TEACHER EVALUATION IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON EVALUATION, QUALITY, AND RESILIENCE IN THE GREEK EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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One of the implications of globalization for education is the introduction of teacher evaluation models worldwide based on managerial notions such as cost rationalizing, system efficiency and quality, accountability, professionalism and measurable educational outcomes. In the Greek context, a failed attempt was made to introduce a teacher evaluation policy in 2010-2014 based on international standards and requirements. The present qualitative study examines whether teacher evaluation models based on internationally set standards are seen by Greek teachers as promoting their resilience. It was investigated whether teachers considered that the attempted globalization-influenced reform took into account their identities and emotions, which are embedded in particular socio-cultural dynamics. Three focus groups and twelve individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with Greek primary school teachers. Results showed that, according to teachers' views, evaluation models which are oriented towards cost-cutting and competitiveness among schools and teachers have negative implications for teachers' resilience and school climate. Models based on school self-evaluation and in-service training is seen as promoting resilience. It is argued with the support of the empirical data that in a context where educational policies are heavily influenced by globalization tendencies, policy makers should take more into account the socio-cultural context of the educational community instead of opting for top-down educational policies, consider teacher resilience at the individual and organizational level when legislating and listen on teacher's voices transforming this information into useful policy guidelines and education laws.

Keywords: teacher evaluation, globalization, resilience, quality teaching, socio-cultural context, Greek teachers

1.   Introduction: Globalization, teacher evaluation and teacher resilience

Globalization has been defined as an era in which the excessive spread of telecommunications, the internet, the technological and scientific advances, the speed of worldwide transportations and trade, incorporate the economic space and create a world-wide connected sphere with emphasis in production and the financial markets (Gibson-Graham, 1996). Many scholars highlight the cultural transformations of the post-modern world

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(Giddens, 1990, Castells, 1996) and the pressures towards uniformism or the reactions against globalization as a way to protect different identities.

A unanimous acceptance and agreement on a single "grand" definition or on the implications of globalization from the scientific community and the lay public (Griva & Chryssochoou, 2015; Scott, 2016), or even on the ontological basis of this new or not so new concept (see Bartelson, 2000) is difficult to be reached.

A fundamental idea and argument of this paper is that the process of globalization along with its dynamics in a material but also in a symbolic and ideational level can be identified in the educational procedures and practices (Scott, 2016) and above all in critical educational reforms (Vulliamy, 2010; Zajda, 2010). Institutional reforms could be seen as the way to align education with the new era "demands", so analytically, reforms could highlight the connection and the dynamic relationships between globalization and education. Wider socio-economic and political transformations in the spotlight of globalization have an impact on education (Carnoy, 1999, Scott, 2016), still not in a uniform way in every nation state (Vulliamy, 2010). More precisely, global economic restructuring opens the debate and the need for a re-negotiation of the fundamental role and goals of education regarding economic growth, or management of economic and social crisis.

The introduction of very specific notions, ideas and values, which are surely not new but embedded in a new market driven managerial and neo-liberal content, such as excellence, efficiency, competitiveness, accountability, continuous evaluation of educational outcomes and resource management, has been recognized and analyzed by many scholars as indicative of the contemporary trends on education caused by what is called globalization.

Many specific market-led models become apparent in educational policies and practices and put more pressure for consequent changes in teachers' morale and professional mindset (Vulliamy, 2010). An example of that is the need for greater and managerially oriented accountability, efficiency, and quality. All these demands and pressures of globalization practices have an impact on mental health of people and more specifically it can be argued that directly or indirectly this globalized new environment has increased teachers stress and vulnerability (Matsopoulos, 2011)

Stressing the importance of teacher resilience we consider as vital the introduction of prevention mechanisms targeting at empowering teachers, so as to deal with all sorts of demands and stressors of being an educator, on top of all new requirements and procedures that teacher evaluation reforms in the Greek educational system have introduced. Education, schools and Greek teachers have been significantly affected by the last 8 years of socioeconomic crises in multiple ways. The recent educational laws, which officially introduced teacher evaluation demand a change in attitudes, in philosophy of delivering education. The introduction of the concept of self or external evaluation is a new concept for many of the Greek educators, who have been trained and so far worked for the last almost 35 years with no notions of official form of accountability and evaluation.

The teacher evaluation laws introduced a new normative paradigm for Greek teachers. In fact when laws were introduced in such a haphazard way in a society in deep socioeconomic crisis, teachers needed to have lots of individual and social resources to cope with all new demands and changes in order to be resilient (Matsopoulos, 2011). Introducing the concept of resilience (and its associated strategies to enhance it, such as collaborative work) as a counterbalance approach to the vulnerability already felt by teachers, is a solid proposal in the context of globalization and it can significantly promote coping, agency and sense of support among teachers. In fact, this can be considered the new contribution and unique perspective this present study brings to the table.

In conclusion, studying teachers' resilience is a new area which can be connected with public policy in schools and our data further support that the study of teacher resilience makes sense not only from a public policy point of view, but also from a mental health prevention standpoint especially in a country which has suffered all the negative impact of budget cuts, reduction of social capital and services offered by the state, salary cuts and even daily obstacles in citizens lives such as capital controls.

1.1. *The key notions of quality, evaluation and accountability in education*

In the context of globalization, education is considered to be a fundamental tool towards economic stability, growth, and scientific and technological advance. In this respect, education has to be closely connected with the economy and provide to future labor force a continuous flow of the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes. However, this doesn't come without price as education must be in a constant adjustment and re-adjustment of goals and means and have the necessary mechanisms so as to be able to measure and evaluate educational outcomes and performance.

This market-driven managerial model with very specific political objectives for education (Worthen & Sanders, 1991; Carnoy, 1999) requires a notion of accountability for stakeholders and especially for politicians, who spend public money on educational reforms so they need to make informed decisions having factual data (Eastmond, 1991), and teachers who need to deliver specific educational outcomes. Evaluation systems, as part of quality assurance mechanisms, serve this purpose. "Quality teaching has become a key factor for all stakeholders about how best to respond to the challenges of globalization, sustainable development and knowledge society" (Wosnitza et al., 2015, ENTRÉE report, p. 2).

A big theoretical discussion is shaping up regarding the variety of quality assessment models (Eastmond, 1991) and their specific characteristics and focus. Also, there is a respectable spectrum of practices and methodologies to choose from, when it comes to assessing the quality of an educational institution. Considering the above, international models and best practices must be adjusted to the specific socio-cultural contexts, and be aligned with the fundamental goals and philosophy of each educational system in a national or local level. However, there are many other significant points for consideration.

For example, a dilemma discussed is whether to provide more autonomy to educational institutions in the sense of decentralization and flexibility or to create centralized structures of control and monitoring of the educational quality in a top down way. This case has always been a matter of discourse and concern (Van der Bij, Geijsel, & Dam, 2016) and especially in the context of globalization where the former model of governance is considered to be more efficient and effective (Carnoy, 1999). In reality the two different cultures and philosophies can be spotted in various EU countries with specific applications depending on cultural and historical contextualities.

Another crucial debate has to do with the quality indicators, a qualitative or quantitative methodology (Worthen & Sanders, 1991) the points to evaluate, the character of the evaluation, the evaluators etc. On top of this, apart from these external factors and characteristics as such we have to incorporate in our system of analysis the representations of these elements, namely how these are being perceived by the people and institutions involved (Scott, 2016). This is why it is very important these parameters to be co-decided or negotiated by the people whose lives will be affected so as to incorporate their symbolic world, their actual experience and professional know how, their specific needs and finally their way of seeing things, their feelings and their mindset. A top down, uniform, theoretically designed,

fast and culturally insensitive policy making cannot entail and support the above mentioned dimensions which we support as crucial for the effectiveness of policies in all levels (Salvatore, 2014, 2016).

Also, evaluation systems in education very often provoke specific reactions or oppositions that are based on the imperfections they may have (as systems, or structures) (Wang, Becket, & Brown, 2006) or because they may trigger specific dynamic interactions, or not be clear about their ethics or their goals (Scott, 2016). Therefore, a point of serious consideration is concerned with the clarification of the purposes of the evaluation, its incentives (Carnoy, 1999), the management of the data (Scott, 2016) and the implications it may have to the people involved. If these fundamental elements of evaluation aren't clearly and fully defined and stated from the beginning, and if there isn't any culture of trust and co-operation between the involved players, then mis-representations or negative representations will impact the implementation and the legitimacy of the evaluation.

Finally, apart from the specific design of an evaluation system, quality assessment one should take into consideration the dynamic and cultural dimension of the institution (or population) to be applied. If cultural factors are neglected and if the evaluation models and the general philosophy of the quality definition and assessment is a top down, uniform procedure, culturally insensitive (Hopson, 2005), or inflexible, then the representations of the people involved in the evaluation will not be so positive or open to accept or embrace the system. Thus, the chances of causing negative emotionality are increased. In other words, if the evaluation system is constructed or perceived via negative emotional categories (mistrust, anxiety, stress, insecurity, loss of stable systems of reference, lack of meritocracy and thus feeling of injustice etc.) then the implementation or the success of the evaluation system and thus the educational quality may be at stake or questionable.

1.2. *Internal Evaluation or self-evaluation of school systems & External Evaluation*

Self-evaluation models could be considered as a product of broader political and managerial transformations in the '80s such as decentralization and deregulation of policy design, policy making and implementation. In any case, we should not forget that evaluation and quality per se maintain strong connections with the idea of institutional management. So, autonomy could mean more freedom to choose the right tools to tackle problems or self advance, in a responsible way having the honesty and strength to deal with the reality and the true problems and weaknesses but also working on a solid and reliable self-evaluation system (Van der Bij et al, 2016). Otherwise, autonomy through self evaluation could be the platform to hide weaknesses, to deal with quality assessment bureaucratically, and in a superficial way and as a way to escape real evaluation and honest accountability. In many cases this reality leads to top down interventions with stricter external control.

It should be noted that for internal evaluation to work and to promote overall quality there are a number of prerequisites to be met and resources to be available to school system/units referring both to material, symbolic and human ones. Some significant issues can be related the lack of experience and professionalism in quality assurance from school personnel and managers), the exclusion or not the efficient or adequate involvement of specific groups such as students and parents,– not to mention other critical stakeholders in the evaluation procedures- and finally the interpretation and the subjectivity factor that could lead to different results or problem perception (Gaertner, 2014).

External evaluation is a stricter, usually top down, inspection system based on specific requirements, procedures and indicators defined by the state (Vulliamy, 2010). There are also

cases of final examinations organized by the state as a way of external control of school system/units (Gaertner, 2014) evaluating in this way their educational outcomes.

Another form of external evaluation could be considered the participation of students in international tests (e.g. PISA). This promotes the context of international ranking of students' performance and through that, the basis of the evaluation of school systems and units, teachers and of the national educational systems in general. The fundamental rationale behind that is a globalization driven idea to measure and compare the efficiency of the educational systems in a homogenous quantitative way (Hopson, 2005) and thus of the educational outcomes in the context of a global economic competition (Carnoy, 1999). The mentality of this type of evaluation is formulated and diffused politically by global institutions through the years such as OECD, the World Bank, International Educational Assessment (IEA) and many others.

However, there have been significant criticism regarding the real capacity of external evaluations to measure and promote educational quality in relation with the indicators used, the methods applied etc. (Van der Bij et al., 2016). Also inspections and external control meet very often criticism and opposition from various academics and school personnel for the negative impact it may have (Ball, 2003 as cited in Penninckx, 2017). Also in some countries (England and New Zealand) reforms for stricter accountability through inspections were perceived by teachers as a lack of trust in their abilities, while the very relaxed accountability system in Finland is perceived by teachers as indicative of a culture of trust (Vulliamy, 2010).

1.3. *The key concept of accountability of teachers and schools*

Accountability is a key concept which is prevalent in every evaluation model (either internal or external) and is considered to be fundamental in realizing the purposes of evaluation (Connell, 2009).

It is argued by many scholars that the concept of accountability in education is closely related with the concept of maximizing utility of the economic resources spent or better, invested in education (Worthern & Sanders, 1991). The concept of accountability extends to teachers so as to ensure the maximum educational outcomes, but also to school managers, to policy makers designing reforms etc. (Scott, 2016). Accountability could also serve for parents or stakeholders as consumers of the educational outputs. So, evaluation mechanisms can be seen as a way to measure accountability and performance. Also historically the more the public money spent on education, the more the need from the state and tax-payers to see major or similar improvements in the educational outcomes in various levels (Worthern & Sanders, 1991).

Today, following the dominant neo-liberal approaches, accountability is ensured through inspection systems with emphasis on school effectiveness. Market driven approaches, private funding of education, competitiveness, free choice of schools, emphasis in pedagogy and curriculum to serve the competitiveness factor is all very well connected with the accountability concept.

As stated before, many teachers have a negative stance towards strict market based evaluation systems due to raising their stress and workload and limiting their teaching practices (Vulliamy, 2010) so as to conform to the standards of evaluation. Also the different or antagonistic perceptions of accountability to different players within a school (teachers, managers, principals, counselors etc.) may lead to individualism or opportunism and lack of concern about the real educational and socioemotional development of students (Scott, 2016)

Finally, one basic rhetoric for the emphasis given to professional development through specific skills and sets of knowledge for teachers, as Fischman (2000, as cited in Maguire, 2002) explains is that poor school students' performance and low educational quality is mainly attributed to teachers. So by improving them or pushing them to improve (accountability aspect) and then through quantitative evaluation or supervision, educational outcomes will improve. In a neo-liberal context, market-driven educational reforms emphasize in structural reforms along with performance management techniques (Maguire, 2002), so as to give incentives similar to the world of enterprises but most likely strange and hostile to the symbolic world of teachers. This strategy was very popular in the UK and tried to re-shape and actually introduce a new professionalism for teachers giving emphasis in measurable skills and applied competencies rather than teachers as critical and reflective thinkers (Ball, 1999 as cited in Maguire, 2002).

1.4. *The failed attempt of a teacher evaluation policy in Greece during the years 2010-2014*

The context of this study on teachers' views about evaluation is the Greek government's failed attempt to introduce a teacher evaluation policy in the years 2010-2014, amidst the outbreak of the economic crisis. More specifically, a series of laws were passed introducing a central, top-down teacher evaluation policy. These were communicated by the government as attempting to address the negative evidence about the quality and effectiveness of the educational system (Ministry of Education, 2010). The core of the designed policies is Presidential Decree 152/2013 which includes specific criteria for the evaluation of teachers, such as educational environment, planning and preparation of teaching, teaching and student assessment, administrative duties and professional development. Teachers are rated on a four-point scale on these criteria by school principals and school administrators called "school counselors" (sxolikoi simbouloi) and if judged inadequate they lose the right to rank upgrading. According to another controversial provision (Law 4024/2011), teacher evaluation would lead to promotion to higher ranks, but only as allowed by set percentages per rank. Besides teacher evaluation, provisions were made about the internal evaluation of schools on an annual basis (Law 3848/2010).

These reforms were met with fierce reactions by the educational community and especially by the teachers' unions. Teachers were downright afraid of possible layoffs or salary cuts as a result of the evaluation reforms. Moreover, they criticized the hierarchical and 'manipulative' evaluation system established with the various legislative acts (Stamelos & Bartzakli, 2013; Anastasiou, 2014). It is also argued that the governments' discourse and actions regarding teachers' evaluation have been unclear and ambiguous, thus creating a sense of mistrust, threat and instability to the educational community. Especially for older teachers, the attempted reforms also evoked memories of the "school inspector" (epitheoritis ekpaideusis), a figure who evaluated teachers until 1982 in an autocratic, austere and punitive way (Stamelos, Vassilopoulos, & Bartzakli, 2012). Following vehement reactions by the teachers, the teacher evaluation policy was finally suspended in 2014, subsequent to the national election and change of government.

Thus, the tensions around teacher evaluation policy in Greece can be traced back to a historical background of non-democratic practices, as well as to a gap between government policies stemming from international influences and the educational community's beliefs and interests. Many teachers perceived the educational policies designed in the context of memorandums as part of neo-liberal economic policies and re-structuring, rather than as an

effort of quality improvement. However, it should be noted that based on research findings, Greek teachers have a positive stance towards supportive, formative forms of evaluation that provide feedback and training (Anastasiou, 2014).

1.5. *Teacher resilience as a correlate of teacher evaluation policies*

Teacher resilience is a new and significant area of research and scholarship (Beltman & Manfeld, 2011). In fact a number of European Projects have focused exclusively in this dimension and have produced significant results and new theoretical models (e.g. ENTRÉE model of Teacher Resilience) (Wosnitza et al., 2015). Connecting thus the demands and reforms of the modern educational system (e.g. teacher evaluation) with teacher resilience can be a new area of interest from a clinical point of view as well as in terms of scholarship. The new demands of Teacher Evaluation (TE) reform has the potential to increase teachers' stress and vulnerability thus can significantly compromise their resilience (Matsopoulos, 2017).

1.6. *Rationale and Research Questions of present study*

In this context, the present qualitative study examines whether the last teacher evaluation model, based on internationally set standards, is seen by Greek teachers as promoting their resilience and promote agency and positive emotionality. More specifically, in the present paper we focus on teachers' representations and interpretations of globalization trends found in the educational evaluation reform and under which conditions these could work beneficially for teachers' resilience.

The more general inquiry of the paper is focused on the issue of the aspects of teacher evaluation systems stemming from globalization trends in education may be considered to take into account socio-cultural dynamics and the school community (in the Greek educational context), thus having beneficial effects for teacher resilience.

More specifically one of the main research questions of the present inquiry is the following:

How do Greek school teachers perceive teacher evaluation policies stemming from globalization trends in education and what aspects of these policies do they perceive as promoting their resilience?

Some other targeted research questions are:

1. How do Greek primary school teachers interpret various notions of internationally set standards for teacher evaluation in the era of globalization?
2. Which elements of these internationally set standards for teacher evaluation are seen by teachers as promoting agency, positive emotions, and positive school climate?
3. Which elements of the teacher evaluation Greek law are seen by teachers as causing negative emotions, negative school climate and thus making teacher more vulnerable (less resilient)?
4. To what extent do teachers believe that Greek policy makers considered all the above elements in the attempted reform?
5. Are Greek teachers' views on the attempted reform related to these elements, which are viewed negatively?

2. **Method**

2.1. *Sample*

The overall sample of this study consisted of 28 primary school educators, 13 female and 15 male, from the area of Crete, Greece. The data collected for the present study were embedded in the context of the European project RE.CRI.RE (2015-2018). Four of the participants held administrative positions at the time of the study, or had held such positions in the past.

More specifically, 22 of the educators were tenured and 6 were non-tenured (substitute teachers). With regard to age, seven participants were over 50 years old, six were 20 – 30 years old and 15 were 30 – 50 years old. Concerning seniority and years of experience, 9 participants had work experience of more than 20 years as educators, 11 had work experience of 10 – 20 years and eight had experience of less than 10 years.

Participants who served or had served in administrative positions included the regional-level administrator for primary education, the former regional-level administrator (now working as a school teacher), a local-level administrator and a school counselor for primary education. These individuals were all qualified primary school educators and had previous work experience as school teachers; for this reason, the administrator sub-sample was merged with the school teacher sample for this analysis.

2.2. *Data collection*

Data were collected in 2016-2017 by all members of the research team through three focus groups with school teachers and 12 semi-structured interviews with school teachers and administrators. Each focus group included five or six participants.

The researchers developed guides for the focus groups and interviews. Participants were asked about their experiences and views of the Greek school system today, issues of resilience, the economic crisis, quality in primary education, and the teacher evaluation policy implemented in the years 2010-2014 (motives, content, and implications of the policy, reactions, and proposals). Participants who held administrative positions were also asked about the policy making aspect of the teacher evaluation policy and about their own participation in the implementation of the policy.

All interviews and focus groups were tape-recorded following written consent by the participants. At the end of the interviews/focus groups, participants completed a form with their demographic data. Interviews and focus groups were transcribed by members of the research team and analyzed with the assistance of Atlas.ti (v. 7) software.

2.3. *Data analysis procedures*

Data analysis was based on the principles of thematic analysis (Willig, 2013; Joffe, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006), with the aim of identifying and analyzing patterns of meaning, or thematic categories, within the data.

A coding scheme was developed stemming from both inductive and deductive coding procedures. An initial set of codes was developed grounded in the interviews and focus groups data, while also taking into account theoretical notions of teacher evaluation (TE) and resilience. In order to increase reliability and refine the coding scheme, part of the data (two

interview texts) was coded independently by two members of the research team and changes were made accordingly. The whole dataset was then coded anew. These codes were then organized into higher-order thematic categories based on conceptual grounds, research questions and literature on global trends for teacher evaluation.

A further aim was to explore relations among these thematic categories, as well as relations of the thematic categories with concepts of teacher resilience; this was achieved through examining co-occurrences of codes among thematic categories in Atlas.ti software[1].

3. Results

Six higher-order thematic categories were identified, corresponding to participants' interpretations of global evaluation policies notions. These categories included the codes most frequently mentioned by the participants; some codes were also included which, though appearing less frequently, were considered to be a relevant and important part of the category. Each thematic category is presented in a separate section detailing its content and frequencies, along with characteristic quotes. Thematic categories are presented in descending order of frequency. For each category, a 'super-code' was developed in Atlas.ti and co-occurrences of these super-codes with resilience notions and attitudes were examined. Frequencies of the co-occurrences are also mentioned for each category. For reasons of brevity, only co-occurrences with frequency > 5 are presented. In the final section of the results, relations among categories, attitudes and notions of resilience are presented in a network chart.

3.1. *Thematic categories about teacher evaluation in the era of globalization*

3.1.1. *Teacher performance and professional development: improvement and effectiveness*

Overall, codes included in this thematic category were mentioned in 146 text quotes. This category was the most widely discussed by participants and focuses predominantly on the teachers' wish for more in-service training as a resource ensuring the improvement of their teaching practice (see Table 1 for detailed content of category). Most participants emphatically argued that TE should be linked to in-service training:

'Evaluation could help us refine our everyday teaching practice, it could help us become better teachers; because there are teachers who may have been in service for 40 years, and they may retire just as they started off, without refining or correcting their practice or moving forward' (teacher, female, focus group 2).

As regards the links between this thematic category and notions of teacher resilience, as seen by the category's co-occurrences (right section of Table 1), it is apparent that respondents view this notion of TE as enhancing professional development in a largely positive light. Codes of this category were mostly related by participants with factors considered as promoting their resilience and positive emotions. For example, a view of TE as linked with professional development is connected to notions of peer support, provision of

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[1] In Atlas.ti, co-occurrence of two codes means that the two codes are applied to text quotes that enclose each other, or overlap each other, or that the two codes are applied to the same text quote (Friese, 2013).

feedback for teachers' practice and development of a collective mentality among colleagues. 'The Greek teacher should realize […] the benefits of working collectively, of working together as a school unit, instead of being isolated in his/her own role' (teacher, male, interview 3). As mentioned in the introduction, these can be considered to be resilience-enhancing factors as they promote coping, agency and sense of support among teachers.

To a lesser extent, on the other hand, teacher performance and professional development as linked with TE is also seen as potentially compromising teachers' resilience, as witnessed by some expressions of negative emotions and lack of trust. This is probably due, however, to a more generalized lack of trust towards educational policies and lack of in-service training, rather than to a lack of trust towards the notion of teacher performance per se.

3.1.2. *Cost rationalizing and spending cuts*

Codes included in this thematic category were mentioned in 123 text quotes. This category, also widely discussed by the participants, focuses on the economic aspect of educational policies and mostly views TE as a means of reducing educational costs and staff (see Table 2). This is attributed to pressures of EU institutions towards the Greek government and is viewed by teachers as a punitive practice.

'But if, once again this year, we [educational administrators] announce that there will be no staff appointments, …[ ] that there will be staff cuts, school mergers because there is lack of staff, school closures, or more students per classroom, and on top of all that we will introduce this [TE] too, what do you think would happen? Just guess the teachers' attitude...' (administrator, male, interview 1).

Thus, it could be argued that this notion of spending cuts is one of the main reasons why Greek teachers opposed the TE policy of 2010-2014 so vehemently. It could also be argued that such a link between TE and layoffs or salary cuts negatively impacts teachers' resilience, as it induces feelings of anxiety, insecurity and mistrust towards the government. It should also be noted that this punitive aspect of TE in view of austerity measures is considered to be a factor reducing quality in education. Thus, the notion of TE as a means of cost rationalizing is seen in purely negative terms by the participants.

3.1.3. *Meritocracy and teacher excellence*

This thematic category, involving 100 text quotes, focuses on issues of teacher merit and professional adequacy. This is considered to be one of the most controversial and debatable notions of TE in the global era, as it includes both an element of excellence/meritocracy and a punitive element for those considered to be professionally inadequate. The consequences of TE for inadequate teachers was an issue especially debated in the focus groups: 'Why should some tenured teachers, like myself, rest assured and always be secure in our job until retirement? Why shouldn't we have the best teachers instead?' (teacher, male, focus group 3). 'On the one hand, TE should be established, but if, say, I'm a teacher with 25 or 30 years of service… I may not be able to cope psychologically or physically. But still, I need to make a living' (teacher, female, focus group 1).

Table 1. Teacher performance and professional development: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
TE as teacher improvement	70	Positive attitude	104
TE linked with in-service training	39	TE as quality improvement factor	52
In-service training as resource for teachers	33	Resilience enhancing factor	26
TE as enhancing productivity	15	Positive emotions/trust	17
Efficiency and meeting of goals as resource for teachers	12	Negative emotions/lack of trust	17
		Collective mentality and peer support as resources for teachers	15
		Reflection/feedback as resource for teachers	13
		TE is necessary	11
		Negative attitude	10
		Lack of in-service training	9
		School self-evaluation	9
		Inadequacy of some teachers	8
		TE as teacher supervision	7

Note. For codes co-occurring with category, n represents number of co-occurrences. Co-occurrences may refer to anyone of the codes included in the category (ibid for Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

Table 2. Cost rationalizing and spending cuts: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
Layoffs as motive for TE	77	Negative attitude	35
Salary cuts as motive for TE	38	TE as punishment of teachers	28
Salary stagnancy as consequence of TE	22	Lack of trust	28
School mergers as motive for TE	5	Fear/anxiety	23
		EU/Troika pressures for TE	12
		Layoffs of inadequate teachers through TE	11
		Quality reduction factor	12
		Crisis: economic dimensions	9

Table 3. Meritocracy and teacher excellence: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
Some are teachers are 'settled'/lack motive	31	Positive attitude/trust	38
Inadequacy of some teachers	28	Negative attitude/lack of trust	18
Layoffs of inadequate teachers through TE	21	Layoffs of inadequate teachers through TE	14
TE as ensuring justice	14	Fear/anxiety	12
Transfer of inadequate teachers through TE	9	Quality reduction factor	12
Salary progression through TE/positive incentive	7	TE as teacher improvement	7
Selection of excellent teachers for tenure through TE	4	TE as teacher supervision	7
		Crisis: economic dimensions	6
		EU/Troika pressures for TE	6

It comes as no surprise, then, that this notion of TE is viewed with ambivalence by participants. As seen by code co-occurrences within this thematic category (right section of Table 3), meritocracy and excellence is considered to be both necessary and fear-inducing, in the sense that it is linked to prospective layoffs and austerity measures.

3.1.4. *Teacher accountability*

This thematic category involved 70 text quotes. An important notion of global trends in educational policies, teacher accountability is also viewed by teachers with ambivalence. On the one hand, many participants mentioned that teachers have always been accountable to other members of the educational community, and this is viewed as both appropriate and as a potential source of conflict, e.g. with parents. On the other hand, the notion of accountability is associated by teachers with evaluation as a source of supervision and control over teachers, which also raises ambivalent views and feelings among them. 'Our job is about children, so when you're responsible for, say, 20 children, and no one knows what goes on in the classroom, that's not acceptable' (teacher, female, focus group 3). 'I mean, you've got 15 families with their expectations; so that's already a way of supervising your job' (teacher, female, interview 2).

Overall, as seen by co-occurrences of this thematic category (see Table 4), the notion of accountability is viewed by teachers as both promoting and compromising their resilience. It should also be noted that, though only involving few text quotes, a marked link was drawn by some participants between the notion of accountability and the 'school inspector' regime, which has been historically dreaded by Greek teachers.

Table 4. Teacher accountability: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
TE as teacher supervision	40	Positive attitude	27
Accountability of teachers to parents/school principal/pupils	33	Negative attitude/lack of trust	17
		Fear/anxiety	8
		TE is necessary	6
		Inadequacy of some teachers	6
		'School inspector' regime	6

3.1.5. *Measurable educational outcomes*

This thematic category was discussed in 61 text quotes. The issue of quantitative vs. qualitative nature of TE was debated in the focus groups, with some participants arguing for the need to have measurable outcomes as a criterion of a teachers' performance and some participants arguing against this practice, on the grounds that teacher performance depends on many external factors and cannot be measured. 'You can't just have the kids pass a test and then judge the teacher's adequacy based on that; because the kid may have been distracted, or there are many other factors' (teacher, female, focus group 3). 'Let's say I set some goals, e.g. for the kids to learn how to jump shoot. And then, in June, I'll see that 23 out of 25 pupils can do that; that's a way for me to evaluate my job' (teacher, male, focus group 3).

This aspect of measuring quality in education was also questioned by some participants as part of a more general critique towards governmental policies that prioritize rote learning and

are based on outdated curricula and textbooks. In this sense, the measurement of teachers' performance through educational outcomes may raise feelings of insecurity and mistrust.

Table 5. Measurable educational outcomes: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
Quantitative nature of TE	27	Negative attitude	20
Educational outcomes as a criterion for TE	19	Positive attitude	20
Standardized testing/rote learning as priority of governmental educational policy	10	Quality reduction factor	15
		Inappropriate curricula/textbooks	6

3.1.6. *Implementation of international evaluation models*

This thematic category, involving 45 quotes, addresses the top-down implementation of international educational policies in the Greek national context. Many participants felt that TE policies designed in 2010-2014 were implemented by the government in an superficial manner and under pressure by international institutions. Moreover, some participants felt that TE policies were designed by technocrats having little knowledge of the realities of the classroom. This top-down design of policies is seen by participants as imitating international models without taking into account teachers' needs, and is thus seen in negative terms. 'And when other, European models, are discussed, teachers will tell you just that; Yes, but in Europe, German or English teachers have a better pay, they are secure both financially and institutionally' (administrator, male, interview 2).

Table 6. Implementation of international evaluation models: codes included and codes co-occurring

Codes included in thematic category		Codes co-occurring with thematic category	
Code	*n*	Code	*N*
EU/Troika pressures for TE	32	Negative attitude/lack of trust	20
TE as imitation of international models	8	Layoffs as motive for TE	10
TE policy designed by technocrats	5	Crisis: economic dimensions	9
		Quality reduction factor	6

3.2. *Relations among thematic categories and teachers' attitudes, feelings and their aforementioned resilience*

Figure 1 summarizes co-occurrences of codes among the thematic categories presented above and teachers' attitudes, feelings and beliefs about their resilience. As seen in the Figure, the six notions of TE in the era of globalization are interpreted by the participants as being interlinked in many ways. It is important to mention that although notions such as improvement of teacher performance, meritocracy, accountability and measurable educational outcomes are viewed in positive terms at least by some participants, the two notions that directly refer to international institutions and models are viewed overall in negative terms. This is due to participants' lack of trust towards top-down governmental policies in times of economic crisis and austerity.

The second point that may be raised with regard to relations among TE concepts and teacher resilience is the ambivalence shown by participants towards the consequences of

professional inadequacy. Although accountability and supervision are seen by many participants in positive terms, potential consequences of a negative evaluation raise feelings of fear, anxiety and insecurity. This should also be considered in conjunction with participants' mistrust against governmental policies.

4.   **Discussion**

The basic findings of the present qualitative study have revealed six thematic categories as they relate to teacher evaluation, teacher perceptions about it and related issues. These six thematic categories were: a. Teacher performance and professional development: Improvement and effectiveness, b. Cost rationalizing and spending cuts, c. Measurable educational outcomes, d. Implementation of international evaluation models, e. Teacher accountability, f. Meritocracy and teacher excellence.

These findings suggest that overall the Greek teachers perceive the teacher evaluation reforms with a positive mindset if they are to improve their skills and promote their growth through professional development, which leads to increased quality of education. The teachers reported that an evaluation model that helps them improve and become better educators will only bring positive emotions and promote professional development which is important for them. These findings are in line with the findings of international research, which confirm that evaluation as an ongoing process of improvement supports positive school climate and cooperation. This positive climate enhances, in turn, quality of teaching and learning (OECD, 2014; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015). If however, teacher evaluation is to lead to cuts and job losses Greek teachers were very suspicious about it and thus this explains the resistance to implementation of the Greek evaluation law. Also, Greek teachers reported ambivalent emotions as expressed in the thematic categories meritocracy/excellence, teacher accountability and measuring educational outcomes. The Greek teachers reported negative views and emotions regarding the international system of teacher evaluation and how these models can be applied in Greek educational context.

It is obvious nevertheless just by looking at all Tables (1, 2, 3, 4, 6) that the teachers raise a significant issue of trust and they articulate mixed emotions about their evaluation. They have basically said that they cannot trust the government with this significant reform, because they are not sure of the true incentive (and motivation) of the government since they know that the driving force behind this law is Troika and its agenda for the country. Also, teachers have a reason to be skeptical since lots of them (the more experienced) have direct previous experience of older haphazard attempts of the government to improve education, which did not have solid planning, implementation and thus positive final outcomes. This ambivalence is a source of insecurity for the teachers, increases their vulnerability and compromises their resilience in the long run. Therefore, it is important for policy makers to keep these findings in mind when designing policies to be implemented to teachers within this context.
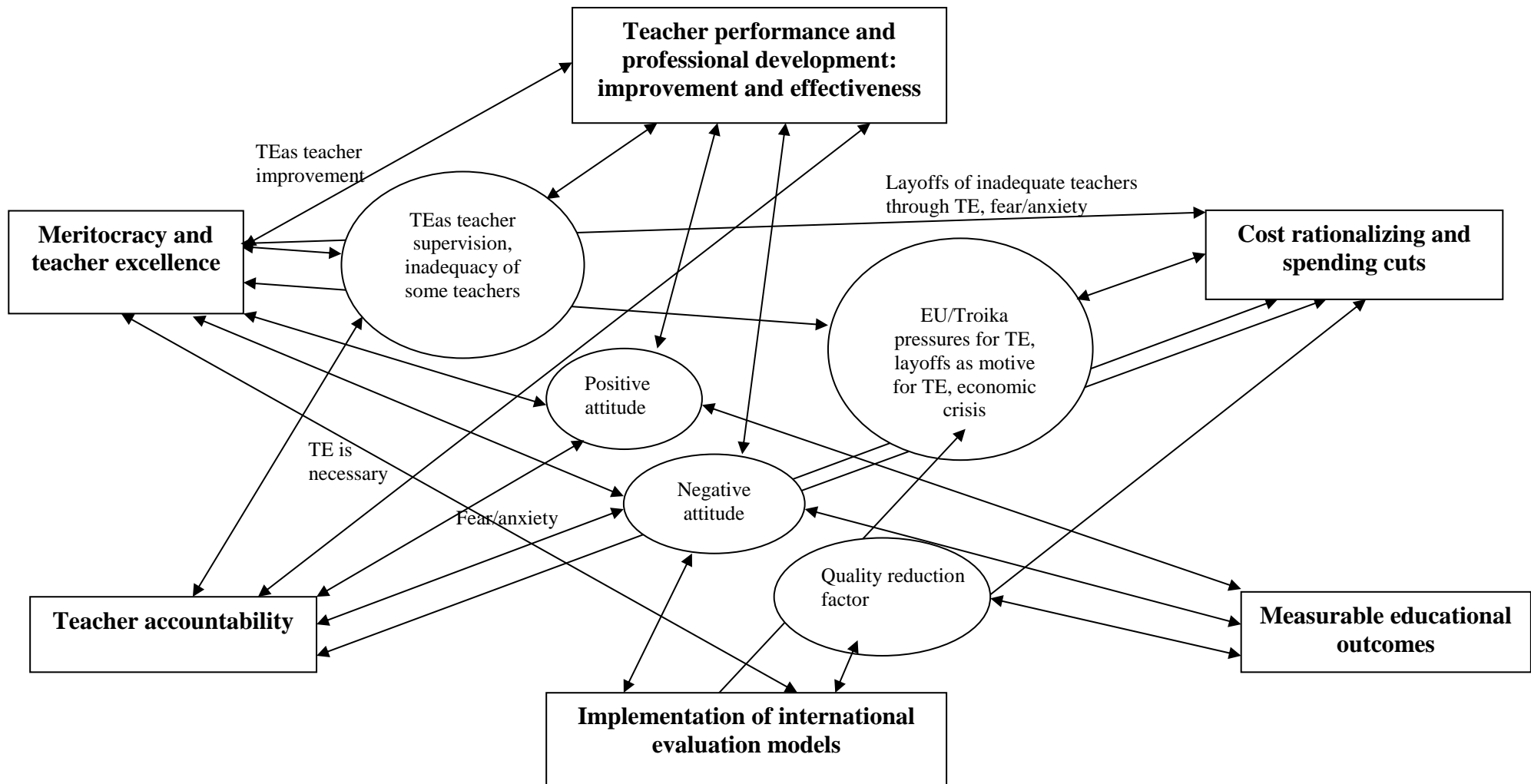
Figure 1. Relations among notions of global trends in teacher evaluation, as interpreted by a sample of Greek primary school teachers (texts N = 15).

Note. Rectangles represent the six thematic categories/notions and all other captions represent codes co-occurring among those categories. Common codes that co-occur with two thematic categories are presented next to arrows linking those categories; codes co-occurring with more than two thematic categories are presented in circles.

The present study has shown that there is a common ground (expressed in the six broad thematic categories) between the discourse of the Greek teachers expressed in their representations and interpretations of the evaluation law and some basic internationally set standards that characterize major trends in teacher evaluation systems worldwide in the context of globalization. The notions of accountability, meritocracy, excellence, evaluation and quality, are not objectively and diachronically constructed or universally defined, despite being presented as natural or value neutral (Maguire, 2002). These arguments have found support in our present study.

Our Greek data (which are a part of a larger European project entitled RE.CRI.RE Horizon 2020 project (2015)) supports that the ambivalence of the teachers is due to lack of trust in the State/Government and often their negative emotions are further a point of contention about global education models and directives to be implemented in countries such as Greece with a idiosyncratic mentality (due to history, civilization and culture) and how all these issues are infused in the educational process and are connected with accountability and quality assurance.

On the condition that policy makers and the state seek to forge consensus on educational reforms, it is imperative that the legitimate concerns and representations of the school community be heard and incorporated in the evaluation system.

Also, the government has to define explicitly and eloquently the aims, the reasoning, the impact and the ethics of the evaluation system. The existence of a vague and unstructured context increases the feeling of distrust and negative emotionality in the school community. Also, it fosters a chaotic system of negative representations or mis-interpretations and by all means undermines teachers' resilience.

This negative and vague situation where unstable systems of meanings and identification seems to be prevalent explains the ambivalent stance of many teachers who interpret the unclear position of the state as a hidden agenda. This environment by no means can build a community of trust, a culture of collaboration and real consensus or strengthen teachers' resilience through evaluation.

The findings of the present qualitative study can provide useful interpretative material explaining teacher's emotions and overall resistance to the Greek evaluation law in two levels. First, at the level of negative emotionality that the law generated and second at the level of implementation and the process of implementation (top down without taking into consideration teachers' "voices") which have compromised the smooth implementation of the law.

Connecting the above findings with the ENTRÉE model of teacher resilience, which takes a systemic point of view emphasizing macro, meso and micro systems of teachers' lives, it is evident that the educational system needs to be aware and actively promote not only children's resilience (Matsopoulos, 2017) but also individual teachers capacities (e.g. emotional, motivational, professional and social) and also behavior dispositions (strategies and beliefs) and at the same time promote contextual support (not confusion), so the teachers can cope more effectively with stressors and challenges in the process of implementation of new reforms in education (Matsopoulos, Nastasi, Fragkiadaki, & Koutsopina, 2017; Wosnitza et al., 2015). This did not happen evidently in the Greek case, as it is obvious that the policy makers did not take into consideration the need to build individual teacher capacities (which promote resilience and reduce vulnerability) and did not provide any contextual support for the school reform to become smoother. In fact, the top-down approach along with the significant amount of mistrust towards the government, policy makers and their agenda, has increased the teachers' stress (and thus vulnerability) and significantly reduced their resilience, at the same time increasing their resistance to new (and future) reforms in

education such as teacher evaluation. Finally, the importance of school climate (or the Classroom Psychosocial Climate CPSC) is an important variable to be considered since is directly connected with teaching quality, well-being of teachers and clear positive psychosocial outcomes for students (e.g. achievement, self-efficacy, motivation, cognitive engagement) as supported by international and recent Greek empirical studies (Charalambus & Kokkinos, 2015).

The present study has some limitations, such as the relatively small sample of teachers whose "voices" were recorded either in interviews or focus groups to secure generalization to the whole teacher population. Also we need to keep in mind that this sample may not be representative since it was a volunteer sample and thus self-selected.

In conclusion, we fully adopt (and the same we suggest the same to policy makers) - among other things- at a national and international level the argument of Nobel prize-winner Amartya Sen who has said that helping to shape the decisions that affect your own life and other peoples' is fundamental to human well-being (2001). This argument is further supported by Connell (2009), a significant Australian educational researcher, when she states that "a lively occupational culture will support teacher's voices in educational policy making" (p. 226).

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