



**ADA UNIVERSITY**  
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**MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Exploring the Definition of Sense of School Belonging in Schools with Female Teachers**  
**Outnumbering**

Thesis prepared for the degree of Master of Arts

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### **STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY**

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## Abstract

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging. The following research questions guided the study. 1. *“How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?”* 2. *“What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?”*

As a theoretical framework, the study used Lazarsfeld and Merton's (1954) *theory of homophily*. A qualitative exploratory research design was employed to investigate boys' sense of school belonging in an environment where female teachers outnumbered male teachers. The study was conducted in two public schools in Baku, which were selected through convenience sampling. Accordingly, the data were collected employing qualitative research methodologies with the help of semi-structured individual interviews with students and teachers. Ten student and six teacher participants were included.

The findings of the study show that the sense of school belonging is consistent with the theory of homophily such as gender and age factors play a significant role in students' sense of school belonging. However, due to the lack of exposure to male teachers, male students find it difficult to say how it would contribute to their definition of a sense of school belonging.

*Keywords:* a sense of belonging, theory of homophily, teacher gender impact, male students, and male teachers.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

At schools, the outnumbering of female teachers is a worldwide phenomenon, and female teachers' majority - or male teachers' minority - is attributed to various reasons including the job is underpaid; females are biologically more fit to teach; and teaching is culturally regarded more feminine (Martino, 2008). From time to time, public panic emerges to attract more male teachers to schools, which is often expressed in the popular media and educational forums through discourses that construct male teachers as dying breeds or facing extinction (Cloer, 2006; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2006; Mitchell, 2004; NEA, 2004). The reasons behind such concerns are male students' academic underachievement and lack of exposure to male role models or father figures, especially in single-mother families (Carrington, 2002; Sommers, 2001; Titus, 2004). However, there are studies that challenge the assumption that underachieving boys will perform better with male teachers and that teacher gender has no direct effect on students' academic outcomes (Cho, 2012; Winters, Haight, Swaim, & Pickering, 2013). The research findings also suggest that the idea of a role model is an ambiguous notion, and the desired characteristics of a male role model are not gender specific, and female teachers can also model masculine traits (Brownhill, 2014; Hutchings et al, 2008). What is more, Skelton (2012) states that not all teachers are willing to act as role models, but a role model is usually a peer or relative of the students (Ashley, 2003; Bricheno & Thornton, 2007). The third concern is related to "fatherless" children needing male teachers (Martino & Kehler, 2006). A male teacher is important to act as a father figure, especially for boys coming from single-parent families, but the presence of a father figure needs to establish a long-term parenting bond and because most schools change teachers annually and the same teacher may not be continuously available all the time, that case reduces the effectiveness of a male teacher's compensation as a father figure.

Moreover, in Australia, for example, same-sex couples with children are predominantly female couples (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013), and there is no evidence that children from loving same-sex families suffer any adverse psychological outcomes (Short, 2007).

In contrast to the abovementioned reasons for the public panic, McGrath, Moosa, Van Bergen and Bhana (2020) bring a more educational perspective to the male teacher shortage at schools. Based on the research findings across several disciplines, the need for male teachers can be analyzed at the classroom level: the teacher's gender diversity addresses diverse groups and cultivates a sense of belonging by giving chances to diverse groups to establish bonds with teachers similar to their identity (McGrath et al, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Labor is the foundation of individual and public welfare, and everyone has the right to freely choose an activity, profession, and place of work according to his or her will (The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Article 35). The right to work, regardless of gender identity, is an integral part of fundamental human rights; therefore, this issue is repeatedly guaranteed by various legal codes. Education Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2009) secures the creation of equal opportunities for each citizen and doesn't tolerate any discrimination, regardless of the individual's gender, race, language, religion, political views, nationality, social status, background, and state of health. (Article 5.2). In addition, the same law guarantees equal requirement opportunities for all citizens regardless of their backgrounds (Article 5.3). However, The Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan (2020) indicates that if in 2000, the total percentage of females (including heads of the schools) was 50.2, this number has increased to 83.4 percent in 2020. In parallel, cases like school dropouts and a decline in university test scores are observed among boys. For instance, according to the State Statistical Committee (2021), the gender

percentage of students in Baku during university admission is 56.8 in favor of girls. Also, in 2022 the percentage of 15 years old boys who left school for vocational education is 83.8 (State Statistical Committee, 2022). Those numbers bring up an assumption that encourages exploring boys' sense of school belonging in relation to the male teacher shortage. The sense of school belonging is a multidimensional construct that can be generally defined as the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment (Petrucci, Marcionetti, & Castelli, 2022). According to the principle of homophily, people, who have similar social and demographic characteristics to one's self are inclined to be drawn to and associate with (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Considering that principle in student-teacher relationships at the classroom level, there raises a possibility that teacher gender facilitates a sense of school belonging for students who are male by providing opportunities to form relationships with teachers perceived as being similar to themselves (Hutchings et al., 2008). For example, McGrath et al. (2013) report that both boys and girls think that it was easier to relate to a teacher of the same gender. These findings raise the possibility that, like other classroom relationships (Farmer & Farmer, 1996), some student-teacher relationships may be homophilous. Since boys tend to report lower school belonging than girls (Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2012), further research is needed to examine associations between school belonging and teacher gender.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed

to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?
2. What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging.

In this part of the research study, the literature review explored the existing studies conducted in the last two decades in the western (European and North American) context for two reasons: first, the significant number of relevant studies was done in western countries, so they provide more data, and the second reason is that after the independence of the Azerbaijan Republic, the western education system has played a role model in the modernization process of our national education (Aghayeva, 2019). The purpose of this literature review is to explore how the topic is defined in the existing studies, how much is already known about it, and what gaps exist in the literature. Therefore, in the first part of this literature review, the definition of the sense of school belonging is identified based on the relevant studies conducted in the western context. The second part of the literature review describes the identified factors that foster the sense of school belonging; in sequence, the benefits of the topic for students are illustrated. In the end, the theoretical framework and the gaps in the literature are described.

### **Definition of Sense of Belonging in School Context**

Theories define the sense of belonging in a general social context, while Willms (2000) defines school belonging as a psychological construct as an attachment to school with a sense of being embraced and valued by the community of the school. Besides that, school belonging has no one single definition, and in different research, it is identified with different constructs like a sense of community (Osterman, 2000), positive interactions with others (Hamm & Faircloth,

2005), school connectedness (Jose, Ryan, & Pryor, 2012), school identification (Wang & Eccles, 2012), school attachment (Hallinan, 2008), and a sense of community (Osterman, 2000). The definitions are usually used interchangeably.

### **The Contributors to Foster Sense of School Belonging**

Previous studies reveal some common contributing factors to boost the sense of school belonging including school environment, safety, parent support, peer relationships, extra-curricular activities, and teacher support are stressed as significant contributors (Libbey, 2004).

School environment refers to classroom climate, recreational spaces, socialization, and school size and location (Anderson, Hamilton, & Hattie, 2004; Chan, 2008; Waters, Cross, & Shaw, 2010). For instance, school location is an important contributor to school belonging; that is, students' sense of belonging is lower in urban school settings compared to suburban schools (Anderman, 2002). In addition, according to Cunningham (2007), student safety is another significant environmental indication that deserves to be emphasized. His findings suggest that a bullying-free school environment is positively associated with school belonging. Kuperminc, Darnell, & Alvarez-Jimenez (2008) study finds out a positive relationship between parental involvement and the achievement of students. Studies also reveal that both boys and girls who engage in extracurricular activities report a higher sense of school belonging compared to their peers (Blomfield & Barber, 2010).

During the teaching and learning process, teachers and students are the main actors as they stand at the core of the process. No doubt, the teacher's contribution to the sense of belonging bears great significance. Teachers have a great chance to promote mutual respect and provide a safe environment, and academic support (Anderman, 2003). For instance, Brewster and Bowen (2004) conducted a study with the participation of six hundred ninety-nine high school

students in the US and found that even though support from peers and parents matters, teacher support is a more significant element. Other studies (Anderman, 2003; Garcia-Reid, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Sakiz, 2012) have widely supported their findings ( Allen et al., 2016).

Stevens et al. (2007) exploration of the teacher effect on the sense of belonging uncovers two positive aspects of teacher support: mastery goal orientation and academic pressure. The former refers to students' acquisition of new skills through developing personal goals, while the latter is about encouraging new ideas.

### **Benefits of School Belonging**

Previous research on school belonging confirmed the positive influence of the sense of belonging on several individual physical, psychological, and social outcomes (Slaten et al., 2016). As indicated by Petrucci, Marcionetti, and Castelli (2022), the sense of school belonging deserves attention for several reasons. There exists a connection between the sense of school belonging and academic performance. The sense of belonging boosts academic performance and reinforces social acceptance, self-esteem, and well-being; meanwhile, it reduces anxiety, depression, delinquency, school dropout, and substance use (Petrucci et al., 2022). Benefits associated with physical functioning have also been reported and include reduced risk of stroke (Boden-Albala et al., 2005), lowered disease risk (Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2009), and reduced mortality (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010). What is more, McNeely and Falci (2004) found that in grades 7-12, the more connected students felt to their teachers in particular, the less likely they were to engage in what researchers referred to as six health-risk behaviors: cigarette smoking, drinking to the point of getting drunk, marijuana use, suicidal ideation, sexual behaviours, and weapon-related violence.

## Theoretical Framework

Before conducting research on the sense of school belonging, it is needed to explore the existing literature to discover how the concept has been defined and studied at different times by different researchers.

When examining the literature, the concept appears in classic and contemporary literature. Maslow's *theory of human motivation* (1943) first mentioned the sense of belonging as a third need, after physiological and safety, in his hierarchy of needs. Other researchers carried it to the classroom environment, such as Dewey's (1938) concept of supportive school environments, Vygotsky's (1962) role of the social environment in schools, and Erikson's (1968) social identification in educational settings. All those theories were seminal and led way to relatively more contemporary theories. Baumeister and Leary (1995) put forth the *belongingness hypothesis* that human beings instinctively need to possess at least some degree of interpersonal relationships with other humans, and such a need is universal and requires frequent, stable, and affectionate connection. Human beings' desire to belong encourages them to establish social bonds, and when such desire is not met, it does mental and physical damage like depression, stress, and other carnal diseases.

According to the *homophily principle*, a concept in sociology, there is an inclination in society to create bonds among similar individuals. Group members with similar characteristics – age, gender, status, and culture - are more likely to associate with each other than by chance. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) differentiate between *status and value homophily* types. While the attributes of the *status homophily* are innate and acquired characteristics, *value homophily* is characterized by the value and belief set of individuals. According to this principle, gender is an important factor to build a mutual understanding between the same sexes. Therefore, male

students' feelings of being accepted and understood in a female teacher-dominating school environment deserve attention to study.

### **Gap in Literature**

School belonging has been subject to many previous studies; however, there are still gaps that need to be properly addressed. Existing studies have been limited in understanding the needs of marginalized minorities such as socio-economically unprivileged or underrepresented groups, students with disabilities, and students with behavioral problems. As mentioned above, they mostly focused on other contributors such as school size, parents, teachers, and peer support, but gender as a factor has not been encountered. Therefore, further research is necessary to plug that gap. Moreover, still more research is needed to explore how students themselves perceive their sense of belonging at school. Finally, since most of the studies have been conducted in western societies, the definition of a sense of belonging cannot be generalized to other cultures. Sense of belonging especially in still economically developing and traditional societies like Azerbaijan may differ to some extent.

Boys at public schools can also be counted as a marginalized group as the school environment is highly feminized and classroom culture has been designed to meet girls' needs more than that of boys (Spilt et al.,2012). According to Spilt et.al (2012), as a result of the feminization of education, both male and female teachers value female-typical behaviors such as cooperation, compliance, and attentiveness more than stereotypical male behaviors such as liveliness, impulsivity, and autonomy. Such female-typical behavioral expectations raise a question that if it estranges boys and reduces their sense of school belonging. All these gaps, theories, and homophily principle suggest a necessity to explore, describe, and understand boys'

perceptions of the sense of school belonging in the socially marginalized school environment in Azerbaijan.

### **Chapter 3. Methodology**

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?
2. What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?

In this chapter, research design and methods, target population, sampling, data collection process, trustworthiness, data analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations will be described.

#### **Research Design and Methods**

Since the study aims to explore how teachers and male students define the sense of school belonging and identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of the sense of school belonging, it employed a qualitative exploratory research design. Exploratory research design aims to discover new perceptions and insights through an initial investigation and explore new ideas about the research topic. Furthermore, such a design method is distinguished for its flexible characteristics, and it is highly effective when there is little or no knowledge about the phenomenon in question (Blanche, Durrenheim, & Painter, 2006). According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research helps explore a situation and develop a profound understanding of the central phenomenon. In addition, the choice of research design should meet the expectations of the study and answer the research questions (Crotty, 1998). Considering that there has not been performed any similar study at Baku public schools, an exploratory qualitative research design was applied

to uncover male students and teachers' perceptions of the potential role of the teacher gender in the student-teacher relationship in terms of predicting boys' sense of school belonging.

### **Sources of Data**

To seek answers to the research questions, data from male students and teachers were collected through semi-structured interviews. Interview as a data-collecting tool is effective when it is not possible to observe behaviors, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them, and it is also necessary when past events are impossible to replicate (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### **Semi-Structured Interview**

To do an in-depth perception exploration, semi-structured one-on-one interviews with students (See Appendix A), and teachers (See Appendix B) were used to uncover participants' observations about the topic. This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To ensure the clarity of the interview questions, they were piloted first with a group of students, teachers from a different school, and the supervisor. Individual semi-structured interviews lasted with each participant for approximately 40-60 minutes. Along with simultaneous notetaking, the interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants, and on the very interview day, the recorded data was transcribed and translated into English to get it prepared for the data analysis process.

### **Research Site**

Based on the places and people to best help understand the phenomenon, in qualitative research participants and sites are identified on purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2012). As it is already mentioned, the research sites were public schools in Baku. The first reason behind that decision was that public schools outnumber private schools; therefore, the former better serves the aim of the study. According to the data retrieved from the official website of the Ministry of Education and Science (2022), the number of public schools in Baku is three hundred twenty-nine, and that number is significantly higher than the number of private schools in Baku. The second reason was the comparatively less active social life at public schools, such as to reinforce students' school belongingness, private schools give significant importance to the quality of social life at school. To be specific, the number of events and extra-curriculum activities at private schools is remarkably higher than those at public schools. For instance, Azerbaijan British College (2022), offers more than 20 after-school activities. Therefore, considering the majority of the student population at public schools and the scarcity of social activities, public schools bear significant importance.

### **School Selection**

For this study, two public schools, which offer full secondary education, were chosen through convenience sampling that enables to collect the data from the schools that are conveniently available to participate in the study (Creswell, 2013). This sampling strategy was chosen regarding the researcher's limitations; for instance, the schools closer to the city center were preferred in the first place to save time and transport fees. The data collection process needed to be done for approximately a duration of one month, so the schools' proximity helped the researcher to save time and extra costs.

### **Target Population**

The target population is the group of people possessing the desired characteristics that the sample will be chosen among (Creswell, 2013). In conjunction with the research questions, the perceptions of boys about their sense of belongingness in a female teachers' outnumbering environment was the primary data source for the study; thereby, the main target population was the high school male students studying at public schools in Baku. In other words, the desired characteristic can be identified as the student's gender (male), educational level (high school), and school type (public). Considering these characteristics, the student selection was performed through purposeful sampling with the written consent of school management and parents. Purposeful sampling allowed me to obtain a deeper understanding of the central phenomenon in this study (Creswell, 2007). From each school, a minimum of 5 male students were chosen. To be specific, it is important for the data trustworthiness to get teachers' and students' unanimous consent from the same level to become participants. The desired number of participant students is 10 in total to collect enough data. Nevertheless, more students were planned to be included in the study in case of unclear or incoherent responses and lack of saturation point.

Similarly, the teachers were chosen based on the purposeful convenient sampling principle; that is, teachers with more than three years of teaching experience were selected. Teaching experience is an important requirement for this study in terms of data yielding, for only the teachers who had enough opportunities to work with boys and explore them in the school environment can supply satisfactory data (See Table 1 and Table 2).

**Table 1.** *Participant Selection*

	<b>The number of male students</b>	<b>The number of teachers</b>
<b>School 1</b>	5	3
<b>School 2</b>	5	3
<b>Total</b>	10	6

**Table 2.** *Participant Sampling*

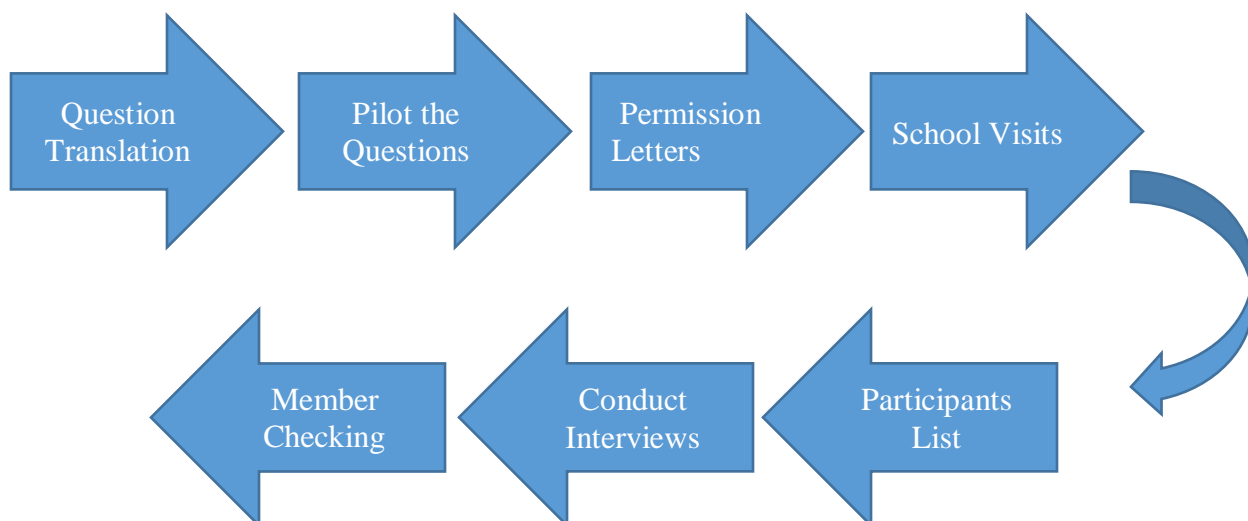
	<b>Purposeful</b>	<b>Convenient</b>
<b>Students</b>	1. among high school male students	Available and volunteer
<b>Teachers</b>	1. among a minimum of three years of teaching experience 2. among participant students' teachers	Available male or female teachers

### **Data Collection Process**

The data collection process started in mid-February only after getting the necessary official permission from Baku City Educational Department. After securing permission, invitation letters, declaring the purpose of the study and the researcher's expectations from the schools, were sent to the public schools. The invitation letter was written in the Azerbaijani language. Once the official permission is granted, the researcher had a meeting with the school principals to build rapport and familiarize them with the process. Students' parents or legal

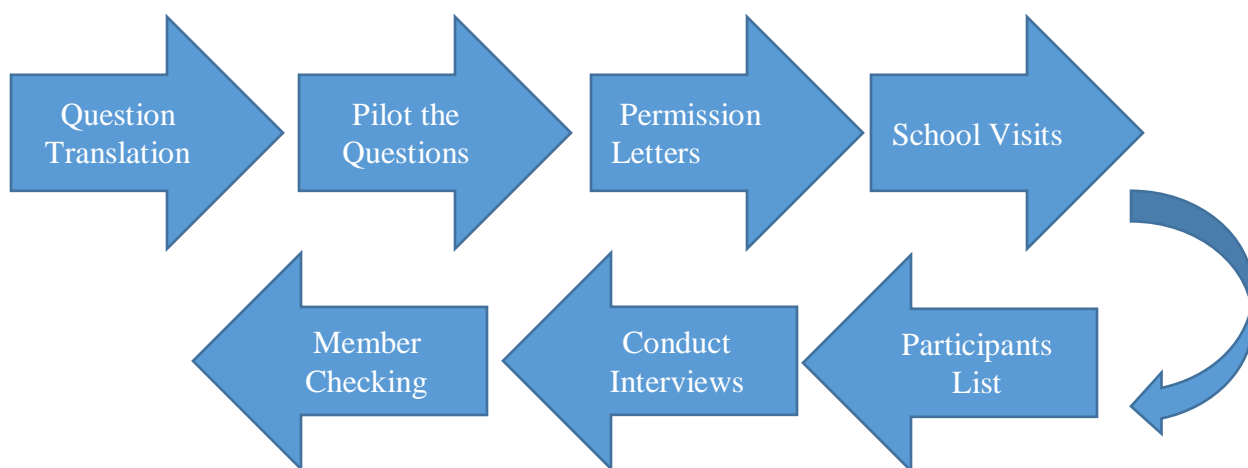
guardians were introduced to consent forms written in the Azerbaijani language, and then the semi-structured interview process started with the students (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** *Data Collection Process (Semi-structured Interview)*



The semi-structured interview questions for teachers were translated into the Azerbaijani language. The questions were piloted with the supervisor and other volunteers. The purpose of piloting was to secure the clarity and practicality of the questions (See Figure 2).

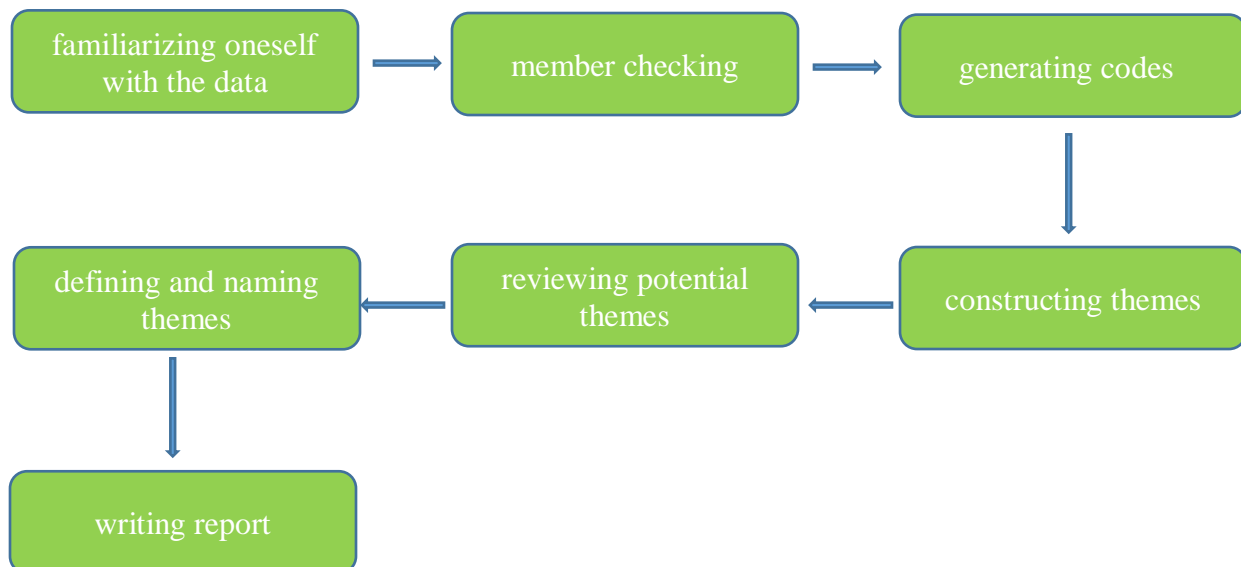
**Figure 2.** *Data Collection Process (Semi-Structured Interviews)*



## Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method commonly employed in qualitative studies to analyze non-numeric, raw data, especially collected through the interview process. Later, the collected data is transcribed, coded, and analyzed to uncover hidden trends and inferences. There exist six commonly recognized thematic data analysis steps - familiarization, coding the data, generating the themes, reviewing the themes, defining the themes, and writing up a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, after transcribing the recorded raw data, they were read several times to develop a thorough understanding. To avoid any potential misunderstanding or misinterpretation, member checking was performed to secure the desired trustworthiness. Next, the transcribed data were coded based on the common and broader themes, and the emerging themes were aligned accordingly to the research objectives. After differentiating the ideas to avoid confusion among several concepts, a final formal report was written up (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As the data were collected in the Azerbaijani language, the analysis was also done in the original form to avoid losing any meaning (See Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** *Data Analysis Process*



### **Trustworthiness**

The purpose of trustworthiness in qualitative research is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are worth paying attention to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The data source triangulation method was used to ensure the reliability of the result, and it helped validate research findings by checking several methods or various observers of the same phenomenon. To get multiple perspectives about the same phenomenon, the data were collected from different groups of people including students and teachers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Member checking was used to validate the collected data. After transcribing the recorded interviews, the interviewees checked the script to ensure the accuracy of the data or supply additional information. This is highly recommended in qualitative research to avoid researcher bias and maintain partiality or data transparency.

### **Ethical Issues**

During the qualitative data-gathering process, the researcher attempts to dive into participants' personal experiences or privacy to a certain extent; thereby, building mutual trust and following ethical codes such as consent, deceptive practices, anonymity, and respectful interaction is an obligation for a researcher (Creswell, 2014). For that reason, all the participants were given informed consent. They were given clear information about the purpose of the study and the use of data. They were also explained that they could stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable about the questions or omit certain questions if they preferred not to answer.

### **Study Limitations**

The study also has some limitations due to the small size of the population. First of all, the data were collected from two public schools, and not all the students and teachers could be included. In that case, it does not reflect all male students' perceptions about their sense of

belonging. Secondly, since the data were collected from two public schools, the findings cannot be transferred to other public schools due to some situational factors such as school culture, demography, and history.

## Chapter 4. Findings

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?
2. What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?

To answer the research questions above, semi-structured interviews were conducted at two Baku public schools with ten students and six teachers. The initial goal was to include the parents of the students from the 10th and 11th grades, but access to parents could not be established. After member checking and triangulation of the data obtained from interview transcripts, the findings are presented in four themes as follows: understanding sense of belonging, school as a social environment, gender factor in teacher-student interaction, and teacher as a role model.

### Theme 1. Understanding Sense of Belonging

The first research question asks, "*How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?*" To answer this question, the student and teacher participants were asked the following questions in the interview: "*How do you understand your/students' sense of school belonging? and can you describe your/students' general mood when you/they are at school?*"

### Subtheme for Student Responses 1.1 Relaxed

The major finding for those questions was that the students feel *relaxed* at school, and they attributed that to peer interaction and the time they spend with their friends at school. The following expressions are extracted from student responses (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** *Students' descriptions of their feeling (major attribution)*

Sınıf yoldaşlarımla məktəbdə maraqlı vaxt keçirirəm	I spend interesting time with my classmates at school
Məktəbdə yaxşı dostlarım var	I have got good friends
Digər uşaqlarla ünsiyyətdə olmağı sevirəm həm də şəxsi münasibətim var	I like interacting with other students, and I also have a private relationship
Məktəbdə dostlarımdan yeni şeylər öyrənirəm	I learn new things from my friends at school
Dərs aralarında sinif uşaqları ilə əylənirəm	I am having fun with my classmates during the break times

Generally, students find the idea of the sense of belonging something that they have never thought of it before. When they are asked about their suggestions to school to boost their sense of belonging, they repeatedly replied that everything is fine at school, so they have no suggestions in mind. To help students describe their feelings thoroughly, additional questions were also used during the interview process: *“Can you talk about the time you spend at school? Can you tell me about a time when you felt a real sense that you belonged at school? Can you tell me about a time when you felt a real sense that you belonged at school? and What factors shape a strong or weak sense of belonging in you?”* Alongside the common responses shown in table 1, a few students mentioned some other attributions that positively boosted their feelings at

school (see Table 4). Another commonality was that none of the students described their feelings in negative a tone.

**Table 4.** *Students' descriptions of their feeling (minor attribution)*

Pianino çalmaq mənim hobbimdi və məktəbdəki pianinoda çalırım	Playing the piano is my hobby, and when I am at school, I play piano
Müəllimlərimin mənimlə anlayışlı olması və məni tərifləməsi	My teachers understand me and they praise me with good words
Bəzi dərslərin yaxşı keçilməsi	Some lessons are taught very well
Məktəbdə istədiyim qız var ona görə özümü məktəbdə yaxşı hiss edirəm	I have a girlfriend at school, so I feel well

### **Subtheme for Teachers 1.2 Lack of Belonging and Absent.**

Teachers as main actors in the teaching and learning process were also included in the interview process. In contrast, teacher responses to the same questions differed to some extent. The most common teacher observation about male students' feelings at school was that they feel unnoticed and desire to be noticed by others. One participant teacher described the boys' feelings in the following way: *"Qızlarla müqayisədə oğlanlar öz hisslərini ətrafdakı insanlardan gizlətməyə meyillidirlər. Buna görə də özlərini ifadə edə bilmək üçün fərqli yollara müraciət edirlər. Məsələn dərslərdə qızların saçını dartırlar."* [In comparison with girls, boys tend to hide their feelings from others. Therefore, they express themselves differently, such as pulling girls' hair.]

Another teacher also emphasized that *“Oğlanlar ailədəki problemlərə daha həssasdılar. Buna görə də məktəbdə özlərini düzgün tapa bilmirlər. Bəzən onlara yazığım gəlir.”* [Boys are more sensitive to family issues. Thus, they feel lost at school. Sometimes I feel sorry for them.]

The last two years at school are commonly defined as chaotic years. When boys come to year ten, they start to disappear from school. The reason for that disappearance is due to their university preparation with private tutors. One teacher described the situation: *“Oxumaq istəyən oğlan şagirdlər məktəbdən uzaqlaşır. Geridə qalanlar isə adətən oxumayan uşaqlardı.”* [Good boys who are interested in university leave school. Only those who are not interested in university stay.] This claim implicitly became obvious during student interviews. For instance, one of the student participants could not tell the exact number of girls and boys in his class.

Another interesting finding was the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. *“Pandemiyadan sonra oğlanlarda məktəbə qarşı qopuqluq hiss olunur. Sanki məktəb öz ciddiyətini və əhəmiyyətini itirib. Səbəbini bilmirəm ancaq heç nə əvvəlki kimi deyil.”* [After the pandemic, there is a disconnection between boys and schools. As if the school has lost its importance. I don't know the reason but things are not as they used to be.] The teacher believes that lockdowns and online lessons caused the loss of a sense of belonging.

One of the teachers asserted that boys do not feel any sense of belonging to their school. She supported her claim with an anecdote that *“Bir neçə il qabaq bəzi şagirdlər internetdə məktəbimizin imicinə zərərli anonim kampaniya apardı. Digər oğlanlar da bunu öz aralarında həvəslə yayırdılar. Heç bir tələbə özünü bu hadisəyə görə pis hiss eləmədi.”* [a few years ago some students from the school started an anonymous online campaign to damage the school's reputation. Other boys were spreading such information among themselves and making jokes. They didn't feel bad.] The teacher participants interpreted such an attitude as a lack of belonging

senses. She had expected them to act possessively and avoid misinformation, but they acted on the contrary.

## **Theme 2. Gender Factor in Teacher-Student Interaction**

The other goal of the research was to understand the influence of gender differences on teacher-student interaction. Students' answers can be divided into two subthemes.

### **Subtheme for Student Responses 2.1 Paucity of Male Teacher Experience**

The first and most common answer was that the students do not care about the gender of the teacher. When asked to explain the reason, their common answer was that there have never been enough male teachers during their years at school; thus, making a comparison is difficult for them. The male teacher number was in the 0-3 range. For them, the quality of the lesson bears importance. As long as the lesson is good, the teacher's gender identity remains a peripheral concern. Still, they agreed on a point that more male teachers can be beneficial for the sake of maintaining gender equality, but besides that, they could not give specific reasons for how it would change the situation in favor of their sense of belonging.

### **Subtheme for Student Responses 2.2 Exposure to Male Experiences and Traits**

Nevertheless, one or two student participants provided more detailed responses. Especially, one participant said: *“Bəzi şagirdlərin evdə ataları olmadığından məktəbdə həyat haqqında kişi müəllimlərdən daha çox öyrənə bilərlər nəin ki qadın müəllimlərdən”* [Some students do not have fathers, so they can learn about life from male teachers better than they do from female teachers.] Also, he emphasized the importance of observing and learning some traits from male teachers. *“Oğlanlar kişi müəllimlərdən mülayimlik nümunələrini müşahidə edə bilər.”* [Boys can learn tenderness from male teachers.] Being tender is socially associated with the

female gender, but more male students can prove it wrong. Some student reactions (see Table 5) are as follows:

**Table 5.** *The Significance of the Teacher Gender (major reactions)*

Müəllimin kişi yada qadın olmasının fərqi yoxdu mənim üçün hər ikisi eynidir	Having male or female teacher makes no difference, for me both are same
Qadın və kişi mənim üçün eyni hüquqludur ona görə bu haqqda heç vaxt düşünməmişəm	Males and females have the same rights, so I have never thought about that
Məncə insanlardakı xüsusiyyətlər önəmlidir	To me, the character is important in humans
Müqayisə edə bilmirəm çünki daha çox kişi müəllimi olsaydı nələr fərqli olardı bilmirəm	I can't compare because I am not sure what will change if we had more male teachers
Heç bir fərqi olmazdı mən məktəbə dərs öyrənməyə gəlirəm ancaq	There would be no difference for me, I come to school just to study
Müəllimin vəzifələri var. Ancaq mənə bu vəzifələrin necə yerinə yetirilməsi maraqlıdır	Teachers have duties. I am only interested in how well they perform their duties

### **Subtheme for Teacher Responses 2.3 Presence of Boundaries between Genders**

Unlike students, the teachers detailed the importance of male teachers for male students. five of my teacher participants were female teachers, but only one of them was male. The female teachers reported that they have to keep boundaries with boys in their conversations.

One female teacher reported, *“Yaxşı yoxsa pis elədiyimdən əmin deyiləm ancaq qızlardan fərqli olaraq oğlanlarla hər mövzuda danışmıram”* [ *I am not sure if I am doing it right or wrong, but I try not to talk about everything with boys, but with girls, there is no problem for me.* ] She explained herself with an anecdote. *“Bir neçə il əvvəl sinifdə iki oğlan eyni qız üstündə*

*mübahisələri olmuşdu. Ancaq bu barədə onlarla hissləri barədə heç vaxt səmimi söhbət aparmadım. Əgər mənim yerimdə başqa kişi müəllimi olsaydı vəziyyət daha yaxşı olardı.” [A few years ago, in my class, two boys had a conflict because both of them loved the same girl. But I could not have an honest conversation with them about their feeling. If there were a male teacher, the situation could be better.]*

In another anecdote, one teacher said: *“Bir dəfə idman dərindən sonra paltar geyinmə otağında oğlanlar bir biri ilə kobud zarafat etmişdilər. İdman müəllimələri qadın idi və sinif rəhbəri olduğun üçün mənim müdaxilə eləməyimi tələb elədi. Mən də analarını məktəbə çağırtdırdım. İndi isə təcrübələrimə dayanaraq vəziyyəti şışirtdiyimi düşünürəm. Kişi müəllimi vəziyyəti daha fərqli idarə edərdi”. [Once boys had a prank in the locker room after the PE lesson. The PE teacher was also a female teacher, so she pushed me to react as a homeroom teacher. I overreacted, and I called their moms. But now with experience, I understand that there was no need for that much reaction. If there were a male teacher, he could handle the situation more effectively.]*

Another female teacher also mentioned that in case of sensitive situations, she sends her messages to boys through one of the male teachers.

All those female teacher experiences indicate that female teachers, culturally and socially, have to limit their interactions with boys.

### **Theme 3. Social Environment**

The data from the interviews suggest that neither students nor teachers see the school as a social environment. They only see the school as an academic institution; therefore, they do not have expectations from the school to create a social environment for them. Teacher-student interaction is limited in the classroom.

### **Subtheme for Student Responses 3.1 School is only an Academic Environment**

The data from student participants revealed that outside the classroom they only talk to their homeroom teachers, and such talks are also limited to academic issues. To the question “Which teacher comes to your mind first to talk to when you have a difficulty/problem?”, one student said: *“Dərsdən kənar tək cə sinif rəhbərim ilə söhbətim olur. Məsələn bir neçə dəfə məktəbə gəlməmək üçün icazə lazım olanda dərs bitdikdən sonra yaxınlaşıb icazə istəmişəm”* [I only talk to my homeroom teacher outside the classroom. For instance, I approached her a few times when I needed permission in order not to come to the school the next day.]

When I asked about the conversation topics, one of the students answered my question with a rhetorical question, and he said: *“Dərsdən başqa nə danışa biləm ki?”* [What else I can talk about except my lessons?] Almost during all student interviews, talking only to homeroom teachers is mentioned.

### **Subtheme for Teacher Responses 3.2 Limited Schedule for Socialization**

Likewise, teacher participants also agreed with that point. One teacher pointed out the lack of time as a reason. She said: *“Müəllimlər ancaq beş dəqiqəlik tənəffüs fasiləsində müəllimlər otağına gedib növbəti dərsə hazırlaşma bilirlər. Dərslər bitdikdən sonra da şagirdlər evə gedirlər.”* [Teachers only have five minutes breaks. During the breaks, teachers have little time to go to the staff room and prepare for the next lesson. When the lessons finish, students immediately leave the school.] The school schedule is designed to meet only academic objectives, but social interaction with teachers appears to be overshadowed.

### **Subtheme for Teacher Responses 3.3 Limited Interaction for Socialization**

In addition, as discussed above, female teachers tend to follow social boundaries with male students in informal settings as well. One teacher said: *“ Adətən 10 və 11-ci siniflər universitetə hazırlaşdıqlarından onlarla sosial fəaliyyətlərimiz olmur. Bir dəfə ekskursiyamız olmuşdu həmin vaxtda məktəbdəki kimi ciddi münasibətimi qoruyub saxladım.”* [We usually don't have social/ extracurricular activities with 10-11 grade students because they are usually busy with their university preparations. I had a trip with students only once, and even that time I maintained my formal/serious attitude with my students.]

Another female teacher also found interacting with boys in an informal way not necessary. She said: *“Hər şey ailədən asılıdır. Əgər evdə problemlərini müzakirə etmək üçün düzgün mühit varsa müəllimin şagirdlə sosiallaşmasına gərək yoxdu.”* [If boys have good communication with their parents, and if they talk about their problems, there is no need for teacher-student informal interaction. It is all up to the family.] In general female teachers reported that they talk to students if they spot a problem with them, but the rest of the time the interaction does not occur due to time restrictions and social conventions.

### **Subtheme for Teacher Responses 3.3 Male Teacher Factor in Socialization**

Nevertheless, my only male teacher participant stated that he socially interacts with students and talks about different topics and his life experiences. He is a second Karabakh veteran and said: *“Oğlan şagirdlər mənim müharibə haqqında olan xatirələrimə qulaq asmağı xoşlayırlar. Özləri yaxınlaşıb mənə suallar verirlər. Söhbət zamanı müxtəlif mövzular açılır. Məsələn bir şagirdim boksla məşğul olur və mənə youtube kanlaındakı video məşqlərini göstərir. Başqa bir tələbəm maşınları sevir və mənimlə maşınlardan danışır.”* [My male students like to listen to my war stories. They approach me to ask different questions about my memories.

*During such talks, we jump from different topics as well. For example, one of my students is a boxer, and he likes to discuss his training videos on YouTube. Another student likes cars, and we talk about cars.] Unfortunately, at the schools I visited were no other male teachers to interview and learn their opinions, but student interviews justified the male teacher's saying. One of his students told me: " Mənim də İnformatikaya həvəsim olduğundan müəllimim ilə danışmağı xoşlayıram. Ortaq marağımızın olması fərqli mövzulardan danışmaq üçün səbəb olur." [I like to speak with my teacher because both of us share an interest in ICT, and it is a good reason to start conversations on different topics.]*

#### **Theme 4. Teacher as a Role Model**

Based on the data from interviews, the question of *teachers' characteristics as an influencing factor on students* yielded different responses.

##### **Subtheme for Student Responses 4.1 Teacher's Content Knowledge**

The major finding from the student participants was that they pay attention only to the academic skills of their teachers such as content knowledge, classroom management, and methodology. They have not considered teachers' personal qualities as a model they want to internalize or reflect in themselves. The most common answer was that they come to school to study, and the teachers' academic performance is the most important characteristic they are looking for. One student said, "*Mənim riyaziyyat müəlliməmizin biliyi xoşuma gəlir. Mən də onun kimi riyaziyyatı yaxşı bilmək istərdim.*" [I like my math teacher's knowledge, and I would like to know math as well as she knows.] Some of them mentioned different personal characteristics that they appreciate, but they do not see those characteristics as influencing factors in their lives. There are some extracts from student interviews as follows:

**Table 6.** *The Teacher Characters Students Appreciate*

Sınıf rəhbərimiz uzaq görəndir. İndiyə kimi müşahidə eləmişəm dediklərinin hamısı düz çıxıb.	Our homeroom teacher is wise. I have observed that everything she said proved true.
Sınıf rəhbərimiz şagirdlərlə mülayim davranır	Our homeroom teacher is gentle with us.
Riyaziyyat müəllimimiz zəhimlidir. Sınıf dərslər müddətində yaxşı idarə edir	My math teacher is serious, so she manages the classroom easily.
Müəllimlərimizin hamısı dürüstdü. Biz də onlardan dürüst olmağı öyrənirik	All our teachers are honest, and we learn how to be honest from them.

**Subtheme for Teacher Responses 4.2 Competitive, Decent, and Honest**

Teachers, in return, unanimously reported that they demonstrate good characteristics and models for their students. When I asked the question: “*What characters in you do boys like/dislike?*” different teachers mentioned specific qualities such as being competitive, decent, and honest. One interesting argument was that boys don’t see teachers as good role models because teaching as a profession has a low reputation among students.

## **Chapter 4. Discussion**

This research aims to explore how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging. In particular, the research focused on high school male students' sense of school belonging at public schools where most teachers are females. Furthermore, the study also aimed to identify teacher qualities contributing to the definition of a sense of school belonging. In accordance with the theory of homophily and the gap in the literature, a qualitative research approach was used to explore male students' sense of school belonging in Baku public schools. In this chapter, the main findings of this study will be discussed in light of the literature reviewed in previous chapters. To explore boys' definition of sense of school belonging in Baku public schools, the following research questions have been formulated to guide the study:

1. How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?
2. What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?

To answer the RQs the collected data were analyzed under 4 themes: the sense of school belonging, gender factor in teacher-student relationships, social environment, and teacher as a role model.

### **How Teachers and Male Students Define the Role of Male Teachers in Shaping a Sense of School Belonging**

In order to answer the first RQ, the data were divided and analyzed under 3 themes.

#### **Theme 1. Sense of School Belonging**

Baumeister and Leary (1995) put forth the *belongingness hypothesis* that the need to belong is universal and requires affectionate connections. In fact, the sense of school belonging is a widely studied topic in Western literature under various interchangeable terms such as a

sense of community (Osterman, 2000), positive interactions (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005), and school connectedness. Unfortunately, no academic study has been done in Azerbaijani public schools. Considering such a wide scope of interest, some interview questions focused on exploring how students and teachers understand the sense of school belonging to our public schools. The data in this study suggested that the idea of a sense of school belonging is new for the interviewed students and teachers; that is, most of the sampled school participants (students and teachers) in this study did not demonstrate an awareness of the sense of belonging. Literature reveals different factors that foster a sense of belonging among students including school environment, safety, parent support, peer relationships, extra-curricular activities, and teacher support are stressed as significant contributors (Libbey, 2004). However, in the literature, the teacher gender impact has not been addressed as one of fostering factors. Likewise, in this study, it remained obscure how a female teacher-dominated school environment affects male students' sense of belonging. The data collected from the student participants revealed that they, hypothetically, do not guess that there would be any difference if there were more male teachers around. It is also important to note here that student participants' conclusions are merely based on their imaginary assumptions as they have never been truly exposed to enough male teacher environments. Unlike student participants, the teacher participants based on their past experiences suggested that male teacher presence would be an asset for the boys' sense of belonging. The data revealed from their responses were consistent with the theory of homophily (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954)

## **Theme 2. School as a Social Environment**

School as a social environment refers to classroom climate, recreational spaces, socialization, extracurricular activities, and school size and location (Anderson, Hamilton, &

Hattie, 2004; Chan, 2008; Waters, Cross, & Shaw, 2010). All these factors make a school a place where students come not only to meet their academic needs but also to meet their needs to socialize with one another. School as a social environment and school as an academic institution are the two faces of a sense of belonging to the schools.

Several studies have found a link between academic quality and students' sense of belonging. For instance, research has shown that students who perceive their school as having a positive academic climate, characterized by the challenging and relevant curriculum, supportive teacher-student relationships, and opportunities for academic success, are more likely to report a higher sense of belonging (Voelkl, Bokhorst-Heng, & Liefbroer, 2017). Additionally, studies have found that the quality of classroom instruction, such as engaging and interactive lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of diverse learners, can contribute to students' sense of belonging in the classroom and school (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). The student participants' responses are also consistent with the literature. Their responses revealed that they really care about the academic quality of the school, and if they don't think that the school fails to meet their academic expectations, they are ready to change their schools (some of the participants already had that experience). The data suggested that they feel satisfied with the teachers' care and attention to their lesson-related questions inside and outside the classroom. Teacher participants also focused on the academic success and achievements of their schools rather than the quality of the social environment. Therefore, school as an environment matters for students' sense of belonging.

However, even though the literature suggests that there is a causation between the social environment in schools and students' sense of belonging, the student and teacher participants' responses to the interview questions suggest that they don't see school as a social environment to

meet their social needs but as an academic institution to achieve their academic goals. For example, research has shown that when students perceive their school as being socially inclusive, where there is a sense of belonging, acceptance, and respect for diversity, they are more likely to report a higher sense of belonging (Way, Reddy, & Rhodes, 2007). The student participants generally stated that they don't have many social events in informal settings. Especially, the students when they come to the high school level, neither the school nor the students are interested in organizing or attending any social events or extra-curricular activities. The data also put forth that female teachers may not always be willing to closely interact with boys due to their concerns coming from their gender difference. The common feeling among high school students is defined as "they are on the go" so they feel like a guest when they are at the school.

Additionally, studies have found that positive relationships with peers and teachers, supportive school policies and practices, and opportunities for social engagement and participation can contribute to students' sense of belonging in school (Hughes, Cavell, & Wilson, 2001; Wentzel, 2010). The data revealed that the only satisfactory socialization means for the students is their positive peer interaction during break times.

To sum up, the common theme in student responses about the factors that impact their sense of belonging was the quality of the lessons and positive peer interaction. Besides that students do not have many expectations from school. Nevertheless, none of the student participants described his emotional well-being negatively. They mostly used positive adjectives to talk about their feelings during the time they spent at school. The peer interaction factor turned out to be the main contributor to students' sense of belonging (Libbey, 2004).

### **Theme 3. Gender Factor in Teacher-Student Interaction**

Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) hypothesized in the *theory of homophily* that group members who share similar characteristics – age, gender, culture- create bonds with one another than those who don't. The data from student participants supported this theory in terms of age and gender. Most of the student participants stated that they have a good time with their same-sex peers at school, and that boosts their belongingness sense to the school. However, they could not state the same factors for their teachers. To the lack of student participants' experience with male teachers, they could not compare the difference between male and female teachers in their interactions. Similarly, teacher-participant responses also supported the theory. Most of the teachers stated that the presence of more male teachers would positively affect the interaction with the boys.

In addition, the literature suggests that teacher gender can influence students' perceptions of teacher-student relationships, with students sometimes having different expectations and perceptions of male and female teachers; for example, students may perceive male teachers as being more authoritative or stricter, while perceiving female teachers as more nurturing or approachable (Marsh, 2006). These perceptions may impact students' behavior, engagement, and academic outcomes in the classroom. Teacher participants' responses were in alignment with the literature. Especially, they agreed that more male teacher presence would help boost the discipline of the boys.

Furthermore, research has shown that teacher gender can influence communication patterns - diction, tone, and nonverbal clues – and the level of engagement (Goudas et al., 1999; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Both student and teacher interview participants agreed that the interaction between boys and female teachers differs from the interaction between girls and

female students. While the former occurs mostly on a more formal and secure level, the latter can be more intimate and open.

### **What Teachers Qualities Contribute to the Definition of a Sense of School Belonging**

In order to understand the influence of teacher characteristics on boys, various questions were employed during the interview process. The student participants' responses are collected under the following theme.

#### **Theme 1. Teacher as a Role Model**

Student participants mostly stated that they don't see any qualities of their teacher as a role model in their lives or there didn't mention any specific characteristics that they would like to emulate. Nevertheless, they stated that there are certain characteristics they like. The most general teacher quality was about teacher academic competencies like content matter knowledge and classroom management. Student emphasis on the academic qualities of the teachers is also supported in the literature. As Schleicher (2019) argues that teachers who demonstrate a genuine passion for their subject matter and for teaching can serve as positive role models for inspiring a love of learning in their students; likewise, teachers who are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and continuously engage in their own professional development can model a lifelong learning mindset and inspire students to develop a similar attitude towards learning. It is also important to note that, none of the student participants said that they would like to be a teacher in the future. One teacher participant related this to the poor reputation of teaching as a profession.

Besides the main theme, some student participants also randomly stated some other teacher characteristics (decency and honesty) that they consider as a positive influence.

## Conclusion

The study employed Lazarsfeld and Merton's (1954) theory of homophily as the theoretical framework and was conducted around two research questions, "How do teachers and male students define the role of male teachers in shaping a sense of school belonging?" and "What teacher qualities contribute to the definition of a sense of school belonging?"

The study participants were high school male students and their teachers from two public schools in Baku. The study used qualitative methodologies for data collection – semi-structured interviews. The accuracy of the data was checked with the participants before coding.

The following conclusions can be drawn as a result of the study findings:

1. The sense of school belonging is an unfamiliar idea in Baku public schools. Although the participants describe their feelings at school with positive adjectives, they do not truly understand the significance of the sense of school belonging.

2. Male students don't know how male teachers would influence their feelings at school as they have not been in a male environment. However, teacher participants agree that having more male teachers would be helpful for boys.

3. Female teachers tend to be more restrictive in their interaction with boys. They choose not to be open with boys as they are with girls.

4. School is considered only as an academic institution. It is generally not considered a social environment.

The study also has some limitations.

1. Even though the study aimed to include parents, it became impossible to engage parents in interviews.

2. School and participant sampling is narrow. Therefore, the findings above cannot be applied to all public schools in Baku.

3. It is difficult to find schools where teacher gender balance is equal. Therefore, it is not possible to understand the true influence of male teachers at school.

4. Considering teacher participants' age is crucial for the data. Older teachers and younger teachers responses may vary from one another.

### **Implication**

This section provides the reader with a clear description of implications for future research studies and practice.

#### **Implication for Future Research Studies**

In two Baku public schools, this study explored the how teachers and male students define a sense of school belonging and what teacher qualities contribute to the definition of sense of school belonging. To generate insights and explore new perspectives for the first time, exploratory research was conducted to understand the definition of the sense of school belonging. Despite the small sampling scale, it revealed useful guiding findings for the future studies. For further studies, I suggest to employ explanatory research to explain causal relationships and understand the underlying mechanisms or reasons of teacher gender impact on students' sense of school belonging. A quantitative method can be utilized to collect numerical data and analyze it using statistical techniques. This will help to generate a deeper understanding of the influencing factors. In addition, the number of sampled schools and participants, and their diversity need to be considered. For instance, including female students can yield valuable findings.

### **Implication for Future Practices**

One important finding of the study is that due to cultural norms, female teachers set boundaries between themselves and male students. The data collected from female teachers' responses suggest that they do not consider or understand the harmful impact of such differentiated approach on male students' sense of school belonging. To help female teachers recognize their own biases, trainings or seminars on gender awareness need to be delivered to female teachers.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions with Students

1. Hello! How are? Can I know you? Can you tell me about your hobbies?  
Salam necəsiniz? Sizi biraz yaxından tanımaq olar? Mənə hobbiləriniz haqqında danışa bilərsiniz?
2. Can you talk about the time you spend at school? Can you describe your general mood when you are at school?  
Məktəbdə keçirdiyiniz zaman haqqında biraz danışa bilərsiniz? Ümumiyyətlə məktəb haqqında fikirlərinizi bölüşə bilərsiniz?
3. How do you understand your sense of school belonging? Can you provide any specific examples of your sense of school belonging?  
Özünüzün məktəbə bağlılıq hissinizi necə başa düşürsünüz? Məktəbə bağlılığınız haqqında konkret misallar verə bilərsiniz?
4. What factors shape a strong or weak sense of belonging in you?  
Hansı amillər məktəbə bağlılıq hissinizin güclü yada zəif olmasına təsir edir?
5. Can you tell me about a time when you felt a real sense that you belonged at school? What was that like for you? Can you describe it?  
Məktəbə bağlılıq hiss elədiyiniz hansısa bir anı təsvir edə bilərsiniz? Necə bir duyğu idi? Təsvir edə bilərsiniz?
6. Can you tell me about a time when you really didn't feel like you belonged at school? Özünüzün məktəbə bağlı olmadığı hansısa bir anı təsvir edə bilərsiniz?
7. How many male and female teachers do you have? How do you feel about the gender balance of your teachers?  
Neçə qadın və kişi müəlliminiz var? Məktəbdə müəllimlərin gender tarazlığı haqqında nə düşünürsünüz?
8. In what ways are teachers important for creating a sense of belonging at school? What is the importance of your teachers' gender?  
Müəllimlərinizin mənsubiyyət hissinizdəki rolu nə qədər əhəmiyyətlidir sizin üçün? Müəllimlərinizin cinsi kimliyinin burda nə qədər rolu var?
9. How do you feel around male and female teachers? Can you give examples?  
Özünüzü qadın yada kişi müəllimlərinizin yanında necə hiss edirsiniz? Konkret misallar göstərə bilərsiniz?

10. Which teacher comes to your mind first to talk to when you have a difficulty/problem?  
Can you give any specific example?  
Hansısa çətinliyiniz olanda danışmaq üçün ilk aqlınıza gələn müəlliminiz hansıdır?  
Konkret misallar göstərə bilərsiniz?
11. Do you feel comfortable discussing your academic or personal issues with your female teachers? Can you give any specific example?  
Şəxsi və ya dərslə bağlı məsələrinizi qadın müəllimlərinizlə müzakirə edəndə özünüzü rahat hiss edirsiniz? Konkret misallar göstərə bilərsiniz?
12. Have you noticed any differences in the way your female teachers interact with you compared to male teachers? Can you give examples?  
Qadın müəllimlərinizin sizə kişi müəllimlərinizlə müqayisədə fərqli davrandığını heç hiss eləmişiz? Misallar göstərə bilərsiniz?
13. Are there any challenges you face in your school due to the gender of your teachers? Can you provide examples?  
Müəllimlərinin cinsiyyəti sizə məktəbdəki işlərinizdə hansısa çətinlik yaradıb? Misallar çəkə bilərsiniz?
14. How does having female teachers impact your overall sense of belonging in your school?  
Qadın müəllimlərin məktəbdə çoxluğu sizin məktəbə bağlılıq hissinizə nə qədər təsir edir?
15. How do you feel about the level of support you receive from your female teachers? Why?  
Qadın müəllimlərinizdən aldığınız dəstəyin keyfiyyəti haqqında nələr hiss edirsiniz?  
Niyə?
16. What is the first thing comes to your mind about your male and female teachers? Why?  
Qadın yada kişi müəllimi deyəndə aqlınıza gələn ilk şey nədir? Niyə?
17. Would you like to have more male or female teachers at school? Why?  
Məktəbdə daha çox kişi yoxsa qadın müəlliminin olmağını istiyərdiz? Niyə?
18. What characters of your male/female teachers do you like the most? Why?  
Qadın kişi müəllimlərinizin hansı xüsusiyyətlərini bəyənlirsiniz? Niyə?
19. What suggestions would you have for improving the sense of school belonging for male students in female teacher-dominated schools?  
Oğlan şagirdlərinin qadın müəllimlərin üstünlük təşkil elədiyi məktəblərdə bağlılıq hissinin artırmaq üçün nələrin olmasını istərdiz?

## APPENDIX B

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions with Teachers

1. How do you perceive boys' and girls' behavior at school?  
Oğlan və qız şagirdlərinin məktəbdə davranışlarını necə görürsüz?
2. What has been your experience teaching male students in a female-dominated school environment?  
Məktəbdə oğlan şagirdlərinə dərs demək haqqında təcrübələrinizi bölüşə bilərsiniz?
3. How do you think male students react to having predominantly female teachers?  
Sizcə oğlanlar qadın müəllimələrinin üstünlük təşkil elədiyi cəvrəyə necə münasibət göstərirlər?
4. How do you differentiate your attitude towards boys and girls? Can you give specific examples?  
Oğlan və qız tələbələrlə olan münasibətinizdə necə fərqlər qoyursuz? Dəqiq nümunələr verə bilərsiniz?
5. How do you describe boys' attitudes in interacting with teachers? Have you noticed any differences in the way male students interact with female teachers compared to male teachers? Can you give specific examples?  
Oğlanların müəllimlərlə olan davranışlarını necə təsvir edərsiz? Onların kişi və qadın müəllimələri ilə olan davranışlarında nə dəyişiklik görürsüz? Dəqiq nümunələr verə bilərsiniz?
6. How do you describe boys' feelings at school? Can you give specific examples?  
Oğlanların məktəbdəki hissələrini necə təsvir edərsiz? Dəqiq nümunələr verə bilərsiniz?

7. How often do you talk about boys' personal feelings/problems/concerns?  
Oğlanlarla onların hissləri və ya çətinlikləri barədə nə qədər danışırırsız?
8. How often do boys bring up their feelings to your attention? How do you react specifically?  
Oğlanlar öz hissləri barədə sizinlə nə qədər danışirlar? Belə hallarda necə reaksiya nümayiş elətdirirsiniz?
9. How do you characterize boys' interactions with their male and female teachers?  
Oğlanların kişi və qadın müəllimlərinə münasibətini necə xarakterizə edirsiniz?
10. What characters in you do boys like/dislike? How do you understand that? Provide a specific example  
Sizcə sizdə oğlan şagirdlərinin xoşladığı və xoşlamadığı xüsusiyyətlər hansılardır? Bunu necə başa düşürsüz? Nümunələr gətirə bilərsiniz?
11. How do you think the gender of teachers impacts the academic environment in the school?  
Sizcə müəllim genderinin akademik mühitə hansısa təsiri var?
12. To what extent teacher gender plays a role in boys' sense of school belonging?  
Müəllim genderinin oğlan tələbərinin məktəbə bağlılıq duyğusuna nə dərəcədə təsiri var?
13. Do you think having predominantly female teachers has had any impact on male students' sense of belonging in the school?  
Sizcə qadın müəllimələrini çoxluq təşkil etməsinin oğlanların məktəbə aidiyyət duyğusuna nəsə təsiri var?
14. Do you think that boys need more male teachers to feel belonging? Why

Sizcə oğlan şagirdlərinin məktəbdə daha çox kişi müəlliminin olmasına ehtiyacları var?

Niyə?

## APPENDIX C

### Tədqiqat iştirakçısı üçün Məlumat və Razılıq Forması

#### TƏDQIQATIN İZAHİ:

Sizdən “*Oğlan Şagirdlərinin Məktəbə Olan Bağlılıq Duyğusunun Araşdırılması*” adlı tədqiqat işində iştirak etməyiniz xahiş olunur. Bu tədqiqatın məqsədi qadın müəllimələrinin sayca üstünlük təşkil elədiyi tədris müəssisələrində yuxarı sinif oğlan şagirdlərinin məktəbə qarşı olan bağlılıq hissələrini necə başa düşdüklərini araşdırmaq və bu haqda fikirlərini öyrənməkdir. Məlumat müsahibə formasında toplanacaq və hər bir müsahibə 45-60 dəqiqə davam edəcək.

Yuxarıda adı keçən aşdırmada iştirak etməzdən qabaq aşağıda yazılan məlumatları diqqətə oxuyub hər hansı bir sual və ya əlavə informasiyaya ehtiyacınız olduğu təqdirdə bildirməyinizi xahiş edirəm.

#### SİZİN HÜQUQLARINIZ

Araşdırmada iştirakınız tamamilə könüllü xarakter daşıyır. Özünüzü narahət hiss elədiyiniz və ya xoşlamadığınız suallar olduğu halda müsahibəni dayandıra bilərsiniz. Adı keçən araşdırmada iştirak etmək qərarına gəldiyiniz təqdirdə, bu razılıq formasını imzalamağınız xahiş olunur. Razılıq formasını imzaladıqdan sonra istənilən vaxt heç bir səbəb göstərmədən geri çəkiləkdə sərbəstsiniz. Məlumatın toplanılması yekunlaşmadan öncə iştirakdan imtina etsəniz, məlumatlarınız sizə qaytarılacaq və ya silinəcək.

#### GİZLİLİK

Müsahibə müddətində verdiyiniz bütün cavabların anonimliyi təmin olunur. Bunun təminatı üçün tədqiqat boyunca kod adlardan istifadə olunacaq və sizin adınız və ya səs qeydiniz başqa şəxslərlə paylaşılmayacaq.

#### FAYDALAR və ya RİSKLƏR

İştirakınızın sizə birbaşa faydası və riski yoxdur. Lakin əldə edilən məlumatlar məktəblərdə oğlan şagirdlərinin məktəbə olan bağlılıq duyğusunun anlaşılmasına və ehtiyac olarsa gücləndirilməsinə müsbət təsirləri ola bilər.

### **ƏLAQƏ MƏLUMATLARI**

Tədqiqat ilə bağlı hər hansı bir sualınız yaranarsa, mənimlə və ya elmi rəhbərimlə əlaqə saxlaya bilərsiniz.

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### **MƏLUMAT VƏ RAZILIQ FORMASININ SƏNƏDLƏŞDİRİLMƏSİ**

Verilmiş məlumatları oxudum və sual vermək imkanım oldu. İştirakımın könüllü olduğunu və istənilən vaxt, heç bir səbəb göstərmədən iştirakdan imtina etməkdə sərbəst olduğumu anlayıram. Bu razılıq formasının bir nüsxəsinin də mənə (iştirakçıya) veriləcəyindən xəbərdaram. Könüllü olaraq bu tədqiqatda iştirak etməyə razıyam.

İştirakçının

imzası: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarix: \_\_\_\_\_

Səsyazma üçün

icazə \_\_\_\_\_

Tədqiqatçının

imzası: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarix: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D****İcazə Məktubu**

No \_\_\_\_\_

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 2023-cü il

Bakı şəhəri üzrə Təhsil İdarəsinin

müdiri Mehriban xanım Vəliyevaya

Hörmətli Mehriban xanım,

Nəzərinizə çatdırmaq istərdik ki, ADA Universitetinin MATL 2023 “Təlim və Tədrisin Təşkili və Metodikası” ixtisası üzrə magistr proqramı ikinci kurs tələbəsi Sarvan Rəsullunun apardığı yekun tədqiqat işi üçün (“Exploring Male Gender Role in Male Students’ Sense of School Belonging”, “Müəllim genderinin oğlan şagirdlərinin məktəbə aidiyyət duyğusu üzərindəki rolunun arasıdırılması”) Bakı şəhəri 7, 27, 176 və 220 nömrəli tam orta məktəbin şagird, valideyn və müəllim heyəti arasında sorğu keçirilməsi tələb olunur. Sorğunun məqsədi yuxarı sinif oğlan şagirdlərinin habelə onların valideyn və müəllimlərinin məktəbə aidiyyət duyğusunda müəllimlərinin rolu haqqında olan hissələrini, təcrübələrini və fikirlərini tədqiq etməkdir.

Bu məqsədlə tədqiqatın aparılması üçün şəraitin yaradılmasını sizdən xahiş edirik. Əməkdaşlığa görə təşəkkürümüzü bildiririk.

Hörmətlə,

Ülviyyə Mikayılova,

Təhsil fakültəsinin dekanı