

## **Secondary School Education Preservice Teachers' Experiences with Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice: A Case Study at St. Paul's University, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*Teacher quality has long been a challenge and a subject of research interest in Kenya. The teacher education models used to train teachers in Kenya have been criticized for failing to produce the calibre of teachers needed in basic education classrooms. The shift from Kenya's 8-4-4 system to Competency-Based Education (CBE) has exacerbated the situation. CBE requires teacher education that prepares preservice teachers with new approaches that encourage creativity and the relevant skills for effective teaching. Reflective practice, known for promoting lifelong learning and professional growth, is inconsistently applied across institutions. This study looked at secondary school preservice teachers' experiences with a Context-based Structured Reflective Practice (CBSRP) model. Twenty-three third-year undergraduates at St. Paul's University filled in reflective diaries for ten weeks and took part in four biweekly focus group discussions. Thematic and narrative analysis, done within an interpretivist framework, showed that CBSRP encouraged professional growth through critical evaluation of teaching strategies, better lesson planning, intentionality, flexibility, responsiveness to learners, critical thinking, communication, subject mastery, teamwork, peer support, and mentorship. The findings emphasize the need for adoption of a well-structured context-based reflective practice model in teacher education, capacity building in reflective practice for secondary school preservice teachers, and Inclusion of a structured and well-planned school mentorship programme for secondary school preservice teachers during TP.*

**Keywords:** Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Model, Preservice Teachers' Experiences, Preservice Teachers' Perceptions, Secondary School Preservice Teachers, Reflective Practice, Teaching Practice

### **Introduction**

Globally, the quality of education is strongly linked to the quality of teachers and, by extension, the effectiveness of teacher education (Suaib, 2022; Mwangi, 2011; UNESCO, 2005). In developing countries like Kenya, persistent challenges, including inadequate resources, high teacher-to-student ratios, and underprepared teachers, continue to hinder educational outcomes (Bustillo & Patrinos, 2023). Despite substantial government investment, including a 27.4% allocation to education in the 2023/2024 national budget, significant gaps remain in teacher capacity and educational quality (GoK, 2023). To address these issues, Kenya introduced Competency-Based Education (CBE) in 2017, aligning it with the 2010 Constitution, Vision 2030, and SDG 4. The CBE emphasises learner-centred, outcome-based approaches that foster creativity,

adaptability, and practical competencies (KICD, 2017; GoK, 2019). Teachers are central to the successful implementation of Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBE). Since its 2017 rollout in primary and junior secondary schools, teacher quality has remained a key challenge (GoK, 2023). However, current preservice teacher education programmes are misaligned with the pedagogical demands of CBE and offer limited opportunities for practical learner engagement and innovation (GoK, 2023; Malicay, 2023).

Although government agencies like KICD, TSC, and KNEC, as well as universities, have launched capacity-building initiatives, evaluations reveal persistent gaps in both in-service and preservice teacher preparedness for CBE implementation (GoK, 2023). Addressing these gaps requires transformative teacher education models that integrate innovative, culturally responsive pedagogies and strengthen teaching practicums. A key strategy for gaining global recognition in this regard is reflective practice, which promotes lifelong learning and professional growth by enabling teachers to critically examine their beliefs, attitudes, and teaching approaches (Schön, 1991; Suphasri & Chinokul, 2021).

Practitioners who are often the best equipped to know how to structure practice in the most beneficial ways are those who have developed highly meaningful and relevant frameworks that guide their professional practice (Schön, 1991). In the teaching profession, both preservice and in-service teachers need reflective skills to build frameworks that enhance their professional practice. Reflective practice in teaching involves systematically examining and evaluating one's professional experiences to improve future instruction (Suphasri & Chinokul, 2021; Weiss, 2020). Teachers can therefore examine their beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and personal philosophies and make adjustments to improve their professional teaching practice. The main focus of a teacher's reflective practice should be to improve students' learning. Kılıç (2022) conducted a case study on the effects of different reflective practices on pre-service science teachers' (PSTs) classroom teaching and found significant improvements in PSTs' teaching practices after implementing these practices.

Reflective practice in preservice teacher education is possible during teaching practice, and it is critical for a preservice teacher, as it helps shape his or her professional teaching practice from the onset of his or her teaching career. It serves as a bridge between theory and practice in teacher education (Korthagen, 2017; Bubnys & Zavadskienė, 2017; Mwangi, 2011; Ahmed & Leider, 2024; and Spiteri, 2024). Maonga (2015) supports this argument by indicating that reflective practice enhances a teacher's teaching practice. Therefore, it is fundamental for teachers to acquire

the requisite reflective practice skills during their preservice education; hence, the need for structured reflective practice in preservice teacher education. According to Nguyen (2022), reflective practice deepens a teacher's understanding of his/her profession, beliefs, attitudes, and philosophies. Through reflective practice, preservice teachers can expand their teaching repertoire, reshape beliefs about teaching and learning, and improve professional competence (Leonielyn, 2023; Suaib, 2022). For this process to be effective, reflection must be intentional and structured. Kayima (2022) emphasizes that purposeful reflective writing reveals changes in trainees' thinking about teaching, while also serving as a tool for expressing and refining their views on the profession. Although reflective practice can improve teaching effectiveness and student outcomes and is a concept reflected in many teacher education practices, it is inadequately integrated into preservice programmes and undermined by poor academic support and limited instructional quality, leaving novice teachers to navigate its meaning and application. This denies preservice teachers an opportunity to critique and improve their teaching practice (Suaib, 2022; Malicay, 2023; Makura & Toni, 2015; Mwangi, 2011). This contributes to novice teachers being underprepared for the complexities of the profession, leading to the continuation of traditional teacher-centered pedagogies in schools (Malicay, 2023; Suaib, 2022; Suphasri & Chinokul, 2021). As a result, many preservice teachers cannot adequately connect theory and practice. Structured reflective practice offers a pathway to address these challenges, as recommended by Pedro (2005) and Spiteri (2024)

This study was guided by Schon's Reflective Model (1991), which promotes reflection during and after the occurrence of an event. The model helps practitioners improve the quality of their practice by critically reflecting on individual actions during an event, considering what worked or did not, and identifying possible remedies or improvements. Schon's reflective model involves three stages, namely *Knowledge-in-Action*, which denotes the intuitive ability of a practitioner to perform a task, followed by *Reflection-in-Action*, in which the practitioner considers his or her actions during the occurrence of an event, and finally *Reflection-on-Action*, where the practitioner considers his or her actions and possible remedies that can be adopted to improve the actions and the event.

In this study, Knowledge-in-Action occurred during planning for teaching, where the preservice teacher prepared lessons scheduled each day according to his/her ability and context. Reflection-in-action was also done when the preservice teacher was teaching the lesson, considering his or her actions, the learners' actions, and their consequences in the context of each lesson. The reflection was recorded at the end of the lesson. Reflection-on-Action was conducted by the

preservice teacher at the end of each day and during focus group discussions (FGDs). Each preservice teacher was expected to consider all lessons for the day and the mitigating factors that could improve areas that did not work well. During the FGDs, preservice teachers shared their professional teaching experiences, what worked and what did not, and areas for improvement. The ultimate aim of daily reflections and FGDs was to help preservice teachers critique their teaching from the planning stage to the end of each lesson, focusing on what could improve students' learning and identifying possible areas for improvement. This was aimed at enhancing lifelong learning skills and contributing to continuous learning and improvement of preservice teachers' professional practice. The study aligns with SDG 4 by promoting inclusive, equitable, and quality education through improved teacher education practices.

In Kenya, reflective practice remains underutilized and poorly integrated into preservice programmes, often reduced to procedural reporting rather than meaningful professional development (Makura & Toni, 2015). Structured reflective practice offers a more intentional, context-based approach to developing reflective skills aligned with CBE and classroom realities (Ahmed & Leider, 2024). When embedded within teaching practice, it can bridge the gap between theory and practice, enhance instructional effectiveness, and foster deeper professional identity formation (Nguyen, 2022; Leonielyn, 2023).

The Structured Reflective Practice model is used in this study as a guide to help pre-service teachers understand the extent of their reflection by critically reflecting on their teaching experiences, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as the teaching and learning process. Ahmed and Ledier (2024) posit that the Structured Reflective Practice model is used progressively or flexibly to suit changing levels of awareness, experience, and reflection in education students. This study explored the experiences and perceptions of secondary school preservice teachers on the context-based structured reflective practice model. Specific objectives of this study were to

1. Explore the experiences of secondary school education preservice teachers on a context-based structured reflective practice model in teacher education
2. Find out the perceptions of secondary school education preservice teachers on a context-based structured reflective practice model in teacher education.

## **Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative case study design to explore the experiences and perceptions of preservice secondary school teachers regarding the use of a context-based, structured reflective

practice model in teacher education. The use of a qualitative design and a case study is useful when a researcher seeks a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Priya, 2021). An interpretivist research philosophy underpinned the study, as its main aim was to explore preservice teachers' experiences and perceptions of the use of context-based, structured preservice teachers in teacher education. The target population comprised 290 third-year Bachelor of Education (Arts) preservice teachers at St. Paul's University, Kenya. The study targeted a sample of 20 participants. However, 25 participants (5 per quartile) were purposively selected to account for participant dropout and missing data.

A structured reflective practice diary was used to collect data on each preservice teacher's daily reflections on their teaching experiences over 10 weeks. Eight biweekly focus group discussions, each lasting 1.5 hours and guided by a semi-structured FGD schedule, were conducted with 10 students each. FGDs and reflective practice diaries helped explore preservice secondary education teachers' experiences and perceptions of the context-based, structured reflective practice model in teacher education. The data's credibility was ensured through piloting the reflective diaries with 10 pre-service teachers and conducting two FGDs. Feedback from the pilot study informed revisions to the diary and FGD guide, improving clarity, relevance, and user-friendliness. Data triangulation was employed by comparing diary and FGD responses to ensure consistency. There were also peer discussions in which researchers discussed the methodology, analysis, and interpretation of the data. In addition, participant orientation and feedback from study participants during teaching practice further improved credibility by addressing emerging issues. Confirmability and credibility were enhanced through reflexivity, where researchers continuously examined their own beliefs and biases to maintain objectivity. Hadi and Closs (2016) note that reflexivity, peer discussion, and member checks can strengthen credibility. In this study, reflexivity and peer discussions were crucial, as the assessment relied on preservice teachers' reflective teaching diaries. Systematic coding ensured authenticity and transferability by capturing the voices of all participants, while verbatim excerpts added contextual depth. Finally, the use of a structured reflective diary provided an audit trail, which increased both dependability and credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that qualitative research should maintain an audit trail that documents all decisions, methods, and changes, while ensuring fairness and an accurate representation of participants' experiences to strengthen credibility, trustworthiness, dependability, and confirmability.

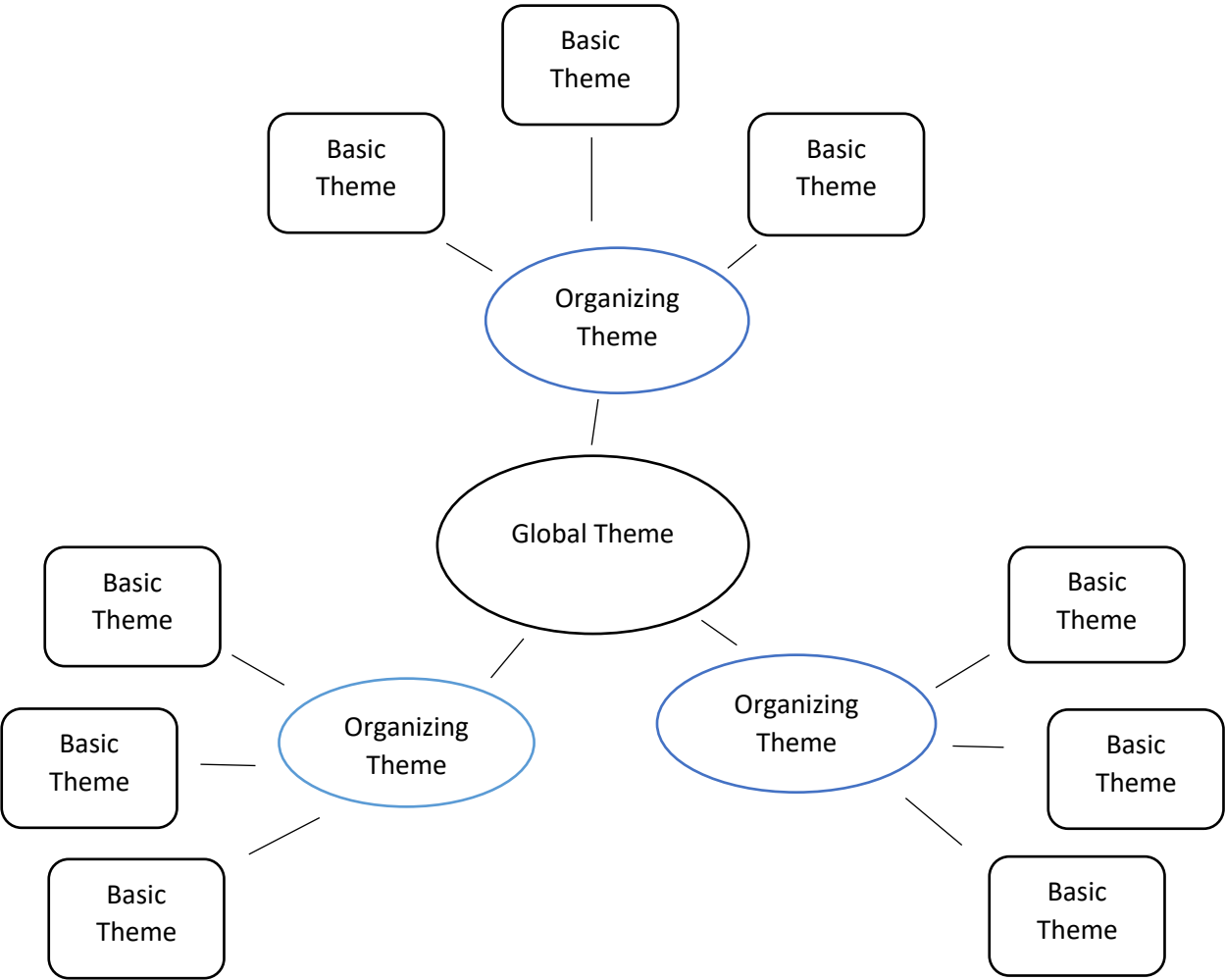
Ethical considerations employed in this study included obtaining approvals from the St. Paul's University Institutional Ethics Review Board and NACOSTI. In addition, participants provided written and verbal informed consent. Participation in the study was voluntary, and individuals were

allowed to withdraw at any stage. The principle of do-no-harm was upheld by ensuring confidentiality, respect, and equitable participation in all FGDs. Participants were asked not to indicate their names, registration numbers, or the name of the school in the reflective practice diary to ensure anonymity. Anonymity was further ensured through coded identifiers during data analysis.

After obtaining relevant approvals and permits from the St. Paul's University Institutional Ethics Review Board and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), the researchers held a virtual meeting with the 25 preservice teachers to explain the purpose of the study, the process of recording reflections and conducting FGDs, and seek their informed consent and voluntary participation. Study participants were issued with reflective diaries, which they used to record daily teaching experiences and reflections for 10 weeks. Eight biweekly FGDs were conducted within the teaching practice period. At the end of the 10 weeks, reflective diaries from the 25 study participants were collected.

Data obtained from the context-based structured reflective practice diaries were coded and then analyzed using thematic and narrative inductive analysis. Dawadi (2020) and Braun and Clarke (2006) point out that thematic analysis can be used to systematically organize and analyze complex data sets. In this study, thematic narrative analysis based on Attride-Stirling's (2001) three-level model of thematic analysis was used. It involved careful reading, re-reading, and transcription of data to identify, describe, and interpret themes emerging from the context-based structured reflective diaries and FGDs. Flexibility in thematic analysis, as noted by Braun and Clarke (2006), enabled the identification, description, and interpretation of themes that emerged from preservice teachers' narratives in structured reflective practice diaries and FGD discussions. The use of inductive analysis enabled themes to emerge from the data, rather than fitting the data to the researcher's preconceived themes, allowing them to be strongly linked to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Narrative analysis was also used to capture preservice teachers' actual secondary school education accounts of their experiences and perceptions. Kujur (2023:74) asserts that "*narratives are a powerful tool of giving meaning to experience.*" Following Attride-Stirling's (2001) thematic analysis model, the data obtained were systematically analyzed using three basic levels, namely: *Basic Themes* that were directly drawn from participants' textual responses, *Organizing Themes* or the clusters of related basic themes reflecting broader categories, and *Global Themes*, which are the overarching themes based on the objectives of the study and encapsulate the main ideas. These layers were then used to construct thematic networks that visually map the progression from

specific participant experiences to broader conceptual insights, as illustrated in Figure 1.1: Thematic Network Structure.



**Fig. 1.1 Thematic Network Structure**

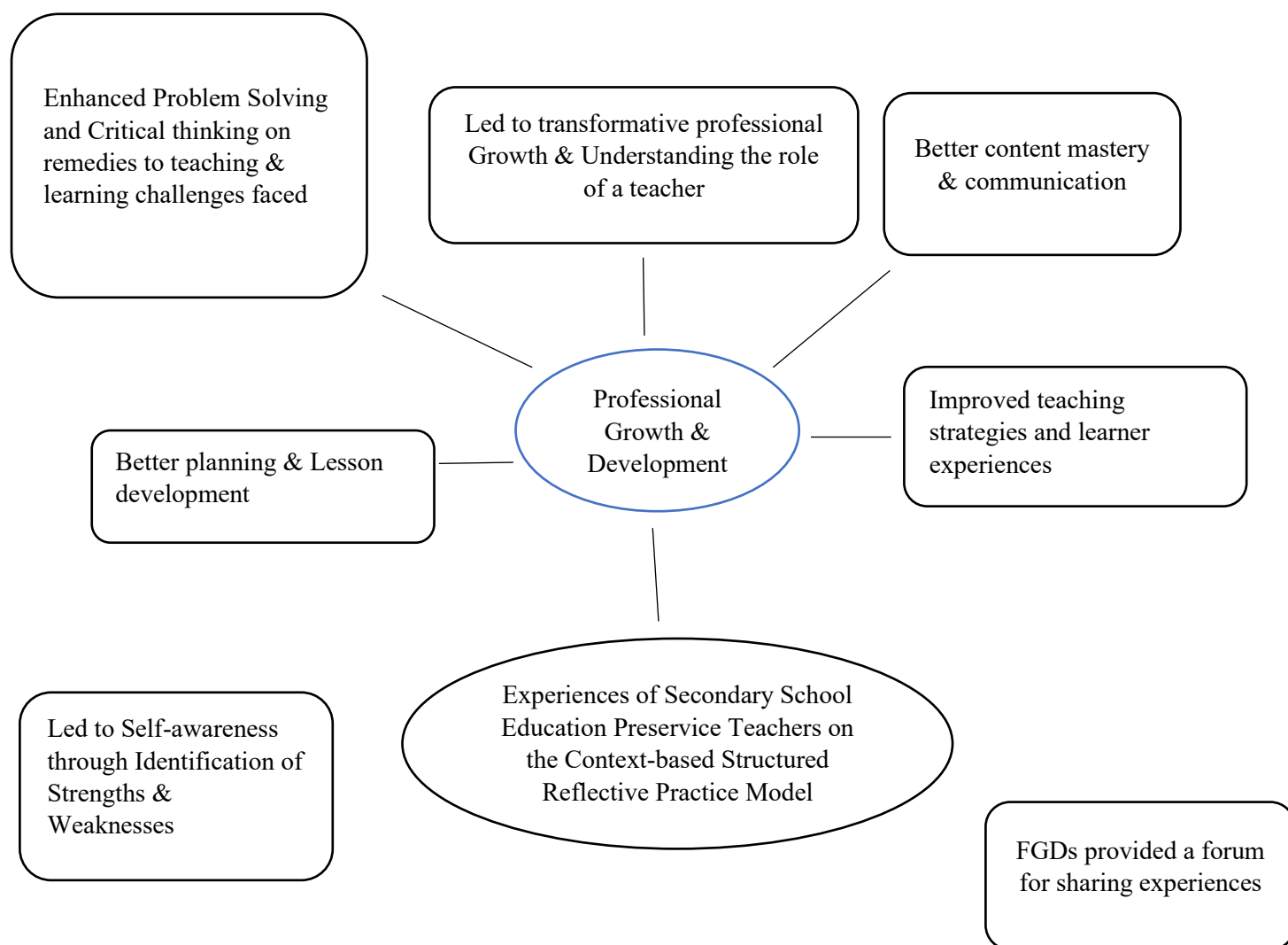
**Results and Discussions**

Twenty-five reflective practice diaries were collected. However, after data cleaning, only twenty-three reflective practice diaries were used for data analysis. Two reflective practice diaries were

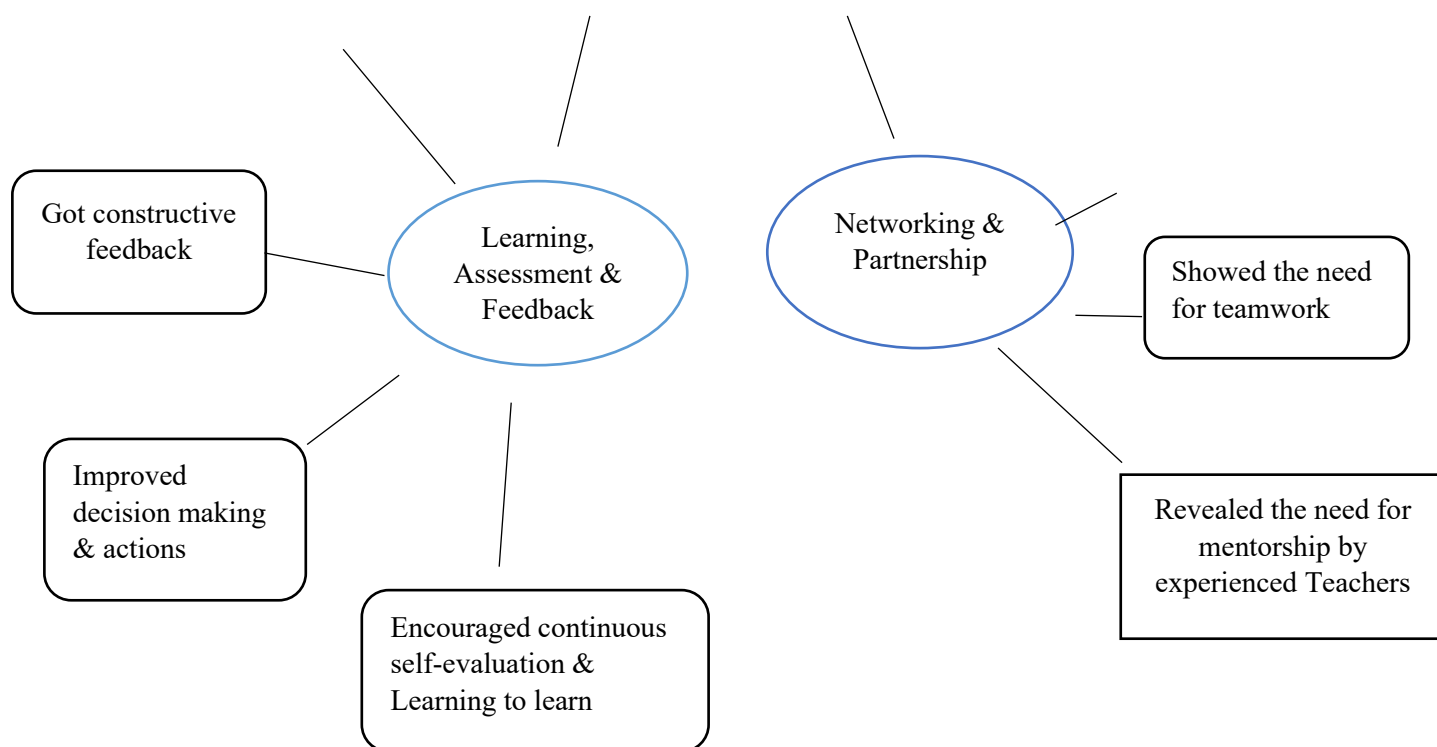
excluded due to significant missing data, and participants had not completed most daily reflective diary entries. Data obtained from context-based reflective diaries and FGDs were analyzed through the use of the basic and organizing themes based on the two global themes. The two global themes were based on the study objectives, namely: experiences of secondary school education preservice teachers on the context-based structured reflective practice model in teacher education, and perceptions of secondary school education preservice teachers on the context-based structured reflective practice model in teacher education. Preservice teachers were required to record their daily reflections on the teaching and learning process in a structured reflective diary, focusing on what worked, what did not, and how they could improve on what did not. The daily reflections formed the focal point of discussions during the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). FGDs provided further insights into preservice teachers' experiences and perceptions of the context-based, structured reflective practice model.

### **Experiences of Secondary School Preservice Teachers on the Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice Model**

The experiences of preservice secondary school teachers in the context-based, structured reflective practice model were as indicated in Figure 1.2.







**Figure 1.2: Experiences of Secondary School Preservice Teachers on the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Model**

Data from the secondary school preservice teachers' experiences with the context-based structured reflective practice model, as indicated in Fig. 1.2, brought out three main or organizing themes, namely, professional growth and development, learning, assessment and feedback, and networking and partnership.

### **Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice as a Tool for Professional Growth and Development**

Participants consistently reported that structured reflective practice contributed to heightened self-awareness and significant improvements in their teaching practices. This process, according to several accounts, resulted in what they described as transformative professional growth.

*"The reflection according to several accounts, this process active practice has helped me identify what worked and what needed improvement in my teaching. Through daily reflections and focus group discussions, I became more confident, flexible, and better at meeting learners' needs. I also grew to be a more intentional and responsive teacher."*  
(Participant 1)

*"I was able to critically analyze what worked well and identify areas needing improvement. The continuous cycle of reflection and discussion made me conscious of my professional growth."* (Participant 3)

Participants' views on their experiences with the context-based, structured, reflective model during the focus group discussions aligned with what they indicated in the reflective diaries.

*"It has been nice journey since I was able to know my strengths and what to improve on and also learn from other people on how to solve whatever wasn't working well."* (Participant 1, Focus Group 3)

*"I was able to identify both of my strengths and the areas that need improvement."* (Participant 2, Focus Group 3)

Evidence from participants' structured reflective diaries and their statements during focus group discussions revealed that many preservice teachers felt that they had improved their lesson planning and teaching strategies through reflection.

*"It helped my teaching in terms of lesson preparation and interaction with learners, enabling me to teach the right concepts to the learners."* (Participant 4)

*"It gave me a chance to think critically about my teaching methods, classroom interactions, and planning. Writing reflections daily allowed me to identify my strengths and areas for improvement, helping me grow professionally. The focus group discussions also provided a platform to share experiences, learn from my peers, and receive constructive feedback, which boosted my confidence."* (Participant 5)

*"Reflective practice has significantly enhanced my teaching practice. It has helped in identifying strengths and areas for improvement, leading to more effective lesson planning and delivery. The focus group discussions provided valuable peer insights and encouraged collaborative problem solving, thus enhancing professional self-awareness."* (Participant 6)

In addition, several preservice teachers indicated that context-based reflective practice enhanced communication skills, content mastery, and critical thinking abilities.

*"Reflective practice made communication in my Kiswahili lessons more eloquent. CRE lessons also helped me to have mastery of content..."* (Participant 7)

*"Reflections... helped me in teaching the right concepts to the learners."* (Participant 8)

*"...It has enhanced problem-solving abilities."* (Participant 9)

For some, engaging in reflection deepened their understanding of the teacher's role:

*"Through the personal reflections as a teacher trainee, I have noted that the reflective practice experience has been wholesome in helping me understand the comprehensive role of a teacher."* (Participant 10)

The main theme emerging from the data is that context-based, structured reflective practice cultivated transformative professional growth. Many preservice teachers reported that the process enhanced their self-awareness, enabling them to critically assess their teaching strategies, classroom interactions, and lesson planning. This growth was not limited to technical improvements but extended to the development of professional dispositions such as intentionality, flexibility, and responsiveness to learner needs. For instance, one participant noted:

*"It helped me to be more intentional in lesson planning, flexible in class management, and learner engagement. It also encouraged me to be more confident and keep improving as a teacher."* (Participant 11)

These narratives resonate with Schon's (1991) concept of the reflective practitioner, who engages in a continuing cycle of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, leading to continuous improvement. The findings also align with Farrell's (2019) contention that systematic reflection enhances pedagogical skills.

### **Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice as an Instrument for Learning, Assessment, and Getting Feedback**

Participants also noted that context-based structured reflective practice was instrumental in facilitating learning, enabling self-assessment of teaching competencies, and providing meaningful feedback on their professional performance.

*"The daily reflections help one to correct the mistakes made before every lesson."*  
(Participant 13)

*"...The focus group discussions provided a platform for sharing experiences, receiving feedback, and learning from peers." (Participant 14)*

*"Daily Reflective practice enabled me to single out any aspect that hinders learning and look for a remedy." (Participant 15)*

### **Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice as a Tool for Networking and Creating Partnerships**

A few preservice teachers noted that the structured reflective practice is a useful tool for networking and creating partnerships in the teaching profession and activities.

*"Through focus group discussions, ... I was able to learn from other people and understand that teaching needs people to work together as a team." (Participant 16)*

*"...The focus group discussions provided valuable peer insights and encouraged collaborative problem-solving, thus promoting professional self-awareness. "(Participant 17)*

*"Reflective practice helped me see the need to consult with experienced teachers on areas in which I needed help in. Focus group discussions taught me a lot, which also helped me to be more intentional in participating as an active member of a team." (Participant 18)*

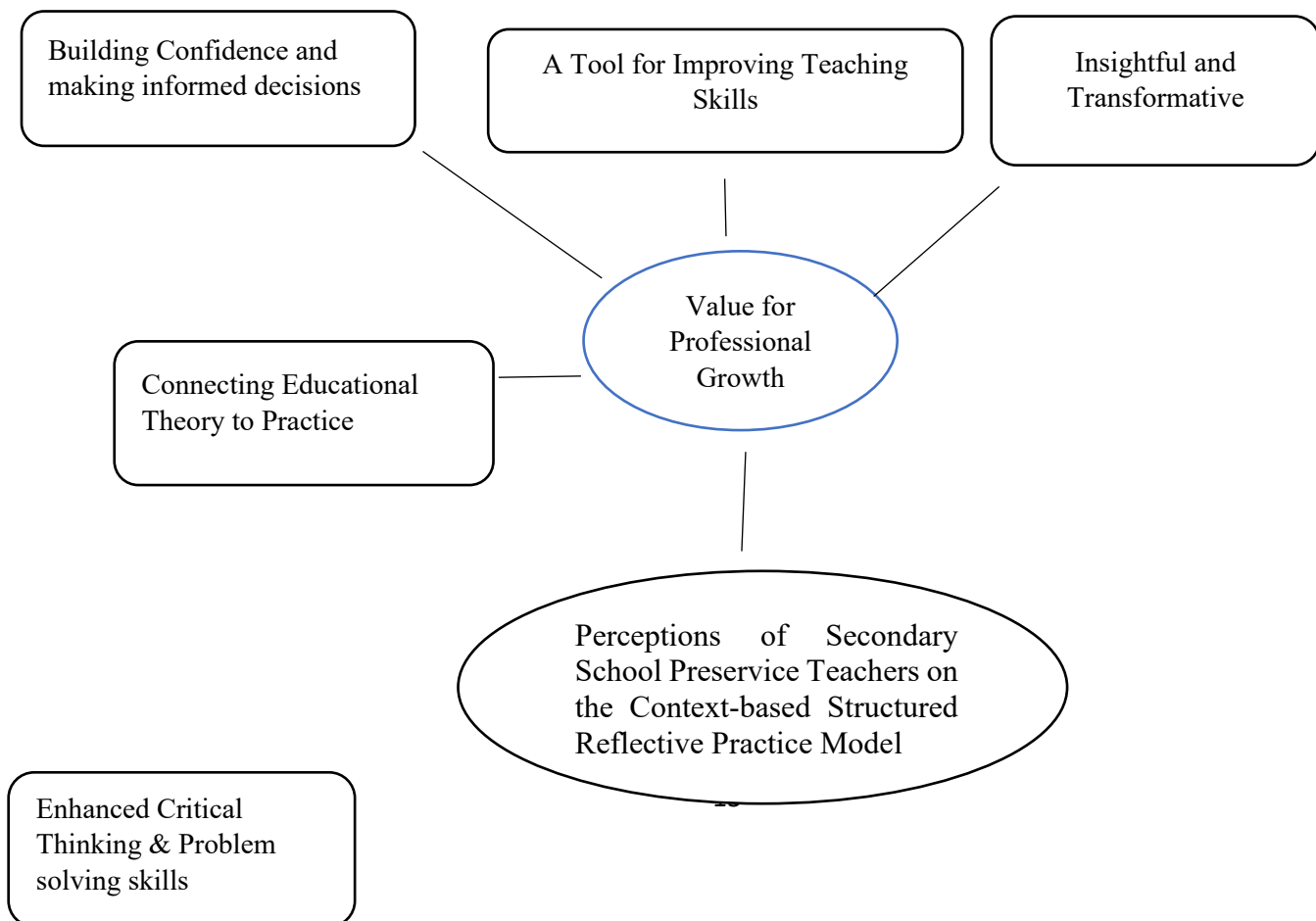
During the focus group discussions, participants had similar sentiments.

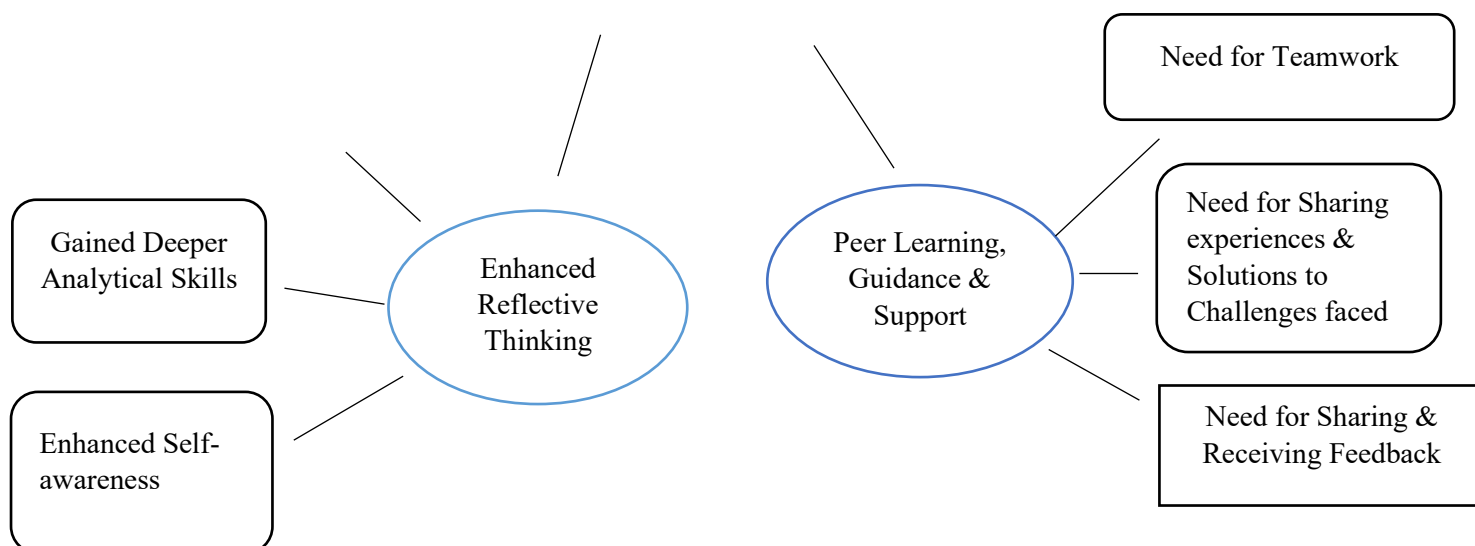
*"It has been a nice journey since I was able to know my strength and what to improve on, and also learn from other people on how to solve whatever wasn't working well." (Participant 1, Focus Group 2)*

Overall, preservice teachers' narratives indicate that reflective practice served as a tool for self-improvement. It was also a process of ongoing learning, teamwork in solving problems, and the formation of a professional identity. The mix of daily written reflections and organized peer discussions created a cycle of analysis, feedback, and action. This approach encouraged both personal and professional growth.

### **Perceptions of Secondary School Preservice Teachers on the Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice Model**

The second objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of secondary school preservice teachers on the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Model. The findings revealed three interrelated themes: value for professional growth, enhanced reflective practice and peer learning, and guidance and support. Perceptions of secondary school education preservice teachers on the context-based structured reflective practice model are as indicated in Figure 1.3:





**Figure 1.3: Perceptions of Secondary School Preservice Teachers on the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Model**

### Context-Based Structured Reflective Practice as an Avenue for Professional Growth

Participants termed the context-based structured reflective practice as a catalyst for their professional development. They described it as insightful and transformative, an eye-opener, and important in their teaching practice, as it helped them improve lesson delivery, subject content mastery, communication, confidence, and decision-making. In addition, it enhanced their ability to connect educational theory to practice. Many preservice teachers postulated that the structured reflective practice provided clarity on “what worked and what needed improvement,” enabling them to assess their progress during the term, make necessary adjustments, and continuously improve their teaching practice. Some of their specific narratives were as follows:

*“The reflective practice experience has been both enlightening and transformative”.*  
(Participant 3)

*"Reflective practice has been very important in helping me to master the subject content and methods of delivering it."* (Participant 3)

*“It was very important...I was able to teach the right concepts to learners.”* (Participant 8).

*"It has been eye-opening and beneficial... It helped me identify my areas of strength and areas of improvement, thereby helping me grow professionally."* (Participant 4)

*"Reflection has instilled in me the importance of continuous professional development. I now view every lesson—successful or otherwise—as an opportunity to learn and grow."*  
(Participant 2)

It is imperative to note that, largely, preservice teachers' perceptions mirrored their experiences. Perceptions expressed by preservice teachers align with Schon's (1991) and Sheffield and Felten's (2018) conceptualization of the reflective practitioner, wherein continuous reflection fosters professional competence and growth. In the context of this study, the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice model provided a scaffolded framework for critical self-assessment, enabling participants to transition from perceiving teaching as a purely technical exercise to engaging with it as a reflective, evidence-informed practice. These results reinforce existing research evidence that underscores the transformative potential of structured reflection in cultivating professional agency (Loughran, 2002; Farrell, 2016).

### **Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Enhances Reflective Thinking.**

Preservice teachers observed that the context-based structured reflective practice nurtured their reflective thinking, thereby strengthening self-awareness and cultivating more advanced analytical skills. Some of their sentiments were as follows:

*"It made me more aware of strengths and areas of improvement, thereby helping me grow professionally."* (Participant 4)

*"I was able to seek solutions to some of the challenges I faced. It promoted my problem-solving abilities."* (Participant 9)

*"It gave me a chance to think critically about my teaching methods, classroom interactions, and planning."* (Participant 5)

*"The reflective practice experience was good; it was an eye-opener. It enabled me to seek remedies for challenges I faced."* (Participant 15)

The findings show that the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice model is a valuable tool for developing preservice teachers' reflective thinking. This skill is essential for effective teaching. Participants noted that the model not only increased their self-awareness but also improved their higher-order analytical and problem-solving skills. These skills are crucial for professional development in today's complex teaching and learning environments. For example, Participant 4

highlighted how the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice model provided a structured platform for self-examination. This allows teachers to recognize their strengths and areas where they can grow. This observation aligns with Schon's (1991) idea of the reflective practitioner. Ongoing self-analysis helps cultivate adaptive expertise. Similarly, Participant 9 pointed out the important link between reflective practice and a teacher's ability to make responsive decisions in challenging classroom settings. Participant 5 described the analytical aspect of reflection as a process in which teachers systematically evaluate their teaching strategies and outcomes. This supports Moon's (2004) idea that reflective thinking goes beyond simple description, promoting evaluative and transformative engagement with practice.

### **Context-based Structured Reflective Practice Promotes Peer Learning, Guidance, and Support.**

Participants observed that the context-based structured reflective practice fosters peer learning, guidance, and support by encouraging the exchange of ideas, experiences, and feedback, thereby reinforcing the essential role of teamwork within the teaching profession. Their specific narratives were as follows:

*"I didn't know about the lesson plan. I've heard it from others, so I'm happy that I've learned something"* (Participant 2, Focus Group 3)

*"Reflective practice diaries and the focus group discussion have helped me learn from other people on how to solve whatever wasn't working well...Thank you for your answers to my questions."* (Participant 4, Focus Group 2)

*"Reflective practice helped me see the need for mentorship by experienced teachers in teaching."* (Participant 18)

*"I was able to see the importance of working as a team."* (Participant 16)

The findings show that the context-based structured reflective practice model is essential for encouraging collaborative professional learning among preservice teachers. By offering organized chances to share ideas, experiences, and feedback, the model boosts peer learning, encourages support and guidance, and builds a teamwork spirit, which is crucial for effective teaching. Participant 2's comments illustrate how peer learning in the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice can fill individual knowledge gaps and help develop practical skills through shared experiences. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, which holds that



knowledge is constructed through social interaction, especially in communities of practice where peers are valuable resources for mutual growth. The insights from Participants 4 and 16 highlight the model's ability to promote collegiality, shared responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving, which are essential for improving student learning and advancing teacher development. These findings align with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation and Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) call for a culture of collegiality, in which educators enhance their professional skills through joint inquiry and the sharing of expertise, fostering teamwork. The role of mentorship is clear in Participant 18's remarks, which emphasizes the importance of guidance from experienced teachers in shaping novice educators' teaching choices. This supports Hudson's (2013) view that mentoring is a vital link between theoretical knowledge and the growth of confident, responsive teaching practices.

While most preservice teachers perceived the context-based reflective practice model as a valuable tool for enhancing their teaching practice, a few found it challenging.

*“... Overall, it has been challenging, enriching, and rewarding.”* (Participant 20)

*“The reflections were very helpful and challenged one to have a look at how to improve on the next class lesson. It helped me try a number of ways to check which was comfortable and helpful to the learners”* (Participant 18)

Overall, the findings show that the CBSRP acts as a structured support system. It allows preservice teachers to move from basic reflection to deeper engagement with their professional experiences. By including reflection within organized and relevant processes, the model connects theoretical understanding with practical application. It gives novice teachers the thinking skills they need for innovation and long-term professional growth. These results back existing research, which emphasizes that guided reflection encourages professional agency, critical inquiry, and resilience in teaching (Loughran, 2002; Farrell, 2016). In this study, preservice teachers' narratives indicated that CBSRP was a useful tool not only for developing these skills but also for placing them in the real context of classroom practice. This approach improves their relevance, applicability, and lasting impact for preservice teachers. Additionally, the model serves as more than just a personal reflective tool; it acts as a platform for collaborative learning. By combining reflective practice, structured peer discussions, and mentorship, CBSRP builds a professional learning community. Here, preservice teachers gain practical insights, improve problem-solving skills, and develop the interpersonal skills necessary for ongoing success in teaching.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on preservice teachers' secondary school experiences and perceptions, this study found that the Context-based Structured Reflective Practice (CBSRP) model significantly promoted their professional growth. Daily reflective diaries and peer discussions improved their self-awareness, encouraged critical evaluation of teaching strategies, and enhanced lesson planning, classroom engagement, and content delivery. CBSRP also developed professional qualities such as intentionality, adaptability, responsiveness to learners' needs, collaboration, peer support, and mentorship. Additionally, it built higher-order thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills, effectively connecting educational theory and classroom practice. The findings emphasize the need to integrate CBSRP into teacher education to strengthen reflective thinking, teaching skills, and professional behaviour. Institutional support through dedicated reflection sessions, trained mentors, and structured peer discussions is essential for effective implementation. Further research should focus on long-term studies to evaluate CBSRP's lasting impact, adaptability across subjects, contexts, and cultures, and integration with structured mentorship to improve induction and ongoing professional development.

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