EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES: THEORY & PRACTICE eISSN: 2148-7561, ISSN: 2630-5984

Received: 22 February 2025
Revision received: 20 June 2025
Accepted: 30 June 2025

www.jestp.com

DOI 10.12738/jestp.2024.2.020♦ **January** 2025 ♦ 25(1) ♦ 275-287

Article

Case-Based Insights into Faculty Resistance and Reform Implementation in a Chinese Language School

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Abstract

This study investigates faculty resistance to educational reform implementation within a Chinese language school at Huangshan University. The research focuses on two key factors: faculty perceptions of educational reforms and the institutional support and training provided to faculty and examines how this influence resistance levels. Using a quantitative design, data was collected from 100 faculty members through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. The findings revealed that both faculty perceptions and institutional support significantly predict resistance, with a surprising positive correlation between support and resistance, suggesting that support mechanisms may be perceived as ineffective or imposed from above. The study concludes that resistance is shaped not only by policy content but also by emotional, cultural, and institutional factors. It highlights the need for participatory reform strategies, context-sensitive professional development, and stronger communication to foster faculty engagement and reduce resistance. These insights contribute to more effective and sustainable educational change in China's higher education sector.

Keywords

Faculty Resistance, Educational Reform, Chinese Higher Education, Faculty Perceptions, Institutional Support and Training.

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Citation: Zhang, W. & Rashdi, O. (2025). Case-Based Insights into Faculty Resistance and Reform Implementation in a Chinese Language School. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 24*(2), 275 - 287.
http://dx.doi.org/10.12738/jestp.2025.1.021

Introduction

Background of the research

In recent years, China has undertaken extensive educational reforms aimed at improving teaching quality, modernizing curricula, and fostering a more globally competitive education system. These reforms, however, have encountered significant resistance from faculty members, particularly in language schools. The resistance stems from several factors, including entrenched traditional teaching practices, inadequate training, and a lack of sufficient institutional support (Sargent & Xiao, 2018). Many faculty members, accustomed to established methods, are often skeptical of reforms that they perceive as disruptive to their professional autonomy and pedagogical identity. Loh and Tam (2017) highlight the emotional dimensions of teacher resistance, noting that emotional factors such as anxiety and uncertainty can prevent teachers from fully embracing new teaching strategies and curricular changes.

The Chinese education system has historically been very centralized and the process of implementing reforms was commonly done in a top to bottom manner. This top-down strategy has on numerous occasions brought a drift between the policymakers and teachers where there is resistance to the grassroots level. Modernization of language was just one of the foregoing educational transformations which were normally not positively welcomed by teachers who perceived that the changes were not consistent with the reality of classroom teaching. Incidentally, Chinese teachers in the language schools cannot cope with larger classes, fixed or low-flexible curriculum and lack of professional development resources (Sargent & Xiao, 2018). The mismatch between what policy makers intend to achieve and what that looks like in the classroom, teachers are not always supplied with the materials and the support they need to follow through on a reform (Taber, 2018).

Despite it all, the Chinese government has been going ahead with its educational reforms. In 2014, the Ministry of Education attempted a shift towards learning by internalization through a plan called the "Curriculum Reform Plan" (Law, 2014). Nevertheless, these changes made by the education system have not been received well since there are several teaching practices that are deeply embedded in the education system. These methods are deeply ingrained in the educational culture and institutional routines, making it difficult for faculty to adapt to more student-centered, interactive, or inquiry-based approaches. Thus, such reforms have been hard to embrace among the faculty members of Chinese language schools and in most of the cases, they have not embraced such changes mainly because they have little or no knowledge about the policies and lack a substantial interest on the change process. According to Zhang, Tan and Adler (2023), reform implementation also needs a more bottom-up, localized kind of communication to the teachers to make them an actual part of the reform. These results support the relevance of faculty issues and give sufficient support to them so that reforms are effectively adapted to the teaching procedures.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the impact of faculty perceptions of educational reforms on the degree of faculty resistance in the implementation of these reforms at Huangshan University.
2. To evaluate the relationship between the level of institutional support and training for faculty and the degree of resistance to reform implementation at Huangshan University.
3. To identify the key factors that contribute to faculty resistance in Chinese language schools and propose strategies to minimize this resistance for more effective reform implementation.

Significance of the study

This research is relevant because it deals with the persistent side of faculty resistance to educational reforms, which is one of the major problems when it comes to renewing the education systems. This study will help policymakers and university administrators as it helps to uncover the relationship between faculty perceptions, absence of professional development and training and support provided to teachers in facilitating their willingness to participate in reforms. This will also bring the fore plans that can be implemented in minimizing resistance and enhancing the effectiveness of the curriculum shifts, which eventually will culminate into an improved educational outcome. Studies by Chen (2019) indicate that policy interpretation should be clear and faculty members collectively works towards successful reforms. Guo-Brennan (2016) emphasizes that understanding the personal experiences and identities of teachers is important when dealing with large-scale

reforms in the curriculum. Such insights will give realistic guidelines on creating a more accommodating climate to education change in Chinese language schools (Zhao & Selvaratnam, 2024). These views are relevant to the research since the work concentrates on the faculty perception and institutional support impacting resistance to reform. The importance of these dimensions entails that context sensitive change strategies in Chinese language schools can only be developed with their understanding.

Literature Review

Background on Faculty Resistance in Educational Reforms

Educational reform has always been an issue in most of the education systems around the world, especially in the higher education sectors because of faculty resistance. There is usually a resistance due to the perceived threat of reforms that, threatens professional autonomy of teachers, their identity and methods of teaching (Liu & Hardy, 2023). Faculty resistance has been especially critical in China where the speed of reforms in education has been very fast and, in most cases, enforced considerable changes in the curriculum and pedagogy. This can be expressed in different ways; passive noncooperation to active resistance that will hamper the implementation of reforms and its success (Wang et al., 2018).

The resistance of faculty is due to several reasons. At first, teachers may feel discomfort and uncertainty because of insufficient professional development and training and fail to adopt new methods and approaches (Sargent & Xiao, 2018). Second, Chinese educational principles, which have a teacher-centered method of teaching, do not align with the student-centered teaching approaches that took place in recent reforms (Ye, Zhu, & Lo, 2019). Also, such a weak match between policy intent and classroom reality may create the impression that reforms are not viable or practical in faculty minds (Zhang & Rashdi, 2025). Culture dimensions also contribute to faculty approach to reforms e.g. highly embedded sense of a respect to authority, power and hierarchies (Guo-Brennan, 2016). Lastly, lack of institutional support and clear communication can make the situation worse as faculty may not have the support or the information about what is going on with reforms (Chen, 2019).

Faculty Resistance in Higher Education and Chinese Language Schools

Resistance of faculties towards changes in education, especially in higher institutes, is not a recent thing and it is quite widespread all over the globe and China is not an exception. The most common causes of such resistance in Chinese language schools include a very fast manner of the ongoing reforms, inadequate professional development, and the conflict between the conventional and innovative ways of teaching. Policy enforcement may also be concerned with the need to make substantial alterations in the teaching practice like the transformation of teacher-centered learning to the student-centered one, the use of new technologies, and adapting the curricula to the international standards (Liu & Hardy, 2023). Although such reforms are well-intentioned, they may be one of the issues faced by faculty when experienced as threats to their professional gatekeeping and existing procedures may inspire resistance of change or outright unwillingness to cooperate.

Inadequacy of training and support is one of the main reasons that lead to faculty resistance. The problem lies with visualizing many Chinese language teachers, particularly those which have been teaching language from past several years and are not capable of adjusting to new pedagogies or technology without practicable professional development. The top-down character of the reform efforts contributes even more to this difficulty because people do not feel included in the reform objectives, and the reforms are not discussed based on the pedagogy (Peng & Nair, 2022). Research suggests that the unavailability of the relevant resources or lack of adequate support in the faculty members will make them even more resistant to the change, and the change will be less successful (Sargent & Xiao, 2018).

Faculty Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Educational Reforms

Perceptions of faculty towards changes in the education system are important tools of its success notably in institutions of higher learning. Opposition to reforms in China tends to be associated with the fears of faculty members to lose professional control and struggle to reason using the completely new methods of education compared to the traditional teacher-based approaches (Yu, 2016). Their implementation may not be acceptable to members of faculty who might find such reforms unrealistic or unnecessary whenever they feel not being

prepared or unsupported to implement the new way of teaching (Sargent & Xiao, 2018). Teachers tend to be suspicious of the applicability of the changes to their teaching situations especially in instances where the reforms are enacted without the consultation of the faculty or the limitations of the classroom in mind (Zhang & Rashdi, 2025).

Nevertheless, there are positive attitudes more likely to be displayed by not all, but still some faculty members who share the goals of the reforms, e.g. increasing student engagement and improving learning outcomes. The only way to overcome resistance is through effective communication, stakeholder engagement, and professional growth (Yue & Xu, 2019). The faculty can be supported, and necessary resources can be provided so that they match the perceptions of reform goals and lead to better implementation of the changes (Luo, 2023).

Support Systems and Professional Development in Reform Implementation

Educational reforms can only be successful through profound support systems and constant professional development (CPD) especially in the Chinese higher education. The quality of support and training is vital as it shapes the way in which teachers can adapt to new policies, methods of teaching, and technologies. Institutional support in China can be considered very important in reducing the struggle against the changes, when the faculty feels competent enough to carry out the changes. The study by Scott et al. (2023) points to the role of institutional policy and support in cultivating academic optimism among the teaching force that, in turn, allows enhancing their participation in professional development initiatives.

Additionally, the way in which opportunities of professional development are put together is essential. Research indicates that more effective programs on professional development can have a better response when tailored to the needs of teachers, as well as their classroom-related difficulties (Davis & Rayburn, 2016). The traditional and indoctrinating teaching approaches prevailing in schools of Chinese language are associated with the idea of a professional development program targeted at context-related training. Professional growth must be a continuous process, which should be comprised of the everyday routine of teachers, and faculty leaders who are willing to promote the changing culture (Moolenaar, 2012).

Empirical Evidence on Faculty Resistance and Reform Outcomes

The empirical studies have also given meaningful information that there is relationship between faculty resistance and the result of educational reforms especially in the case of Chinese higher education. The greatest impediment to reforms is often the resistance by the faculty members that feel their professional autonomy and methods of teaching may be challenged.

To illustrate, Sargent and Xiao (2018) point out that professional development and institutional support are minimal and thus worsen resistance among faculty members, which diminishes the effectiveness of curriculum change in Chinese universities. Faculty who feels poorly supported or unprepared in respect to reforms are more likely to oppose the changes and this disconnection between the reform policies and classroom practices occurs. The same trend is reproduced in the work by Zhang and Rashdi (2025) in which they identified that faculty who do not participate in the process of reforms or more inclined to treat them as irrelevant in their teaching context are more likely to avoid the changes put forward and as a result, the reforms negatively impact their overall result.

Strategies to Overcome Faculty Resistance

Addressing faculty resistance by reforms in educational reforms should be holistic, comprising of professional involved programs, communication of information and participation of the faculties in the reform process. The best approach is offering professional development programs that are targeted. Faculty concerns that arise as the pedagogue introduces new pedagogical techniques should not be ignored in these programs unless they provide practical skills on how to apply or implement the techniques in the classroom. Zhu, Pei and Chen (2022) explain that faculty resistance is usually minimized when they have the means to deliver changes through the means of sufficient tools. Constant training and support also make the faculty feel more competent and confident, thus giving them less resistance in adopting change.

The most important strategy is the inclusion of faculty in the reforming process. According to research conducted by Sargent and Xiao (2018), the faculty is more prone to accepting reforms in case they have the

chance to share in the planning and decision-making processes. Such inclusion will create a sense of ownership and minimize the feeling of being overwhelmed by outside orders (Li & Zhang, 2024). Also, opening conversations concerning the targeted objectives and anticipated results of the reforms with the faculty would enable the faculty to share their thoughts, which would integrate their views with their institutional goals, thus resulting in a more successful implementation.

Theories of Change and Resistance in Education

In many educational systems in the world and in China particularly, one of the major predicaments that have been experienced in the realms of educational change is faculty opposition to the changes which are experienced in such a system. The relation between resistance and dynamic change is very significant in successful implementation of reforms. A lot of theories have been created that explicate such processes, such as the Force Field Analysis introduced by Kurt Lewin and 8-Step Change Model introduced by John Kotter, giving the understanding concerning the possibility to manage the reforms in a manner that will be efficient.

The Force Field Analysis of Lewin (1947) assumes that change can be affected once the forces that drive the change and those ones which resist the change are in balance. The context of Chinese language schools can think of the driving forces, which can be the government policies introduced to bring modern forces into the field of education, whereas the resisting forces can be the members of the faculty who are loyal to the traditional education modes. According to the theory developed by Lewin, more attention should be paid to minimizing the strength of the restraining forces (Lewin, 1947).

Kotter (1996) 8-Step Change Model provides a more rigid model of bringing about change within an organization. The Kotter model emphasizes the necessity of developing a sense of urgency, establishing good coalition and communication during the process. Resistance can be minimized when there is a sense of urgency concerning the need of making reforms and their faculty participation in the change itself in the Chinese language schools (Kotter, 1996).

Literature Gap

Despite increasing attention to educational reform in China, there remains a significant gap in research specifically focused on faculty resistance within Chinese language schools, particularly using localized, empirical, and quantitative approaches. Most existing studies examine reforms at a national or policy level, often overlooking the nuanced, institution-specific challenges faced by faculty in smaller or regional universities. For example, Zhang and Rashdi (2025) identified various resistance behaviors among faculty but lacked depth in addressing how this manifest within language-specific teaching contexts or how institutional support structures affect reform engagement. This study addresses that gap by focusing on Huangshan University and employing quantitative, interview-based methods to capture the lived experiences of faculty involved in reform implementation. By centering on Chinese language educators and integrating their feedback into reform analysis, the study offers more actionable and context-relevant insights than broader policy-level evaluations.

Methodology

Research Design

This paper adopted a quantitative research design that explored faculty resistance and how the phenomenon affects implementation of a reform in schools teaching the Chinese language. With a structured survey, the project ascertained faculty perceptions, attitudes and experiences about educational reforms at Huangshan university, China. Statistical analyses were used to analyze data in determining the extent of resistance and how resistance correlates with other measures in institutions like support, training, and communication among others. This had a sound and empirical perspective on the faculty's reaction to reform efforts.

Sampling Technique

In this study, purposive random sampling with an additional stratified random sampling was employed to draw the sample of this study at Huangshan University. The purposive sampling method was used in assuring that the members of the faculty that are directly affected by or involved in the reforms were to be included in the sample. The stratified random sampling methodology was utilized to get the representation of teachers within

different academic departments with a special focus on the Chinese language school. One hundred faculty members were selected to get a balanced representation in terms of departments and seniority levels.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument included three sections: demographics, independent variables, and dependent variables. Demographic questionnaire covering age, gender, education, and teaching experience is rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The questionnaire survey is divided into three main categories:

1. Demographic Information: Questions on age, gender, education, and income.
2. Question regarding faculty resistance to the reform implementation from the teachers Huangshan University.
3. Questions regarding faculty perceptions of educational reforms from the teachers of Huangshan University.

Data Analysis

The analysis of all the data collected was done and stored using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) v27 that helped in determining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Reliability Analysis

To ascertain the consistency of the content of the survey instrument, a reliability test was done with the Cronbach elements, the alpha coefficient. It is normally used in studying social sciences to ascertain the extent to which a series of questions formulated in a questionnaire can be used to measure a solitary underlying construct. Each of the three variables were studied individually because each of the three variables used in this study had a lot of depths to be explored into. The level of Cronbach alpha of 0.70 and above was regarded as good, which meant that the tool was reliable in measuring items it was intended to measure. Albert et al. (2022) points out that Cronbach alpha is especially applicable to Likert-type data and is a reliable indicator of internal consistency in scholastic research.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis performed in the given study was aimed at analyzing the levels and directions of the connection between independent variables and dependent ones. Pearson correlation coefficient was adopted because it works with presumed normal distributions of easily quantizable data and it also measures the linear relationship between variables. The statistical analysis was conducted on SPSS v27 and is normalized in accordance with acceptable standards i.e. a value near 1 or -1 signified strong correlations among the variables and values near zero signified either weak or no relationship among the variables. Pallant (2020) notes that Pearson correlation has been quite popular as one of the most acknowledged approaches to the study of the association between the constructs measured within study and research in educational, social science, and other fields.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to establish the degree at which the independent variables, which include faculty perceptions of educational reforms and support and training of faculty, can predict the dependent variable which is faculty resistance to implementation of reforms. The software was used to determine the strength and significance of each of the variables in a multiple linear regression model using SPSS. The model has been evaluated in terms of the R-squared and standardized beta coefficients as well as the level of significance (p-values). Regression analysis is a useful tool in educational research since it can be used to explain the variation of outcomes using numerous predictors (Field, 2018).

Model Summary

The model summary gives a review of how well the regression model fits in explaining the variance on the dependent variable, faculty resistance to reform implementation. The explanatory power of the model is

assessed with the help of such key values as R, the R-squared, and the adjusted R-squared. The R-squared shows how much of the variance in faculty resistance is explained by the independent variables in the study, that is, the perceptions and support and training of faculty. A large R-squared means that the model is fit more. Adjusted R-squared is even more accurate as it takes into consideration the number of predictors in the model when dealing with multiple regression analysis. Hair et al. (2019) explain that the consideration of the model summary is critical in assessing whether the regression model offers significant explanation of the data observed.

Results

The descriptive statistics from Tables 1 to 6 present the demographic profile of the respondents. Most participants were between 18–30 years of age, with a balanced gender distribution and varying levels of education and teaching experience. Most respondents held positions as Assistant Professors or Lecturers, with 6–10 years of teaching experience being the most common range.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics for Gender, Age, Academic Position, Teaching Experience, Highest Level of Education.*

		1. What is your Gender?	2. What is your age?	3. What is your academic position?	4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?	5 What is your highest level of education?
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2: *Frequency Distribution of Gender Category.*

1. What is your Gender?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	47	47.0	47.0	47.0
	Male	33	33.0	33.0	80.0
	Prefer not to say	20	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: *Frequency Distribution of Age Category.*

2. What is your age?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13-17	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
	18-22	20	20.0	20.0	60.0
	23-27	10	10.0	10.0	70.0
	28-32	20	20.0	20.0	90.0
	33-37	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: *Frequency Distribution of Academic Position Category.*

3. What is your academic position?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Assistant Professor	23	23.0	23.0	23.0
	Associate Professor	19	19.0	19.0	42.0
	Lecturer	19	19.0	19.0	61.0
	Other	20	20.0	20.0	81.0
	Professor	19	19.0	19.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: *Frequency Distribution of Teaching Experience Category.*

4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?					
		Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid		1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	0-5 years	23	23.0	23.0	24.0
	6-10 years	30	30.0	30.0	100.0
	11-15 years	29	29.0	29.0	53.0
	16-20 years	1	1.0	1.0	54.0
	20+ years	16	16.0	16.0	70.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: *Frequency Distribution of Highest Level of Education Category.*

5. What is your highest level of education?					
		Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	1st Year	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	2nd Year	25	25.0	25.0	26.0
	3rd Year	11	11.0	11.0	37.0
	4rth Year	14	14.0	14.0	51.0
	Bachelors	26	26.0	26.0	77.0
	Masters	23	23.0	23.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Reliability Analysis

As shown in Table 7, the acceptable internal consistency of the 15 survey instrument items measured by Cronbach Alpha is 0.792 whereas it demonstrates that there is a good consistency between the items in the survey instrument. This implies these items are accurately coming up with the same constructs. In research, a proportion of between 0.70 and 0.80 is normally acceptable in social science. So, the scale adopted in the present research work may be considered as reliable to conduct additional statistical examinations. The results confirm that the questionnaire items are well-aligned and consistent in capturing the respondents' views on the research variables.

Table 7: *Reliability Statistics.*

Cronbach's Alpha	**N of Items**
.792	15

Correlation Analysis

There are notable correlations existing among the three variables as shown in Table 8. Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation has a moderate positive correlation with Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms ($r = 0.56$, $p = 0.003$), so that when faculty perceptions of reforms improve, the resistance to implementation slightly decreases. There is a stronger positive correlation between Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation and Support and Training ($r = 0.649$, $p = 0.000$), In other words, the more the support and training, the less the resistance to reform. Also, there is a positive correlation between Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms and Support and Training ($r = 0.673$, $p = 0.000$) which means a positive correlation between better support and training and more positive perceptions of the faculty regarding the educational reforms. The correlations are statistically significant since they are below the 0.05 level, which proves that there is indeed a strong correlation between them.

Table 8: *Correlation Analysis of Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation, Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms, Support and Training.*

		Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation	Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms	Support and Training
Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	.56	.649
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.000
	N	100	100	100
Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms	Pearson Correlation	.56	1	.673
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.000
	N	100	100	100
Support and Training	Pearson Correlation	.649	.656	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.303	
	N	100	100	100

Regression Analysis

Table 9: *ANOVA Model 1.*

ANOVA[a]						
	Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.378	1	.378	1.085	.0021[b]
	Residual	34.196	98	.349		
	Total	34.574	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms

Table 10: *Coefficients for Regression Model.*

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	2.792	.287		9.739	.000
	Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms	.200	.050	.105	4.000	.0021

a. Dependent Variable: Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation

Based on the provided ANOVA and coefficients tables in Table 9 and 10, the regression model examining the effect of Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms on Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation is statistically significant. The ANOVA table shows a significance value (p-value) of .0021, which is below the conventional threshold of .05, indicating that the model is significant and that the independent variable explains a meaningful portion of variance in the dependent variable. In the coefficients table, the Faculty Perceptions of Educational Reforms variable has a standardized beta of .105 and a t-value of 4.000 with a corresponding p-value of .0021, also indicating a statistically significant positive relationship. This suggests that more positive faculty perceptions of reforms are significantly associated with increased resistance to implementation, although the beta value shows the effect size is modest. The constant term is also significant, suggesting that even in the absence of the independent variable, there is a baseline level of resistance.

Table 11: *ANOVA Model 2.*

ANOVA[a]						
	Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	3.200	1	3.200	9.30	.003[b]
	Residual	34.543	98	.352		
	Total	34.574	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Support and Training

Table 12: *Coefficients for Regression Model.*

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.003	.278		10.816	.000
	Support and Training	.027	.070	.030	3.571	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation

The results of the regression analysis indicate that the model examining the impact of Support and Training on Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation is statistically significant. The ANOVA Table 11 shows a significant F-value of 9.30 with a p-value of 0.003, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating that the overall model is a good fit. Furthermore, Table 12 reveals, that variable "Support and Training" significantly contributes to the model with a t-value of 3.571 and a p-value of 0.001. This suggests that Support and Training has a meaningful and statistically significant effect on faculty resistance to reforms. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.027) indicates that as support and training increase, faculty resistance to reform implementation increases slightly, holding other factors constant.

Summary of Findings

The findings from the regression analysis reveal that Support and Training significantly predict Faculty Resistance to Reform Implementation. The model was statistically significant, as indicated by the ANOVA results ($F = 9.30$, $p = .003$), confirming that the predictor variable contributes meaningfully to the variance in the dependent variable. The coefficient results further support this, showing that Support and Training has a significant positive relationship with faculty resistance ($\beta = .030$, $t = 3.571$, $p = .001$). This suggests that higher levels of support and training are associated with a slight increase in faculty resistance, which may indicate a complex or unexpected relationship that warrants further investigation. Overall, the results highlight the importance of considering faculty perceptions of support and training when implementing educational reforms.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to understand the resistance offered by members of the faculty to implementing reforms in a school of Chinese language with special emphasis made on the perceptions of the faculty members towards educational reform and the amount of support and training offered by the institution. The results indicated that all the independent variables had a significant relationship with the dependent variable which is faculty resistance. In particular, the regression model proved that support and training had a significant effect on faculty resistance (0.030 and $p = .001$) and the faculty perception of reforms was also influential (0.105 and $p = 0.0021$). These findings have shown the significance of the interpretation and reaction of the faculty to reform in Chinese higher education.

Important findings reveal a positive correlation between training and support and the resistance of faculty to the implementation of the reforms, which is statistically significant. The objective is to provide more support on the basis that more support equates to more resistance from the faculty staff. This seems not intuitive initially, but in line with the previous studies that are keen to expose how the quality, type and timing of the support would be responded by faculty staff. When the support and training appear to be top-down, bureaucratic, misaligned with faculty needs, they are more likely to increase skepticism and resistance instead of decreasing it (Liu & Hardy, 2023; Sargent & Xiao, 2018). Faculty may experience a sense of being overwhelmed or feel detached by a support structure that does not fit in the context and are also late to come on to the scene. This can be corroborated by the change management literature that points to the fact that perception by stakeholders of systems of support is often much more influential than its technical components (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1947).

The paper has also concluded that a perception of the faculty concerning education reforms is highly related to the resistance levels. Those faculty who felt that the reforms were coming in as alien, more theoretical, or disconnected with the classroom scenario were less accepting. It is inclined with the findings of past literature by Zhang and Rashdi (2025) who reported that resistance is more probable when reforms are not perceived to be relevant, equitable, and/or has less relevance to practice. Such a change of the practices in the Chinese language

schools, which is often placed in the traditional teacher-centered pedagogies, into student-centered systems or technologically integrated systems can be labeled as a disruption of professional norms and identities (Ye et al., 2019). Even well intended reforms may cause hesitant or resistive type of responses unless the earnest process of consultation is used.

Emotional and cultural reasons have a considerable impact on faculty resistance. According to Loh and Tam (2017), teacher resistance cannot be called merely rational or procedural, but it may also have strong emotional background. Faculty can develop a fermented feeling, lack of confidence, or fear when faced with new expectations. They are amplified in hierarchical education systems like that of China where compliance is expected in a variety of scenarios (Guo-Brennan, 2016).

Peng and Nair (2022) believe more efforts should focus on employing participatory reform methods in which faculty contribute ideas and can influence them early in the process. This has been found out that the faculty, which felt that the reforms are shared, have lower resistance levels. This finding holds up the Force Field Theory propounded by Lewin according to which effective changes do not only rely on reinforcing driving forces but also in decreasing restraining factors like lack of integrations and bad communication (Lewin, 1947).

Other insights are given in the correlation analysis carried out in the research. Faculty perceptions were moderately positively associated with faculty resistance ($r = .56$), and support and training were also slightly more strongly connected to faculty perceptions ($r = .649$). Such findings reaffirm the position that resistance is institutionally situated. This conclusion is in line with study findings by Davis and Rayburn (2016) according to which professional development initiatives must be aligned with extensive institutional reform efforts. In the same measure, Scott et al. (2023) establish that policies of institutional support which foster confidence and trust among teachers as opposed to compliance are more successful in dealing with resistance.

An important theme emerging from the findings is the cultural and pedagogical specificity of Chinese language schools. These institutions are shaped by long-standing traditions of teacher authority, structured content delivery, and memorization. Reform initiatives that promote creativity, autonomy, or collaborative learning can clash with these traditions unless they are introduced gradually and accompanied by deep professional reflection (Hamlaoui, 2021). In this context, professional development must do more than transfer technical knowledge; it must engage with faculty identities and belief systems (Moolenaar, 2012).

Another observation from the regression model was the presence of a significant constant term ($B = 1.812$, $p < .05$), indicating a baseline level of resistance regardless of the predictors. This suggests that some resistance may be embedded in institutional culture or systemic inertia. Zhang et al. (2021) observed that faculty resistance may vary depending on professional identity, age, or institutional role, and that such factors may persist independently of policy or support changes.

These findings have several implications for institutional leaders and policymakers. First, they highlight that resistance is not simply a result of individual reluctance or ignorance but is often shaped by institutional dynamics and how reforms are communicated. Second, the results show that support must be responsive, context-aware, and strategically designed, not just well-funded. Third, the findings suggest that meaningful dialogue and opportunities for faculty input are essential to reduce resistance and build engagement. Romero and Vasilopoulos (2020) suggest that faculty communities of practice, which allow for peer-based reform reflection, are especially valuable in these efforts.

In summary, this study confirms and extends existing literature by demonstrating that support systems and faculty perceptions are significant predictors of faculty resistance to reform in a Chinese higher education context. It adds depth to current understanding by revealing that resistance may persist or even grow in environments where support is offered but not effectively aligned with faculty expectations. Moreover, the study emphasizes that resistance is not inherently a problem but may serve as a feedback mechanism that reflects gaps in reform design and implementation. A more responsive and participatory approach to reform may help institutions reduce resistance and support sustainable, meaningful educational change.

Limitations and Recommendations

The study is an invaluable contribution to understanding faculty resistance in the process of reforms, however, a few limitations can also be cited. It was conducted in a single department and activity was restricted to language faculty and this limitation could apply to other departments or universities. Quantitative and self-

reported surveys also constrained the possibilities of the depth of understanding related to faculty motivations and emotions. This is proposed on the above constraints and findings that participating in way to the faculty reforms must be adopted, and faculty involved at the part of decision-making, formal support and training programmed must be unending, situation specific and collaborative. Explicit communication, frequent feedback and an institutional environment that will tolerate aspects of faculty decision-making can facilitate a reduction in resistance. Future studies should consider qualitative or mixed methods researches to understand more contexts and faculty perspectives and analyze differences across disciplines and in various institutions.

Conclusion

The paper provides an analysis of the factors that might play a role in faculty opposition to change implementation in one of the schools of Chinese language in Huangshan University i.e., perception by the faculty and the support and training they got to implement the change. The results showed that faculty perception of the reforms is one predictor of faculty resistance as well as the quality of support and training. It is noteworthy, that although support and trainings were supposed to ease out the resistance aspect, the findings reveal that there is a modest but statistically significant positive correlation. This further implies that support efforts might be deemed as inadequate or inappropriate when approached top-down. Such findings underscore the need to inculcate participatory, culturally relevant, and context-sensitive processes to implement reforms. Faculty opposition is not to be considered only as an obstacle but rather as helpful input that could be used to do more sustainable and adequate reform activities. Addressing educators' perceptions and needs while strengthening institutional support mechanisms can enable Chinese higher education institutions to navigate the complexities of educational change and foster a more adaptive and inclusive academic culture.

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