

# Women in Mathematics Education: Pathways to Participation

## INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This narrative inquiry highlights the personal pathways—including experiences, thoughts, and stories—to becoming a woman mathematics educator at the post-secondary level.

- Why do women decide to teach mathematics at the post-secondary level?
- What are the experiences of women mathematics educators who had “overcome barriers”?
- What are the critical moments along their pathway to participation?

## METHODOLOGY

This study brings together critical feminist theory, psychoanalytical perspectives, and social constructivist theory to understand the perspectives of women, the complexities of their gender identities, and how their experiences in mathematics education influenced their participation.

Table 1

Number of Participants During each Phase of Data Collection

Data Collection Methods	Phase 1		Phase 2
	Semi-Structured Questionnaire	Semi-Structured Interview	Reflection Activity
Number of Participants	10	5	4

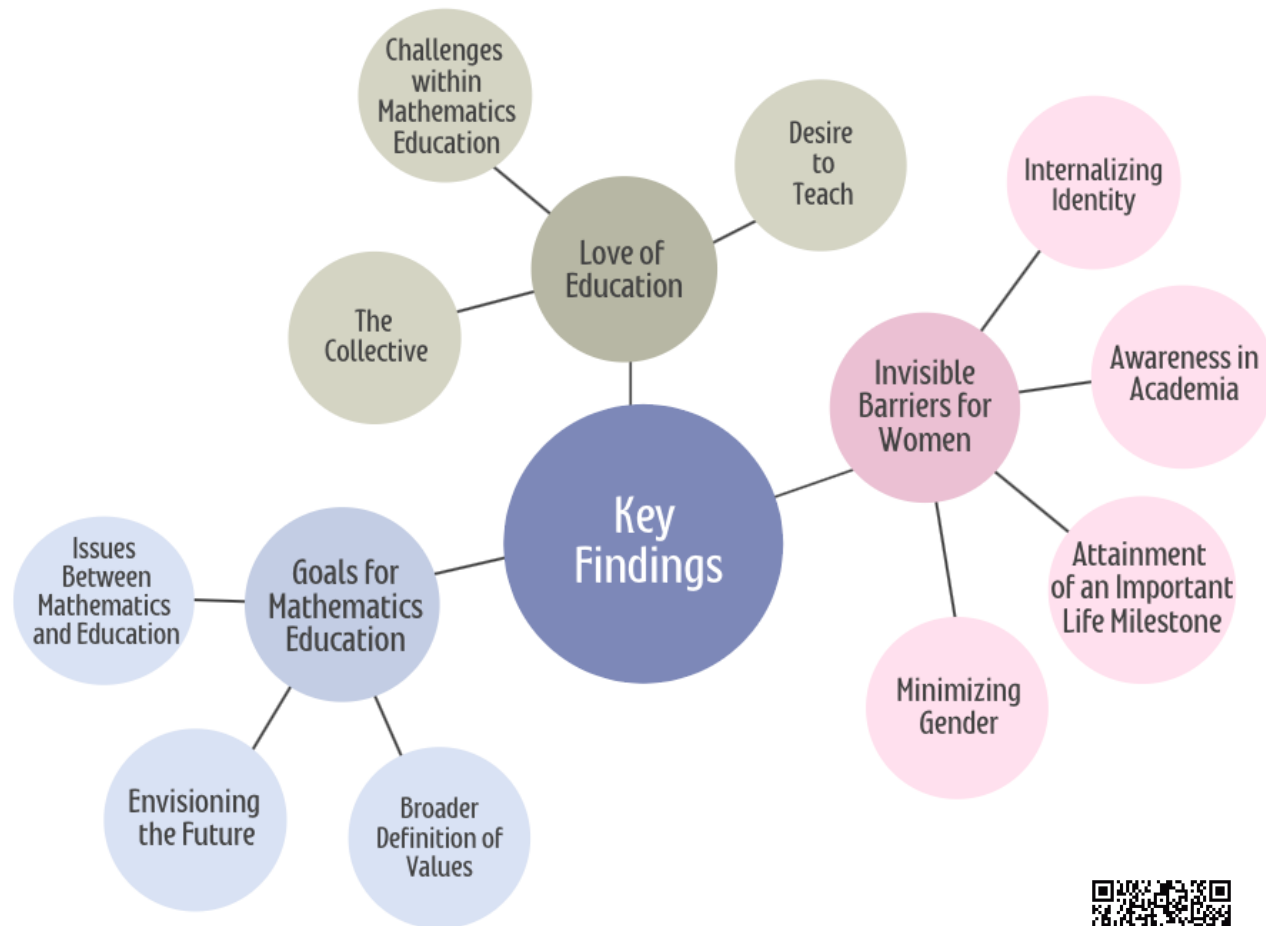
The data analysis consisted of two phases:

1. **Within narrative analysis** → Re-storying of lived experiences
2. **Across narrative analysis** → Identified major themes across the women’s experiences and their journey towards mathematics education.

## DISCUSSION

Women mathematics educators need time to establish positive relationships, to deeply understand their students, and to align their experience in mathematics education with their personal values. They also need time to establish real connections within their community of practice so that they can learn how to lead with their head and heart. Above all, women need time to deconstruct the damaging perceptions towards them in relation to mathematics.

## Pathways to participation represents a critical first step towards social change in mathematics education through storytelling.



Participant Stories →



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To my supervisor, Dr. Gary Plum, thank you for helping me believe in the voice I had to share. To the brave group of women who participated in this study, thank you for trusting me with your stories. I am eternally grateful for your participation and for sharing a piece of yourself with me.