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Resistance to Educational Changes from the Perspective of Higher Education Stakeholders in Azerbaijan

Pasipriešinimas švietimo pokyčiams Azerbaidžano aukštojo mokslo suinteresuotųjų šalių perspektyvoje

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Pasipriešinimas švietimo pokyčiams Azerbaidžano aukštojo mokslo suinteresuotųjų šalių perspektyvoje

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Santrauka

Šiame tyrime siekiama atskleisti Azerbaidžano aukštojo mokslo suinteresuotųjų šalių požiūrį į pasipriešinimą švietimo pokyčiams ir išsiaiškinti galimus tokio pasipriešinimo padarinius studijų procesams. Remiantis tyrimo rezultatais yra siūlomi būdai, kaip palengvinti Azerbaidžano aukštojo mokslo reformų vykdytojų ir įgyvendintojų pasipriešinimą įvairiems pokyčiams. Tuo tikslu iš Azerbaidžano buvo apklausti 12 informantų (4 aukštųjų mokyklų dėstytojai, 4 aukštųjų mokyklų vadovai, 4 aukštųjų mokyklų studentai) iš 4 skirtingų valstybinių ir privačių universitetų, o surinktiems duomenims analizuoti buvo panaudota kokybinė turinio analizė. Šis tyrimas padėjo atskleisti pagrindinius aukštojo mokslo dėstytojų pasipriešinimo pokyčiams veiksnius, baimes ir argumentus, kurie neigiamai veikia aukštojo mokslo sistemos tobulinimą.

Tyrimas atskleidė, kad Azerbaidžano aukštųjų mokyklų dėstytojai pasipriešinimas pokyčiams, priklauso nuo dėstytojų asmenybės ir aplinkos, kurioje jie dirba. Dažniausiai senosios kartos dėstytojai priešinasi pokyčiams dėl sovietinio stiliaus mąstymo. Be to, darbo sąlygų trūkumai valstybiniuose universitetuose neleidžia dėstytojams būti atviriems pokyčiams įgyvendinant reformų iškeltus uždavinius. Kitas svarbus priešinimosi pokyčęiams veiksnys yra nepakankamas Azerbaidžano universitetų dėstytojų motyvavimas, kuris yra glaudžiai susijęs su jų atlyginimais. Dėstytojų įtraukimas į pokyčių planacvimo ir įgyvendinimo procesą taip pat yra labai ribotas, trūksta mokymų dėstytojams, kad jie galėtų suprasti pokyčius ir jų svarbą. Siekiant sumažinti pasipriešinimą ir sėkmingai vadovauti pokyčių procesui, reformuotojai turėtų atkreipti dėmesį ir išspręsti visas minėtas problemas. Atlikti tyrimai gali būti laikomi naujais moksliniais duomenimis, atskleidžiančiais realią aukštųjų mokyklų dėstytojų priešinimosi kaitai situaciją šalyje.

Raktiniai žodžiai: universiteto dėstytojų pasipriešinimas švietimo pokyčiams, aukštštųjų mokyklų dalininkų strategijos švietimo pokyčių valdymo srityje, švietimo kaitos valdymo aukštšosiose mokyklose būdai.

Resistance to Educational Changes from the Perspective of Higher Education Stakeholders in Azerbaijan

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Abstract

This research explores the level of resistance to educational changes from the perspective of higher education stakeholders and find out possible implications of it to the educational process and suggest ways to facilitate changes for education reformers in Azerbaijan. For this purpose 12 informants (4 higher education teachers, 4 higher education managers, 4 higher education students) from Azerbaijan were interviewed from 4 different public and private universities and quantitative research and content analyzes were used to analyze the collected data. This research has contributed to reveal the underlying factors, fears and arguments of higher education teachers towards change which impact the improvement of whole education system negatively.

The study disclosed that there is resistance towards change by higher education teachers in Azerbaijan generally depending on the personality of teachers and the environment they are working in. Mostly, teachers who belong to old generation resist to change because of their Soviet style thinking. Moreover, the lack of conditions in public universities prevent teachers to be open to changes and accomplish tasks. Another important point was about low motivation of Azerbaijan university teachers which is strongly related with their salaries. The involvement of teachers to the change process is also very low and there are not enough trainings for teachers to understand a change and its importance. In order to reduce resistance and successfully lead change process, reformers should pay attention and solve all mentioned problems. The conducted research can be regarded as the new research-based data that revealed the available situation in the country.

Keywords: resistance to educational changes by university teachers, approaches of higher education stakeholders to educational change, ways to facilitate educational change in higher education

Contents

Introduction

Relevance of the topic. During the recent decades, there were significant changes in the field of education under the effect of several issues, such as globalization, improvement of communication and information technologies, working in international educational organizations, European integration processes, and many others. One of the primary purposes of education is to make students ready for a global future which is unpredictable (McMahon, 2011, p. xv). As recent world events underlined, it is required nowadays young people to be global citizens, responsible, and contributing to their communities, which brought to the centre the importance of international education. Educational organizations also change during a time because of the environment which changes frequently as a result of pressures by outside. Thus, nowadays educational change is one of the necessary and essential focus areas.

As one of the post-socialist countries, Azerbaijan education system is overwhelmed with the avalanche of changes for improving the education in the country. Educational reform in higher education system of Azerbaijan started after its joining to the Bologna Process which happened in 2005 and followed by the acceptance of the new Law on Education in 2009 which officially acquainted the country with the European Credit Transfer System, alongside with three-cycle system of study and diploma supplement.

Higher education in Azerbaijan is regulated by the two different laws which are the Law on Education and Law on Amendments to the Educational Law (Ministry of Education, 2018).Moreover, the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic accepted the Development Concept in 2012 which is named as "Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the Future" and one year later in 2013 the Strategy for Development of Education in Azerbaijan by 2025, which decides the aim, objectives, directions, instruments components for the advancement of instruction framework in the Republic of Azerbaijan by 2025. The main purpose of the Strategy is to achieve the following goals: (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2017)

- "Creating content for competency-based personality-oriented education.
- Develop highly influential educators to ensure the effective acquisition of the educational content through innovative learning methods and technologies that take into account the individual characteristics of learners.
- Formation of the public policy administration system with responsible, transparent and effective regulation mechanisms, based on state-business partnership.
- Creation of modern education infrastructure that ensures lifelong learning.
- Create a new mechanism for sustainable and multi-sources funding of education".

For achieving the mentioned goals Action Plan was created in 2015, and many activities regarding the Action Plan was realized in 2015 and continuing till now. Of course, it is impossible to achieve mentioned goals without cooperating with teachers and their active involvement in the process.

The reactions to the changes differ from each other widely in the society and also between the different subject groups of education, such as teachers, students, managers, parents etc. While some changes are accepted quickly or just only get disapproval of separate subjects, the others are met with stronger resistance and the implementation process gets longer, and still, others are facing with much more strong resistance and rejected, so cannot reach the goals. Resistance to changes can show up in lots of several ways, beginning with the verbal grumblings to composed activities by beset gatherings, for example, work strikes. (Coch and French, 1948, De Meuse and McDaris, 1994).

Resistance to educational change is one of the globally recognized and essential problems which is also observed among higher education teachers. In the content of Azerbaijan, it is more relevant and essential because it has not been searched before and there is no any research in this area. Although changes are a lot in HE system of Azerbaijan for improving the education system in Azerbaijan as it was mentioned before, however resistance of teachers to these changes have not been analyzed and totally ignored which definitely put the success of the change under the risk.

Analyzing the current situation Kamran Asadov - education expert mentioned in his speech: "It is a pity that most of the teachers are resisting to innovations and think that these innovations will have no effect" (A. Rahimova, 2017). He added that even though most of the teachers participate in training, they still cannot understand and apply it. Because new style of teaching requires teachers to work a lot and they have very low motivation for that, especially considering their low salary.

The creation and application of the innovation is characterized by the system of complex relationships with this innovation. According to statistical data, during the formation of new ideas, the members of the staff of the educational institution are subdivided into these groups depending on the motivation level (I. Ahmadov, 2014):

1. Leaders group
2. Positive group
3. Neutral group
4. Negative group

He also added that people who are negatively motivated to the adaptation and application of innovation resist this innovation in different ways. Experience shows that positive results change people's attitude toward innovation. The "focusing" on innovation depends on the personality

features of the individuals - the type of nervous system, the degree of reflection, the level of excitement, the creativity, the competence, the self-assessment and other factors.

The principal task of the people who are managing the innovation process is to move people from Groups 3 and 4 into a highly motivated area. For this reason, information and instruction is an important step in the application of innovation. Meantime, each participant correctly understands his duty and mission. If a person properly understands his mission, his self-esteem, self-realization, self-expression processes start, his stereotype changes, self-improvement occurs (I. Ahmadov, 2014).

By showing resistance to educational changes the higher education teachers creates a significant problem which prevents implementation of the change successfully. Investigation of the underlying factors which stimulate the resistance in Azerbaijan will create the main part of knowledge related to the reasons of resistance to educational changes in terms of higher education.

Azerbaijan is among the developing countries which wants to raise the country and education is one of the most important areas for it, but teachers generally are not keen on to change and spend their time to learn new things, especially when they know it will not add any advantage to them. So from this side, the conducted study could be of great tool for teachers in need. In case the psychological and personal resisting factors are distinguished, educators may build up a feeling of self-awareness. As a result, it might help them to change their perception of change and make them increasingly responsive to change which depends on worldwide patterns. Moreover, the research may provide policymakers, change agents, reformers with the proof about resistance factors that can be encounter during change process. It will help them for developing the best ways to accept and deal with resistance in a way which moves change forward.

Research problem. One of the very essential problems during the change process is teachers' resistance. Generally, many teachers are excluded from the decision making regarding the change and they view their function insignificant, inactive and inferior. Several teachers think that they do not have any input to educational changes because of the centralized and dominating education system in Azerbaijan.

The primary problem being addressed in the study is that not all teachers accept educational changes without any problem. Some of them resist to these changes and these changes vary among teachers according to their resistance towards different areas of change. As an example, not all teachers welcome and accept immediately new interactive teaching methodologies which promote innovation and creativity during the teaching process. Some teaching resists to the change by supporting traditional methods and teaching styles, especially teachers who had witnessed Soviet education system in Azerbaijan support traditional ways of teaching. So the problem is not related

to the change, however with the parameters that influence teachers' resistance to changes and these factors will also be investigated in this study.

The problem of the resistance to educational changes from the perspective of HE teachers in the contemporary rapidly changing world is a very important problem and needs ways of solution urgently for getting expected results from the changes. That is why it always attracts attention both from the side of the Western specialists-scientists of management (Drucker, 1993; 2000; Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly, 1994; Boddy, Paton, 1998; Conner, 1993, etc.) and educational management (Ewerard, Morris 1997; Fullan, 1998; Hargreaves, 1999; Hopkins; Ainscow; West, 1998, etc.).

Research object. The resistance of higher education teachers to educational changes in Azerbaijan.

Research aim. The main goal of the study is to identify and describe underlying factors for teacher resistance to educational changes in Azerbaijan higher education institutions.

Research objectives:

1) Define the main types of reaction of higher education teachers towards changes in education.

2) Identify arguments that higher education teachers put forward while resisting changes.

3) Determine the influence of resistance to changes to the whole education system.

4) Identify the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist changes.

5) Suggest ways for imitators of changes for reducing the level of resistance.

Research questions:

1) Which factors (psychological, personal, school-culture and organizational) affect to university teachers' resistance to educational changes that happens in Azerbaijan nowadays?

2) What are the arguments that teachers put forward in order to protect themselves from the changes?

3) What are the implications of resistance to educational changes from the perspectives of higher education stakeholders?

4) What should reformers do to facilitate changes in higher education and successfully lead it?

Glossary

HE - Higher Education

HEIs - Higher Education Institutions

ICT - Information and Communication Technology

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

MoE - Ministry of Education

OUP - Oxford University Press

CUP - Cambridge University Press

Change - unsure stability between stimulation and constancy, creation of something in different ways which is unusual (Hammonds, 2002; Flamholtz & Randle 2008).

Educational Change - the process of knowledge development of all student, teachers and administrators and dispositions which completely differs from the previous case for keeping competitive and functioning in an advanced society (Motlotle, 2000).

Resistance to Change - low amount of interest and cooperation for change implementation; preference of keeping the existing status (Alvin Zander, 1950).

Blind Resistance - type of resistance when people resist to changes automatically without thinking about the change (Hambrick & Cannella, 1989).

Political Resistance - type of resistance when people think that they will lose something important to them in case a change is accepted (Hambrick & Cannella, 1989).

Ideological Resistance - type of resistance when people disagree with the change by showing logical reasons of their resist (Hambrick & Cannella, 1989).

Psychological Factors - factors associated with teachers' stress, discomfort, worries, fear and insecurity (Flamholtz & Randle, 2008).

Personal Factors - factors associated with relations, tust, adaptability and faith of teachers (Van Veen & Sleegers, 2006).

University Cultural Factors - factors that associated with the behaviours of principals which come from moral values such as sharing, communication, collaboration, problem solving, support, continuous learning and openness to change (Per, 2004).

Organizational Factors - factors that associated with the principals' and change agents' work in dealing with change which includes the followings: setting the main goal, planning the steps, developing staff by several trainings, practising, implementing the change and motivating staff towards change (Fullan & Bathew, 2004).

1.0 THEORETICAL RESEARCH OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Need for change

Change is among the most famous and frequently used terms of the 21st century. Hammonds (2002) defined change as unsure stability between stimulation and constancy and success of change depends on coping with divergence, changeability, and variability. Moreover, Flamholtz & Randle (2008) added that it is the creation of something in different ways which is unusual.

Many organizations are forced to change because of the complexity of events and rapid growth of technologies. Ragsdell (2000) argued that the main factors that dramatically force human beings to change are globalization, economic crisis, developments in ICT and changes in the demographic situation of the country. Whelan-Berry & Gordon (2000) explained that this kind of change is the result of major environmental shifts in order to increase profitability, effectiveness, and quality.

Education is considered the main first point of all other changes and it allows the people of the country to send the main characteristics to the next generation and by this way keeps society alive. Motlotle (2000) stated that because of education each generation is different from each other as it helps us to change all the gained knowledge and abilities of people according to the things happen in the society. In educational organizations, several factors pressures on organizations to change which are government intervention, values of society, improvement, and changes in technology, administrative processes, and fulfilment of needs of educational organization's members. Most of the researchers described the general and main aim of change in all types of organizations as an adaptation process to the new environment (Smith and Child, 1987; Stimpert, Huff and Barr, 1992; Barry and Leana, 2000) or as performance improvement (Keck and Tushman, 1993; Boeker, 1997).

1.2 Change and other related concepts

In order understanding the way change can lead to resistance, person should know the change-related concepts, mainly nature, reason categories, types, and forces of change:

Nature of Change

According to the studies in the literature, there are five various point of views, which are survival, behaviour, process, structure, and system:

Survival - Darwin (1876) was the first one who described change as survival as it is one of the main adjoinings in natural sciences. He linked the idea of survival with the capability to respond environmental changes successfully. In this case, generally, organizations can be approached as the

types in nature and Beer & Nohria (2002) argued that in business world surviving understood as the need of adoptation or to die. If organizations want to enhance the chance of surviving they should adapt themselves to the business environment easily or they will disappear. Workers who generally do not resist and mostly open to changes have more chance to survive in the organization they are working at.

Behaviour - The behaviour approach mainly focuses on individual attitudes and according to it, the change depends on organization's members and their behaviours. Cameron & Green (2004) mentioned that the success or failure of any change should be analyzed in the behaviours and the conditions of each person. Christensen, Marx & Stevenson (2006) stated that during the change implementation process people's behaviours should be the main focus area and more attention should be given areas that affect behaviours, such as improving communication, organizational culture, group behaviours, motivation and organizational learning for achieving intended results.

Process - Change as a continuous procedure is making various tasks which are utilized to yields and results for associations. According to Newstrom & Davis (1977) change process has the following main parts:

- "Diagnosis of change drivers
- Strategy building and implementation
- Evaluation
- Institutionalize change".

Structure - Nature of change as structure centres around updating and rebuilding organizations. Seel (2002) stated that the structure is the result of an interaction of people who work together for the common goals. For achieving the change and reducing or removing discomfort from the organization, the structure should be created by consultants or change agents (Hirschhorn & Barnett 1993). The structure can be created by internal and external experts.

System - Final nature of change proposes that with the use of technological systems change can be managed. So change can be viewed as a result of the need for the development in systems inside the organizations.

Reason Categories of Change

There are reasons behind of every change that takes place. According to Flamholtz & Randle (2008) indicated that change occurs because of two reasons which are proactive and reactive reasons. While proactive change happens as a result of evaluation of the future possible environment and organization's condition, reactive change is the reaction to changes that have previously happened than those are expected in the future.

Types of Change

It is also very important to acknowledge the types of change which are evolutionary, spontaneous and planned as described by Motlotle (2000). He described them as following:

Evolutionary change is slow development and passing from one status to another. Spontaneous change happens quickly and it is an unintentional change which usually happens after the unanticipated events. Finally, planned changes are the ones which are directed towards particular goals.

Forces of Change

As for the forces of change, Morlotle (2000) argued that universities, like other organizations, may be forced to change and this force could come from different sources from inside and outside of the educational system. Primary external forces began outside the association can be government laws and guidelines, demographic characteristics, globalization of markets with adoption of several values and standards, technological improvements and social and political pressures as a result of main social and political events (Dawson, 2003; Lunenburg & Ibery 2006, Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Opposite to external forces, the internal forces originate from inside of the organization and it encourages hierarchical change. These forces can be related to several processes, such as communication, decision making, leadership type or may be related to people's problems, such as high turnover and low level of job satisfaction. Leavitt (1964) stated that internal forces are innovation, essential errand, individuals and managerial structures. Kreitner & Kinicki (2010) added that internal forces can emerge out of both HR and administrative choices or behaviour. According to Dawson (2003), both external and internal factors are linked with speeding the direction and outcomes of change in organizations.

1.3 Change and resistance

For better understanding of the idea of resistance to change, it is essential to determine the term resistance. One of the first definitions that were given by Alvin Zander (1950) was that it is "behaviour which is expected to shield a person from the impacts of genuine or envisioned change " (Dent & Goldberg, 1999, p. 34). According to Folger & Skarlicki (1999), resistance is " worker conduct that looks to challenge, upset, or transform winning presumptions, talks, and power relations" (p. 36).

Piderit (2000) mentioned three dimensions. First group researchers see resistance as a behaviour as Zander (1950), Folger and Skarlicki (1999). The second group of researchers relates resistance with emotional factors. Coch and French (1948) argue that the term is liked with the aggression and frustration feelings. Similar to this, Piderit (2000) defined resistance as a response to the mentioned feelings which is the result of the change initiative. Finally, third group researchers associated resistance with the cognition which refers to attitudes and beliefs. Watson (1982) as one of the researchers who belong to this group described resistance as a way of employees' reluctance.

According to Gravenhorst (2003), resisting to educational change is just a natural reaction and he described it as an " practically unavoidable psychological and organizational reaction that appears to apply to any sort of progress, changing from rather unobtrusive upgrades for extensive change and organization change " (p. 3). Each organization has its own culture, and various responses to change. While some accept the change, others may resist at the same time.

De Jager (2001) stated that resistance can be rational and irrational. In rational resistance, there is always reasonable explanations for people's resistance to the proposed changes. Some of the reasonable explanations are resisting because of lack of involvement with the change process or having fear to learn something which is completely new to you and doubting the adaption to the change, being comfortable within the new situation and also that have been proven to be successful. In irrational resistance to change, there is no necessary evidence, persuasion or verification for convincing people to change and they simply are against of change.

Willingness to change or resistance to change also change among staff members. Islam, Ali & Wafi (2010) argued that workers in higher positions were less resistant to change as they by one way or another felt safer inside the company because of the power they had. This is as in their activity was seen as protected after the change occurred. Gravenhorst (2003) claimed that resistance is related to everyone in the organization except to top manager as they are commonly the ones who accompanied a change choice and line managers support them. So employees are only ones who are just recipients of the change and consequently, they resist to be excluded from the change process which has a great effect on the organization and also their work. Because of this reason, teachers are more likely to resist change in comparison to other staff members.

In order to avoid teachers' resistance, White (1990) mentioned that it is very important to consider their perception as their attitudes are important for the reform program. Norman (2010) argued that teachers should get information about reasons of the change and about the exact things need to be changed. Moreover, they should get information about the effects of changes on them, what they should change on their behaviours for managing the change. However, in order to accept change their behaviours, teachers should believe in the importance of change. George & Jones (2001) mentioned that therefore, for effective change several factors should be considered, such as teachers emotions, needs, relationships, wants, and interactions.

1.4 Types of resistance to change in educational organizations

For understanding rationale behind protection from change in educational organizations, Hambrick & Cannella (1989) proposed types of resistance which are necessary to consider. According to them, resistance can be blind, political or ideological.

Blind Resistance:

This is kind of resistance when people resist automatically, even without thinking about the change. Regardless of the change, they are afraid and intolerant to this process. In instructive associations, instructors can likewise respond protectively and oppose to change on account of the way that obscure is discomforting. In this circumstance, there are two helpful reactions which are to persuade individuals and given the time a chance to go without putting any weight on individuals. That is why there is always need for time in order get used to new idea in educational organizations.

Political Resistance:

Employees, especially teachers who have political opposition feel that they will lose something of significant worth in case a change is executed. These sort of loses might be incorporate loss of one's capacity base, position, and job inside association, status, spending size and even personal compensation. In universities, teachers and other members of university feel that new change may prompt loss of their position, power, and job among different individuals. In these cases, change agents become negotiator and the negotiation begins.

Ideological Resistance:

Teachers who have ideological resistance generally are intellectually honest people and they can disagree with the change by showing logical reasons of their resist. The reasons can be offered change is not well planned so most probably it will not work or will result with harms more than progress. Educators may feel that the offered changes in the universities are not right and it can damage their profoundly held qualities. In this instances, it is best to get more data, facts for persuading them once again and solve the problem.

1.5 Factors of educational change

Literature was widely reviewed for discerning different parameters to resist change in order to develop the data collection instrument of this study's data. There are four categories of factors which will be investigated in more details in the next sub-sections.

1.5.1 Psychological factor

It is very important to understand effects of teachers' psychological stability on the successful implementation of change. Therefore, the emotional stability of teachers should be highly considered. Feeling of loss, threat, doubt, worries, and discomfort are examples of psychological factors. Flamholtz & Randle (2008) argued that as a result of change people generally move from known to unknown and unusual, from comfortable to uncomfortable. This situation usually leads people to resist change. They also added that resistance occurs when conflict happens because of the fact which indicates that teachers' background is not considered or when the low amount of time is given to consolidate the change into their reasoning. Fullan & Ballew (2004) found that the "nature of change incorporates dread of misfortune and oldness and feeling of

clumsiness. Individuals frequently express questions about new headings and here and there out and out restriction to them" (p.97). Furthermore, people's reactions to change process are different according to the feeling of insecure, stressed and frightened or feeling the happiness, enthusiasm to go for a risk and to develop the change.

Van Veen & Sleegers (2006) added that "the way in which instructors respond to instructive changes is to a great extent controlled by whether the educators feel their professional identities as being fortified or compromised by reforms" (p. 109). Margolis & Nagal (2006) stated that education managers have the most powerful role in mediating the teacher stress. They are the ones who create environment that either increase or hinder teachers' work. Considering all mentioned factors teachers' psychological equanimity can be achieved which simplify and lead to the implementation of any suggested change successfully.

1.5.2 Personal factor

The personal factors are the ones which are strongly related with the values of instructors, such as their relations, identities, trust, beliefs, and adaptability. Van Veen & Sleegers (2006) asserted that instructors are open to change when this change is according to their qualification and abilities. Gray (2002) added that some personal factors strongly contribute to resistance of teachers which are lack of trust, disagreement for the proposed change, conservatism due to culture or age and different perceptivity of foreign dangers. Norman (2010) described that change cannot happen without focused staff members even the program perfectly planned. That is why for achieving the successful change teachers' opinion and intentional contribution is very important. Education reform make it necessary for teachers to understand their role during the change process.

There are some more personal factors which make teachers to oppose change (Mckenzie & Scheurich, 2008). First one of them is the effects of external factors, such as parents, students' carelessness, culture, second language, and neighbourhood. teachers understand the accountability system restrictive as by this way they are being watched and judged. Next factor is that teachers accept any change suggestion critically because they see leaders as authoritarian and powerful. Finally, when changes make teachers more responsible they resist as they do not want to be in a higher position in comparison to other teachers. To conclude all mentioned things, if changes match with teachers' beliefs and attitudes and does not afraid them, they will be less likely to resist changes.

1.5.3 University-culture Factor

Culture in the university has essential role on the teachers' understanding of the change process. Per (2004) described cultural factors and how they work with educational organization. Cultural factors shape the norms and values, organize the work, create interpersonal relations and

interpret the idea for change in universities and other educational organizations. For effective change, the standards and estimations of progress ought to be in concurrence with the way culture of organization and furthermore its fundamental qualities. Else, it will be opposed by the instructors. Palmer et al (2009) added that with a common vision and right communication strategies change can be facilitated.

University administrators have an essential role in shaping the culture inside the organization. In Higher Education Report (2003) it was mentioned that successful governance though trust between managers and other workers can be possible with the help of culture. Higher Education Report (2003) also pointed out the importance of interaction between effective change strategy and culture. Beckum (2010) & McGregor (2002) added that university administrators should trust teacher during the whole change process for achieving successful implementation. University administrators should share all ideas and information with other stakeholders who are connected with the process of change By this way, they will know about change, will be kept informed, and it will help for reducing the feelings of frustration and anxiety (MacNeill & Cavanagh, 2003). In case of high level of participation, communication and trust are evident in university culture, most of the teachers become open to changes in the organization (Gaylor, 2001).

1.5.4 Organizational factor

The proper evaluation of the organizational culture before adopting any change is very important so more efforts and attention should be given to this process and it should fit more successfully to the organization's culture. During the change process, the organization needs an effective leader for the support of other staff members and who can assist in organizing and planning process or there will be more resistance. Fullan & Bathew (2004) asserted that effective leader in an organization can help staff members to feel comfortable and to believe in that even the most difficult and complicated problems can be dealt with successfully. They pointed out five leader behaviours that strengthen the positive change which says to behave in accordance with "spiritual purpose, getting the idea of change, building connections, making and sharing learning, and making intelligibility" (p. 4). Palmer et al. (2009) mentioned that some teachers' resistance is due to the inappropriateness of the proposed changes to organization's culture or time of the introduction for it might not be suitable. Moreover, some other organizational factors for teachers' resistance are that they have witnessed many changes in a short time interval or previous ones had negative effects on them.

Some essential components of organizational factor are to keep teachers aware of changes and train them on various parts. Involvement to the planning professional development activities is also very important for teachers. Previous literature showed that the lack of effective staff development is another resisting factor. Growther et al. (2002) found that change should create and

sustain a culture which shows commitment to motivational values, initiative, and self-development. This only can be achieved through the organization of professional development activities as well as arrangement of frequent staff meetings that emphasize all of the mentioned values, monitor the process of implementation and suggest solution ways in case of facing with the difficulties in this phase. Silcox, MacNeill & Cavanagh (2004) and Kise (2005) also demonstrated the significance of educators' contribution to staff advancement projects and school change efforts. But according to Calabrese (2006), the teacher usually has not got so much time to practice and there is always a large amount of information available for them to grasp. As a result, they are not always getting benefit from the training activities. Therefore, the planning and implementation ways of professional development activities affect the way teachers react to change.

1.6 Research on resistance: reasons and solutions

Many researchers (Lawrence, 1954; Strebel, 1994; Maurer, 1996; Waddell and Sohal, 1998) argued that reasons of many change initiatives failure are related with the resistance to change. Ansoff (1990) stresses that protection from change brings us delays and expenses into the procedure of progress which is typically exceptionally hard to foresee. (Lorenzo, 2000) but must be paid attention. It has also been considered as an information source by many authors and help to learn the ways to develop more successful change process (Lawrence, 1954; Goldstein, 1988; Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Piderit, 2000).

Before finding out the techniques that might help managers implementing change projects with success, it is essential to check the symptoms and reasons of resistance in organization. Symptoms are behaviour of people that appears when they resist to change. Zander (1950) describes resistance on behalf of individuals and their attitudes about change. He gives a distinction between symptoms and reasons of resistance. He argued that instead of just eliminating the symptoms, it is essential focus on causes. According to Zander (1950), there are six important reasons for resistance to change which are followings:

• "Ambiguity in the mind of those who will be affected by change about the nature of change;

• Existence of diverse interpretations about the change and its impact;

• Existence of strong forces preventing individuals from changing;

• Strong top down imposition on individuals who will be influenced by change, lack of participation;

• Existence of personal interests directing change;

• Ignorance of pre established institutions in the group."

Although any change is implemented for positive reasons, employees often react negatively and resist change (Boohene & Williams, 2012). Generally, employees resist to changes because changes bring a lot of new things which they should learn, and they are afraid of unknown

future, and the adaptation process of the changes. Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) mentioned that stress, pressure, and uncertainty which comes with the change are the main reasons behind negative reaction. Jager (2001) argues that A great number of people are hesitant to abandon the familiar behind. We are all suspicious about the unfamiliar; we are on the whole suspicious about the new; we are normally worried about how we will get from the old to the new, particularly on the off chance that it includes gaining some new knowledge and risking failure. According to Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) when a worker has a low patience which means a fear that he/she will not be successful enough for developing the new skills required, the job will be done differently which will cause resistance to the new ways of doing things. In most cases employees understand that change is necessary, however, they are emotionally unable to make the change and resist it unconsciously.

The research done by Lester Coch and John R.P. French (1948) tried to find out the reasons of resistance and the suggested options to defeat this problem. In order to see the impact of change on employees and their responses, they divided four different groups and they were involved to different level of participation in the change process. The first group was avoided from all activities, discussion step, and they did not get any information about why the change is needed and how it is going to work, the last group was involved to all mentioned things. Other two gatherings were offered opportunity to partake in specific dimensions. The main focus area in the research was the first and the last groups because they were totally unique in relation to one another. As a result, the first group performed very poorly while last group was very good and improved the productivity in a short time period. Coch and French (1948) concluded with the point that when people are given a chance to participate in change process including creating and improvement of necessary activities, they are less likely to be resistance to change comparing with others who are kept away.

Gattiker (1990) also found some famous reasons to change with organizations which also cited later by many researchers as Mullins, 2005; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008; Robbins & Judge, 2009. These reasons incorporate obstruction with need satisfaction, particular recognition, propensity, burden or loss of opportunity, financial ramifications, security before, fear of unknown, dangers to power or impact, information and expertise out of date quality, authoritative structure and constrained assets.

Brickell (1964) stated that large percentage of the literature about teacher resistance has been approved during a lot of years of individual experience and through counselling and helping instructors on various dimensions of training. He also listed the main reasons of showing resistance to educational changes by teachers:

• Any sudden change in the traditional role of teacher which inspire fear through being large and intense, so in this case, it is more likely to evoke some form of resistance

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•   The degree of complexity of changes has also strong influence of resistance level. Aquino mentioned that in case of equipment is not in fact dependable easy to work, and promptly possible, resistance anticipated.

•   When change is unknown or the complexity of it lead to a lack of understanding, it generally faces with resistance or failure because of the ignorance

•   Sometimes the reason of resistance is that change is totally new and has not been used before.

•   Most teachers make innovation unnecessary and resist which is because of they find their own methods more successful and do not want to change them.

•   Psychological causes also happen when changes do not fit with the personality of teacher's individuality.

•   The other reason is relationships between people which happens when other workers in the organization do not use the change, so others do not want to use as well.

Teachers' personal opinions and perceptions can definitely help to resistance problem to educational change. According to Hinde (2002), teachers' norms and values are the factors that affect to their ideas about education system and change. He added the change which is completely differs from the philosophy and also different from culture of teachers most probably will get resistance by them. Additionally, teachers also resist when they consider the change process risky in comparison with the present situation. Moreover, they also resist because they are overwhelmed or very tired. Schuler (2003) argued that for most of teachers change is a terrible idea.

However, change is a demand of current world and in order to improve the system and cope with global world, we need to accept changes, especially in education field. That is why we should also think about the solution ways for resistance. Rossi & Biddle (1966) found that when educational change assisting or lightly changes the available educational situation and practice instead of completely replacing it, the change is less likely to cause resistance.

Persellin (1968) describes the following conditions which help the change process to succeed:

•   "Government or the educational community should express necessity for change.

•   Expressed need should be also recognized by the people of the country at large level.

•   A state of the art should exist to meet the need in methodology and media in a cost-effective manner.

•   There should be sufficient funds available for paying the all costs of change.

•   Teachers should be ready enough to change process beforehand".

One of the other essential points worth to mention is exploiting knowledge and intelligence of instructor in the arranging procedure of change, particularly for making the projects which

conquer any hindrance between the old and the new educators. At the point when educators are permitted and urged to effectively take an interest during the time spent assessment just as choosing materials, sorts of hardware, and approaches identified with their utilization, opposition level declines. Another way to solve resistance problem is to plan workshops or in-service trainings about changes so that all involved teachers will get skills to be ready to the unavoidable problems related to the change in a continuing system.

Summing up all, Aquino (1976) gave the list of important steps for successful change which are followings:

• All involved teachers at different stages and levels of implementation process of change should participate in the planning process adequately.

• There should be support from the authorities who have responsibility in the education area where change happens.

• Teachers preparation step should be enough to be sure that all involved teachers are capable to meet the demands that placed upon them.

• And the last solution way can be identifying the limits in which a change operate and extension of the provided supporting services.

Later Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) described six techniques in order to overcome the resistance to change in educational organization that university administration can use:

1. Education and Communication - Employees in the educational organization should get broad information about the change process, its nature and necessity to it before implementing and the logical reasons should be explained. This strategy is especially better when resistance is due to inaccurate or lack of information.

2. Participation and Involvement - University teachers should be allowed to participate in the planning, designing and implementing process as well as contribute to change with their ideas and advices. The methodology is valuable when change initiators have less data than educators which implies they have significant capacity to stand up to change.

3. Facilitation and Support - Providing emotional and material help for teachers are very important to deal with resistance. Emotional help includes listening to ideas, problems, and complaints of teachers by university administrators who have difficulties with the change process. This strategy is generally used when teachers are afraid of change and face difficulties or have adjustment problems.

4. Negotiation and Agreement - It is kind of trade-offs for special benefits for people who resist and accepting the change is achieved with the negotiations. The mentioned strategy is essentially utilized in case of any teacher loses something important apparently due to the new change and he/she has right to show resistance.

5.   Manipulation and co-optation - This strategy is used when others do not work as well as are seen expensive, so in order to achieve the desired change influencing teachers and their opinions is attempted.

6.   Explicit and implicit coercion - This strategy is totally different from others and is used in crisis situations. Teachers who resist are threatened with undesirable situations if they continue their resistance towards proposed changes. However, Woodman & Pasmore (1988) founded later that this strategy can result with negative effects such as creating fear, frustration, revenge, and alienation which lead to poor performance, dissatisfaction or turnover in its turn.

1.7 Arguments of teachers against educational changes

The arguments instructors concoct against the proposed change demonstrate that educational change, particularly when it is coordinated to change in teaching practice, dependably has a forceful emotional side and contacts to all members' identity feelings. This topic has discussed mainly in the Dutch context (Kelchtermans, 2005; Van Veen and Sleegers, 2006; and Kelchtermans, Ballet and Piot, 2009) and in an international context by Hargreaves (1998, 2005). According the research results here is small selection of arguments that teachers use to protect them against the winds of change:

•   The "No time!" argument: it is the most common argument type used by teachers. They know that new changes will bring lots of new things that they have to learn. So they simply resist because they do not want spend time on them.

•   The "I am innocent!" argument: some teachers use this argument and they believe that there is no necessity for changing person's own practices that he/she uses for years. They state that although problems exist, the responsible are not them but the other people, groups, system, or society and etc.

•   The "burnt child" argument: this group of teachers have already experience a change several times and they now insist that previous reforms were not successful and have not resulted with anything valuable. Although huge amount of time, as well as power, has been spent by all people involved to the change process but as a result, nothing has led to improvement, so teachers do not want to experience new change anymore.

•   The "two worlds" argument: educational reforms are generally developed by university administration, managers who control quality or educational researchers. But universities and teachers work in two various worlds which are completely different, and teachers are the main part of change process which means a lot of things that have been decided and approved by higher authorities will not be successful in real practice.

- The "biographical" argument: generally these arguments are used by older teachers who argue that now it is younger colleagues' turn to take over the responsibility over them, and it is no more valuable and important to them.

- The "lack of personal benefit" argument: this is the argument of those teacher who think that change will only bring them more work, nothing more. They also explain their resistance by pointing out that educational reforms only benefit university administration, supervision, ministries and so on, but not them.

1.8 Implications of resistance to educational changes

It is also very important to know the implications of resistance to educational changes. It can cause damage to the organization itself and teachers who are working there. Resistance to educational changes is considered one of the most essential reasons of failure during the implementation process of any change (Strebel, 1996; Piderit, 2000; Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Lewis (2011) argued that failing during the change process results with high costs and there is only small opportunity to be alive in this environment (Levinthal, 1991; Lewis, 2011). Protection from change additionally has negative ramifications for work-related related results of instructors. One of the most essential results is the intention to leave the job voluntarily. Most of the researchers found out that employees have high level of tendency to turnover in case of experiencing more resistance to change (Wanberg& Banas, 2000; Oreg, 2006; Neves, 2009; Lapointe &Rivard, 2005).

Another important consequences of resistance to change is that employees become frustrated by the change and it makes them to have more negative feelings and thoughts about the organization. As a result, motivation to work decreases, but at the same time intention to turnover increases (Oreg, 2003; Burke et al., 2009).

Another negative effect of resistance of teachers to educational changes is to their job satisfaction. As several researchers (Wanberg & Banas, 2000; Oreg, 2006; Dool, 2006; Burke et al., 2009) stated, teachers who experience resistance to change also experience change in their thoughts about the organization they work, as their general positive feeling and attitude towards the job decreases. Rush, Schoel & Bernard (1995) added that because of more protection from change by employees, they experience more pressure which diminishes their job satisfaction in its turn.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

The study has been conducted by using qualitative research methods to collect data and analyze primary and secondary data. With the intention of to collect data from higher education stakeholders semi-structured interviews designed for the informants from different universities in Azerbaijan and then sent by email together with cover letter. An interview was conducted as an instrument to precisely get the teachers' dispositions about just as the components that reason educators to stand up to change, their main fears, ideas about change and possible implications of change for the education process from their perspective and the solution ways that they suggest to overcome the resistance. By the same way, the opinions of higher education managers and higher education students have also been collected in order to examine if the answers show and proof the available situation in the higher education system of Azerbaijan. A few stages were taken to build up this instrument. The initial step was extensive review of the literature and then prepare the questions which are strongly related to the research questions of the study and help to discover responses to these questions at the end of the research. 7 open questions were prepared and sub-questions were added to get more broad answers about the questions. The first part of the interviews was sent on the 15th of October, 2018 and answers came within one-two month period. Afterwards, making some small changes in interview questions, second part of the interviews with adjusted version of questions was sent on 22nd of January and it also took one-two month to get all answers. After getting all the answers the collected data was analyzed by using content analysis of qualitative method.

2.2 Research sample (about research participants, criterions for their selection, methods for selection)

The target population of this research was mainly higher education teachers in Azerbaijan. However, it is not possible to get the reliable results only from the answers of higher education teachers as it is high chance that they can hide the truth and react as they follow the changes and never show their resistance. To solve this problem, higher education managers and students were included to the target population list and by this way the problem was examined from all perspectives in order to get better results.

For this research, both expert and snowball sampling methods were used. Kultar Singh (2007) stated that "Expert sampling includes choosing an example of people, who are known to have clearly apparent experience and skill in a specific zone of study interest" (p. 108). This sampling method is mainly used when you need informants high degree of knowledge in their field

of study and it is just one of the sub-types of purposive sampling. Singh (2007) also mentions that another reason for using this sampling method is to validate another sampling method. In case of this research, snowball sampling method was also used which is the process of selecting informants by using networks. This method helps a lot to find participants for your interview that may otherwise be hard to reach.

First of all, the number of people - informants who participated in the interview process was selected and the process started. The total amount of informants who took part in the interview process was 12 for this study: 4 higher education teachers, 4 higher education managers, 4 higher education students. Half of the participants from each group is working or studying in one of the most prestigious private universities in Azerbaijan (University X), while the other half is working or studying in one of the public universities (University Y).

2.3 Study background

The study aimed to carry out in three different groups, making particular attention to get information from HE teachers, HE managers and HE students. Although the analyzed case was Azerbaijan and it was a bit difficult to find participants for the interview process, however with the help of networks it became easier and accessible.

6 public and 6 private higher education workers and students were interviewed and data was analyzed in accordance with the answers. The willingness to participate in the study was voluntary.

University X currently is one of the most popular universities in Azerbaijan. As it is private university and recently opened, the available conditions, and high standards allow teaching staff follow the changes easily. Also working staff here is mainly contained from individuals who have studied abroad or worked for different international organizations which make them to be open almost all kinds of changes and make them not to resist.

In comparison to University X, University Y is one of the successful public universities in the country which has not got high standards. The staff here is huge, containing all age groups with different ideas about the change process. As one of the graduates from this university, knowing the available conditions, and observed resistance to change by some teachers made me to choose this university as a sample of this research.

2.4 The research process

The main point of this research was to inspect the all factors that demoralize higher education instructors to accept educational changes by utilizing the qualitative methodology explicitly the content analysis research method. Using the qualitative research methods for collecting and examining the data has gained a remarkable popularity during the past two decades

(Strauss & Corbin, 2006). Heppner, Kivlighan and Wampold (1999) compared quantitative research with a qualitative research and stated that in quantitative research answers of the informants are symbolized numerically, while in qualitative research the representations of the world are mainly linguistic. "As a result, qualitative researchers want to research behaviour in context and may even venture to such an extreme as to battle that it is the understanding of the setting that is the fundamental procedure to be studied" (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, p. 246). Merriam (1998) indicated that qualitative research offers " the best guarantee of making noteworthy commitments to the information base and routine with regards to training," as it seems to be "centered around disclosure, knowledge, and comprehension from the viewpoint of those being contemplated" (p. 1).

Burnard (1995) mentioned several analysis methods that can be used in qualitative research, such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenographic and content analysis. In this study, the content analysis will be used which is defined by Cole (1988) as a technique for examining composed, verbal or visual communication messages. Harwood and Garry (2003) noted that during its first years content analysis was utilized as a strategy for investigating hymns, paper and magazine, articles, promotions and political speeches in the nineteenth century. Nowadays, content analysis gained high significance and it enables the researcher to test theoretical issues so as to improve comprehension of the available information. With the assistance of content analysis, it is reasonable to refine words into less content related categories.

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe higher education teachers' resistance to educational changes with its underlying factors, fears, arguments and find out possible implications of it to the educational process and suggest ways to facilitate changes for education reformers. Qualitative research and content analysis are more suitable to the purpose with its huge sensitivity than a quantitative methodology could suggest to us. As stated by Heppner, Kivlighan and Wampold (1999), generalizability is not possible, nor is a goal since the qualitative methodology uses background information, personal experience, and emotional elucidation.

2.5 Data collection

After finding the participants of the interview by using snowball and expert sampling methods, first of all the cover letter (the email addresses of the experts were taken from the official university websites or from the networks) which outlined the information about the researcher, the main aim of this research, guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity of the participant and clarified the participation is voluntary and asked the way they preferred participation (Skype interview or answering questions by email) in case of agreement (see annex 1).

All participants who acceted to participate in the interviewing process preferred to get the questions of the interview through email and answer to them. After agreeing with the 4 higher

education teachers, 4 higher education managers, 4 higher education students, the Azerbaijani version of the interview questions was sent to the participants deadline for answering the questions was mentioned as next week. There were 7 open interview questions for each group of participants together with sub-questions in order to get more broad answers about the questions (see annex 2).

The first part of data collection was between October-December, 2018 which was close to the end of the academic year and participants were engaged a lot with their works and studies which made it hard to find necessary informants, especially among higher education teachers and managers. However, agreed informants of the interview answered to all the questions and after a week the interview answers were collected and were ready for the detailed content analysis.

The second part of data collection was between January-March, 2019, and collected data were analyzed together with the previous interview answers and all comparisons were done for getting final results and content analysis (see annex 6).

2.6 Data analysis methods

Data analysis step is considered one of the principal and crucial steps in the whole research process in which deep analyze of the collected data from the interview process is conducted. Depending on the chosen research method, the way of analyzing might be different. In case of qualitative research as this research is, data analysis is the main step. Whatever the data is, it is the analysis of the given data which forms the outcomes of the research. " Qualitative data analysis is the order and elucidation of semantic (or visual) material to make articulations about implicit and explicit measurements and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it" (U. Flick, 2014, p. 5). He also adds that after comparing different materials, texts or several cases, the final purpose is to come to generalizable statements.

Also it should be mentioned that qualitative analysis is appropriate for this research as it is well suited to the studies of subjectivity and identify as well as it is consistent with my research objectives.

The data analysis process in case of this research started by "getting to know" the collected data. The available interview answers translated to English language and the written transcripts have been read by researcher in order to start the analyzing process. After this step, the general idea of the informants and the general view of the results was analyzed. However, as deeper analyze starts, the amount of information in the data gets more and more and as a result a systematic rigorous analysis starts.

So as to accomplish this aim, formal frameworks for the investigation of qualitative data have been created so as to enable scientists to get at the importance of their information all the more effectively. These frameworks include:

- coding strategies for finding and denoting the basic thoughts in the information;
- grouping comparable sorts of data together in classifications;
- relating distinctive thoughts and topics to each other (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

In case of this research data analysis has been conducted in several ways. First of all, analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of the informants of the interview such as their age, gender, academic degrees and field of area have been provided. Then the interview answers of the participated informants have been analyzed and discussed, all findings, similar and different kinds of ideas of the participants have been presented. After presenting all findings, the general discussion of the research has been done, and final conclusion has been given.

2.7 Validity and reliability

"Reliability and validity are tools instruments of a basically positivist epistemology." (G. Winter, 2000, p. 7)

Validity is one of the most important factors for any research for both qualitative and quantitative methods. In case of qualitative research this concept has been described by a wide range of terms. The idea of validity is not fixed, single or universal idea, however "rather an unexpected build, inevitably grounded in the procedures and goals of specific research approaches and venture" (G. Winter, 2000, p.1). Despite the fact that some qualitative researchers have contended that this term is not relevant to qualitative research and ought not be utilized, and yet, they have understood the significance of validity and the requirement for some sort of qualifying measure or check for the research done by them. So the validity in qualitative research means "suitability" of the procedures, utilized instruments and information. It also checks if the research question is legitimate for the result which is wanted, the picked methodology is proper so as to respond to the research question, the structure is substantial for the methodology, the sampling and data analysis is fitting just as the last outcomes and ends are substantial for the context of the research.

With the intention of ensuring validity in this research, first of all, specific time - duration has been identified, chosen an appropriate methodology (in this research the qualitative research method was used), open-ended questions were prepared for the interview process of qualitative research, the target group of the research who are going to be the participants of the interview was chosen (in this research target group is mainly the higher education teachers, however besides higher education managers and higher education students were included to the target group in order to get accurate, relevant and comprehensive data).

Reliability is a concept mainly examining and evaluating the quantitative research, however the idea is frequently used in both kinds of research. Stenbacka stated that "a great quality"

concept in quantitative research is related with a "aim of explanation", while in qualitative research it is related with a "generating understanding" (Stenbacka, 2001, p. 551). As per Stenbacka, (2001) "the idea of reliability is notwithstanding deceptive in qualitative research On the off chance that a qualitative study is debated with reliability as a rule the outcome is fairly that the study is nothing more than trouble" (p. 552). Then again, Patton (2001) states that validity and reliability are two elements which any qualitative researcher ought to be worried about while planning a study, examining outcomes and form the opinion about the quality of the study.

In this research reliability of the findings checked under the terms of whether a similar study has been conducted with the same informants and the outcomes of this findings were resemble to the previous one or not. However, as this research is going to be done for the first time in the context of Azerbaijan, it is not possible to ensure hundred percent reliability and validity in this study and in overall all studies done in a qualitative way.

2.8 Ethical considerations

The origin of ethics comes from the remote past and approved by philosophers as a moral principle that manages person's behaviour and although a long time passes but even in the first decades of 21st century perception of ethics notion has not changed. According to Bryman and Bell, (2007) there are several principles that are designated by researcher in order to maintain ethical consideration:

Firstly and mainly, informed consent was set as a prior purpose in ethical concerns. Informed consent allows to inform the research participants regarding the purpose of the conducted study, the main characteristics of the designed interview as well as potential threats and preferences which will influence research participants in the study period. Informed consent is an important thing which creates an opportunity to informants related to their voluntary participation and in case of any risk, anxiety or potential harm (although, in this research any potential risk has not been forecasted yet) their right to cancel their participation in study with their own will. All participants of this research were informed before starting the data collecting that they were free to accept or decline the participation in the study process and feel free to cancel their participation at any step of the research, and that would not affect to their work and would not in any way be used against them.

Furthermore, except the informed consent another essential ethical principles which were applied in this research were confidentiality and anonymity. The idea of confidentiality is stemmed by the guideline of regard for autonomy and is interpreted as meaning that recognizable data about people gathered amid the procedure of research will not be shut without authorization (BSA, 2004). In this study the anonymity and confidentiality of research participants were assumed by introducing the explanatory title of topic, its academic purpose and voluntary participation of the informants in the interview process. In case of this study, maybe because of the target group of this

study (higher education teachers, managers, and students) after sending all information in the email, nobody had any question related to the above mentioned things. Considering different attitudes towards research and interview process, the participants treated individually and their confidentiality and anonymity is maximally assured. Also, the researcher did not attach any personal suggestions to influence the informants and all the data and information were saved confidentially.

2.9 Limitations of the study

A set of limitations has been revealed in this research that can be aligned as followings:

The scope of the topic that requires to analyze by using qualitative research method; the case of Azerbaijan can be regarded as a main obstacle in this research as getting feedback from informants remotely created some problems such as low chance of getting answers back to emails or getting answers on time as well as not finding access to interviewing teachers who are more than 50 years old and mostly resist to change and prefer traditional way of teaching.

This research paper is limited only to higher education institutions' workers and students from two universities, (one private and one public) so results cannot be generalized for all higher education institutions. Moreover, higher education workers - teachers and managers will be unable to honestly responding the interview questions which were connected to their resistance or one of their colleague's resistance since it will not considered right for them. However, interview was taken also from higher education students in order to get the accurate idea about the available situation.

3.0 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 Research results

This chapter analyzes approaches of higher education stakeholders towards resistance of higher education teachers to changes. After analyzing the socio-demographic characteristics of the informants and interview questions, the approaches of higher education teachers, higher education managers and finally higher education students about the resistance problem in education are investigated separately and finally, in the content analysis part the similarities differences between the answers are provided

3.2 Socio-Demographic characteristics of the informants

Socio-demographic factors are important factors in qualitative research and let researchers to examine the validity and reliability of the research. Also in case of some research topics as this research, the answers of the informants to the provided interview questions can be totally different according to their socio-demographic characteristics. That is why almost in all interviews or questionnaires the first part of the questions is related with the background information of the informants and gets the details of their socio-demographic characteristics. In this research, the first question was also about the background information of participants and aimed to get answer about the socio-demographic characteristics of the informants.

1. **Gender**

In this research, women were more active in compared to men to participate in the research process. Although, the permission email was sent to people from both genders, females mostly accepted to be part of the interview process. Also it is worth to mention that University Y is qualified in mostly majors related to language teaching and most of the teachers there are women. So in total out of 12 participants 8 informants were females while all other 4 informants who participated in the interview process were males:

Higher Education Managers (X university)	1 male, 1female informants
Higher Education Managers (Y university)	1 male, 1 female informants
Higher Education Teachers (X university)	1 male, 1 female informants
Higher Education Teachers (Y university)	2 female informants
Higher Education Students (X university)	1 male, 1 female informants
Higher Education Students (Y university)	2 female informants

2. Age group and years of experience

As participants of this research were divided into several groups as higher education teachers, higher education managers and higher education students, we will examine each group differently. The higher education teachers who have participated in the interview process are belonging to 30-45 age group. The higher education managers who have participated in the interview process are belonging to 35-65 age group, and have more experiences in their field. Finally, the higher education students who have participated in the interview process are between 19-24 years old.

	AGE	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
1st HE Teacher - informant 1X1	45	12
2nd HE Teacher - informant 1X2	32	5
1st HE Teacher - informant 1Y1	35	11
2nd HE Teacher - informant 1Y2	33	7
1st HE Manager - informant 2X1	38	20
2nd HE Manager - informant 2X2	42	17
1st HE Manager - informant 2Y1	56	32
2nd HE Manager - informant 2Y2	63	35
1st HE Student - informant 3X1	21	4th year BA student
2nd HE Student - informant 3X2	23	1st year MA student
1st HE Student - informant 3Y1	24	2nd year MA student
2nd HE Student - informant 3Y2	19	2nd year BA student

3. Field of experience or field of study

One of the other key demographics include field of experience of higher education managers and teachers and field of study of higher education students. As representing higher education managers, interviews were taken from 2 deans, 1 vice rector, 1 head of the department. They were working in the field of School of Information Technologies and Engineering, School of Education, Academic Affairs, Innovations in Education. The highest completed degree for 3 of HE managers was PhD, while 1 had MA degree. Higher education teachers also were from different fields, such as marketing, computer science, academic reading and writing/English, Azerbaijani language instructors. The highest completed degree for HE teachers mainly was MA, excluding 1 who completed PhD as well. Finally, 2 of higher education student were studying BA, while other 2

were doing their MA. Their fields of study were public affairs, MBA, methods and methodologies of teaching foreign languages, international relations.

3.3 Analysis of interview questions

The interview questions were prepared according to the research questions and aimed to fulfil the research objectives. The informants answered 7 open-ended questions in total and sub-questions included to get more clear answers and clarify the available situation. Questions were a little bit different according to the target group but aimed to get answers to conclude final general ideas. That is why the answers of the informants belonging to each target group will be discussed separately and then in the discussion part all answers with its similarities and differences will be discussed and final conclusion will be given by the researcher.

First question was prepared to get the socio-demographic characteristics of the informants. By this question background information has been collected such as gender, age, highest level of degree completed, experience, field of study/work. Second question was about finding the importance level of changes in Azerbaijan education system by education stakeholders and informants were also asked the reaction of HE teachers to these changes, whether it is mainly positive or negative. The main goal of this question was to find out the main type of reaction higher education teachers towards changes in education. Following these questions, interviews were asked about the reasons the HE teachers put forward while resisting to any change, and if they were witnessed anything like this, and what arguments they heard from teachers. From the answers it was possible to identify the factors (psychological, personal, school-culture and organizational) affect to university teachers' resistance to educational changes that happens in Azerbaijan nowadays as well as arguments that higher education teachers put forward while resisting changes. Fourth question was about finding out the biggest fears of HE teachers that make them to resist changes which is necessary to know in order to solve the problem of resistance. The next question informants answered aimed to determine the influence of resistance to changes to the whole education system and the implications of this resistance. Then informants were asked their personal choice of teaching method in education, whether it is better to use traditional ways of teaching and organising studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes. Final question was about suggestions for HE initiators and reformers for facilitating changes in higher education and successfully leading it. So in general, with the help of the questions and given answers the research objectives were achieved and research questions were answered.

3.4 Analysis of higher education teachers' approach

- Importance of change in HE system and reactions of HE teachers to the change:

All teachers who participated in the interview process stressed the importance of the change in a rapidly changing world and its impact to the education process. The informants were supporters of a change in education, however they mentioned that reactions of higher education teachers in Azerbaijan are different. Some of them try to keep up with educational changes, while the others cannot be considered as supporters of innovations.

One of the teachers indicated that "*Some of them, especially teachers who belong to old generation are against to such changes; they claim that innovations in education add more entertainment than science to teaching*" (informant 1Y1). HE teachers who participated in the interview process generally related this with the Soviet ideology.

A teacher from University Y mentioned: *"During the transition time to a new teaching methods in Azerbaijan I have participated at many educational trainings and webinars. According to my observations teachers who had got their education during Soviet regime they were so conservative. They did not want to accept this new education style"* (informant 1Y2).

Ideas of another teacher also can be considered as continuation of previous idea: "*Azerbaijani scientist is old, Azerbaijani scientist is aged. There are not even academicians under the age of 60 in Azerbaijan. However, in the world it is 35 years old. Professors, doctors of sciences in Azerbaijan's universities consider themselves to be in Soviet-era. Of course, in its turn it affects negatively to the change adaption and application process as most of them do not want accept them and resist"* (informant 1X2).

- The main reasons and arguments of resistance of higher education teachers to change:

While for one of the teachers who is working at university X the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education were mentioned as "*addiction to old teaching methods*" and "*no motivation*" (informant 1X1), for the other one reasons were *"strong soviet union ideology", "lots of new works which is not adequate to salary", "loss of control", "loss of routine", "loss of comfort zone"* (informant 1X2). He also added that *"Working environment is also important in this process as if most people around react positively, it will affect to others as well or wise worse".*

Teachers from university Y indicated reasons as "*reluctant to get acquainted with new technologies*" and the idea of *"changes give more freedom to learners which affect their learning and attendance negatively"*.

One of them explained the situation as following: *"To prepare case studies, real-life assignment and problem based project is very difficult than traditional lesson examples. So that most of governmental university teachers do not prefer to use these changes. In contrast to public universities, private universities always make their teachers to use new methodology in teaching and learning process"* (informant 1Y2).

Regarding to a case when they resisted to any change, one of the participants (informant 1X1) who is working in the private university answered that she is always open to change and had no experience with resistance to a change in case of her or any other colleague in the institution she is working in. She also added that all conditions available in her workplace for easily following any change. However, she said she knows many colleagues from her previous teaching experience in public university who are reluctant enough to change theoretical type of teaching into practical model which will supply the students with more useful and modern skills in their sphere than a theoretical one.

Her colleague (informant 1X2) said almost the same and he added that "*I am working in the best private university in Azerbaijan and our work environment is very positive to changes and innovations. However, during my previous experience, while working in one of the public universities I have witnessed a lot of resisting teachers. Their argument was that old methods are better to control students and if they want to learn more they can study more after university*".

Other participant from the public university (informant 1Y1) mentioned a case where she had to resist to a change that occurred at the university she is working in:

"*Recently, at our university there was a new tendency that teachers had to be in the auditorium where his/her groups were writing for an exam. My reaction to this was not positive because students do not feel confident and they address to their teachers with multiple questions. I showed my resistance not to coming to the exam*".

Finally, the last teacher also mentioned herself as active supporter of changes and added: "*I think and sure that if human is alive he or she has to be adapt herself to the innovations, otherwise she cannot improve in any level, any field of her life*" (informant 1Y2).

- The biggest fears making higher education teachers resistant to change:

All teachers answered the question about the biggest fears of higher education teachers for resisting the changes almost same. According to them, these fears are "*losing their freedom*" "*losing their comfort zone*", "*losing their time*" and "*losing their job*". The public university teacher mentioned a case which is very important for higher education teachers who are working in public institutions in Azerbaijan. As any change in education requires from teachers to develop professionally, however most of the teachers cannot find time for it since "*they are either too old to be enthusiastic to learn or they prefer tutoring to earn for their life*" which takes their all time and energy and eventually they react negative to a change (informant 1Y1)

One of the teachers (informant 1X2) generalized the fears of HE teachers and said "*Some are afraid of properly understanding the innovation - fear of failure; some are afraid of to lose their current position - fear of instability of status; some are afraid to lose comfort - fear of unfamiliar and so on*".

- Influence of resistance of higher education teachers to the education process:

Participants of the interview agreed that any resistance from them influences to the whole education process and this influence is negative.

One of the teachers (informant 1Y1) indicated that the negative influence starts from the quality of teaching and from the organization of lessons and these cases influence the whole education process:

"*It affects the quality of teaching and the organization of lessons. In its turn, they influence badly to educational development*".

Another teacher (informant 1Y2) also agreed and added that "*Students of such teachers cannot approach critically to situations, demonstrate creative thinking and show their own opinions and attitudes. New changes based on turn theory to the application. Their students can not apply their knowledge. Non applicable knowledge usually quickly forgotten*".

- Preferences of traditional and innovative ways of teaching and organizing studies by higher education teachers:

All informants said they are supporters of a positive change in education, because it reflects the real demand of the time. Informant 1Y1 added:

"*In my opinion, today's generation want innovations, new trends in teaching; traditional approach in higher education demotivate them because they had been already told in a traditional way at schools*".

Informant 1Y2 said she prefers changes in education based on the following idea: "*I prefer changes because changes come from necessity. The development of science with the development of society must be always harmonious*". She added her thoughts about traditional way of teaching "*In my opinion, traditional way of teaching prepares youth who are thinking like robots. They brains are full of knowledge but they cannot connect this knowledge with the real life, they cannot understand and show their opinions about this knowledge, they cannot synthesis their own thoughts, ideas*".

- The ways of overcoming or reducing resistance to change:

The answers to this question was different by informants. While the public university teachers mentioned that there should be an increasement in the salary of higher education teachers which will motivate them to develop professionally and as a result they will not resist later to a change:

"*In case of Azerbaijan, the main problem in my opinion is the salary of higher education teachers. It is such a low amount that does not motivate teachers to do anything, so it is somehow understandable when they do not want to work a lot and spend their time for learning new staff. Especially the ones who are doing private tutoring get tired so they do not have energy for that. So*

I think change initiators first of all should increase the salary and teachers should get bonuses and should be motivate to work on themselves and apply changes" (informant 1Y1).

Informant 1X1 answered that "*the initiators of changes should attract higher education teachers to the projects and debates where they will be informed about the real demands of the contemporary society and new approaches to modern educational system especially in developed countries*". Besides, university authorities also should motivate the teachers to make appropriate changes in their teaching strategy.

Informant 1X2 generalized the whole situation: *"In general, our main problem is the motivation, so if the change initiators will be able to increase the motivation of the higher education teachers, they will achieve to solve resistance problem".*

3.5 Analysis of higher education managers' approach

- Importance of change in HE system and reactions of HE teachers to the change:

All of the higher education managers think that a change is a crucial factor for the improvement of higher education and they agreed that reactions are different among teachers due to several reasons. However, according to the higher education managers the reaction of teachers towards changes is mainly positive as one of the HE teachers explained:

"*I do not think that reaction of higher education teaching staff to the changes is somehow drastically different from that of other people. Hence, you can apply the methodology and classification of the conventional change management to the system of higher education*" (informant 2X1).

His colleague (informant 2Y2) reacted to the question differently and pointed out the negative reactions of HE teachers towards change: *"Teachers usually avoid new teaching methods, since they think they can teach better through the methods that they are used to. Some elderly teachers refuse to follow the curriculum as well".*

- The main reasons and arguments of resistance of higher education teachers to change:

All informants mentioned the main reason as time, because due to the current situation in Azerbaijan many higher education teachers give private lessons or work in another places to make money which results them being reluctant to spend time to learn something new.

A higher education manager from public university (informant 2Y1) mentioned that there is low motivation among teachers especially because of low salaries. She talked about a case when a teacher resisted to a change:

"For instance, after observing one of the experienced teachers, I asked her to reflect on her lesson and what would she do differently at her next lesson? She said, it was a good lesson and she was not going to change or improve anything. I continued the post-observation meeting with the

question: Are you planning new resources and give students more time to talk? and she said that she does not have extra time to re-plan the lesson and she thinks students do not need it at all as they like the way she teaches, but she will give time to talk to students at the next lesson. So, the argument was lack of time for re-planning and I could see a strong resistance to improve and acceptance to a change".

Informant 2X1 mentioned that as working in one of the prestigious universities, he has not experienced strong resistance from any teacher, and all teachers in their university are open to changes. However, there were small cases when some faculty members resisted some suggested changes in curricula. The range of reactions was from sarcastic comments to lengthy emails with a goal to persuade the leadership that the changes to be introduced will harm the programs. He also talked about a case of when he interviewed an elderly professor as part of the selection teachers for university:

"*This colleague openly expressed his sarcasm about new methods of interactive learning, praising the good old Soviet education. I believe in similar cases there are two factors: not a clear or even worse incorrect understanding of the new, low skills to be able to implement the changed process, which may have the effect of <cat not reaching the meat>*".

- The biggest fears making higher education teachers resistant to change:

HE managers working in public university mentioned "*lack of academic competency and professional confidence*" as the biggest fears of teachers that make them to resist.

Informant 2Y2 said: "*I think, new books, new materials, working on them, having all the answers according to the new method seem like more work to them and they are not sure if they will be successful or not. Traditional methods that they have been using for years appear more safe for sure*".

Private university managers said their biggest fear could be "*unknown future*" because of the change and "*leaving familiar behind*".

- Influence of resistance of higher education teachers to the education process:

HE managers agreed that resistance to a change directly affects students and it influences to the whole education process in its turn negatively.

Informant 2X2 explained the negative affect with the following sentence: "*Indeed, as the whole education process is delivered by the teachers, any resistance to changes will hinder implementation of those changes*".

Informant 2Y2 indicated that university students are always talk with each other about teachers and lessons and when they see that teaching methods of specific teacher affect to lesson process, it also affects their motivation which as a result affects to results and whole education process: "*Students are always in correlation with each other, when they realize because of the*

teachers they are getting more knowledge or otherwise, it can pull down their motivation, and slow down the whole process in the university level".

- Preferences of traditional and innovative ways of teaching and organizing studies by higher education teachers:

The informants reacted to this question almost the same and said new ways of teaching are always better and make students ready for the unpredictable future. However, informant 2X1 stated: "*Modern teachers should definitely accept changes, moreover, they should create their individual approach to changes that would promote to progress in higher education*", one of the other managers (informant 2Y1) mentioned that there is no need to create a bicycle again as there are professional organizations that has got a long term experience in creating and experimenting new streams and new ways of teaching in higher education institutions and teachers should just follow these changes.

- The ways of overcoming or reducing resistance to change:

Managers agreed that as it was mentioned in change management theory, the affected parties should be informed and consulted, if the people are to stay they must be also trained the skills necessary for implementing the change.

Informant 2Y1 added that also active involvement of teachers to the change process will affect the level of resistance: "*Moreover, they should comment, contribute and advise in all stages of the suggested changes. This would certainly reduce and minimize the resistance*".

Informant 2X2 added that all stakeholders should be added involved the process and only then effective results should be achieved: "*Changes should be discussed not only with people in the managerial position, but also with teachers and students. Offers, suggestions and complaints should be heard, collected and observed. Only then it is possible to have a sound education system and changes which pave a way for better future".*

3.6 Analysis of higher education students' approach

- Importance of change in HE system and reactions of HE teachers to the change:

As other informants all HE students who participated in the interview process expressed the importance of a change in higher education as well. A student who is studying in the public university (informant 3Y1) mentioned that there are different approaches to the educational changes by higher education teachers. While some of them actively support a change, some of them show strong resistance and use the traditional ways in their teaching process. Also there are some teachers who mix the both methods. She adds that this kind of difference is very essential obstacle in front of the education system and prevent improvement.

The private university students mentioned the low chance of resisting teachers in their university as the conditions and facilities are good and most of the teachers are young and have international background.

Informant 3X1 expressed her thoughts about the resistance differently:

"Personally, I do not know any of my professors to resist changes. Almost every year they change their syllabuses, course materials, exam structure and questions, and use technological advancement as much as possible. If the change occur in the education system, overall, they easily adapt to it. However, in other state universities, the reaction is not always positive. Instructors stuck in the traditional way of teaching maybe because of lack of technology or their Soviet style thinking. Also, if, for example, Ministry of Education requires to use PowerPoint slides in classes, instructors should have skills to do so, otherwise, they will try to ignore this requirement."

- The main reasons and arguments of resistance of higher education teachers to change:

Informant 3X2 said that the reason of resistance to educational changes could be related to the personality of the teachers, but mainly and more importantly, to the environment they are working at.

Another student (informant 3Y2) related the resistance with the ages of teachers. She expressed herself by saying: *"In my opinion, all these disagreements are dealing with the ages of teachers. From the psychological point of view, it is proved that for old people it is very difficult to admit new things. In their opinion, they are right all the time. If you ask the reasons of disagreements, they will not answer the question directly".*

Other students mentioned several reasons such as *"doubt at the successful appliance of new methods; not enough trust of the effectiveness of new methods; simply not wanting to go out of the traditions and avoiding additional responsibility, not being able to learn new staff",* public university student also addeed *"low motivation, low salary"* as reasons of resistance to educational changes.

- Preferences of traditional and innovative ways of teaching and organizing studies by higher education teachers:

All students agreed that it is always better to follow the changes except one (informant 3Y2) who said it is also better to mix the methods. According to her: *"From my point of view, instructors can use not only innovative ways, but also traditional ones(sometimes). Because, it would be foolishness to ignore all traditional methods. There may be such kind of situations that only they can help us".*

Informant 3Y1 answered that she had some cases when her teachers at university only were using the traditional ways of teaching which was decreasing the interest level in the class and resulted with students losing their motivation to study that subject:

"I had several cases when teachers were using boring traditional ways with no presentations, discussions or by reading books and demanded us to answer the lesson just by saying written information by heart. Even I remember one time in grammar exam the questions were asking us to write grammar rules which was useless. In this cases, students were always losing their motivation and they preferred not to come or not to listen to the lesson".

Students from private university said that they did not face such cases in the university they are studying now but one of them (informant 3X2) experienced such case while studying his BA in public university and other student mentioned a case when she had a professor who came from other state university to their university and was using traditional way of teaching which resulted with high level of absence of students:

"In my case, I do not have any instructor to resist changes. But I had in the past. When that instructor came from other state university to ours, he just read materials from the PowerPoint without any discussion with students. After some time he felt that students are very bored and their absence in class is in a high level. So, he decided to be more interactive in class and prepared some questions for group discussions. It means he was open to changes but the environment he came did not require him to develop his teaching strategy".

- Influence of resistance of higher education teachers to the education process:

Students reacted to this question almost the same, and agreed that the resistance of teacher to changes influences them and to the whole education system negatively. They also mentioned the importance of using information communication technologies in education and resistance such kind of changes is unacceptable. Informant 3Y1:

"It is undeniable fact that the ICTs - information communication technologies have an essential role in the improvement of education level in the country and resistance of teachers to these kinds of changes is unacceptable".

- The biggest fears making higher education teachers resistant to change:

3 of the students answered that the biggest fear of higher education teachers could be their fear of taking responsibility because of change which can be resulted with failure in applying the change, even one of them (informant 3Y2) related it with their age by saying: *"In my opinion, the biggest fear of higher education teachers is <not to be able to work with this rules>. You know, the young teachers are better in innovations".*

The other student (informant 3X2) agreed with it and fear of "*getting punished by university administration*".

- The ways of overcoming or reducing resistance to change:

The answers of informants were similar to this interview question as well. According to them, presenting a change before its application and trainings are good way to reduce resistance, public university students also added the problem of low salary in public universities.

Informant 3X1 added that another way to reduce the resistance towards change could be "*Offering incentives and punishments in terms of money to the teachers. It is a bit risky but effective way as teachers care about their profit*".

Informant 3X2 also agreed to be strict towards the problem and suggested the following solution:

"*Soviet teaching methods should not be accepted anymore as I do believe that prevent students to improve their critical thinking, problem solution, team building skills, and teachers who follow this methods should be send to special trainings*".

Discussion of the results

This study sought to identify and describe underlying factors for teacher resistance to educational changes in Azerbaijan higher education institutions. The research questions were designed and aimed to examine the issue from the perspectives of higher education stakeholders, such as, higher education teachers, higher education managers, and higher education students. To attain the primary goal of the study, the main arguments and fears of higher education teachers were examined. Another objective of this research was to suggest ways to the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to changes.

Education is considered the initial beginning step and it allows people in the society to transmit the main characteristics to the next generation and by this way keeps society alive. According the analyzed data in the context of Azerbaijan there is still resistance to educational changes by higher education teachers and there observed all three types of resistance which was proposed by Hambrick and Cannella (1989). Some teachers react automatically without thinking about the change which is called blind resistance, some teachers think they will lose something that is valuable to them as a result of implemented change which is called political resistance, and some teachers disagree with the change by showing logical reasons of their resist which is called ideological resistance.

In case of factors of educational change, according to the analysis of answers of informants all four categories of factors which were discussed in the theoretical part of the research were found in Azerbaijan context. Psychological factors such as feeling of loss, threat, doubt, worries and discomfort were mainly observed in higher education teachers of Azerbaijan. As Flamholtz and Randle (2008) mentioned as a result of change people generally move from known to unknown and unusual, from comfortable to uncomfortable and analysis of data show us that this feeling makes teachers to feel unsafe and resist to change. Personal factors affect resistance as well, however as Gray (2002) mentioned some of them as lack of trust, disagreement for the proposed change, conservatism because of age and culture and various understandings of external dangers strongly contribute to resistance of teachers and this was mentioned in Azerbaijan context. Especially, elder teachers strongly resist changes and they argue that Soviet system is the best and they do not trust the new methods at all. Continuing with the university-culture factor, culture in the university has a huge effect on the teachers' understanding the change process. Interview analysis reveals that there is no strong trust by university administrators to teachers which was mentioned by Beckum (2010) and McGregor (2002) and therefore sometimes they resist as simply they are afraid of losing their jobs in case of doing something wrong. Another factor was organizational factor which also mentioned by informants a lot. Most of them mentioned that the environment teachers work affects

them a lot and their thoughts about change. Especially the informants from private university mentioned that as staff generally has international background, they are always open to changes and it affects to the whole staff positively.

Regarding to the fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist to education change research was found the following categories: fear of failure, fear of instability of status, fear of unfamiliar which include fear of losing freedom, job, time and money, fear of leaving their comfort zone, taking responsibility, getting punished by university administration, lack of academic competency and lack of professional competences. Informants related the mentioned fears either being too old that make it hard to learn, and generally they are afraid of to fail or being too busy to make money that new changes can take their time which will not let them to gain money.

One of the aims of this research was to analyze the main causes of higher education teachers and suggest ways to change initiators for successful implementation of the change without facing resistance. Interview participants stated different reasons that make teachers resist to a change and they were completely related with the literature. Fear of unknown future and fear of leaving the familiar behind were considered main reasons in Azerbaijan for teachers' resistance and as Jager (2001) argues teachers doubtful about the situation which is not familiar, they are also worried about the way they will pass from the old to the new which is quite natural, especially in case it includes to get some new information and risking failure. Moreover, the other popular reason by Azerbaijan higher education teachers was not being able to develop the necessary new skills as mentioned by Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) as one of the main reasons of resistance. In Azerbaijan as most of teachers gain their money from private tutoring, they do not have enough time to spend for change process so as Hinde (2002) described they resist because they are overwhelmed or very tired. The main reasons given by Brickell (1964) were also very suitable for Azerbaijan context and almost all reasons were mentioned by interview participants.

The higher education teachers, managers and students who participated in the interview process suggested different ways to overcome resistance towards change. The way that suggested by all participants was to organize trainings for teachers and involve them to the change process. This was mentioned by Aquino (1976) in the list of important steps for successful change. Support from the authorities was another suggested way both by Aquino and informants to reduce resistance. In Azerbaijan, as salary of higher education teachers is very low, interview participants suggested to increase salary and motivate them by this way. Almost all six methods for overcoming resistance to change in education that suggested by Later Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) were suitable for current situation in Azerbaijan and mentioned by informants.

There are many arguments that teachers put forward when they resist to a change. In Azerbaijan the main argument of higher education teachers was found to be "No time!" argument

which is the most common argument type used by teachers. They simply resist because they do not want to spend time on them, however it is understandable in Azerbaijan context. Because in order to live normal life, they have to do private tutoring or work at private courses which take their all time and energy as mentioned by interviewees.

As mentioned in the literature resistance to educational changes has always negative impact on people, students, institutions, and whole education system and all people who participated in the interview agreed with this idea. Since the whole education process is delivered by the teachers any resistance to changes will hinder implementation of those changes.

Regarding to the reflection to the research paper, used method - qualitative method was suitable for this study as it gave chance teachers to explain themselves better and better chance for researcher to analyze the data. The prepared instrument (interview questions) were relevant as they were matching with research questions as well. Chosen research method and research instrument allowed the researcher to get the final results and make conclusions.

The outcomes of empirical part show that there is still strong resistance towards change by higher education teachers in Azerbaijan universities, especially by teachers who witnessed Soviet regime and wants to continue those teaching methods even now. Also conditions and facilities in public universities are low and this also prevent application of any change. According to the consequences of survey it can be derived that the level of resistance getting low as young teachers are mostly active and most of them react changes positively. Taking into consideration all the mentioned underlying factors and suggestions it is believed that resistance to education changes problem can be solved.

Conclusions

Resistance to change is one of the most important factors that should be considered during any change process. When we say resistance from change we comprehend a marvel that makes troubles for the procedure at its start or amid its improvement stage and means to keep the present circumstance.

This study purposed to find out the current resistance level in Azerbaijan higher education institutions by teachers as well as identify the underlying factors, reasons, fears, arguments and suggest ways for reformers in order successful implementation of a change.

It has been found that there is still strong resistance by higher education teachers to the new changes and mostly by teachers who belong to old generation and studied during Soviet time or witnessed this time period.

The interview results which were collected by higher education teachers, higher education managers and higher education students let us get idea about available situation in Azerbaijan and answer research questions. To determine the underlying factors, reasons, fears, arguments of teachers allow change initiators to solve resistance problem in education system.

The study concluded that there is resistance towards change by higher education teacher in Azerbaijan depending on the many factors such as personal, psychological, university-culture, organizational as mentioned in theoretical part. Most of the teachers who belong to old generation resist to change because of their Soviet style thinking. Also the lack of conditions prevent teachers to be open to changes and accomplish tasks.

Another important point was about low motivation of Azerbaijan university teachers which is strongly related with their salaries. The involvement of teachers to the change process is very low and there is not enough trainings for teachers to understand a change and its importance.

Higher education students mostly prefer the new teaching, and they believe that following the changes is very important and brings only positive things to education system. Because it allows everyone not depending on the country people live in to get the same level of education, improve themselves and get enough knowledge and skills to enter to international work environment. Other informants also agreed that changes come from necessity and should be accepted, however they experiences so many resistance cases by teachers in today's education system in Azerbaijan.

Another conclusion was about the influence of resistance to the students and whole education system and the study reveal that the resistance prevents the whole education system from improvement and the overall level of the education decreases in the country. So in general the influence is negative.

In general, informants answers were close to each other not depending on the university they are working or studying at. Informants from public university stressed on the salary of teachers more in comparison to others as salaries in private universities in Azerbaijan are generally satisfactory and better. Even participants from private universities have not seen anyone who resist in the organization they work but most of them has experience from past. As a conclusion, it can be said that private university teachers are more open to changes and react positively. They have all facilities and conditions as well as skills to follow the changes. Good working environment, higher salaries, plenty of training let them to accept changes without any problem.

In order to reduce resistance and successfully lead change process, reformers should pay attention and solve all mentioned problems. The conducted research can be regarded as the new research-based data that disclosed the real situation in the country. The research results can be used by education initiators to decrease the resistance level of higher education teachers to change and to improve the overall education level in the country.

Recommendations for the future

Here are some recommendations to consider for future studies:

- As it can be observed, the output of the current research study was biased as the informants were only from 2 different universities (1 public and 1 private university) in the country so the drawn conclusions regarding the perspectives of higher education stakeholders can be prejudiced. It would be reasonable to increase the scope of research and enhance the number of informants and universities they are working at.

- Furthermore, researchers are encouraged to increase the target population to include teachers from all regions of Azerbaijan for being able to get general findings to the whole Azerbaijan universities.

- The mixed research approach can be used in future research which means the usage of lots of instruments can make the results more reliable and stronger. The utilization of the quantitative method will enable the scientists to examine the issue all the more profoundly.

- Additionally, in case of cooperation with the educational institutions or research centers the effectuality of the research can be increased as it will enable the researchers to have an access to more universities, their staff and students.

- In case of the informants, teachers who belong to old generation and studied during Soviet time period or witnessed Soviet regime can be involved in order to get reliable results and make comparisons for future researches.

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ANNEX 1

The Sample of Cover Letter Asking Permission for an Interview:

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Nazrin Ahmadova and I am a second year master student in the faculty of educational management in Vytautas Magnus University.

Currently I am writing my master thesis and my topic is "Resistance to Educational Changes from the Perspective of Higher Education Teachers in Azerbaijan". The main purpose of this research is to find out underlying factors of teacher resistance to educational changes in Azerbaijan and suggest ways for the initiators of changes in order to reduce this resistance.

For achieving this aim, I need to take an interview from higher education teachers, managers and students from public and private universities. An interview process will take about 15-20 minutes and can be done by Skype or by email (answering interview questions in written format).

Please be informed that participation in this interview process is voluntary and in case of any risk, anxiety or potential harm you have right to cancel your participation in the study with your own will. Also please be informed that all your answers will be kept entirely anonymous and absolutely confidential.

If you are agree to participate in the interview process, please reply to this email by mentioning the interview way (by Skype or by email) you prefer. Thank you so much in advance!

Best Regards,
Nazrin

ANNEX 2

Interview Questions for Higher Education Teachers:

1. Personal background information:

   Your gender:

   Your age:

   The highest level of education you have received:

2. How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

3. From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when you resisted to any change that occurred in the system of education or at your university? What was the reason of your resistance? How did you demonstrate your resistance?

4. What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

5. Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

6. As a teacher how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

7. From the perspective of teachers how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

Interview Questions for Higher Education Students:

1. Personal background information:

   Your gender:

   Your age:

   The highest level of education you have received:

2. How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? From your experience at university: How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions? Is it always positive? Why?

3. Why some of teachers resist do educational changes strongly? What can be the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education and which arguments can be put forward?

4. Could you reflect on a case when one of your university teachers only continued with the traditional ways of teaching, ignoring the changes? Could you please describe the situation? In your opinion is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

5. As a student how do you think: Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process or to the students? If so, what is this influence?

6. In your opinion what are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

7. From the perspective of students how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

Interview Questions for Higher Education Managers:
1. Personal background information:

   Your gender:

   Your age:

   The highest level of education you have received:

2. How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

3. From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when one of the teachers in the institution you work resisted to any change that occurred in the system of education? What was the reason of his/her resistance? How did he/she demonstrate his/her resistance? What was his/her argument?

4. What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

5. Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

6. As a person who is working in managerial position how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

7. From the perspective of people who is working in managerial position in university how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

ANNEX 3

Interview Sample with Higher Education Teacher: (in case of public university)

Personal background information

Your gender: Female

Your age: 35

The highest level of education you have received: master degree

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

I think all fields need changes for their development. Global, social, and technological change factors impact higher education too. Now, educators create effective learning environments. They use new methods in teaching, change their traditional teaching to blended learning. Contemporary higher education reflects both distance and traditional systems with students moving between the two systems either within one institution or between institutions. In my opinion, such changes do not affect development of education negatively; on the contrary, they bring innovations and make them more modern and academic. However, the reactions of teachers to the changes differ. Some of them, especially teachers who belong to old generation are against to such changes; they claim that innovations in education add more entertainment than science to teaching.

From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when you resisted to any change that occurred in the system of education or at your university? What was the reason of your resistance? How did you demonstrate your resistance?

The reasons of their resistance is that they are reluctant to get acquainted with new technologies; besides, they think that changes give more freedom to learners which affect their learning and attendance negatively. Recently, at our university there was a new tendency that teachers had to be in the auditorium where his/her groups were writing for an exam. My reaction to this was not positive because students donot feel confident and they address to their teachers with multiple questions. I showed my resistance not to coming to the exam.

What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

They are afraid of losing their freedom and also their work. As we know that innovations in education require from teachers to develop themselves professionally and personally. They do not have time to work on themselves as they are either too old to be enthusiastic to learn or they prefer tutoring to earn for their life.

Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

It affects the quality of teaching and the organization of lessons. In its turn, they influence badly to educational development.

As a teacher how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

In my opinion, today's generation want innovations, new trends in teaching; traditional approach in higher education demotivate them because they had been already told in a traditional way at schools.

From the perspective of teachers how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

They should increase salary of teachers in order to motivate them to develop themselves professionally. If they are professionally developed, they will not resist to any changes. Besides, in their working hour, hours should be balanced between scientific and teaching sections.

Interview Sample with Higher Education Teacher: (in case of private university)

Personal background information

Your gender: Male

Your age: 32

The highest level of education you have received: master degree

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

It is very important. Recent graduates react positively to changes because most of them have international experience. However, elder teachers, professors react negatively. Unfortunately, we still could not get out of the Soviet era. You know, there is no doctor in Azerbaijan under the age of 35. However, in the world this is 26-27 years old. Our youngest doctors are over 50 years old. Azerbaijani scientist is old, Azerbaijani scientist is aged. There are not even academicians under the age of 60 in Azerbaijan. However, in the world it is 35 years old. Professors, doctors of sciences in Azerbaijan's universities consider themselves to be in Soviet-era. Of course, in its turn it affects negatively to the change adaption and application process as most of them do not want accept them and resist.

From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when you resisted

to any change that occurred in the system of education or at your university? What was the reason of your resistance? How did you demonstrate your resistance?

Main reasons could be different. First of all, as I indicated before strong soviet education system ideas affect this process negatively. Then new changes mean new works and most of the teachers do not want to do it because of the amount of money they get from their work. Another reason is that they just do not want to leave their comfort zone and show resistance. They mostly think the change can bring loss of control and loss of routine. Working environment is also important in this process as if most people around react positively, it will affect to others as well or wise worse.

Personally, as a young teacher who has international education background and participated so many conferences and trainings, for me change in education is essential and necessary because without it we cannot improve and prepare young people with strong skills and high knowledge. I am working in the best private university in Azerbaijan, our work environment is very positive to changes and innovations. However, during my previous experience, while working in one of the public universities I have witnessed a lot of resisting teachers. Their argument was that old methods are better to control students and if they want to learn more they can study more after university.

What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

Some are afraid of properly understanding the innovation - fear of failure; some are afraid of to lose their current position - fear of instability of status; some are afraid to lose comfort - fear of unfamiliar and so on.

Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

Yes, its impact is high and negative. In case of resistance, so much money as well as time goes to solve the problems and it affects negatively to the education process. Because in this century, the world moves so fast and so many changes happen in world education system and if there is resisting problem in any country's education system it means it will decrease the level of education in that country and future problems will happen.

As a teacher how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

I am open-minded teacher and of course supporter of the changes and innovations. Teachers should understand that they should be open to all kinds of changes even the ones which can be seen that it will not work for the country at first. They should remember that the main thing

here is not their opinion but the main thing is to prepare students for international environment which means they can be successful in all over the world with the knowledge, skills they possess.

From the perspective of teachers how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

In case of Azerbaijan, the main problem in my opinion is the salary of higher education teachers. It is such a low amount that does not motivate teachers to do anything, so it is somehow understandable when they do not want to work a lot and spend their time for learning new staff. Especially the ones who are doing private tutoring get tired so they do not have energy for that. So I think change initiators first of all should increase the salary and teachers should get bonuses and should be motivate to work on themselves and apply changes.

ANNEX 4

Interview Sample with Higher Education Manager: (in case of public university)

Personal background information

Your gender: female

Your age: 56

The highest level of education you have received: doctorate degree

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

A change in HE is dramatically important as there are a lot of areas for development, for instance methodology of English language teaching. As part of my job I organize and deliver some teacher training sessions for the teachers of my department in University Y. Teachers are generally interested in attending these sessions but some of them are unhappy about devoting their free time. We keep hearing students' complaints about the traditional textbooks and methodology of the lectures and seminars. Resources are not up to date and teachers are often not happy about devoting time to their own professional development and mainly are busy with private tutoring, which is understandable. Salary of teachers is low and they lack motivation to take lead on their own professional development. We introduces modern and cutting edge materials for teaching methodology at our university as well as it gives teachers freedom to decide about choosing newly published materials by OUP (Oxford university press), CUP (Cambridge university press) and other well-known publishers that related to the university curriculum by making a research and attending available in-house and other teacher training seminars.

From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when one of the teachers in the institution you work resisted to any change that occurred in the system of education? What was the reason of his/her resistance? How did he/she demonstrate his/her resistance? What was his/her argument?

I think the main reason is not to leave the comfort zone they are in currently. They feel perfectly well with the traditional course books and teaching the same way they have been teaching for years. It is still very teacher centred lessons where teachers teach and students listen with minimal and sometimes no interaction. I often observe the lessons of teachers in my department and give feedback. For instance, after observing one of the experienced teachers I

asked her to reflect on her lesson and what would she do differently at her next lesson and she said, it was a good lesson and she was not going to change or improve anything.

I continued the post-observation meeting with the question: "Are you planning new resources and give students more time to talk?" She answered: "I do not have extra time to re-plan the lesson and I think students do not need it at all as they like the way I teach, but I will give time to talk to students at the next lesson". So, the argument was lack of time for re-planning and I could see a strong resistance to improve and acceptance to a change.

What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

The biggest fear is lack of academic competency and professional confidence. Also teachers are resistant to leave their comfort zone as it takes their time and extra energy. As it was mentioned previously with low salary and lack of incentive teachers do not want to change and develop further.

Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

Absolutely true. The resistance to changes influences heavily on students' education and it prevents the higher education system from development. They are not aware of the new methods of teaching English for instance and when entering the class newly qualifies teachers lack the skills needed to deliver modern interactive lessons which ends with low level of English language learners at schools.

As a person who is working in managerial position how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

I strongly believe in positive influence of using new methods of teaching and organizing studies so that it would support following the changes. We do not need to create a bicycle again. There are professional organizations that has got a long term experience in creating and experimenting new streams and new ways of teaching in HE institutions. What we need is strong leaders in HE institutions who are ready to receive the changes and support teachers in a positive way, with the detailed explanation of any change, involve teachers to all steps of new changes so that they could feel ownership of a change and not to stay in a distance and observe it.

From the perspective of people who is working in managerial position in university how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

Policy makers, stakeholders anyone involved in developing any kind of a change should work in close partnership with end users and implementers of a change, i.e. teachers in this case. To reduce the resistance to changes teachers have to be trained enough & develop professionally. Moreover, they should comment, contribute and advise in all stages of the suggested changes. This would certainly reduce and minimize the resistance.

Interview Sample with Higher Education Manager: (in case of private university)

Personal background information

Your gender: male

Your age: 62

The highest level of education you have received: doctorate degree

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions?

Changes should be done from time to time in the education system to motivate students and professors in order to find the best teaching and learning methods. It is important to mention that sometimes these changes are applied for the first time, and when they fail, we fail students, therefore in my opinion decision-makers should investigate better, and use international and tested methods. Teachers usually avoid new teaching methods, since they think they can teach better through the methods that they are used to. Some elderly teachers refuse to follow the curriculum as well.

From your perspective and experience, what are the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education? Could you reflect on a case when one of the teachers in the institution you work resisted to any change that occurred in the system of education? What was the reason of his/her resistance? How did he/she demonstrate his/her resistance? What was his/her argument?

The reasons of their resistance is that they are reluctant to get acquainted with new technologies; besides, they think that changes give more freedom to learners which affect their learning and attendance negatively.

In my experience, new generation of the teachers were really willing to apply changes in their classes, thus they were even coming up with their own offers and suggestions, because, I think, young teachers are more motivated and energetic to teach. However, elderly people were reluctant in this matter. Once I had an argument with one of our teachers who did not want to attend the trainings of new teaching method, since she thought it was more responsibility and more work for the salary that the teachers gained.

What are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

I think, new books, new materials, working on them, having all the answers according to the new method seem like more work to them and they are not sure if they will be successful or not. Traditional methods that they have been using for years appear more safe for sure.

Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process? If so, what is this influence?

For sure, it does. Students are always in correlation with each other, when they realize because of the teachers they are getting more knowledge or otherwise, it can pull down their motivation, and slow down the whole process in the university level.

As a person who is working in managerial position how do you think: is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

First of all, changes should be discussed not only with people in the managerial position, but also with teachers and students. Offers, suggestions and complaints should be heard, collected and observed. Only then it is possible to have a sound education system and changes which pave a way for better future.

Additionally, if a traditional method works well, it is better to keep it by adding up new things and making changes according to the opinions of above mentioned individuals, and by following up the international experience.

From the perspective of people who is working in managerial position in university how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

Well-organized trainings are the key solutions for the resistance, I believe. If teachers are fully informed about what to apply and avoid, better results can be achieved.

ANNEX 5

Interview Sample with Higher Education Student: (in case of private university)

Personal background information

      Your gender: Female

      Your age: 21

      The highest level of education you have received: bachelor student

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? From your experience at university: How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions? Is it always positive? Why?

      Of course, positive changes in higher education in Azerbaijan is desirable. Technological improvements, students' increasing social activities, and more information flow and exchange are the factors that make teachers to think about changes. Personally, I do not know any of my professors to resist changes. Almost every year they change their syllabuses, course materials, exam structure and questions, and use technological advancement as much as possible. If the change occur in the education system overall, they easily adapt to it. However, in other state universities, the reaction is not always positive. Instructors stuck in the traditional way of teaching maybe because of lack of technology or their Soviet style thinking. Also, if, for example, Ministry of Education requires to use PowerPoint slides in classes, instructors should have skills to do so, otherwise, they will try to ignore this requirement.

Why some of teachers resist do educational changes strongly? What can be the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education and which arguments can be put forward?

      I think the main reasons of teachers' resistance to educational changes are because of their personalities, but more importantly, the environment that they're teaching.

Could you reflect on a case when one of your university teachers only continued with the traditional ways of teaching, ignoring the changes? Could you please describe the situation? In your opinion is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

      In my case, I do not have any instructor to resist changes. But I had in the past. When that instructor came from other state university to ours, he just read materials from the PowerPoint without any discussion with students. After some time he felt that students are very bored and their absence in class is in a high level. So, he decided to be more interactive in class and prepared some questions for group discussions. It means he was open to changes but the environment he came did

not require him to develop his teaching strategy. Changes require a lot of energy and time but result is mostly positive.

As a student how do you think: Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process or to the students? If so, what is this influence?

Of course, changes make the study process more interesting and I would say , if changes are about using technological tools in this process, more efficient ways would be created to spread information to the students. Less time will be required to get more knowledge, students will not need to carry a lot of papers in their hands, spend a lot of time in the library.

In your opinion what are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

Their biggest fear is to deviate from the traditional way and get punished by university administration. Another fear is not being able to teach with new methods. Other factors include not wanting to spend time and energy on looking for changes, and simply, not feeling a need for changes if students are okay with their own style of teaching.

From the perspective of students how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

Trainings always good idea before taking initiatives. These trainings can be given by professors coming from abroad or the experts of the Ministry of Education itself. Another way is using statistics to prove that if some changes happen, teachers and students will be more productive. Finally, offering incentives and punishments in terms of money to the teachers. It is a bit risky but effective way as teachers care about their profit.

Interview Sample with Higher Education Student: (in case of public university)

Personal background information

Your gender: Female

Your age: 19

The highest level of education you have received: bachelor student

How do you think: How important is a change in higher education? From your experience at university: How do higher education teachers react to the different changes in the system of higher education? What are the main types of their reactions? Is it always positive? Why?

As you know, we are living in such a century changes in all spheres of the life are accepted quickly. Because there is no another choice. Development begins with education. Firstly, we should substitute weak points with other variants. Of course, it cannot be accepted by everyone equally. Especially, in higher education professors suffer from innovations ,they complain about changes.

But taking their ages into consideration, it is normal, I think. So, it means that there should be trainings for teachers beforehand, then they will give positive reaction.

Why some of teachers resist do educational changes strongly? What can be the main reasons of resistance of higher education teachers to the changes in education and which arguments can be put forward?

Some teachers resist educational changes. They consider that they are meaningless even harmful for the system and can spoil the students. As I said before, in my opinion all these disagreements are dealing with the ages of teachers. From the psychological point of view, it is proved that for old people it is very difficult to admit new things. In their opinion, they are right all the time. If you ask the reasons of disagreements, they will not answer the question directly.

Could you reflect on a case when one of your university teachers only continued with the traditional ways of teaching, ignoring the changes? Could you please describe the situation? In your opinion is it better to use traditional ways of teaching and organizing studies or to follow the changes or to create these changes? Why?

In our country, it is an ordinary case that teachers continue with the traditional ways. I have met such kind of things. When I was in the first year of my master education, there was a teacher who was dictating all the material, even though we might just copy and study it. But she didn't agree during all the term. To tell the truth, none of the students complain about it. Because it was meaningless. From my point of view, instructors can use not only innovative ways, but also traditional ones(sometimes). Because, it would be foolishness to ignore all traditional methods. There may be such kind of situations that only they can help us.

As a student how do you think: Does the resistance of teachers to changes in the processes and procedures of higher education somehow influences the whole education process or to the students? If so, what is this influence?

I would like to answer this question shortly. Exactly yes. Because in the system of education, all steps are dealing with each other. Changing one thing will reflect to every sphere and every student.

In your opinion what are the biggest fears of higher education teachers that make them to resist the changes?

In my opinion, the biggest fears of higher education teachers is " not to be able to work with this rules. You know, the young are better in innovations.

From the perspective of students how do you think: What should be done the initiators of changes (policy makers, stakeholders) in order to reduce the resistance to change?

In my opinion, policy makers should take into consideration some points. Firstly, to practice, then apply. Secondly, the government must organize trainings for teachers who resist.

They can be motivated by them. Also, higher salary has the power of to motivate all workers. Educational sphere is not an exception, either.

ANNEX 6

Category	Sub-category	Higher Education Teachers	Higher Education Managers	Higher Education Students
Importance of a change in HE for you	Important	- improves the education system; - prepares students for future which is unpredictable	- develop sustainably in this constantly changing world; - to motivate students and professors in order to find the best teaching and learning methods	- Technological improvements; - students' increasing social activities; - more information flow and exchange; - prepares students for future jobs
	Not important			
Teachers' reaction towards a change in Azerbaijan	Accepting change	- some teachers react positively to changes;	- some teachers react positively to changes;	- some teachers react positively to changes;
	Resisting change	- some teachers react negatively and resist (especially older teachers);	- some teachers react negatively and resist (especially older teachers);	- some teachers react negatively and resist (especially older teachers)
	Creating change	- some teachers suggest new change ideas (especially young teachers)	- some teachers suggest new change ideas (especially young teachers)	
Reasons of resistance	Personal reasons	- addiction to old teaching methods; - Soviet ideology; - reluctant to get acquainted with new technologies;	- not having enough time, busy with private tutoring;	- teachers' personality; - not having enough time, busy with private tutoring; - simply not wanting to go out of the traditions;
	Organisational reasons	- not having supportive and assisting staff members	- no staff trainings in organization	

	Psychological reasons	- no motivation; - reluctant to get acquainted with new technologies; - the idea of "changes give more freedom to learners which affect their learning and attendance negatively" - more work	- no motivation; - lack of salary; - unknown future; -leaving familiar behind	- doubt at the successful appliance of new methods; -not enough trust of the effectiveness of new methods; - can spoil children; - avoiding additional responsibility;
	University-culture related reasons	- no trust between university managers and teachers	- low norms and values in university	- bad environment teachers working in
The biggest fears of teachers	Fear of failure	- losing freedom	- lack of academic competency; - lack of professional competence	- not wanting taking responsibility; - getting punished by university administration; - losing position
	Fear of instability of status	- losing job		
	Fear of unfamiliar	- losing time and money	- leaving comfort zone	- time consuming issue
Influence of resistance to the whole education process	Positive			
	Negative	- Slow improvement; - quality of teaching and the organization of lessons decreases; - level of education in the	- hinders implementation of changes; - prevents development	- less motivation among students to study; - boring lessons

		country decreases; - waste of money and time		
Preferred teaching ways in HE institutions	Traditional teaching Innovative teaching	Traditional and new teaching ways depending on the teacher and environment	Traditional and new teaching ways depending on the teacher and environment	Traditional and new teaching ways depending on the teacher and environment
Suggested ways for initiators of changes to reduce the resistance	Motivation of teachers	- to increase the salary of HE teachers; - university authorities should motivate HE teachers; - to balance working hours between scientific and teaching sections; - secrets surveys which will affect teachers' salary	- to increase the salary of HE teachers	- To offer incentives and punishments in terms of money to the HE teachers; - to increase the salary of HE teachers
	Better information	- to attract HE teachers to the projects and debates; - to inform HE teachers about the real demands of the contemporary society and new approaches to modern educational system especially in developed countries	- to involve HE teachers actively to the change process	- to pilot before presenting - to present a change before its application
	Training of teachers	- Active trainings and seminars	- to organize trainings for HE teachers	- to organize trainings for HE teachers