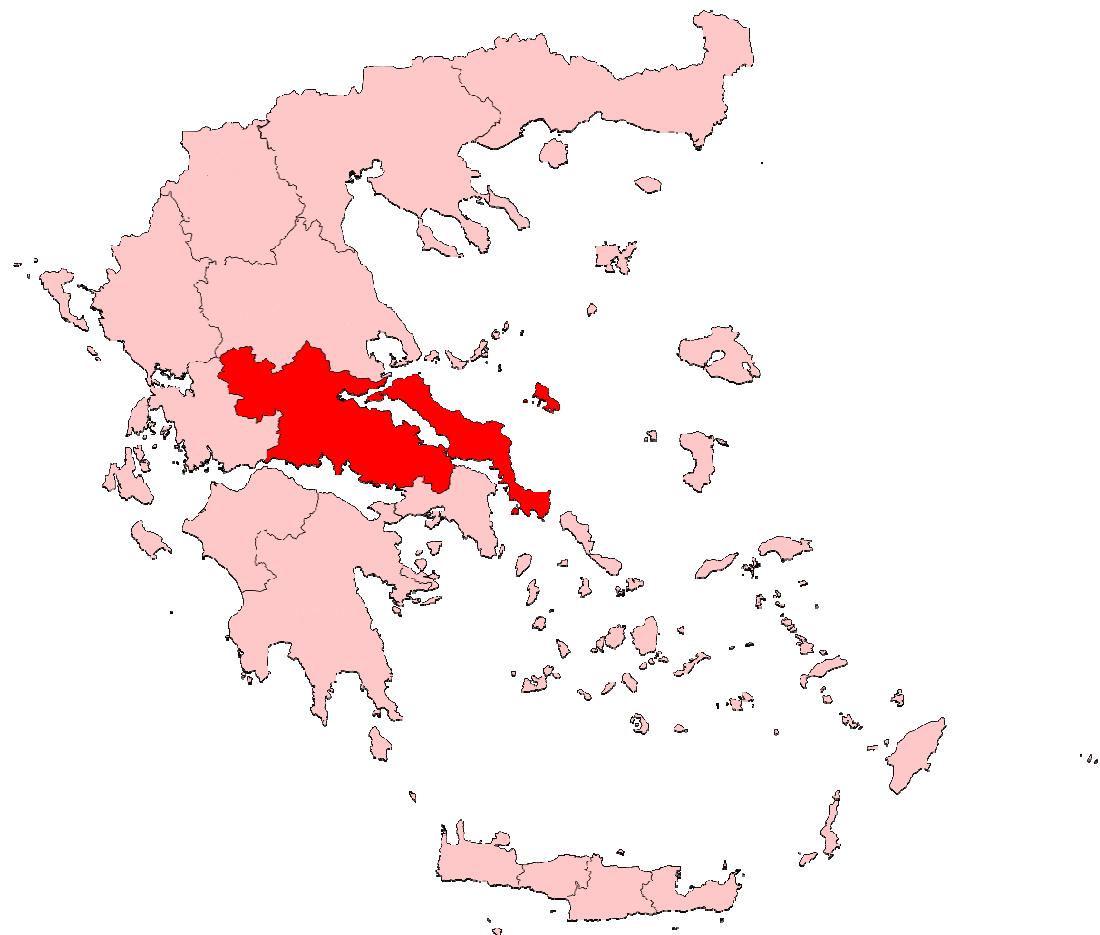
Table 5.8: Redundancies

How possible is it that those refusing to follow the reform will face redundancy?										
	C-sample N=52	C-sample %	School 1 N=12	School 1 %	School 2 N <sub>2</sub> =20	School 2 %	ICT cohort N <sub>3</sub> =22	ICT cohort %	Overall sample N=106	Overall sample %
Very possible	15	28	4	33	5	25	5	23	<u>29</u>	<u>27</u>
Moderately possible	17	34	3	25	10	50	9	<u>41</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>37</u>
Not at all possible	20	38	5	42	5	25	7	<u>32</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>35</u>
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

## Appendix V

### *Empirical Setting*

Central Greece, the empirical setting of the study



## **Appendix VI**

*Interview schedule- a list of predetermined questions and topics*

The evaluation reform

- How does it progress in your school?
- Are you a member of any evaluation team?
- What was the process followed by your headteacher?
- Were there any visits from senior officers?
- Were there any different opinions expressed?
- What happened?
- What was your stance?
- Did you express your opinion?
- If not why?
- If yes, what happened?
- What do you think about all this?

Ask to elaborate on the last one.

Examine each individual factor.

Present the survey results. Ask if they agree. Examine each individual survey question results.