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LEARNING**

**Title:**

**EXPLORING TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BAKU**

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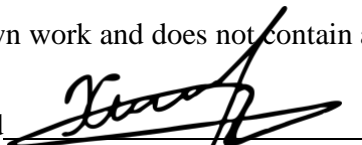
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**Baku, May 28, 2023**

**STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY**

We have read ADA's policy on plagiarism and certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the content of this paper, entitled "Exploring Teacher Leadership in Public Schools in Baku" is all our own work and does not contain any unacknowledged work.

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## **Abstract**

Teacher leadership is vital to every school community. Teachers shape the standards of practice, the nature of communication, and the sense of values that define a school culture. The majority of the population attends public schools for basic education; however, there are several private schools that one can select from and attend as well. This research study investigates how school administrators and teachers define teacher leadership as well as how principals support teacher leadership in Baku public schools.

Interviews were used by the researchers as the main source of data collection to determine principals and teachers' definition of teacher leadership and principals' support for teacher leaders.

The findings of the study demonstrate that a minority of teachers cannot describe teacher leadership and teachers and school administrators have separate views on this concept. Based on our findings, principals completely support teacher leaders in both formal and informal teacher leadership responsibilities.

Support for teachers and administrators in raising awareness on teacher leadership with the help of trainings, workshops, or instructional blogs on teacher leadership may be quite beneficial. *Keywords:* leadership, teacher leadership, principals' support, definition of teacher leadership, public schools

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## **Exploring Teacher Leadership in Public Schools in Azerbaijan**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

With shifting educational trends, the notion of teacher leadership has gained particular attention across the world as an increasingly vital facet of teaching and learning. Educational researchers and practitioners have advocated for increased teacher leadership in order to enhance K-12 public schools (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Furthermore, the profession of teaching has been critiqued as a static career track, since a novice teacher's responsibilities on the first day in the classroom might be the same as those of veteran teachers (Kueker, 2003). Thus, teachers may assume new responsibilities without leaving their profession with the help of teacher leadership opportunities (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Although the literature defines the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders variously, there is a growing acknowledgement of teachers who attempt to extend their reach beyond the confines of their classrooms. Given whether teachers hold official positions or their activities are informal and voluntary by nature, the definition of teacher leadership may be formulated differently. The recognition of informal teacher leaders' initiatives is significant because teaching itself is already complex and challenging, and some teachers still strive to make a difference, extend their influence beyond their immediate teaching responsibilities and recognize opportunities to contribute to their schools. As they do not hold formal positions and mainly take on informal leadership responsibilities, this type of teacher leaders appears to be less visible. Additionally, Poekert et al. (2016) assert that when a supportive environment and the opportunities to lead are available, educators may play a crucial role in the development of their schools. This highlights the need for the improvement of school culture to promote and encourage teacher leadership among teachers.

### **Problem Statement**

According to the preliminary data collected at a public school located in Baku, we found out that there are both formal and informal teacher leaders in the public schools in Baku with certain roles and responsibilities. We interviewed a school principal and four teachers to learn about their perspectives on teacher leadership. Based on our findings, formal teacher leaders are assigned by school principals. Informal teacher leaders, on the other hand, willingly take initiatives to support the process of teaching and learning.

According to Sawalhi and Chaaban (2022), the transition from teacher to teacher leader may lead to confusion for some teachers at schools. Moreover, a misunderstanding of what teacher leadership entails leads to ambiguities and conflicts among teacher leaders (Cheung, Reinhardt, Stone & Little, 2018; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Similarly, Hilty (2011) claimed that both teachers and school administrators commonly misunderstand the concept of teacher leadership. As a result, teachers hesitate to seek out leadership responsibilities, while administrators attempt to reserve the power and authority they hold in schools. Angella and Dehart (2011) also posit that some teacher leaders do not consider themselves leaders because the term indicates that 'leader' refers to teachers with formal positions. As a result, their roles and responsibilities as teacher leaders are influenced by this insight.

We also found out that teachers are not aware that whether they can be recognized as teacher leaders or not and they cannot define teacher leadership. Although the principal and the teachers at that school were aware of their roles as formal and informal leaders, only the principal and one of the teachers were able to define teacher leadership accurately.

### **Definitions of the key terms: *leadership, teacher leadership***

**Leadership:** Influencing others to understand and agree on what has to be done and how it should be done, as well as supporting individual and group efforts to accomplish common institutional goals (Yukl, 2006).

**Teacher leadership:** Teacher leadership is defined as the influence of teachers who can lead both within and outside of the classroom, contribute to the community of teachers and leaders, inspire others to work on their teaching practice, and accept responsibility as a leader to achieve leadership objectives. Teacher leadership also entails promoting innovative teaching methods, sharing information and skills, and serving on school task forces (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

### **Research Questions**

1. How do teachers and principals (school administrators) define teacher leadership in Baku public schools?
2. How do school principals support teacher leaders?

### **Purpose of the Study**

This capstone project is aimed at exploring how teachers and school administrators perceive teacher leadership as well as how teacher leadership is supported by school administrators.

### **Significance of the Study**

Exploring how teacher leadership and roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders prescribed by public school teachers and principals appear to be significant for several reasons. Jarrett (2010) recognizes the importance of investigating teachers' perceptions of teacher

leadership, explaining that a better understanding of teachers' perceptions may lead to more effective implementation of new teacher-leader roles within educational contexts. According to the Institute for Educational Leadership, redefining leadership in schools is crucial to understanding its impact on student achievement (2008). Similarly, Edlow (2008) highlights the significance of administrators' and staff members' perceptions of leadership roles in shaping the development of teacher leadership.

We seek to gain a more accurate understanding of teacher leadership in Baku public schools by conducting this project. These insights will contribute to raise teacher leaders' awareness on their important contributions to the school community.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

According to the previous decade of educational research, instructors have a significant impact on student learning and that some instructors are significantly more effective than others (Quintero, 2017). These instructors frequently take on additional jobs and responsibilities outside of the classroom to help with the development of teaching and learning. Classroom instructors should be active in formulating educational policy and making decisions to increase student learning, and they may even be able to help redefine teacher leadership responsibilities (Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc., 2016). If we are to meet the difficulties of public education in the twenty-first century, teachers working as teacher leaders should shape our idea of where we are going and, more importantly, how we will get there (Hilty, 2011). As teacher leadership is implemented in schools through a variety of formal and informal roles, responsibilities, and methods of communication, it is critical to recognize the relevance of teacher leaders' contributions (Hilty, 2011; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

This chapter is divided into three separate sections. The definitions of teacher leadership, including formal and informal teacher leadership, found in the literature are discussed in the first part. The second section is devoted to the roles and responsibilities of formal and informal teacher leaders, as recognized by various scholars. The final part will explore how school principals and administrators support teacher leaders.

### **The Definition of Teacher Leadership**

Despite the fact that the notion of teacher leadership has been around for a long time, our knowledge of its form, function, and role in school reform has evolved significantly over the years. In the mid-1990s, the literature began to investigate teacher leadership performed not only by

educators in official positions of authority, but also by individuals who did not hold such roles (Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2011).

According to Neumerski (2012), there is limited agreement on what teacher leadership encompasses. It is commonly used as a general term for a wide range of jobs. This study will employ two definitions of teacher leadership derived from comprehensive reviews of the literature on teacher leadership. According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), teacher leadership is the process by which teachers encourage their colleagues, principals, and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning methods in order to promote student progress and academic achievement. Individual development, cooperation or team development, and organizational development are three intentional development foci in team leadership. In another research study on teacher leadership, Wenner and Campbell (2017) give the following definition, emphasizing extra duties teacher leaders assume: Teacher leaders are those individuals who continue to teach in the classroom while also serving in leadership positions outside of the classroom context. To have a better grasp of this notion, we chose to examine how formal and informal teacher leadership are defined in the literature.

### **The Definition of Formal and Informal Teacher Leadership**

In the literature, there are many different definitions of both formal and informal teacher leadership. Previous studies primarily defined a formal teacher leader as someone who is assigned or appointed by a position or a formal title, such as a department head, principal, mentor, coach, lead teacher, clinical educator, teacher-in-residence, and professional development provider and occurs in the context of district, school, or association (Martin, 2007; Anderson, 2004). According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), formal teacher leaders often have crucial roles in defining how schools operate. Formal teacher leaders, according to Hunzicker (2013), are those teachers who

work outside the classroom to promote school-wide or district-wide concerns and projects. Danielson (2006) added that formal teacher leaders receive additional payment and benefits, and are often perceived by their coworkers as quasi-administrators or administrators in teachers' *clothing*.

Although their involvement goes beyond their teaching duties and classrooms, informal teacher leaders are not promoted to official leadership roles (Wang & Ho, 2020; Hunzicker, 2013). Informal teacher leadership refers to the effect teacher leaders have on their peers and community without necessarily assuming official leadership positions (Pineda-Báez & Andrews, 2019). Interestingly, Stein (2014) defined teacher leadership as a kind of leadership that goes beyond official titles and responsibilities and instead focuses on *behavior and performance*.

Based on our review of the research studies on formal and informal teacher leadership, teachers have misconceptions about these two types of leadership (Moller, Childs-Bowen, & Scrivner, 2001; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012; Helterbran, 2010; Dami, 2021). The majority of teachers who take up leadership duties do not consider themselves leaders, instead reserving the title for people in positions of authority, such as administrators or district supervisors. Instead, they claim that the majority of their work is done informally through collaboration (Moller et al., 2001). The findings of the study conducted by Fairman and Mackenzie (2012) indicate that teachers are still reluctant or ambivalent about being regarded as leaders, preferring to affect change through informal channels. Some recognized that their work was leading change in their schools, whereas others did not identify the leadership potential in their work, and simply regarded it as *what we do*. Labeling the work teachers do as leadership may inhibit teacher engagement in leadership activities because teachers' idea of leadership is based on a more traditional model of formally specified roles and tasks. When teachers denied their leadership roles in a study

conducted by Helterbran (2010), they often used the statement *I am only a teacher*. Not only do instructors have misunderstandings about the notion of teacher leadership. In fact, many school administrators assume that teacher leadership is limited to formal titles or positions. School leaders are considered teacher leaders, whereas subject teachers are not and do not act as teacher leaders (Dami, 2021).

According to existing data, there are various cases where instructors refuse to participate in workplace leadership. According to Thorpe and Bennett-Powell (2014), leadership is frequently regarded as administrative, creating a visible contradiction between hierarchical line management and professional concern for collegiality. Several studies have established that many formal teacher leaders report feeling isolated from their colleagues and have been suspected due to their formal leadership status (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008). Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) revealed that most teachers did not want to put themselves in any form of hierarchical relationship with their coworkers. They embraced *us against them* mentality, so being a part of the administration might be risky for them. Carrion and García-Carrión (2015) suggest that those teachers who do not intend to lead the change can become change agents by collaborating with others to advance their communities.

The literature also reveals opposing viewpoints on the consequences of the two sorts of leadership responsibilities. According to some academics, informal leadership is more important than formal leadership. Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) assert that efforts directed by informal leaders can have a bigger influence on school reform than efforts directed by formal leaders. Informal teacher leadership, as noted by Pielstick (2000), would emphasize service above self, which yields an adorative effect. Additionally, Anderson (2004) indicates that formal teacher leadership roles may stifle teachers' engagement in becoming leaders and constrain their decision-

making processes. Being a teacher leader, on the other hand, becomes a more powerful experience when actions are self-initiated rather than imposed (Pineda-Báez, Bauman, Andrews, 2019). Danielson (2006) draws attention to the fact that informal teacher leadership can offer a very high degree of professionalism because of its informality and voluntary nature as they are more committed to serving students (Danielson, 2006). Informal teacher leaders do not gain authority through an assigned role or position; rather, they acquire it through interactions with their students and coworkers (Dami, 2021). Carver (2016) has a similar viewpoint, noting that informal teacher leaders do not wait for being assigned or appointed to a formal role prior to offering their skills, credibility, and influence to others in order to have an impact on students' educational experiences. Instead, they use their influence based on credibility and trustworthiness, rather than power and authority. Without excellent communication skills, care, and compassion, according to Gungapersad (2018), it would be very difficult for educators to exercise the role of informal teacher leaders. Unlike the authors mentioned above, Supovitz (2018) affirms that without empowerment for teacher leaders to exert more authority, the capacity of their leadership will be limited. Wang and Ho (2020) take a larger view, arguing that the influence of Confucianism on relationships in a hierarchical society hinders people perceived as informal teacher leaders from exerting leadership. This claim is in line with a research study that contends that people who do not hold designated leadership positions are hesitant to exhibit leadership behaviors because it could be interpreted as a threat to the individual who is in a position of authority or management (Krieg, Davis, & Smith, 2014). The difference between these two types of leadership is unnecessary, according to recent research, because the importance of teacher leadership depends on how much weight the community places on the leader's decisions (Poekerta, Alexandrou, & Shannon, 2016).

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Formal and Informal Teacher Leaders**

According to Riveros et al. (2013), leaders in education commonly failed to discern between formal and informal teacher leadership. Teacher leaders, on the other hand, typically emerge through informal leadership. Departmental chairs, head teachers, coaches, educational trainers, curricular members of committees, and union leaders are a few instances of official teacher leadership positions. Through these official roles, teachers stand for their profession. Teachers assume informal leadership duties in addition to official leadership ones (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2006; Dozier, 2007; Harris, 2003; Lambert, 2003, Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Patterson & Patterson, 2004). Informally, teachers lead by introducing novel concepts to the school, participating in initiatives, offering their professional knowledge, serving for fresh endeavors, establishing curriculum, guiding coworkers, encouraging involvement from parents and the community, and impacting peers to enhance educational practice by causing in learning communities (Halverson, 2003; Harris, 2003; Lattimer, 2007; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011). Teachers do not solely lead by proactively developing professional development programs for their schools, but they also raise the chance of good outcomes for school projects (Teachers Network Leadership Institute, 2005).

A number of positions for formal teacher leaders have been offered, which serve to explain the different characteristics of the leadership activity. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), a few significant elements of formal teacher leadership positions include authority of students or other teachers, facilitator, coach, mentor, trainer, instruction specialist, creating new approaches, resulting study groups, leadership of operational responsibilities, keeping the school set up and moving toward its goals through responsibilities as a Head of Department, action investigator, member of task forces, administration through making choices or participation.

Teacher leadership positions with a strong relationship to the classroom have been recognized as curriculum creators, bid authors, school enhancement team leaders, supervisors of new or fewer-experienced staff, and action researchers (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2001).

Teacher leadership, according to Danielson (2006), happens informally via actions rather than through officially recognized positions. These teacher leaders possess a set of skills that enable them to be successful not just within the educational setting but also outside of it. Teacher leadership, according to York-Barr and Duke (2004), is a distinct type of leadership that relies on several theories of leadership that stress cooperation rather than authority concentrated on a single individual.

Informal instructors are non-administrative employees whose primary function is to provide instruction in the classroom. This study broadens the dimensions or responsibilities of school leadership by analyzing those determined by previous research, such as hiring and salary decisions, allocation of funds, student disciplinary action policy, student admission, handling instruction, establishing people, analyzing student performance data, as well as interacting with parents (Day & Harris 2002; Hairon & Goh 2015; Katzenmeyer & Moller 2009). Teacher leadership is more than just a formal position in an organization's structure (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). According to Berg et al. (2018), informal teacher leaders' activities may be even more meaningful. Teachers admit that informal teacher leadership has a greater impact on learning and instruction than formal leadership (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). Though less visible, informal leadership among educators is an essential type of change agent teacher leadership. Informal teacher leaders, or teachers who engage in leadership activities outside of their job titles, can operate in a number of positions and get varied degrees of recognition from school communities. These teachers may function as informal leaders when they mentor colleagues, create curriculum,

coordinate professional development, explore practice challenges, and participate in school-wide decision-making (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). According to studies, teacher leadership has enormous implications for teacher and student learning; nevertheless, institutionalized teacher leadership positions are sometimes less significant than informal teacher leadership; therefore, the task of these informal teacher leaders is of particular importance (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Lieberman & Friedrich, 2007; Mangin, 2005; Stoelinga, 2008).

### **School Principals' Support of Teacher Leaders**

Several common characteristics that influence leadership among educators have been identified in various reviews of the literature on the issue. York-Barr and Duke (2004) found out that school culture, educational institutions, and the principal's position are the three important variables that either promote or inhibit teacher leadership. These findings matched those of subsequent literature reviews on teacher leadership, such as those undertaken by Mangin (2007), Weiner (2011), Poekert (2012), and Wenner and Campbell (2017).

Although some teachers may choose to serve as leaders on their own, few can effectively initiate a school development process without the assistance of the principle (Barth, 2001). Johnson et al. (2014) found that it is the principal's role to encourage teachers' active engagement, promote training, establish a sound work environment, and define the purpose of their contributions, which agreed with Barth & Acton (2022) on the critical role of the principal. They highlight that the principal should establish a successful environment for leaders in education who have overcome various obstacles.

Whereas some administrators may wish to promote teacher leadership with great enthusiasm, they may be unsure of how to best empower them. Gates and Siskin (2001) revealed

that more than 70% of administrators who participated in a self-report questionnaire of 330 principals utilized styles of leadership that were poor for supporting teacher decision-making. This study's findings are similar with those of prior research that revealed principals commonly failed to transfer decision-making authority (Ingersoll et al., 2017; Mangin, 2007; Weiner, 2016). In a hierarchical educational system, a dictatorial principal might be a substantial hindrance to the growth of teacher leadership (Grant 2006). According to Acton (2022), it was unusual for a principal to forego established hierarchies in order to cooperate on an equal level with a teacher leader. Indeed, previous hierarchies may still have an influence on structures, and teacher leaders may feel bound by a structural concentration on the line of command. Hoy and Miskel (2012), Hurt (2015) and similar studies (Mangin, 2007; Szeto and Cheng, 2018) found that principal- teacher interactions at work influenced teachers' practices and ambitions for leadership in a variety of ways. It is critical that principals acknowledge and encourage teacher leaders, since teacher engagement and contributions are critical components in school progress (Adams, 2020). According to Whitaker (1995), principals in higher-performing schools deployed leadership roles for teachers with greater effectiveness than those in lower-performing schools. The administrator should be able to identify teacher leaders in order to incorporate these individuals in the school's transition process. Less skilled administrators in the research failed to recognize their informal teacher leaders. Principals that maintained supportive and consistent contact with teachers were able to create an empowering school atmosphere that supported mentorship, training, and mutual feedback for the development of teacher leadership (Hulpia et al., 2009; Lambert, 2003; Mangin, 2007; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Interactions between administrators and teacher leaders can have a good influence on the advancement of teacher leaders (Cheng & Szeto, 2016; Moller & Pankake, 2013).

According to Price's research (2012), administrators who express their expectations to teachers directly have better relationships with them. A teacher has more opportunities to participate in the teacher leadership positions when a principal interacts with them on a regular basis (Cheng & Szeto, 2018). Educators who are left alone, on the other hand, may have negative experiences if they do not have regular involvement from their principal (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter began with the definitions of teacher leadership, formal and informal teacher leadership and proceeded with how the roles and responsibilities of formal and informal teacher leaders are differentiated in the literature, as well as how school principals support teacher leaders. We found out that there is no universally accepted definition for these terms.

### **Gaps in the literature**

In the literature, there are various definitions provided for the concepts of teacher leadership, formal and informal teacher leadership. While these studies have been insightful, few have focused on the responsibilities of informal teacher leader and principal support for both formal and informal teacher leaders was not distinguished in the literature. It is also worth noting that all reviewed literature contained the research studies conducted in other countries. As a result, we were unable to conduct an analysis of the literature on teacher leadership in Azerbaijan.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design**

For this study, we decided to use the qualitative research method because it is particularly effective for grasping concepts and gathering experiences and ideas. Hence, it provides in-depth insights into areas that are less known and investigated (Agius, 2018). Our purpose was to find out the viewpoints of teachers' and school administrators' on teacher leadership. While qualitative research focuses on verbal narrative data such as oral or written data to draw conclusions, quantitative research relies on logical or statistical observations, which is why we preferred qualitative research method for our study. Qualitative approaches are especially helpful in examining the meaning given to circumstances individuals encounter (Creswell, 2012). We conducted qualitative research because one-on-one interviews assisted us in uncovering information regarding the definition of teacher leadership.

The qualitative research method produces a dense (rich) description of participants' thoughts, views, and experiences, as well as an analysis of the importance of their actions. The qualitative research methodologies we employed for this study included one-on-one interviews. Qualitative research allows researchers to learn about the participants' inner experiences and how meanings are created by and in culture (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Researchers interact directly with individuals during data collection through interviews. As a result, data collecting is both subjective and comprehensive.

Moreover, our research participants felt safe and at ease while expressing their ideas. Since our study investigated perspectives of teacher leadership, the use of open-ended questions during face-to-face interviews allowed us to acquire additional data simply by asking questions from our participants.

### Research Site and Population

As research sites, two public schools located in Baku were chosen to conduct this research. The population was made up of public school administrators and teachers.

### Sample Size and Sampling Strategy

The sample size for this study was 10 participants who were interviewed. They included two school administrators and 8 teachers. Convenience sampling was utilized as a sampling strategy in which researchers choose a sample based on time, money, location, availability of sites or respondents, etc (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The interviewed school principal to collect the preliminary data was contacted and asked to recommend research sites where there are teacher leaders known for their initiatives. He recommended us two public schools in Baku.

**Table 1**

*Participants and Research Site*

Participants: 10				
Research Site: Public Schools in Baku				
Participant Profiles	The number of participants	Gender	Characteristics	Age group/experience
School administrators	2	Female		Different
Teachers	8	Female	different positions and teaching different subject matters	Different

### **Data Collection**

Interviews were employed as the primary source of data collection in this Capstone Project because interviews provide in-depth information pertaining to participants' experiences, point of views, feelings and knowledge of a certain topic (Grey, 2014; Patton, 2015). Interviews are also the most direct and straightforward method of gathering extensive and thorough data about the "phenomenon" (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). We posed semi-structured questions to our participants on a one-on-one basis because semi-structured interviews allow individuals to be flexible and offer their points of view to the discussion (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). To see the list of planned questions, an interview protocol was used. Two devices were used to record participant interviews once participants expressed their willingness to be recorded. The questions were open-ended and mainly focused on how teacher leadership is perceived by the research participants, what they think about the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders and if/how school principals/managers support teacher leaders. The average length of each interview was 30 minutes and they were conducted in Azerbaijani based on the preferences of the participants.

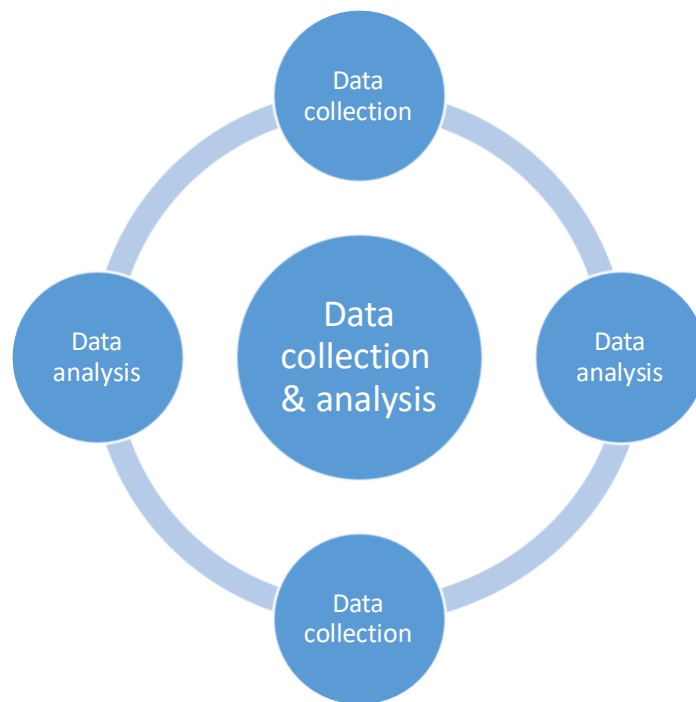
### **Data Analysis**

In qualitative research, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), data collection and analysis should happen concurrently. Given this, we carried out these procedures simultaneously, meaning that we began the data analysis process alongside conducting the interviews, manually transcribing them and coding. The purpose here was to make sense of text data by fragmenting it into text or image segments, labeling the segments with codes, evaluating codes for similarities and redundancy, and categorizing these codes (Creswell, 2012). A codebook was created by us to see all codes as a list and follow the procedures outlined above. After we carefully constructed and

labeled categories, the following step was to prepare for reporting our findings as a narrative discussion.

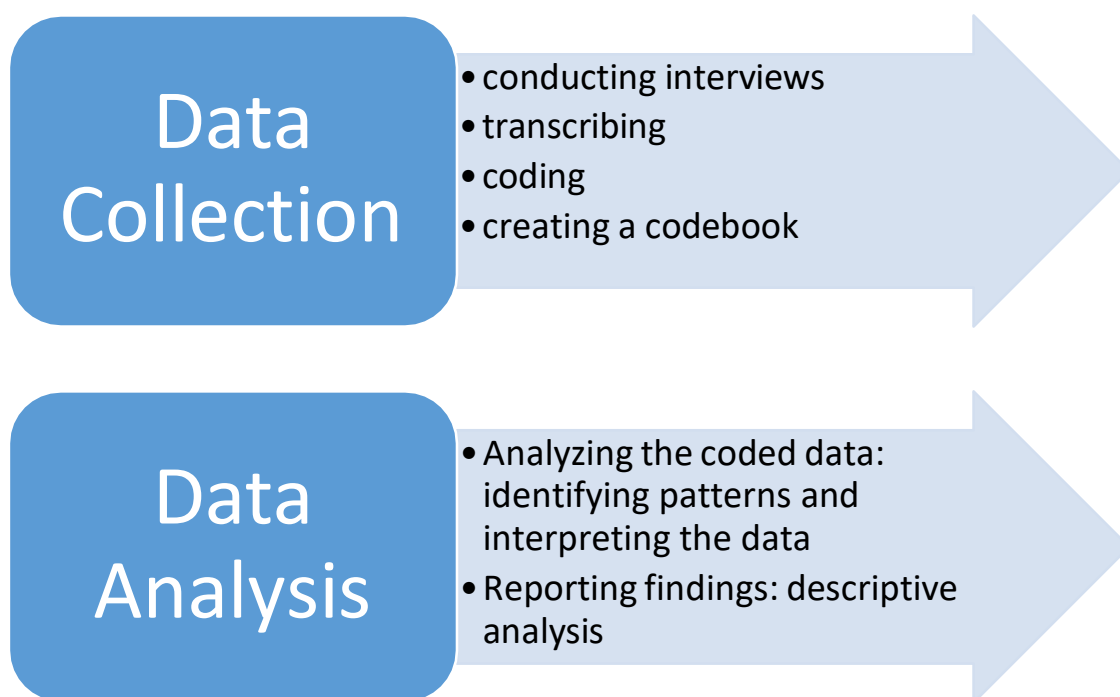
**Table 2**

*Data collection and analysis procedure*



**Table 3**

*Data collection and analysis phases*



### **Reliability and Validity**

Validity and reliability in qualitative research increase transparency and reduce the possibility of researcher bias (Singh, 2014). These are important concepts for contemporary research since they increase the accuracy with which a research study is assessed and evaluated (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). We checked the validity of our findings with the implementation of triangulation.

### **Triangulation**

Triangulation- a validity procedure is employed by researchers to look for convergence across numerous and various sources of data to establish themes or categories for a study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). When data is obtained from a single source, identifying whether the data is valid might be difficult. We applied data triangulation, which makes use of many data sources in order to increase the validity of the findings (Creswell & Miller, 2000). We conducted interviews with teachers from two different schools.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Creswell (2012) emphasizes that ethical concerns should be taken into account at all phases of the research process. In this study, participant names were kept confidential, which means the researchers were the only individuals who know them. The participants were informed of the questions' substance, how the answers would be utilized, and their rights ahead of time by taking into account the importance of "informed consent" (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

## Chapter 4: Findings

The focus of this Capstone project is to explore teacher leadership in public schools in Baku.

The research questions we seek to answer are as follows:

1. How do teachers and school principals define teacher leadership in Baku public schools?
2. How do principals (administrators) support teacher leadership?

We collected data by conducting one-on-one interviews with two school administrators and eight teachers at two public schools located in Baku (Table 4 and 5).

**Table 4**

*Participant information, School 1*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Experience/Position</b>
Respondent 1 (School administrator 1)	40 years of pedagogical experience; vice principal
Respondent 2	Head of Methodology
Respondent 3	Homeroom teacher
Respondent 4	12 years of pedagogical experience, ICT teacher
Respondent 5	33 years of pedagogical experience, homeroom teacher

**Table 5**

*Participant information, School 2*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Experience/Position</b>
Respondent 6	24 years of pedagogical experience, Biology teacher
Respondent 7	13 years of pedagogical experience, homeroom teacher
Respondent 8	21 years of pedagogical experience, philologist
Respondent 9	11 years of pedagogical experience, Biology teacher
Respondent 10 (School administrator 2)	10 years of pedagogical experience, vice principal

This chapter will discuss our findings based on five interview questions asked from school administrators and 14 questions asked from teachers. The questions were open-ended and mainly related to defining teacher leadership, roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders, and how administrators support teacher leadership. Our findings are categorized into three themes: 1. Perceptions of Teachers on Teacher Leadership; 2. Perceptions of School Administrators on Teacher Leadership; 3. Principals’/Administrators’ Support of Teacher Leadership.

### **Theme 1. Teachers’ Perceptions of Teacher Leadership**

During the interviews, we asked the teachers questions concerning their perceptions of teacher leadership and themselves as teacher leaders. Based on our findings, only 1 (Respondent 2) out of 8 interviewed teachers is not sure if she is a teacher leader or not. Respondent 2 noted:

Mən hər zaman özümü lider kimi görmək üçün çalışmışam. Ancaq liderəm və ya deyiləm bu sualın cavabını ətrafimdakı insanlar verməlidir.

[I have always tried to see myself as a leader. However, the question of if I am a leader or not should be answered by other people around me.]

The rest of the teachers replied that they consider themselves as teacher leaders. When we asked a follow-up question regarding their contributions to the school community as teacher leaders, responses differed and the following subthemes emerged (Table 6):

**Table 6**

*Subthemes for Theme 1*

Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ New initiatives;</li> <li>▶ Collaboration with other teachers;</li> <li>▶ Role model;</li> <li>▶ Student support and motivation;</li> <li>▶ Pedagogical and content area knowledge;</li> <li>▶ Formal position and management;</li> </ul>
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**Subtheme 1.1. New Initiatives.** The idea of taking new initiatives outside the classroom and school contexts was highlighted by some teachers as their contributions to the school community.

Respondent 2: Keçən il məktəbimizdə təşkil olunan “Gəlin birlikdə oxuyaq” layihəsinin müəllifi olmuşam. Bu 3 aylıq layihə ərzində uşaqlarla birlikdə bədii kitablar oxumuşuq və kitab oxuyan şagirdlər oxuduğu kitabları kiçik bir xülasə şəklində yazıblar. Ən çox oxuyan şagirdləri mükafatlandırmışıq.

[I am the author of the "Let's read together" project organized in our school last year. During this 3-month project, we read fiction books together with the children, and the students who read the books wrote a small summary of those books they read. We awarded those students who read the most.]

Respondent 8: Mən məktəbimizdə tez-tez bilik yarışları təşkil edirəm. Sonda yer tutan tələbələr medallarla mükafatlandırılır.

[I often organize educational competitions at our school. At the end, top students are awarded with medals.]

Respondent 9: Şagirdləri mövzu ilə əlaqədar harasa aparmaq təşəbbüsünü ideya kimi irəli sürmüşəm. Nəticədə, dərsləri təkə sinifdə yox, laboratoriya kabinetləri, məktəbin həyətyanı sahəsi, zoopark, Zoologiya institutu, Botanika institutu, Botanika bağı və s. kimi yerlərdə də keçmişik. Bu ideya valideynlər tərəfindən xüsusilə bəyənilmişdir.

[I have initiated taking students to various places related to our lesson topics. As a result, I have taught my students not only in the classroom, but also in laboratories, schoolyard, zoo, Zoology Institute, Botanical Institute, Botanical garden, etc. This idea was especially approved by parents.]

These teachers also mentioned that when they have new ideas, they first try to apply them in their classrooms and if they are successful, they share those ideas with the school principal.

**Subtheme 1.2. Collaboration with other teachers.** Some teacher leaders mentioned collaboration with other teachers as one of the main indicators of teacher leadership.

Respondent 2: Lider müəllimlər digər müəllimlərlə əməkdaşlıq etməyi bacarmalıdır. Məsələn, mən yeni ideyalarım olduqda başqa müəllimlərlə bölüşürəm. Həmçinin sinif rəhbəri kimi öz sınıfmdə hər hansı bir problem olduqda digər müəllimlərlə müzakirə apararaq həll yolu tapmağa çalışırıq.

[Teacher leaders should be able to collaborate with other teachers. For example, when I have new ideas, I share them with other teachers. Also, as a homeroom teacher, whenever there is any problem in my class, we try to find a solution by discussing it with other teachers.]

Respondent 4: Mən bu məktəbə yeni gələndə müəllim liderlərlə daim əməkdaşlıq edirdim. İndi isə lider müəllim olaraq mən də yeni gələn müəllimlərə dəstək olmağa çalışıram.

[When I was new in this school, I collaborated with the teacher leaders here. Now, as a teacher leader, I try to support new teachers, too.]

Respondent 9: Mən İKT ilə bağlı bir çox təlimlərdə iştirak etdiyimə görə bununla bağlı çətinliklərlə üzləşən müəllimlərlə öz bildiklərimi bölüşürəm.

[As I have participated in many ICT-related trainings, I share my knowledge with those teachers who experience difficulties with ICT.]

These teachers provided examples on how they collaborate with other teachers at their schools.

**Subtheme 1.3. Role Model.** Some teachers identified teacher leaders as individuals who are good role models to others for their attitudes.

Respondent 2: Şagirdlərlə və kollektiv ilə olan münasibətlərində müəllim liderlər başqalarına nümunə olmalıdır.

[Teacher leaders should be role models to others for their attitudes toward students and colleagues.]

Respondent 5: Müəllim mütləq şəkildə lider kimi nümunəvi olmalıdır. Çünki tək şagirdlərlə deyil, müəllim və valideynlərlə də işləyir.

[A teacher should be a role model as a leader because (s)he works not only with students, but also with colleagues and parents.]

As seen from the examples above, these teachers assume that teacher leadership involves being a good role model for others.

**Subtheme 1.4. Student Support and Motivation.** Another common response entailed supporting and motivating students, mentioned by Respondents 2, 3, 4 and 8, respectively.

Respondent 2 and 4: Dərslərdə aktiv iştirak edən şagirdləri motivasiya etmək üçün sertifikat və medallarla mükafatlandırırım.

[I reward students who participate in lessons actively with certificates and medals to motivate them.]

Respondent 3: Nizam-intizama uyğun davranan və dərslərdə aktiv iştirak edən şagirdlərə 1 günlük müəllim olmaq fürsəti verirəm.

[I give an opportunity to become a teacher for a day to those students who behave accordingly and participate in lessons actively.]

Respondent 8: Mənim müəllim lider olaraq məktəbimizə ən böyük töhfəm şagirdlərimin müxtəlif olimpiadalarda əldə etdikləri uğurlarıdır.

[My biggest contribution to the school community as a teacher leader is my students' achievements in different olympiads.]

According to these teachers, teacher leaders should guide, support and motivate their students to maximize their learning.

**Subtheme 1.5. Pedagogical and Content Area Knowledge.** Several teachers mentioned that teacher leaders demonstrate good pedagogical and content area knowledge.

Respondent 7: Lider müəllim müxtəlif vasitələrdən istifadə edərək dərslərə rəngarənglik qatmağı bacarmalıdır. Məsələn, musiqi, şeir və s.

[A teacher leader should be able to add variety to the lesson using different tools. For example, music, poetry, etc.]

Respondent 8: Lider müəllim öz fənnini yüksək səviyyədə bilməlidir.

[A teacher leader should have content area expertise]

Respondent 9: Lider müəllim müasir İKT vasitələrindən dərslərə və mövzuya uyğun olaraq, həmçinin sinfin səviyyəsini nəzərə alaraq tətbiq etməyi bacarmalıdır. Şagirdlərin əməyini düzgün qiymətləndirmək də mühümdür.

[A teacher leader should be able to integrate contemporary ICT tools into the lessons, considering the topic and student level. It is also highly important to assess student attempts fairly.]

The above-mentioned quotes indicate that these teachers believe that teacher leaders need to be an expert in their fields and it is necessary for them to possess pedagogical knowledge (e.g. varying teaching methods, integrating technology into the lessons, knowing how to assess students, etc.).

**Subtheme 1.6. Formal Position and Management.** Some of the teachers tend to believe that a teacher should either hold a formal position or be involved in management to be a leader.

Respondent 4: Mənə görə müəllim lider dedikdə məktəblərində rəsmi vəzifəsi olan müəllimlər nəzərdə tutulur.

[I think teacher leaders are those teachers who hold a formal position at their schools.]

Respondent 3: Mənim müəllim lider olaraq töhfəm odur ki, 10 ildən çoxdur ki, məktəbin saytını mən idarə edirəm.

[My contribution as a teacher leader is to manage the website of the school for more than 10 years.]

Our findings suggest that teachers' definition of teacher leadership encompasses taking new initiatives, collaborating with other teachers, being a role model for others, supporting and motivating students, having good pedagogical and content area knowledge, and holding a formal position and managing.

## **Theme 2. Perceptions of School Administrators on Teacher Leadership**

During the interviews, we asked the school administrators several questions regarding how they understand and define teacher leadership. Table 7 describes how school administrators perceive the notion of teacher leadership.

**Table 7***Subthemes for Theme 2*

Subthemes for Theme 2	
School Administrators' Perceptions of Teacher Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Classroom management</li> <li>▶ New initiatives</li> <li>▶ Student support</li> </ul>

**Subtheme 2.1. Classroom management.** Unlike teachers, both of the administrators believe that a good teacher leader is someone who has good classroom management skills.

Administrator 1 and 2: Lider müəllim sinfi tam olaraq idarə etməyi bacaran müəllimdir.

[A teacher leader is someone who is able to manage the classroom.]

Interestingly, classroom management was not mentioned as a characteristics of teacher leaders by any of the interviewed teachers.

**Subtheme 2.2. New initiatives.** School Administrator 1 mentioned two teachers in their school whom she considers as teacher leaders, noting that both of them take new initiatives in that school:

Məktəbimizdəki müəllimlərdən biri öz təşəbbüsü ilə həm şagirdlər, həm də müəllimlər üçün valideyn-məktəb münasibətlərində riayət edilməli olan qaydaları özündə əks etdirən sənəd hazırlayıb. Bunun əsasında davranış qaydalarına nəzarət etmək üçün komissiya yaradılıb.

[One of the teachers in our school has taken an initiative to prepare a document containing rules for both students and teachers to follow in parent-school relations. Based on this, a commission was established to monitor rules of conduct.]

Məktəbimizdə ibtidai sinif müəllimi olan, amma rəsmi vəzifəsi olmayan bir lider müəllim də var ki, təşkilati işlərlə məşğuldur. Məsələn, ənənəvi bayramları qeyd etmək üçün məktəb səviyyəsində şagirdlərlə tədbirlər təşkil edir.

[In our school, there is another teacher leader, who is a homeroom teacher with no official position, and engaged in organizational work. For example, she organizes schoolwide events together with students to celebrate traditional holidays.]

**Subtheme 2.3. Student support.** School Administrator 2 provided the following example of teacher leaders at their school, highlighting how they support their students:

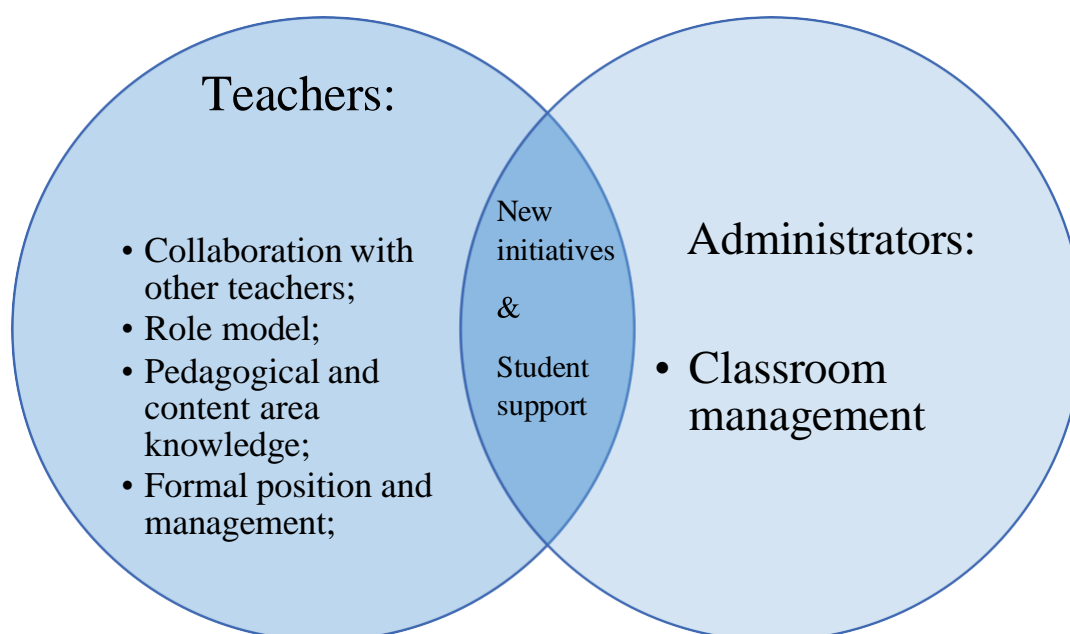
Məktəbimizdəki lider müəllimlər şagirdləri virtual və televiziya yarışları üçün hazırlayırlar.

[Teacher leaders in our school prepare students for virtual and televised educational competitions.]

Table 8 compares the perceptions of the school administrators with teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership. As can be seen in the table, both interviewed administrators and teachers think that teacher leaders are those individuals who take new initiatives and support students.

### **Table 8**

*Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions of Teacher Leadership*



### **Theme 3. Principals'/Administrators' Support of Teacher Leadership**

In terms of principal support, we interviewed both school administrators and teachers. When we asked teachers about principal assistance, they all said that their principals do it in many ways. According to several of the instructors, the principal constantly listened to their concerns and new ideas, motivating them to do better work. In the school “B”, two of the instructors mentioned that their principals reward them with certificates and diplomas for their active participation in extracurricular activities as teachers. According to one teacher from school “A”, the principal provided her with technological support by giving her room with smart board and new computer for creating more interesting lessons.

#### **Table 9**

*Teachers' answers on how principals support them*

#### **School “A”**

**Respondent N2** Yes/ Supports in new projects

**Respondent N3** Yes/ technological support

**Respondent N4** Yes/ Motivation

**Respondent N5** Yes/ Motivation

### School “B”

**Respondent N6** Yes/ Help in difficult situation

**Respondent N7** Yes/ Certificates and diplomas

**Respondent N8** Yes/ Certificates and diplomas

**Respondent N9** Yes/ Motivation

We also asked school administrators how they assist their teacher leaders. The principal of school “B” claimed that she assists teachers and teacher leaders by providing ICT or curriculum development training as well as psychological assistance. The principal of school “A” stated that they encourage teachers to engage in various projects and training. They even allow instructors to engage in these activities during work days when they are required to go to other countries for international projects.

Respondent 1: Bəzi müəllimlərimiz OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) layihəsində iştirak edirdi və bunun üçün Gürcüstana getməli olublar. Amma təbii ki, o vaxt onların burada dərsləri olub. Amma biz onlara dəstək olduq, dərslərini başqa müəllimlərə verdik, rahat şəkildə iştirak etmələrinə kömək etdik.

[Some of our teachers participate in the OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) project, and for this they had to go to Georgia. But, of course, at that time they had lessons here. But we supported them, gave their lessons to other teachers, and helped them participate in a comfortable way.]

Moreover, we spoke with school administrators about teacher leaders in their schools, their contributions, and whether they had any teachers who do not hold a formal role but take on leadership duties. Both administrators acknowledged their teacher leaders' contributions, and mentioned that their schools had informal leaders who are actively involved in extracurricular activities such as organizing events, participating in international projects, and training students for worldwide competitions.

### **Secondary Findings. The Roles and Responsibilities of Teacher Leaders**

We asked questions about the teacher leaders' roles and responsibilities throughout the interview to find out about their contributions to the school. Only responders 4, 7, and 8 stated that their major responsibility is to provide light and guidance to the people and groups that they oversee.

Respondent 7 stated:

Mənə görə müəllim liderin ən əsas vəzifəsi bələdçi kimi insanlara və ya öz idarə etdiyi komandaya yol göstərib, düzgün yola çıxarmaqdır.

[For me, the most important role of a teacher leader is to show the way to the people or the team he/she manages as a guide and lead them on the right path.]

One of the most essential roles of a teacher leader, according to respondent 7, is to act as a conductor and demonstrate the proper path to those who follow him/her. Respondent 8 stated that a teacher leader should be able to guide those who follow him/her correctly. Other responses are rather different, such as respondent 6's statement of roles and responsibilities, which is that a teacher leader should assist the school in organizational work. Another comparable finding is that respondents 4 and 5 stated that one of the most essential roles of teacher leaders is to first improve themselves.

Respondent 5 mentioned:

Müəllim liderlərinin ən birinci vəzifəsi özünü təkmilləşdirməkdir.

[Teacher leaders' first role is to improve themselves.]

We also asked, "How do you engage families in the teaching process?", respondents 3 and 5 likewise addressed their roles and responsibilities in this question, stating that it is their responsibility to engage parents, inform them about their children's attitudes, and provide knowledge to the parents.

Respondent 5 stated that:

Uşağın düzgün təhsili üçün hər cəhətdən valideynlə əlaqədə olmaq müəllim liderlərin ən birinci vəzifələrindən biridir.

[For the proper education of the child, it is necessary to be in contact with the parents in every way, this is one of the important responsibilities of teacher leaders.]

Respondents 5 and 8 also stated empathy and motivation as significant roles of teacher leaders in their responses.

Respondent 8 mentioned:

Tələbələrində və ətrafındakı insanlara motivasiya vermək müəllim liderinin ən əsas vəzifələrindən biridir.

[Motivating students and the people around them is one of the most important role of a teacher leaders.]

**Table 10**

*The roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders*

Respondents' numbers	Responses
2. (School A)	Have the ability to pass knowledge on to others
3. (School A)	Be democratic
4. (School A)	Develop one's own work and lead the way for those who come after him/her
5. (School A)	Improve yourself and being transparent, fair and reliable
6. (School B)	Support the school in organizational work
7. (School B)	Act as a conductor and demonstrate the proper path to those who follow him/her
8. (School B)	Guide those who follow him/her correctly
9. (School B)	Find the most effective approach for interaction between teacher and student in every circumstance for avoiding problems

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research project has explored teachers' and school administrators' perceptions of teacher leadership and how school administrators support teacher leaders at public schools located in Baku. The significance of this qualitative study is its contribution to a more accurate understanding of teacher leadership among teachers and school administrators in Baku public schools, and raising teacher leaders' awareness on their meaningful contributions to the school community.

The review of the literature on teacher leadership and interview results has shown that teachers are not confident to define the concept of teacher leadership and whether they can be identified as teacher leaders.

According to our major findings, teachers' definition of teacher leadership entails taking new initiatives, collaborating with other teachers, being a role model for others, supporting and motivating students, having good pedagogical and content area knowledge, and holding a formal position and managing, while school administrators define teacher leaders as those individuals who are good at classroom management, taking new initiatives and supporting their students. When it comes to school administrators' support of teacher leaders, they provide technological and motivational support as well as certificates and diplomas. The study findings have concluded that there are both similarities and differences in perceptions of teacher leadership between teachers and school administrators. As a result, we decided to conduct a workshop on teacher leadership to raise awareness on this concept among teachers and school administrators.

**Limitations**

The limitations of this study include the following:

- The study was conducted at public schools located only in Baku. However, we could have different findings if we had an opportunity to conduct our research at rural schools and explore the concept of teacher leadership in a different context.
- The study participants included only female teachers and administrators.

## **Chapter 6: End product**

As we mentioned above, the purpose of our study was to explore how teacher leadership is perceived by teachers and school administrators as well as how school administrators support teacher leadership. In order to analyze it, we interviewed two public school teachers and administrators. The data that we collected during interviews have allowed us to understand the perceptions of both teachers and school administrators.

Based on our findings and an examination of the literature, we proposed to organize a workshop on teacher leadership at ADA University.

### **Duration of the workshop.**

Workshop lasted 90 minutes.

### **Audience.**

We invited participants from two different public schools in Baku. There were nine participants, including eight teachers and one administrator.

### **The Purpose of Organizing a Workshop.**

This workshop focused on raising awareness about the definition of teacher leadership among the teachers of Baku public schools.

The objectives of the workshop are below:

- Define teacher leadership.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of teacher leadership.
- Differentiate the formal and informal teacher leadership.

- Discover the challenge that they face during the teaching and learning process and solve the problem that they discovered.

### **Workshop Plan.**

Greetings, Ice-breaker. Workshop started with greetings and ice-breaker questions. Participants shared information about themselves.

Brief presentation about Research. In the beginning of the workshop, the researchers introduced the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the research, and the findings.

Brief discussion about teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership. Researchers asked teachers how they define the teacher leadership. Teachers individually answered the question and gave their own definition.

Presenters' input. Researchers provided information about teacher leadership, roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders, the main characteristics that teacher leaders have, and the difference between formal and informal teacher leaders based on the literature review.

Case Analysis. Three short stories on teacher leaders were shared by the researchers. Participants read stories individually and took notes. Researchers addressed a few specific questions, including:

-whether they believe the primary characters are teacher leaders and why;

-which characteristics teacher leaders possess;

-what duties and responsibilities they have.

Group Work. Researchers divided participants into two groups based on their workplaces.

Participants discussed the challenge they face in teaching and learning process in their school as a group. After they presented their answers, they tried to solve the problem. At the end they presented their solutions as a group.

Reflection. At the final stage of the workshop, every participant wrote short statement and reflected on what they had learned during the workshop.

*Photos that had taken during the workshop:*





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## Appendices

### Appendix A. Semi-structured interview questions for teachers.

- 1) Siz müəllim liderliyi anlayışını necə izah edərdiniz?
- 2) Özünü müəllim lider hesab edirsinizmi? Niyə / Niyə yox? Cavabınızı əsaslandırın.
- 3) Müəllim liderlərin rolları və vəzifələri nələrdir?
- 4) Müəllim lider kimi məktəbinizə hər hansı bir əhəmiyyətli töhfə vermişiniz mi? Əgər vermişinizsə, hər hansı bir konkret nümunəni paylaşa bilərsinizmi?
- 5) Məktəb direktoru məktəbinizdə müəllim liderləri necə dəstəkləyir? Zəhmət olmasa, konkret bir nümunəni paylaşın.
- 6) Bu məktəbdə liderlik bacarıqlarınızı necə təkmilləşdirmək istərdiniz? Zəhmət olmasa bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 7) Heç məktəbinizdə digər müəllimlərlə əməkdaşlıq edirsinizmi? Əgər edirsinizsə, necə?
- 8) Şagirdlərin ailələrini tədris prosesinə necə cəlb edirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 9) Məktəbdə tədris və təlimlə bağlı münaqişəli vəziyyəti necə idarə edirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 10) Tələbələrinizi necə motivasiya edirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 11) Həvəssiz müəllimi yeni bir təşəbbüsə və ya dəyişikliyə necə cəlb edərdiniz? Zəhmət olmasa, bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 12) Nə vaxtsa uğursuz bir təşəbbüs etmişinizmi? Əgər belə bir təşəbbüsünüz olubsa, nə etmişiniz?

- 13) Sınıfınızda hansı davranış idarəetmə strategiyalarından istifadə edirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa, bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.
- 14) Tədris və öyrənmə ilə bağlı yeni ideyalarınız olduqda adətən nə edirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa, bizimlə konkret bir nümunə paylaşın.

#### **Appendix A. Semi-structured interview questions for teachers (translation).**

1. How would you define teacher leadership?
2. Do you consider yourself as a teacher leader? Why/Why not?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders?
4. Have you made any important contributions to your school as a teacher leader? If yes, please share any specific example.
5. How does the school principal support teacher leadership in your school? Please share any specific example.
6. How would you like to improve your leadership skills here at this school? Please share any specific example.
7. Do you ever collaborate with other teachers in your school? If yes, how?
8. How do you engage families in the teaching process? Please share any specific example.
9. How do you manage a conflict situation related to teaching and learning at school? Please share any specific example.
10. How do you motivate your students? Please share any specific example.
11. How would you involve a reluctant teacher in a new initiative or a change? Please share any specific example.
12. Have you ever taken an initiative that did not work? If yes, how?

13. What behaviour management strategies do you tend to employ in your classroom? Please share any specific example.
14. What do you usually do when you have new ideas regarding teaching and learning? Please share any specific example.

**Appendix B. Semi-structured interview questions for school administrators.**

- 1) Siz müəllim liderliyi anlayışını necə izah edərdiniz?
- 2) Məktəbinizdə müəllim liderlərin rol və vəzifələri nələrədən ibarətdir?
- 3) Məktəbinizdəki müəllim liderlər məktəb ictimaiyyətinə hər hansı bir vacib töhfələr veriblərmə? Əgər veriblərsə, bizə konkret nümunələr misal gətirə bilərsiniz?
- 4) Məktəbinizdə rəsmi vəzifəsi olmayan, lakin rəhbər vəzifələri həyata keçirən müəllim liderlər varmı? Əgər varsa, hər hansı bir konkret nümunəni paylaşa bilərsinizmi?
- 5) Məktəbinizdə müəllim liderliyini necə dəstəkləyirsiniz? Zəhmət olmasa, konkret bir nümunəni paylaşın.

**Appendix B. Semi-structured interview questions for school administrators (translation).**

1. How would you define teacher leadership?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders?
3. Have teacher leaders in your school made any important contributions to the school community?
4. Are there any teacher leaders in your school who have no formal position, but take leadership responsibilities? If yes, please share any specific example.
5. How do you support teacher leadership in your school? Please share any specific example.

## Appendix C. Interview Consent Form

### Müsahibəyə Razılıq Forması

**Tədqiqatçıların adları:** Aytən Lütvelizadə, Fidan Xəlilli, Xəyalə Bəyandurova

**Tədqiqatın adı:** Bakıda dövlət məktəblərində müəllim liderliyinin araşdırılması

**Tədqiqatın məqsədi:** Bu tədqiqatın məqsədi müəllim liderlərin və məktəb liderlərinin müəllim liderliyi anlayışını araşdırmaq və məktəb liderlərinin müəllim liderləri necə dəstəklədiyini tədqiq etməkdir. Tədqiqatın nəticələri Bakı dövlət məktəblərində müəllim liderliyinin daha dəqiq başa düşülməsinə və müəllim liderlərin öz töhfələri barədə məlumatlılığının artırılmasına kömək edəcəkdir.

- Mən başa düşürəm ki, bu tədqiqat işində iştirakım könüllüdür.
- Mən başa düşürəm ki, mənim töhfəm müsahibədə iştirakdan ibarət olacaq və mənə müəllim liderliyi ilə bağlı suallar veriləcək.
- Mən başa düşürəm ki, istənilən vaxt tədqiqatdan imtina etmək və/və ya hər hansı səbəbdən istənilən sual(lar)a cavab verməkdən imtina etmək hüququm var. Əgər tədqiqatda iştirakımı sonlandırsam, geri çəkilmədən əvvəl təqdim etdiyim bütün məlumatlar silinəcək.
- Mən müsahibədə səs yazısı olacağına razıyam.
- Mən başa düşürəm ki, bu müsahibədən əldə edilən məlumatlar məxfi saxlanılacaq və səs yazısı/yazılı qeydlər heç bir üçüncü tərəf/şəxslərlə paylaşılmayacaq.
- Mən başa düşürəm ki, mənim kimliyim anonim qalacaq və adım və eləcə də şəxsiyyətimi təyin edə biləcək hər hansı digər məlumatlar bu layihədən kənar şəxslərə açıqlanmayacaq.
- Səs yazıları/yazılı qeydlər yalnız bu tədqiqatı aparan şəxslər üçün əlçatan olacaq və suallara cavablarım yalnız tədqiqat məqsədləri üçün istifadə olunacaq.

- Mən bu sənədi diqqətlə oxuduğumu və bütün suallarımın cavablandırıldığını təsdiq edirəm.
- Bu razılıq formasını imzalamaqla mən bu tədqiqat layihəsində iştirak etməyə razılaşıram.

Tədqiqat iştirakçısının imzası

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Tarix

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Tədqiqatçının imzası 1

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Tarix

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Tədqiqatçının imzası 2

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Tarix

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Tədqiqatçının imzası 3

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Tarix

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### **Appendix C. Interview Consent Form (translation)**

#### **Interview Consent Form**

**Researchers' names:** Aytan Lutvalizada, Fidan Khalilli, Khayala Bayandurova

**Research title:** Exploring Teacher Leadership in Public Schools in Baku

**Purpose of the research:** The purpose of this study is to explore teacher leaders' and school administrators' perceptions of teacher leadership and investigate how school administrators support teacher leaders. The findings of the study will contribute to a more accurate understanding of teacher leadership in Baku public schools and raising teacher leaders' awareness on their contributions.

- I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary.
- I understand that my contribution will involve participation in an interview and I will be asked questions regarding teacher leadership.
- I understand that I have a right to withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason. If I choose to withdraw, all data I provided prior to the withdrawal will be removed.
- I agree that the interview will be audio recorded.

- I understand that the information obtained from this interview will be treated confidentially and the recording/notes will not be shared with any third party/parties.
- I understand that my identity will remain anonymous and my name and any other personal information that identify me will not be revealed to individuals outside this project.
- Only the researchers in this study will have access to the interview recordings/notes and my answers to the questions will be used only for research purposes.
- I confirm that I have read this document carefully and all of my questions have been answered.
- By signing this consent form, I agree to participate in this research project.

Signature of research participant

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Date

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Signature of researcher 1

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Date

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Signature of researcher 2

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Date

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Signature of researcher 3

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Date

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