

# **The role of self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher development: building resilience to prevent burn-out**

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**2016**

**The role of self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher  
development: building resilience to prevent burn-out**

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS  
(HUMANITIES EDUCATION)**

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**2016**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ✓ I give thanks and praise to Almighty God who has always been a pillar of my strength in everything, including this research work.
- ✓ To my wonderful supervisors Prof Rinelle Evans and Dr Sonja Coetzee, your guidance, encouragement and unwavering support are greatly appreciated.
- ✓ To my brother Dr Clement Langa, I am eternally grateful for all the support you gave to me throughout my academic journey.
- ✓ To my children, family and friends, thank you for your tender love and support.
- ✓ To the students who participated in this study, thank you very much - I love you!



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of self-efficacy enhancement in building pre-service teacher resilience to prevent symptoms of burn-out in Swaziland; how engaging in reflective practices can act as a protective factor. Not much research focuses on pre-service teacher burn-out and how to mitigate its effects, and this creates a gap that this study sought to address. Through the interpretivist perspective, and employing participatory action research (PAR) and some elements of pre-test, post test design, seven pre-service teachers who were doing their final year of a three year teacher's diploma programme; four males and three females were engaged in the study. Data were collected by using the resilience scale questionnaire, participants' reflective journals, researcher's diary and transcribed recordings from a focus group interview. Three themes emerged; (1) that pre-service teachers in Swaziland do experience symptoms of burn-out during teaching practice. Seven risk factors that contribute to the experience of burn-out were cited by participants; learners' behavioural issues, heavy workloads, demanding supervisors, lack of support from colleagues, teaching learners who are high achievers, feelings of inadequacy and lack of prioritising. (2) Pre-service teachers were able to draw strength and possibly avert burn-out by mobilising external and internal protective sources. (3) Reflective practices proved to be a viable intervention that enhanced pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and helped promote resilient coping. Future research might look into other factors that predispose pre-service teachers to stress and how reflective practices may be infused in the curriculum for pre-service education.

**Key words:** pre-service education, pre-service teachers, reflective practices, self-efficacy, teacher burn-out, teacher resilience, teaching practice

## SiSwati translation of the Abstract

### ***Sifinyeto saloluphenyo lesihumushelwe elulwimini lwesiSwati***

*Injongo yalolucwaningo bekukuphenyisisa kutsi nguyiphi indzima lengadlalwa kwekutsi umuntfu atakhe lingekhatsi lakhe kute abe sesimeni sekwenetseteka, lokungukona kwenta umfundzi lofundzela buthishela akwati kumelana netingcinamba temsebenti webuthishela eSwatini. Loku kungentiwa ngekutsi umuntfu atihlolisise lingekhatsi kute akwati kugcina bunguye bakhe busesimeni lesigculisako. Tinkhomba titsi tincwaningo leticondzene naloludzaba akusito letinganani, loku kwenta kwekutsi kube nesidzingo sekucwaninga kuloluhlangotsi. Loluncwaningo lolu-ke lucondzene ngco nekuvala lomkhatsi lose ubonakele. Ngekusebentisa indlela yekuphenya lapho khona labatsintsekako babeke imivo yabo endzabeni lephenywako, umphenyi usebentisene nebafundzi labasikhombi labenta umnyaka wabo wekugcina ekoloshi leliececha bothishela. Labane babo ngulabadvuna, labatsatfu besifazane. Imininigwane ibutfwe ngendlela yekuphedvula imibuto lebhaliwe, kufundza emabhukwana alabafundzi lapho babhala khona nabanoma, bhukwana bekabhala khona emaphuzwana umphenyi kanye nekuhlala phasi kucociswane nalabafundzi. Luphenyo luvete tingcikitsi letintsatfu; (1) bafundzi eSwatini babhekana netingcinamba nabasetikolweni lapho balinganisela likhono lekufundzisa (2) bafundzi bakhonile kutfolo tindlela tekubhekana netingcinamba tebuthishela (3)kuhlala njalo utihlolisisa lingekhatsi nguyona indlela ikhombisa kuba nemphumelelo ekusiteni labothishela kutsi bahlale banetsetekile. Umphenyi angancoma kwekutsi lucwaningo lolutawulandzela lucondzane nekutfolo letinye timbangela tekukhatsala kwebafundzi labaceceshelwa buthishela. Lolunye luphenyo lungacondzana nekutsi labaceceshelwa kuba bothishela bangafundziswa njani tindlela tekuhlala njalo batihlolisisa noma banoma ngenhloso tsite yekugucula simo.*

-----

**Key words emagama lamcoka kulolucwaningo:** pre-service education kuceceshwa kwabothishela, pre-service teachers, bafundzi labaceceshelwa kuba bothishela, reflective practices umkhuba wekutihlolisisa lingekhatsi, self-efficacy sigaba sekukhona kwenetiseka emoyeni, teacher burn-out simo sekukhatsala bothishela lababhekana naso emsebenti wabo, teacher resilience kwenetseteka kwathishela, teaching practice kulinganisela kuba nguthishela lokwentiwa etikolweni

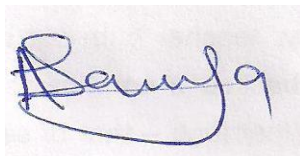
## STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I, Sipiwe Angelica Langa (student number 14355354) hereby declare that the work in this document titled:

*The role of self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher development: building resilience to prevent burn-out*

is my original work. I have acknowledged all resources that I consulted during the study.

The dissertation was not previously submitted by me for any degree at another university.



-----  
S. A. Langa

December 2016



## ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

- COM - Commercial subjects
- D&T - Design and Technology
- Govt. - Government
- HoD - Head of Department
- PAR - Participatory action research
- SCOT - Swaziland College of Technology
- SLT - Social learning theory
- SCLT - Social constructivist learning theory
- USA - United States of America





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## CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers, just like all other helping professionals are generally considered as caregivers, but how can they help and care for the children who have been entrusted to them if they cannot care for themselves? Teachers all over the world are faced with a myriad of challenges such as high workloads, behaviour challenges created by learners and unsupportive leadership, to name but a few. In spite of all these daily stresses, the teacher is expected to be caring and an example to her students. It is regrettable that many teachers are worn-out, resulting in teacher exodus in numerous countries. According to Hong (2010, p.12) “teacher exodus, coupled with the problem of teacher retention has become a setback in the United States of America”. His research also shows that teacher burn-out is common in other countries as well including Australia, England and China. Kottler, Zehm and Kottler (2005, p.112) define burn-out as “a form of occupational stress that is an inevitable struggle for all helping professionals who work with others, no matter how dedicated, committed, and skillful they may be”. It is imperative therefore, to find strategies to avoid teacher burn-out.

### 1.2 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

In Swaziland teacher burn-out is also a problem. This problem manifests primarily through declining motivation (Khumalo, 2013). She further laments teachers’ absenteeism and advocates for close monitoring of teachers. The same author calls for a review of teachers’ working conditions. “Keeping teachers in the system should be sustained through improving the conditions of service” (Khumalo, 2013, p.11). Moreover, teachers are more likely to engage in industrial protest action against government which then affects learners’ performance (Khumalo, 2013). Teacher burn-out is the trigger for the protests.

My working assumption is that if pre-service teachers are given the opportunities of building teacher resilience, which will sustain them during their teaching journey, they are most likely to enjoy a satisfying teaching career and probably avoid getting

stressed out more often which may ultimately lead to burn-out; strike actions will not be as prevalent. This working assumption may probably be a key contribution in the study on teacher resilience because the focal point here is on pre-service teachers rather than in-service teachers. Another assumption was that self-efficacy enhancement may develop teacher resilience. These assumptions were based on literature that I had reviewed.

Teacher resilience is one key element that may enhance teacher stamina and prolong one's teaching career, thus alleviating the challenges mentioned above (Mansfield, Beltman, Prince & McConney, 2012). Le Cornu (2009) defines teacher resilience as the ability to display maturity professionally, emotionally, socially and motivationally. On a similar note Mansfield et al. (2012) define teacher resilience as being insightful, able to demonstrate perseverance in difficult situations, being adaptable, humorous and highly competent. I may then conclude that teacher resilience is likely to ensure that teachers are less prone to suffering from burn-out which may ultimately cause them to give up their professions. Hence, teachers may have to enhance their self-efficacy because literature states that resilient individuals have self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1994). Yost (2006) also affirms the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and resilience.

### **1.3 RATIONALE FOR AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Teacher burn-out is a challenge that teachers across the globe face. Klassen and Chui (2011) note that it is more prevalent during the early years as well as the latter stages, as evidenced by the high levels of exodus during these times. This observation is also held by Hong (2010) who points out that teacher burn-out has increased faster than the supply of teachers and it is more common among beginning teachers. The factor of teacher burn-out superseding the supply of teachers is not necessarily a universal phenomenon, but it is based on findings from a study that was done in the United States of America. What I found to be of interest is that while teacher burn-out may be a universal problem, different countries experience its effects in different ways; while in developed countries like the USA teacher burn-out results in teacher exodus, in developing countries such as Swaziland, burnt-out teachers remain in the profession, yet unhappily.

This problem therefore calls for intervention strategies that will ensure that teachers are able to cope with the demands of their job. Resilience education could be one of the intervention strategies towards addressing teacher burn-out. According to Pearce and Morrison (2011) resilience training is gaining prominence among researchers, with new and different ways of approaching the subject being sought. But it is unfortunate that literature on teacher resilience shows a gap in the manner in which researchers approach the subject of resilience education. Researchers in teacher resilience focus on in-service teachers rather than pre-service teachers (LeCornu, 2009). Britton, Paine, Pimm and Raizen (2003) and Le Cornu (2009) also approach the subject from the angle of engaging teachers who are in their first to third years of teaching in induction programmes.

Yet still, many studies show that resilience is given attention in countries in the Western world (Hong, 2010). She goes on to lament that the experiences of the teaching profession are somewhat similar despite geographic location, hence the need to view teacher resilience from a broader perspective. Beltman, Mansfield and Price (2011, p.196) concur that “it would be useful to examine resilience from a cross cultural perspective”. I also agree with the idea of considering teacher resilience cross culturally, including in Swaziland, where the focus on teacher resilience is an entirely new concept. This might ensure that teachers enjoy their teaching job more. Therefore in this study I sought to find out how enhancing self-efficacy during initial teacher education may build resilience, which may in turn prevent teacher burn-out. To do this, I engaged pre-service teachers in reflective practices, as part of action research. Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, Walker (2014) state that PAR is one approach of action research which helps an educator to continuously consider the impact of her strategies. I also employed some elements of pre-test, post test when collecting data using the resilience scale.

## 1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim which underpinned this study was to find out:

How self-efficacy enhancement during initial teacher education may build teacher resilience

To address the main aim I broke it down to the following objectives:

- ✓ To find out the risk factors that threaten resilient coping among pre-service teachers
- ✓ To identify sources of strength that pre-service teachers may explore to mitigate symptoms of burn-out and promote resilient coping
- ✓ To find out the role of reflective practices as a protective factor to enhance resilient coping

## 1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In the next section I shall clarify the main concepts that I have used in this study. These key concepts form the foundation of my study and it is important that I explain them in order to avoid any possible confusion that may result from misinterpretation of terms in the discussion. I shall clarify these concepts in alphabetical order.

### 1.5.1 Pre-service education

Pre-service education involves the formal processes of becoming a teacher through merging both cognitive and emotional skills which enable one to teach (MacBeath, 2012). MacBeath (2012) adds that during pre-service education teachers should be mentored so that they may avoid suffering burn-out during their career. Similarly Feiman-Nemser (2003) notes that teacher education prepares teacher candidates so that they grow resilience which will sustain them during their teaching journeys. In this study, I refer to teacher education as the preparation that pre-service teachers receive from teacher education institutions before they embark on their teaching journey. The duration of pre-service teacher education in Swaziland may range from three years, for a diploma and four years for a teacher's degree (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010). During this period, pre-service teachers in Swaziland receive formal education in four areas (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010).

### **1.5.2 Pre-service teacher**

A pre-service teacher is an adult student above the age of eighteen, either female or male who is doing a teacher preparation education programme in a college or university in readiness for induction to the school system. The programmes spread out to cover the entire duration of the course. During the second year, students do teaching practice in various schools in the country. In the schools where the pre-service teachers do teaching practice they are usually referred to as student teachers, hence in this study, the terms pre-service teacher and student teacher will be used interchangeably.

### **1.5.3 Reflective practices**

Reflective practices is a concept that was introduced by Donald Schon in 1987. These practices are conducted by an individual who wants to take stock of her life. Osterman, Robert and Kottkamp (1993) state that when engaged in reflective practices a professional becomes both an insider and an outsider at the same time as she takes a moment to think and consider her actions, and critically evaluates those actions. Reflection may be done while still at a task - reflection IN action or after a task has been accomplished - reflection ON action (Dewey, 1933). These practices help the reflective individual to develop a greater self-awareness and thus improve on their practices. Reflective practices have been found to be particularly helpful for professionals such as teachers (Valiga, 2003). Furthermore, reflective practices help a pre-service teacher to develop her competencies. During reflection, the individual often uses a journal to record her thoughts. While reflective practices may be conducted by an individual Osterman et al. (1993) note the benefit of group reflection with people of the same background.

### **1.5.4 Self-efficacy**

Bandura (2010) describes self-efficacy as a belief that an individual has about her own ability to influence her life. Bandura (1994) asserts that self-efficacy enhances a person's self-accomplishment and gives a sense of well-being. Self-efficacy is what determines what a person feels and thinks. It also motivates a person. Self-efficacy affects the way a person behaves. It also fosters inner motivation and dispels fears of attempting challenging tasks. Self-efficacy keeps a person motivated to



accomplish a task that she has started. Even when a person suffers setbacks, self-efficacy is what helps her to recover quickly. Bandura's Social Learning Theory perceives resilience growth as having self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1993) describes four ways of enhancing self-efficacy; performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological states. Similarly, Cherry (2010) whose work is based on Bandura's Cognitive Social Theory acknowledges the different perspectives from which self-efficacy is defined. Cherry (2010) observed that self-efficacy results from both internal and external factors. It starts developing during the early developmental stages of a child and continues to take form as an individual socializes with the environment. Cherry (2010) continues to say that self-efficacy is important in how one sets goals, handles tasks as well as approaches difficult situations. In this study I focused on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy which is promoted by internal factors such as becoming a reflective practitioner rather than external factors such as looking for support from outside of self.

#### **1.5.5 Teacher burn-out**

Burn-out was first identified among people who work in professions that demand a high amount of job commitment. This discovery was made by Freudenburger (1974). Since teaching may also be classified as requiring a high level of job commitment, it means then teachers are also prone to burn-out. Kottler et al. (2005) drawing on the work of Maslach (1982) describe symptoms of teacher burn-out as having difficulty in discussing one's work with others and relying on escapism to cope. Moreover, burn-out manifests in negativity and callousness towards one's students. A teacher who suffers burn-out has less enthusiasm for work and suffers emotional exhaustion which results in decreased effectiveness in job performance (Kottler et al., 2005). On a similar note Day and Smethem (2009) acknowledge that teachers' unhappiness at their jobs affect students' performance. An example is that in England, performance targets have not been reached despite numerous educational reforms. This therefore causes me to conclude that unhappiness at a job may well lead to burn-out. Teachers can suffer the effects of burn-out at any stage in their career but the magnitude varies, depending on their professional cycle (Kottler et al., 2005). Here in this study, I looked into how pre-service teachers may overcome certain risk factors in order to prevent symptoms of burn-out during initial teacher education so

that by the time they become teachers they are able to withstand most challenges that come with the job.

### **1.5.6 Teacher resilience**

Teacher resilience is a teacher's ability to mature in many areas including; emotionally, socially, motivationally and professionally (Mansfield et al., 2012). Similarly, Pearce (2011) views resilience as an ability to adapt to challenging and threatening circumstances. A resilient teacher shows an improved well-being. Bandura (2010) says a resilient individual has improved self-efficacy. Moreover, a resilient teacher's practice is positively impacted. For this study I conceptualise teacher resilience as the ability to remain strong in the face of adversities that a teacher may face in her line of duty; a resilient teacher will be able to keep a positive attitude when being challenged, and continue to search inwardly for motivation even when she feels discouraged. Since this study gives more focus to teacher resilience, the concept will be described further in Chapter two.

### **1.5.7 Teaching practice**

Teaching practice is one of the teacher preparation modules that pre-service teachers in Swaziland take during their course of study. During teaching practice pre-service teachers are assigned to various schools in the country and they get involved with practical teaching activities in actual classrooms. Not only do they teach, but they also become a part of the teaching community in the schools where they practice by getting involved in all school's activities. For those students who are doing a diploma programme, teaching practice lasts for a period of fourteen weeks; seven weeks in second year and another seven weeks in third year. For degree candidates, their teaching practice is a total of eighteen weeks; six weeks in third year and twelve weeks in fourth year. According to Steiner-Khamsi and Simelane (2010) this amount of teaching practice time falls below international standards. During each teaching practice period, student teachers are visited by their lecturers twice ideally. The purpose of these unannounced visits is to offer guidance as well as assigning a mark to the student. The mark is based on the student's overall performance on content mastery, teaching methods and professional qualities. This study involved only diploma students who were in their third year. Their teaching

practice during this period lasted seven weeks. The other seven weeks of teaching practice was done during their second year of study.

## **1.6 THEORETICAL INSIGHTS**

Different philosophical views are at the core of resilience education; social constructivist learning theory (SCLT) and social learning theory (SLT) being the two that I have reviewed. Both theoretical frameworks see learning as a social process, (Gredler, 1997; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Bandura, 2010). Nonetheless, the two frameworks do present divergent perspectives. SCLT emphasises the role of culture in the learning process. According to McMahon (1977) when social relations change, the roles of an individual also change. On the contrary, SLT states that learning is part of self-development and stress management (Mansfield, 2012). Moreover, SLT emphasises that learning is a process (Bandura, 2010). I have decided to integrate both theoretical frameworks in my study and pick certain elements from each in order to come up with a conceptual framework which will enable me to address my research objectives in alignment with my interpretivist perspective. An in depth application of these terms follows in Chapter two.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

In this section I highlight the research design and methods I used for this study. I used the interpretivist research paradigm. Data were collected using the qualitative approach. I followed the Participatory action research strategy. Also some elements of pre-test, post-test featured in the research. I sampled participants using convenience sampling. Data collecting protocols included the resilience scale questionnaire, participants' reflective journals, focus group interview and my researcher's diary. Finally data were analysed using Manual Data Comparison.

### **1.7.1 Research design**

This research followed the interpretivist paradigm. Data were collected using the qualitative approach. The research strategy was largely participatory action research (PAR). However, there were some elements of pre-test, post-test. An in-depth application of these terms follows in Chapter three.

### **1.7.1.1 Research paradigm**

My chosen epistemological perspective is interpretivism. Interpretivism developed as a response to the stance taken by objectivists; this is according to (Heyman, 2009). Interpretivists who are subjectivists state that social phenomena are dependent on human minds, values and perceptions and they cannot be studied like physical objects but they are interpreted through the eyes of an individual in a specific context (Heyman, 2009). This study involved human participants and it is for that same reason that the interpretivist perspective became very relevant. Furthermore, subjectivists believe that researchers cannot distance themselves from their study. Holden (2010, p.11) asserts that “researchers should be encouraged to be involved with their research”, and he adds that one outstanding contrast that subjectivists have with objectivists is that subjectivists focus on the meaning of social phenomena rather than their measurement. Heyman (2009, p.3) affirms this idea by stating that “it is not possible to quantify the subjectivity and individuality of human beings”. As I conducted this research I was aware that the pre-service teachers who took part in this study would have to express their feelings and concerns and these phenomena could not be measured or quantified, hence subjectivity in the nature of data which I collected.

### **1.7.1.2 Research approach**

To carry out this research I explored qualitative methods. Qualitative research looks into quality and narratives. Qualitative research is grounded in interpretivism, which is a paradigmatic perspective that this research followed. According to Lichtman (2006) qualitative research is used to understand and construe social interactions. Usually the study is used with a small sample size where questionnaires, observation, interviews and reflections are the major tools of collecting data. Moreover, qualitative research, through the interpretivist lens affirms that during research, the researcher will not avoid, but, be in constant contact with the research participants. What is more, participants are in touch with their social environments. For this research, I maintained constant contact with the pre-service teachers who were participating in the research through social networks.

Worth noting also is that although some of the data that I used was quantitative, I chose to keep this research qualitative because the use of quantitative methods was very minimal. Moreover, during interpretation of the data I focused on describing participants' thoughts and feelings. Detailed information is in Chapter three.

### **1.7.1.3 Research strategy**

The research strategy used was participatory action research (PAR). There were also some elements of pre-test, post-test. PAR was the most ideal research strategy because action research is a reflection-in-action mindset for teaching where the educator continuously considers the impact of her practice while they are being implemented. The goal is to make an educator to adopt the practice of questioning her practice (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker, 2014). Pre-test, post-test also featured because of the use of the resilience scale questionnaire (RS). The RS questionnaire which was used to measure participants' levels of resilience enabled me to compare results for before and after participants engaged in reflective practices. Johnson & Christensen (2014) point out that a pre-test, post-test is needed so that results for before and after an intervention may be compared. They add that the difference in the result between pre-test and post-test is an indication of the effectiveness of the intervention that has taken place in between. In Chapter three I elaborate on the two research strategies.

### **1.7.2 Research methods**

Below I outline the methods that I used to collect and analyse data. These include the criteria for selecting participants, protocols for collecting data and how data were analysed. However, a deeper application of these methods follows in Chapter three.

#### **1.7.2.1 Selection of participants**

I selected ten participants using convenience sampling from a population of sixty five pre-service teachers who were doing their last year diploma programme in teaching. Four of the ten participants were from the Department of Design and Technology and six were from the Department of Commercial Teaching. Four were female and six were male. Participants' ages ranged between twenty two and thirty. Out of my initial sample of ten, only seven completed the study. All participants

participated in completing the RS questionnaire, focus group interview and reflective practices. Detailed information is in Chapter three.

### **1.7.2.2 Data collection**

I collected data through the use of the resilience scale questionnaire in conformance to pre-test, post-test (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Also, in line with PAR which demanded that the participants be in a position to express themselves, the selected pre-service teachers used reflective journals to record their thoughts and to monitor any improvements they observed in themselves as they became reflective practitioners (Kottler et al., 2005). Moreover, participants engaged in a focus group interview. I too made use of my researcher's diary to record pertinent issues relating to data collection.

### **1.7.2.3 Data analysis**

I analysed data using Manual Data Analysis. Putten & Nolen (2010) state that this method involves deductive and inductive processes. I started analysing data at the same time that I collected it. Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker (2014) describe this as an iterative process. As I read through the data, I colour-coded it according to the themes that emerged. According to Biddix (2015) colour-coding enables a qualitative researcher to organise data. Further on I grouped the data into categories.

## **1.8 QUALITY CRITERIA**

Some qualitative researchers such as Golafshani (2003) advocate for quality checks which involve validation of facts in research. Quality checks may be affected by the researcher's perspective. Certain biases may arise as the researcher conducts interviews. To eliminate biases in my study I adhered to conformability, credibility, dependability and transferability. A deeper application of these terms follows in Chapter three.

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

As a researcher, I had certain responsibilities to abide by as I was engaging human participants in my study. Part of my responsibilities entailed observing ethics. In simple terms ethics can be described as principles of right and wrong; it is these

principles that guide researchers as they do their work. Recker (2013, p.141) describes research ethics as “those actions that abide by rules of responsibility, accountability, liability and due process”. On a similar note Seedhouse (1998b) stresses the importance of ethics and he presents a four-layer pyramid to explain research ethics. The inner layer of Seedhouse’s ethical pyramid emphasises that individuals and their autonomy ought to be respected by researchers. The next layer which is termed the deontological layer is concerned with how things are done as opposed to the consequences. An example would be that researchers should be truthful when they are reporting. The next level is the consequential layer which is concerned about the consequences of a researcher’s actions. The outermost layer which is the external layer speaks to matters such as the law and codes of practice and the use of available resources (Stutchbury & Fox, 2009). For this study I gained access from the relevant authorities, in this case, it was from the Faculty of Education at the Swaziland College of Technology. I also adhered to voluntary participation and trust, informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. More information on how I observed research ethics follows in Chapter three.

### **1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

My study was delimited in terms of population, sample, and data collection protocols. My target population included pre-service teachers from the Swaziland College of Technology, thus excluding pre-service teachers from all other teacher preparation institutions. I did this because it was convenient in light of the activities that participants would engage in. Convenience sampling made it easy for me to engage participants in a focus group discussion at a time that was suitable for all the participants because their teaching practice schedule was the same. Moreover, I believed that data collected from participants who share the same educational background would be more reliable. Secondly, my sample excluded pre-service teachers who were in their first and second years of teacher preparation. I only considered those who were doing their last year since they had previous experience of teaching practice which they had done during their second year. They were familiar with the challenges that teachers face in the teaching profession. Furthermore, I opted to leave out interviews from the data collection protocols. Although interviews would have been suitable for collecting data I thought that since

I had used focus group interviews, other interviews would not be necessary as during focus group interviews participants were given the opportunity to express themselves in a natural environment. In this natural environment participants expressed themselves freely in the presence of their peers who shared similar teaching practice experience. This atmosphere helped to trigger more thoughts that participants were willing to share.

### **1.11 OUTLINE OF STUDY**

This research comprises five chapters as shown below. Firstly, I present Chapter one which gives an introduction and a general overview of the entire document including; background to the study, the purpose of the research, research objectives, and the rationale. Further on, I clarify the key concepts, highlight on theoretical insights, introduce the research design and methods, quality criteria, ethical considerations, and proceed to present the delimitation of the study. Chapter one concludes with an outline of the study. Chapter two follows with review of literature. In this chapter I begin by giving the contextual and theoretical frameworks. I go on to elaborate on key concepts by identifying major issues on teacher burn-out, teacher resilience, self-efficacy enhancement and reflective practices. Lastly, I present my conceptual framework. In the third chapter I elaborate on my research design and methods. Here I describe in detail why I opted for the interpretivist paradigm and how it fits in with my study. I also motivate why I chose the qualitative research approach. I go on to justify why I engaged PAR and pre-test, post test designs. Chapter three continues to elaborate on the methods of collecting data including selection of participants, description of the research site, data collecting protocols, data collecting process, presentation and analysis. I go on to describe quality criteria for this study, and lastly, I discuss how I observed research ethics. Chapter four follows with the main findings. I have used numbers, graphs and tables to present the results. I present and analyse data in terms of the major patterns that I uncovered. I then presented data findings under main themes. Later, I discussed the themes. Lastly, in Chapter five I present conclusions and recommendations from the study. Recommendations are made on the basis of the conclusions drawn from the findings. My research objectives are used as a gauge of conclusions that I have arrived at. Finally I suggest implications for practice and for further research.



## 1.12 SUMMARY

In this chapter I introduced the study and how it shapes out. In the next chapter I pay attention to the literature that pertains to my study. A review of literature from international, national and local studies focuses on what prior studies have found about teacher burn-out and how to combat it through resilience enhancement. I give special attention to pre-service education and how teacher preparation programmes may include reflective practices which may serve as a protective factor to combat symptoms of pre-service teacher burn-out. The literature review is situated in the theoretical framework which underpins this study.



## **CHAPTER TWO: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHER BURN-OUT AND RESILIENT COPING**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I present my conceptual framework of pre-service teacher burn-out and how pre-service teachers may attain resilient coping. The chapter begins with a contextual framework where I situate the study in its context. I go on to describe my theoretical framework showing how the SCLT and SLT theories enabled me to advance the objectives of the study. Further on I delve into the four key concepts; burn-out, resilience, self-efficacy and reflective practices, with special reference to pre-service teachers. Finally, I show the interplay among these four concepts.

### **2.2 CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK**

In Swaziland teacher burn-out is a challenge threatening the education system. Symptoms of teacher burn-out are made evident through teachers' unrest and persistent protests. In 2013 for instance, teachers in Swaziland schools, both primary and secondary levels embarked on a five week-long strike action which saw two hundred and fifty of them fired. These teachers, through their union, were demanding a 4.5% salary increase (SADTU National General Council, 2013). Although the protest action was sparked by salary issues, it became apparent, with the passage of time that teachers had many more serious grievances. Teachers complained that government refused to recognise them for the effort they put in as they were teaching under harsh conditions (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010). A closer look into those issues point towards symptoms of teacher burn-out.

Teachers in Swaziland enter the profession hardly conscious of what lies ahead, but grateful for the opportunity to have a job amidst the high unemployment rate that the country is facing, only to burn-out sooner than later (Rapid Assessment of the Impact of the Fiscal Crisis in Swaziland, 2012). In Swaziland "the unemployment rate is one of the highest among Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) middle income countries. In 2007

it reached 28% of the labour force” (Rapid Assessment of the Impact of the Fiscal Crisis in Swaziland, 2012, p.5).

Since burn-out is a growing concern for the teaching profession there is therefore a need to find strategies that may help teachers especially pre-service teachers enhance their self-efficacy in order to reduce the chances of them suffering the effects of burn-out. Pre-service teacher education in Swaziland covers only four areas; subject content, pedagogical content, educational content and teaching and there is no provision that is made for other modules that will develop teacher resilience or enhance their personal development (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010). Educating pre-service teachers in resilience may be one strategy to help them deal with symptoms of teacher burn-out.

Pre-service teachers at SCOT may also benefit from resilience education because they are not exempt from the challenges faced by other pre-service teachers anywhere in the country. Like all other pre-service teachers, they are taught a limited syllabus which excludes teacher development modules and consequently, they find themselves going through the same challenges that their predecessors had experienced. Moreover, upon their graduation they join the teaching force and experience several risk factors which predispose them to symptoms of teacher burn-out. Hence in this chapter I engage in an in-depth review of what literature says about burn-out, resilience, self-efficacy enhancement and reflective practices particularly in the context of pre-service teachers in Swaziland. However, more focus will be given to the interaction of resilience, self-efficacy and reflective practices because literature does suggest a relationship among these three constructs (Bandura, 1997; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Le Cornu, 2009; Klassen & Chiu, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

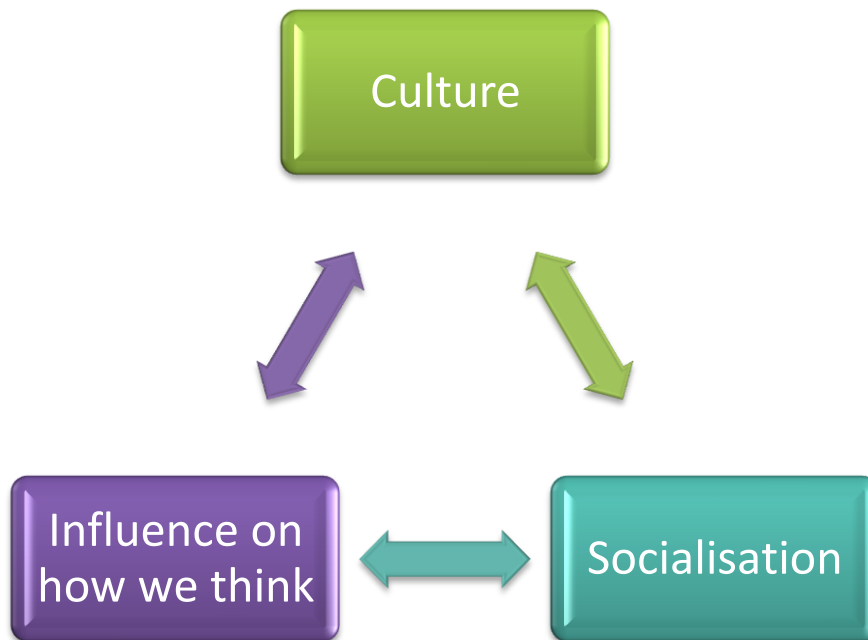
### **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Social Constructivism Learning Theory (SCLT) and the Social Learning Theory (SLT) are the two philosophical views which informed this study. From each of the two I took elements which enabled me to address my research objectives SCLT as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below is associated with Richard Prawat’s work. SCLT states that learning is a social process; it takes place when people are involved in social

activities. Through interaction, members of society create meaning with each other and the environment they are in. The importance of culture is emphasised in the construction of meaning (Derry, 1999).

### 2.3.1 Social constructivist learning theory (SCLT)

Social Constructivist Learning Theory (SCLT) may be useful in resilience education as part of self-efficacy enhancement as pre-service teachers are groomed within a social environment where they engage in communal learning with their peers (Gredler, 1997). In support of this notion is MacMahon (1997) who notes the importance of culture and context in forming meaning. Even during teaching practice pre-service teachers find themselves bound by the culture of the school environment where they have been placed. Learning which takes place during this time, and also at the teacher preparation institutions plays a role in their resilience education. Furthermore, these pre-service teachers are not necessarily bound by the physical environment; they still use other means of media, such as internet, to reach out to each other (McMahon, 1997). In Figure 2.1 below I present my personal illustration of SCLT.



**Figure 2.1: Personal conceptualisation of social constructivist learning theory**

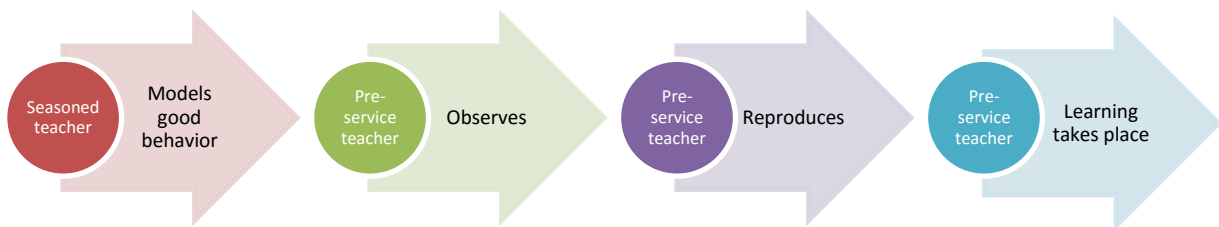
The illustration in Figure 2.1 suggests that culture has a key role to play in influencing how an individual acquires knowledge and how her thinking is shaped. Culture refers to values and practices that a person learns through social interactions. These values are unwritten laws that govern how a person should conduct herself in a given environment (Aschaffenburg & Maas, 1997). This is in line with the tenets of social constructivist learning which emphasise that learning takes place within a society. Gredler (1997) affirms the notion of communal learning in the social environment. He states that when learners engage in communal learning, they are able to produce a product which will be given meaning by them. Furthermore, ideas held by an individual and those that are held by the group are merged to produce new understanding.

Moreover, social constructivism learning theory recognises the important role that language plays in social learning. Language determines how one thinks and what s/he has to think. Thinking is utilised for problem solving; this is what Gredler (1997) refers to as the 'idea based perspective'. To concur, McMahon (1997) stresses the importance of culture and context in forming meaning. He argues that people are part of the constructed environment. When social relations change, the roles of the individual group members change as well. Therefore, learning cannot be isolated from the environment where it takes place. However McMahon (1997, p.3) acknowledges that learning is not confined to the physical environment as in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it may be done through the medium of the Web. Nonetheless he emphasises that "learning is not purely an internal process, nor is it passive shaping of behaviours."

### **2.3.2 Social learning theory (SLT)**

Social learning theory is another framework that has informed this study. From the several theorists who are proponents of the social learning theory I chose to rely mainly on Bandura's theoretical framework because of the close link that it has with self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is traced back to Bandura's social learning theory (1977). Social learning theory sees the importance of learning through observation and socialisation in the development of self-efficacy. For my study I explore the role of self-efficacy in promoting teacher resilience hence the relevance of Bandura's theoretical framework to my study.

In Figure 2.2 below I illustrate my conceptualisation of Bandura’s social learning theory. This figure shows that learning is an outcome of modelling, observation, reproducing behaviour (re-modelling behaviour), and getting motivation to repeat the behaviour. I have arranged the diagram in a progressing linear order to illustrate the process of learning. A pre-service teacher who is being educated in resilience will start from the beginning of the process and move forward as she grows in resilience. Self-efficacy therefore, becomes a result of this learning outcome.



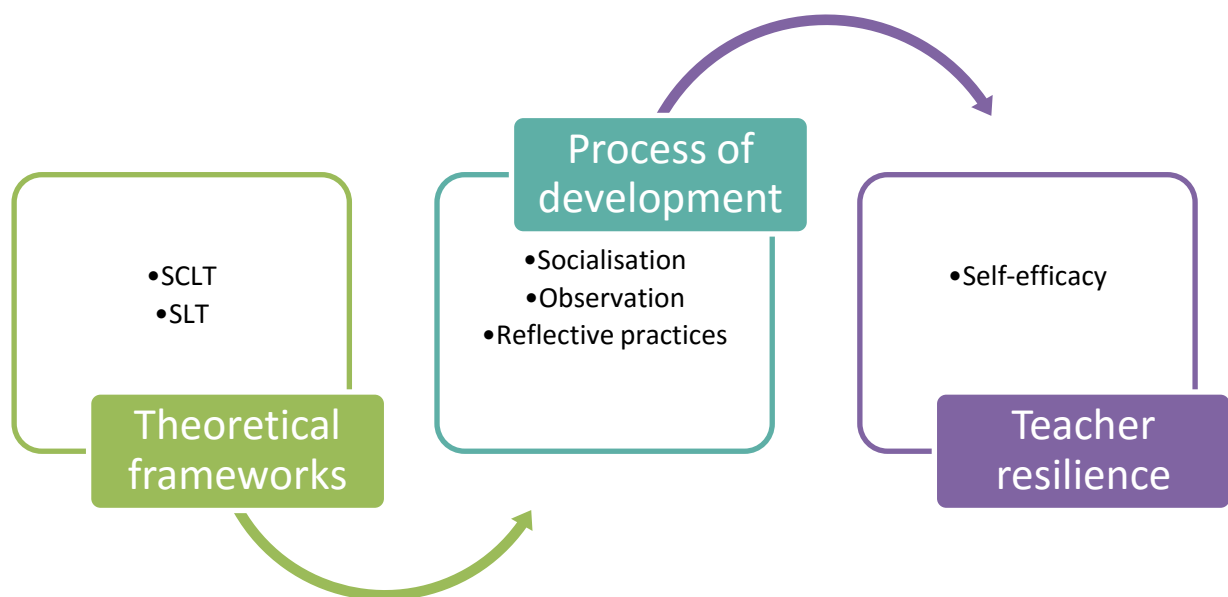
**Figure 2.2: Personal conceptualisation of Bandura’s social learning theory**

Once an individual has attained self-efficacy she may be able to demonstrate resilience through having an ability to view challenges as opportunities for mastering new concepts instead of seeing a challenge as an obstacle. Moreover, she will develop a strong interest in the activities that she is involved in. Furthermore, she will be able to remain committed to the things that she is interested in and, should she suffer setbacks, she will be able to recover quickly (Cherry, 2010). Even Ye He (2009) draws from the concept of self-efficacy in trying to establish how teacher preparation programmes can incorporate resilience education.

Bandura’s social learning theory explains the process of learning. For this reason, it will be useful in advancing the assumption that self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service education may build resilience and probably prevent symptoms of teacher burn-out. This is because resilience education has implications of learning and the process of learning is what Bandura’s social learning theory explains.

Additionally, self-efficacy enhancement is directly related to resilience education because it focuses on self-development. On a complementary note, social cognitive theory brings in the perspective which pays attention to the role of the social environment and culture in helping a pre-service teacher to become self-efficacious.

Now I present a theoretical framework which merges elements of both SCLT and SLT. Here I consider how elements of the two theoretical frameworks may be brought together to facilitate pre-service teacher self-efficacy enhancement which may result in resilience.



**Figure 2.3: Illustration of the theoretical framework for this study**

Figure 2.3 above shows an interaction between the social constructivist learning theory and the social learning theory. By integrating elements of each of the two theories a pre-service teacher may attain resilience. In the schools where pre-service teachers do their teaching practice they are being socialised as members of the school community and this socialisation enables them to learn new practices and also to unlearn old ones. In the process of socialisation pre-service teachers observe how the seasoned teachers whom they consider to be role models conduct themselves. Moreover, pre-service teachers engage in reflective practices. The integration of these elements result in self-efficacy enhancement and ultimately pre-service teacher resilience.

## 2.4 CONCEPTUALISATION

In the following section I describe the four concepts; burn-out, resilience, self-efficacy and reflective practices. I look into how other researches in the field have conceptualised them. I also try to find out how the four concepts interact in enabling me to address the objectives of this study. In my discussion I relate the literature to the theoretical framework described in the preceding section.

### 2.4.1 Burn-out

Burn-out is a phenomenon that has been in existence for several decades. It exists when there is a “disconnect between the worker and the work place” (Leite & Maslach, 2004, p.92). This condition usually sees a worker starting off at a job with great enthusiasm, but due to a variety of stressors, the excitement dies down, and in its place there is an overwhelming sense of negative energy such as anger, exhaustion and failure from among other factors. Burn-out may cause an individual to leave the job, but in some cases workers remain unhappily and this affects not only the worker but also the people around and the organisation at large (Leite & Maslach, 2004). Burn-out, as described by Freudenberger (1974), is a loss of interest for work. He came up with this definition after his first experience of burn-out while he was working in a free clinic. Freudenberger the psychiatrist, was credited for being the first to use the term ‘burn-out’ to describe occupational stress (Wood, Teri-McCathy & Chris, 2002). Out of curiosity, Freudenberger, endeavoured to discover more about this condition. Part of his interest was finding out who was prone to suffering burn-out. Gaining an understanding of who is prone to burn-out may be one of the key steps in seeking ways to address burn-out.

Burn-out may be viewed from different perspectives ranging from emotional, relational and corporate dimensions. An individual is said to be burned-out when her exposure to the predisposing burn-out factors have been prolonged to the point of heightening stress levels (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). On a similar note Leite and Maslach (2004) describe burn-out as a “cumulative reaction to ongoing occupational stressors” not just “acute stress reactions” (p.93) which happen from time to time. However, since burn-out is a chronic condition, it tends to stabilise over time. Further on they point out that since burn-out is a response to chronic job stress,



there is a need to find organisational interventions to deal with the problem; burn-out has attracted the attention of administrators and policy makers because it is a work place problem (Leite & Maslach, 2004).

From a similar perspective there are Cordes and Dougherty (1993, p.621) who view burn-out as a distinctive type of stress which may be characterised by “emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and diminished personal accomplishment”. Leite and Maslach (2004) concur that burn-out presents in three dimensions; emotional and physical exhaustion, cynicism where by the worker starts showing negativity and detachment from various aspects of the job. Cynicism may culminate in detachment and dehumanisation of others. I deduce therefore, that burn-out is a condition that results from severe stress, and it causes an individual to feel depleted and it creates a sense of isolation for the victim of burn-out.

An earlier model of burn-out defined it as a “psychological syndrome of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy which is experienced in response to chronic job stressors” (Leite & Maslach, 2004, p.92). This earlier model placed burn-out within the context of people in human service and educational occupations but later on, burn-out was generalised as being a universal phenomenon; affecting workers in any kind of occupation thus recent studies on burn-out seek to bridge the gap between basic and applied burn-out, with the former paying attention to how burn-out that is experienced by a worker may be addressed, and the latter looking into burn-out as a research area. In this study I view burn-out from both perspectives; how it affects pre-service teachers and also what discoveries research has made on pre-service teacher burn-out.

As already noted above, the construct of burn-out was first introduced by Freudenberg in 1974. He described it as “loss of idealism and enthusiasm for work. Later on in the 1980s Maslach and Jackson (1981); Maslach and Schaeferli (1993) refined the definition by outlining three facets of burn-out; depersonalisation, reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion. Depersonalisation occurs when a person withdraws from others and keeps a distance from friends and colleagues. The pressures of work become so over-powering to the point that a person feels that she does not have time for other people. Reduced personal accomplishment is when the victim of burn-out starts to de-value her work, and

reduce its worth. These ultimately lead to emotional exhaustion where by the burned-out person starts displaying hostile attitudes towards people in the work environment (Wood et al., 2002).

These researchers found that occupational stress reaches these out of control levels when an individual fails to maintain a balance between the daily stresses and her coping mechanisms. “If our resources appear equal to the demands, we view them as mere challenges. If, however, demands are viewed as exceeding our resources, they become stressors and trigger the stress response” (Wood et al., 2002, p.2). Similarly, “Burnout symptoms” outlines a number of issues which result in burn-out. These stressors may be categorised under personal, environmental and organisational factors. Personal factors include lack of support, health issues, financial problems as well as unhealthy relationships. Environmental factors may be, among others, lack of proper equipment and job risks. Organisational factors may include having too much to do, too much responsibility and lack of training. A closer look into the factors listed above shows that almost anyone is predisposed to burn-out but the magnitude may vary depending on how well an individual is equipped to handle daily challenges.

The preceding section on burn-out shows that any person may suffer burn-out but I personally think that the magnitude increases with those people who work in professions that place a demand on human interaction. My assumption aligns with Freudenberger (1974), who after being burned-out by working in a free clinic, pondered the prospects of burn-out being a scourge that mostly affects people in intervention institutions. These include professionals such as doctors, nurses and teachers. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2009) concur with this notion in saying that burn-out is prevalent among human service workers, including teachers.

Needless to say, burn-out is very prevalent among teachers because their daily lives involve isolation from support networks such as colleagues who are also going through the same daily challenges. “While teachers do interact with others on a regular basis throughout the work day, the majority of such interactions are with students, and not with other teachers or professional staff members who might better understand the demands teachers face” (Wood et al., 2002, p.3). The initial conceptualisation of burn-out that was formulated by Maslach (1982) describes burn-

out as a condition affecting those in human service professions and it excludes professions that do not deal with human service (Demerouti, Nachreiner, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2001). However, Demerouti et al. (2001) went on to acknowledge that professions that exclude human interaction may be included in the debate on burn-out because of related job stressors resulting from such professions which may also cause burn-out. Stressors such as “noise, heat, work-load and time pressure” may in fact cause burn-out even though they do not result from human interaction (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501). In this study nonetheless, burn-out is viewed from the initial perspective which excludes non-human interaction professions.

#### **2.4.1.1 Burn-out in teachers**

In Chapter one I elaborated on the high prevalence rate of burn-out among teachers. Researchers both internationally and locally lament this condition and point out its dire effects on the education system. Hong (2010) attributes teacher exodus and the problem of teacher retention in the United States of America to teacher burn-out. His research indicates that teacher burn-out is a setback not only in the United States of America, but also in countries such as Australia, England and China. He adds that teacher burn-out has increased faster than the supply of teachers. In Swaziland the effects of burn-out are felt among teachers who constantly complain about their working conditions and claim that government is not recognising them for the effort they are putting (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010). On the same issue Klassen and Chui (2011) found that teacher burn-out is more common among beginner teachers. This idea is supported by Goodwin (2012) in his assertion that the high prevalence rate of teacher burn-out among pre-service teachers is a result of deficient teacher preparation programmes.

Drawing from the previous sections, I may define teacher burn-out as a condition which results from the culmination of stress that causes a teacher to feel that she can no longer cope with the demands of the profession. A burnt-out teacher may even decide to leave the teaching profession. When a teacher is burned-out she feels drained emotionally to the point of losing confidence in her own capabilities. Moreover, a burned out teacher tends to alienate herself from other people, which then affects her social relations. In addition to that, a burned-out teacher loses motivation to work because of feelings of worthlessness which become so

overwhelming. Consequently, the work of the teacher becomes adversely affected. My conception of teacher burn-out aligns with Kottler et al. (2005) who draw on the work of Maslach (1982) to describe teacher burn-out as showing through having escapist tendencies and difficulty in discussing one's work. Kottler et al. (2005) add that teacher burn-out causes a teacher to have less enthusiasm for work and to suffer emotional exhaustion which results in decreased effectiveness in job performance. The stressors that cause teacher burn-out may be an outcome of a myriad factors which include those relating to a weaker inner state, which may be classified under internal factors and those that come from a non-conducive teaching environment, which may be classified as external factors.

Among the theorists that I have read, those who point out that teacher burn-out is caused by external factors, include the likes of Tschannen-Morana et al., (2007); Yost (2006). On the other hand there are Kottler et al. (2005); Klassen and Chui (2011) who assert that teacher burn-out should be viewed as an outcome of a weak inner state. Yet still, there are Gu and Day (2007) and Mansfield (2012) who say that both internal and external factors are responsible for teacher burn-out. For this reason, it would be useful that research investigates both internal and external factors so that relevant interventions might be sought. Before drawing a conclusion on the factors that are responsible for teacher burn-out, and consequently making teachers most vulnerable, I shall outline what each of these researchers have found.

According to Kottler et al. (2005, p.116) "emotional depersonalisation and lack of personal accomplishment" are some of the causes of teacher burn-out. When teachers do not get satisfaction from their job they tend to get discouraged, which ultimately leads to burn-out. On a similar note Klassen and Chui (2011) point out that occupational devotion, self-value, career stage growth and work stress are closely linked to teacher burn-out. Usually, teachers tend to exhibit symptoms of burn-out early in their teaching career. From these assertions I infer that Kottler et al. (2005) and Klassen and Chui (2011) argue that teacher burn-out has more to do with internal factors as opposed to external factors; what the teacher experiences inwardly as opposed to environmental circumstances.

On a different note Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) present another angle from which teacher burn-out may be viewed. Their outlook is on external factors rather

than internal factors. A study that they conducted uncovered that the variable of grade level seems to have a bearing on teacher burn-out with experienced teachers stating that the higher the grade they taught, the higher the chances of getting burned-out there are. However, in their findings they do not explain why experienced teachers find teaching higher grades more challenging than they do lower grades. They also discovered that the variable of grade level did not present a challenge for beginner teachers because when they prepare for classes, they do so adequately for all grade levels.

From this explanation, I infer that experienced teachers do not do much preparation for their classes, instead they rely on their experience, which then poses a challenge when they have to teach learners who are more mature, who probably challenge them in class. Moreover, the study by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) revealed that teacher burn-out is not necessarily “related to demographic variables such as race” or “contextual variables such as school setting” (p.9). An interesting discovery that they made regarding external factors which are responsible for teacher burn-out is that a deficiency in effective instructional strategies may present as a major culprit to the extent that those who could not find better instructional strategies, usually got burned-out and left the teaching profession. Their statistics show that twenty five percent of teachers do not return for their third year of teaching, and nearly forty percent leave teaching during the first five years of their profession. These statistics are cause for concern because they impact on teacher retention.

Another researcher who perceives teacher burn-out as resulting from external factors is Yost (2006). She asserts that support from the school administration goes a long way in reducing teacher burn-out. Moreover Yost (2006) found that large class size and heavy teaching loads are other factors which may lead to beginner teacher burn-out. Notably though Yost holds a different opinion on the variable of resources from Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007). While Yost argues that unavailability of teaching resources is a factor in teacher burn-out, Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007), on the other hand argue that the variable of teaching resources is not a factor in causing teacher burn-out.

#### **2.4.1.2 Burn-out in Swazi teachers**

In Swaziland, symptoms of teacher burn-out, particularly for beginner teachers who join the teaching profession upon completing their teaching practice results from a number of factors which include low salaries for teachers. The challenge of low salaries is severe for the lower grade earners, who make up the majority of the teaching force. According to Steiner-Khamsi and Simelane (2010) sixty six percent of the qualified teachers in Swaziland are holders of diplomas or lower teaching certificates, only sixteen percent have degrees and the rest are contract teachers, who in most cases, are not qualified teachers.

Moreover, teachers in Swaziland are not happy about the short promotion ladder. These challenges seem to be worse for beginner teachers posted to rural schools where they have to battle with additional burdens of poor infrastructure and lack of resources while their employer - the Swazi government does not supplement their salaries with hardship allowances (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010).

Although teacher burn-out is so prevalent in Swaziland it does not usually lead to the exodus of teachers because teaching is one of the most viable jobs in the country, a country which is plagued by high levels of unemployment as reported by Rapid Assessment of the Impact of the Fiscal Crisis in Swaziland (2012). Burned-out teachers stay in the profession until they reach their retirement age of sixty, unless they find a better job. According to Rapid Assessment of the Impact of the Fiscal Crisis in Swaziland (2012) fifty three percent of the unemployed are the youth; people aged twenty four years and younger.

Having analysed the different perspectives presented by researchers on the factors responsible for teacher burn-out locally, nationally and internationally and drawing from my own personal experiences as a teacher, I am persuaded to agree with Gu and Day (2007) and Mansfield et al. (2012) who see this phenomenon as a result of both external and internal factors. From their study, Gu and Day (2007) discovered that teachers suffered burn-out due to lack of parental support, lack of feedback which result from poor communication, lack of recognition from the school administration, and failure to balance work and family. Similarly, Mansfield et al. (2012) point out that teacher burn-out may be caused by high work load, lack of

support, challenging student behaviour, meeting students' needs and inadequate professional status. The effects of these factors tend to be severe for the beginner teacher because of their lack of exposure and experience. In Table 2.1 below I present an overview of the factors responsible for teacher burn-out that I have reviewed above.

**Table 2.1: Overview of causes of teacher burn-out**

<b>Beginner teachers</b>	<b>Internal risk factors</b>	<b>External risk factors</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emotional depersonalisation (Kottler et al., 2005).</li> <li>➤ Lack of personal accomplishment (Kottler et al., 2005).</li> <li>➤ Lack of occupational devotion (Klassen &amp; Chui, 2011).</li> <li>➤ Low self-value (Klassen &amp; Chui, 2011).</li> <li>➤ Career stage and growth (Klassen &amp; Chui, 2011).</li> <li>➤ Work stress (Klassen &amp; Chui, 2011).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A deficiency in instructional strategies (Tschannen-Morana et al., 2007).</li> <li>➤ Lack of support from administration (Yost, 2006; Mansfield et al., 2012).</li> <li>➤ Unsupportive colleagues (Tschannen-Morana &amp; Woolfolk Hoyb, 2007)</li> <li>➤ Large class size (Yost, 2006).</li> <li>➤ Heavy teachings load (Mansfield et al., 2012).</li> <li>➤ Lack of resources (Yost, 2006).</li> <li>➤ Challenging students' behaviour (Mansfield et al., 2012).</li> <li>➤ Failure to meet learners' needs (Mansfield et al., 2012).</li> </ul>
<b>Seasoned teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Failure to balance between work and family (Gu &amp; Day, 2007)</li> <li>➤ Lack of recognition from the school administration (Gu &amp; Day, 2007; Steiner-Khamsi &amp; Simelane, 2010).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Teaching higher grades (Tschannen-Morana &amp; Woolfolk Hoyb, 2007).</li> <li>➤ Lack of parental support (Gu &amp; Day, 2007)</li> <li>➤ Lack of feedback from the school administration (Gu &amp; Day, 2007)</li> <li>➤ Low salaries (Steiner-Khamsi &amp; Simelane, 2010)</li> </ul>

What I found from the different researchers is that teacher burn-out is a very real problem for all teachers but the magnitude increases with those who are new in the

profession. I also learnt that while there are myriads of factors that are responsible for this phenomenon, different teachers tend to respond differently to each one of them. My conclusion here is that since teachers are unique individuals and their experiences are diverse, it is essential that each teacher finds out for themselves what their risk factors are in their individual circumstances so that relevant measures are taken to avert them. I shall now look into pre-service teacher burn-out in particular.

#### **2.4.1.3 Pre-service teacher burn-out**

Symptoms of pre-service teacher burn-out which result from several stress factors may be suffered by many pre-service teachers even before they commence their careers officially. The symptoms usually manifest when the pre-service teachers are placed in various schools to do teaching practice. It is during this time that the pre-service teachers get a taste of what it is to be at the chalk face. For several weeks, they are separated from their peers and lecturers, and they are expected to put into practice the theory learnt during their pedagogy and methodology classes. In actual classrooms with actual learners, pre-service teachers get an authentic experience of the teaching profession and it is during this time that they start exhibiting symptoms of teacher burn-out.

Figure 2.4 below gives an overview of some of the consequences of teacher burn-out which include anxiety, helplessness, inadequacy, loneliness, sadness, sickness and weight-loss.





**Figure 2.4: My illustration of some of the effects of teacher burn-out**

From the effects of burn-out highlighted above and findings from earlier studies I shall formulate my conceptual map of pre-service teacher burn-out. Of note is that my conception of pre-service teachers burn-out does not depart from the frameworks of Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007); Yost (2006); Kottler et al. (2005); Klassen & Chui (2011); Gu & Day (2007) and Mansfield (2012). I conceptualise pre-service teacher burn-out as a feeling of distress which overwhelms student teachers. At times the distress is so severe such that pre-service teachers start contemplating changing careers (Kottler et al., 2005). Just like seasoned teachers as described earlier, burned-out pre-service teachers also feel drained emotionally, socially, professionally and they also lose the motivation to remain in the teaching profession. Emotionally they feel depleted when they are overwhelmed by learners' discipline issues and work over-load. They tend to feel that they are not coping with these demands. Professionally, the pre-service teachers feel that they do not measure up and they lose their confidence, and this gets worse when they do not receive support from other teachers in the schools where they are doing teaching practice. Pre-service teachers feel socially alienated when they do not receive much needed support from other teachers. As a result of these stressors, the pre-service teachers

become de-motivated. Figure 2.4 above indicates some of the effects of pre-service teacher burn-out if it is left unattended, which may have dire consequences to both the health and emotional state of the teacher.

As already noted earlier, many teachers go into teaching without proper guidance from the colleges about the challenges they are likely to experience in teaching (Johnson et al., 2010) and this results in teacher burn-out which then manifests in the symptoms highlighted above. In a joint study Jonson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, and Hunter (2010) found that pre-service teachers' induction programmes are not adequate, they do not provide quality education. They went further to say that "teachers' pre-service education does not equip pre-service teachers with adequate skills to meet classroom demands" (Johnson et al., 2010, p. 2). This observation is supported by Yost (2006) and Kottler et al. (2005). Due to lack of adequate teacher preparation, teachers tend to leave the profession, citing an alarming thirty three percent of teachers who leave teaching in schools in the United States of America during the first three years of their teaching. They found that among other factors, one's personality may predispose them to burn-out. If teachers are "driven and ambitious, have perfectionist attitudes, are impatient and competitive, and do not feel in control of their emotions" (Kottler et al. 2005, p.117) they are most likely to suffer the effects of teacher burn-out because school structures tend to be too rigid and force teachers to conform to routine which then becomes a source of stress for the beginner teacher who finds working under such conditions frustrating.

On a similar perspective Johnson et al. (2010) discovered school structures do not create an environment that enables enthusiasm for the teaching job. Furthermore Johnson et al. (2010) assert that early career teachers experience a mismatch between their perceived ideas about teaching and actual classroom practice and this usually causes them to leave teaching very early in their career.

Another stress factor among teachers in Swaziland is under-staffing which ultimately results in higher teaching loads. Pre-service teachers are not spared from this stressor; if they do teaching practice in schools which have high enrolments, they are also given high work-loads.

Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) say that beginner teachers are prone to teacher burn-out because they are not equipped with sufficient skills to meet the classroom demands. This view is similar to what the other researchers point out as reasons why beginner teachers are most at risk. I find this assertion to be particularly true in the case of Swaziland where teacher education programmes show a deficiency in teacher development programmes (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010) in addition to the other challenges cited above. Other factors that Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) discovered include a lack of induction programmes, school structures and cultural practices which are not conducive to pre-service teachers' integration in the schools.

Although several factors are responsible for pre-service teacher burn-out I agree with Johnson et al. (2010) who are of the view that school leaders are not doing their part to help the situation because they are either too busy, or they lack skill to support early career teachers. This therefore calls for the engagement of protective factors that will ensure that pre-service teachers are able to cope amidst the challenges noted above. In line with literature that I have reviewed, the section below will indicate that building teacher resilience may be one of the measures for mitigating pre-service teacher burn-out .

#### **2.4.2 Resilience**

The section above looked into burn-out for pre-service teachers and several factors were found to be responsible for it. The section that follows will pay attention to resilience and how it may act as a protective factor for teachers and pre-service teachers in particular, to alleviate the effects of burn-out. In this section I start by reviewing several definitions of resilience which have been formulated by researchers while they conducted their studies and later I look into how they differ. I shall then formulate my own definition of resilience drawing from earlier research.

The term resilience was first used in 1970 within the fields of psychology and psychiatry to refer to children who had shown positive recovery from stressful conditions such as abuse, trauma and broken families (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2011). Later on the term "resilience" was redefined to mean successful adaptation to the environment after being exposed to challenging situations (Masten et al., 1990). Ye He (2009, p.263) affirms that the term resilience was initially used in

psychiatry and developmental psychology studies to describe individual's ability to successfully recover from adversity". He adds that it was later redefined by Henderson and Milstein (2003) to mean ability to successfully transition and adapt.

The concept of resilience originates from the social constructivist learning theory; one of the theories that inform my study. The social constructivist theory emphasises that "learning should be participatory" (Le Cornu 2009, p.718). This notion is supported by Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) who assert that resilience is a process which helps one to relate well with family, friends, and community members. Earlier on Bruner (1996) argued that by participating in communal activities teachers provide support and challenge which enables one to learn new practices and unlearn old ones. Bruner was viewing resilience from the context of the school.

While most researchers view resilience as an internal aspect, others view it as an external aspect. Yet still there is another view point which conceives of resilience as having both internal and external elements. Also on the debate on resilience, some scholars view resilience as a process and others consider resilience as an end in its self. Proponents of the idea that resilience is an internal aspect include (Jordan, 2006; Coetzee, 2013; Bobek, 2002; Pearce, 2011; Masten, Best & Garmezy, 1990; Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010). On the other hand, there is Le Cornu (2009) who conceives of resilience as being an external element. Tait (2008); Ungar (2008); Ungar (2011) and Wood, Ntaote & Theron (2012) acknowledge that resilience has elements of both internal and external maturity.

In debating for resilience as being an internal element, the following definitions were advanced; Masten et al. (1990, p.425) defined resilience as an "outcome of successful adaptation". Later on Bobek (2002, p.202) defined it as "a process of development that occurs over time". His definition of resilience does not depart from the one that had been advanced earlier by (Masten et al., 1990). Similarly, Jordan (2006, p.86) defined resilience as a trait that may be developed through being courageous, and having "the capacity to move into situations when we feel fear or hesitation". Furthermore, Castro et al. (2010, p.623) came up with a similar definition of resilience as it being "specific strategies that individuals employ when they experience adverse situations", adding that resilience is the ability to problem solve. Moreover, Pearce (2011) viewed resilience as a process of adaptation, rather than

an outcome, and Coetzee (2013, p.41) conceived resilience as “a continuous reflective process”. She viewed resilience not as an end, but a journey that one embarks on.

From the definitions above it appears that Bobek (2002); Jordan (2006); Castro et al. (2010); Pearce (2011) and Coetzee (2013) present very similar definitions in that they not only view resilience as being an internal element but they also affirm that it is a process. On the other hand, Masten et al. (1990) presents a slightly different perspective in viewing it as an end to a process.

Le Cornu (2009, p.722) defines resilience as an external trait that can be developed through “participating in a variety of collegial relationships”. This definition subscribes to the notion that resilience is a process, rather than an end in itself. Tait (2008, p.58) comes with a point of view which acknowledges that resilience includes both internal and external factors. He defines it as “a model of interacting with events in the environment that is activated and nurtured in times of stress”. He adds that resilience has to do with “regulation of emotions and effective interaction in social environments”. What I discover from Tait’s definition is that it also leans on the view that resilience is a process.

Ungar (2008) defines resilience as being more than just “a proxy for attachment, self-efficacy, self-esteem, neuroplasticity, positive peer relationships” (p.27) but a result of a positive interaction of physical and social factors. He supports a social ecological view which states that reciprocity between personal traits and environmental factors support resilience building. In recent literature, Ungar (2011) argues that the environment plays more in building resilience than does individual capacity.

From a similar perspective, Wood, et al. (2012) indicate that resilience is the ability to bounce back and adapt after facing adversities which may be emotional, cognitive and material. In a study that they conducted with a group of teachers from Lesotho Wood, et al. (2012) sought to discover the effectiveness of certain intervention strategies which could enable teachers to cope with the challenge of working among learners who were challenged by HIV and AIDS. Their findings showed that teachers were able to draw on intrapersonal and interpersonal protective factors to build

resilience. Drawing on earlier research by Ungar (2011) they referred to this as a “culturally congruent transaction between individuals and their social ecologies” (p.429). This social-ecological view of resilience states that the individual is no longer responsible for being resilient when life is challenging. My understanding of Ungar (2011) and Wood, et al. (2012) social-ecological view of resilience is that resilience may develop when an individual explores both internal and external protective factors which has implications for exploring both internal and external resources in building resilience.

Personally, I would define resilience as the ability that enables an individual to adapt to challenging circumstances and be able to stay strong in the face of adversity. My conception of this construct is informed by Wagnild (2010) who sees resilience as the ability to get back up and carry on after stumbling and falling, which happens from time to time. Despite the harsh reality that life is fraught with diverse challenges; a resilient person is able to recover quickly when feeling depressed (Wagnild, 2010). Thus, I subscribe to the view that resilience is an internal element; hence my study explores how resilience may be enhanced by tapping into inner resources by enhancing pre-service teachers’ self-efficacy. Moreover, I concur with the view that resilience is a process, not just an end in itself. In my study I explore how pre-service teachers may engage in the continuous process of reflection to enhance their self-efficacy and build resilience.

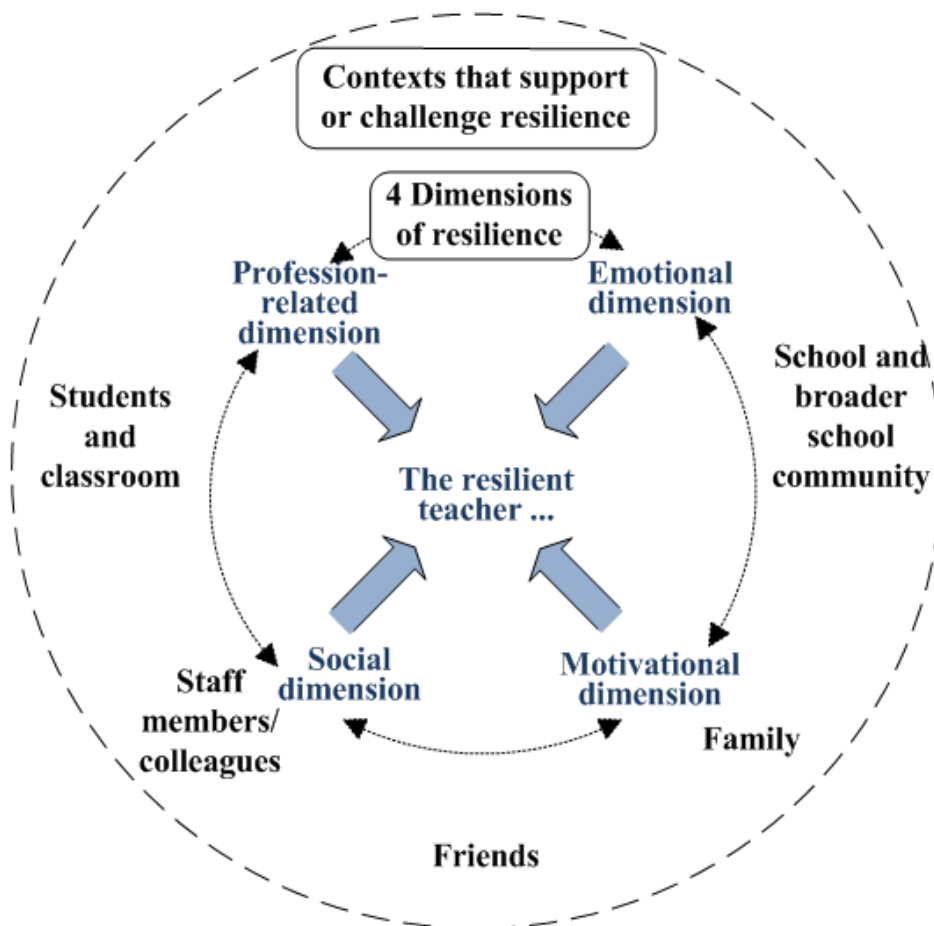
#### **2.4.2.1 Teacher resilience**

In the previous section I discussed resilience, and I went further to formulate my own conception of resilience. In this section I shall discuss teacher resilience in particular. I conceive teacher resilience as having the ability to rise above challenges that a teacher faces on a daily basis while in her line of duty. My conception of teacher resilience is informed by Mansfield (2012) whose contribution to the field, I have found to be very useful and applicable to my research.

Having seen that teacher burn-out is a challenge facing teachers, it becomes imperative that they are introduced to modules that may help them to cope with the stresses cited above. Building their resilience may be one way of building their defence against teacher burn-out. From the perspective of the teacher, resilience

enhances teaching effectiveness, heightens career satisfaction and better prepares teachers to adjust to education's ever changing conditions (Bobek, 2002; Gu & Day, 2007). This not only benefits the teachers, but also "Learners learn resilience from their teachers" (Le Cornu 2009, p.717).

Mansfield (2012) presents a four dimensional model of conceptualising resilience. This concept draws on early research by Bobek (2002); Castro (2010) and Tait, (2008). According to this model, a resilient teacher has attained maturity in four dimensions: emotionally, motivationally, socially and professionally. These four dimensions are presented in Figure 2.5.



**Figure 2.5: A four dimensional model for conceptualising resilience**

*Extracted from Mansfield et al. (2012, p.22)*

The emotional dimension of growth has to do more with a teacher's feelings and how to manage issues that affect one's emotions. According to Mansfield et al. (2012) the emotional dimension of resilience growth is a process of development. This process occurs over time. Le Cornu (2009, p.4) also attests that emotional maturity, which may be a display of resilience is learnt, it is not a trait that one is born with, hence the need for educating teachers in resilience. Emotional maturity is shown in one's ability to adjust to varied situations and to be able to increase one's competence "in the face of adversity". A teacher who has attained emotional maturity has the ability to develop techniques of managing her emotions, perhaps through the development of a sense of humour. An emotionally developed teacher will be less likely to be given to stress, which is usually a result of taking things personally. Bandura (1994) attests to the fact that emotional maturity is related to "less stress, lowered vulnerability, and depression". Emotional maturity will result in a teacher feeling more in control of her inner self and as a consequence enjoying her job more.

Teacher resilience is also shown through a maturity in the motivational dimension. Motivation may be described as explicit strategies that individuals employ when they experience an unpleasant situation. To say that a teacher has reached a high level of motivation means that she is able to remain positive and enthusiastic in the face of challenges. Challenges are seen as opportunities to reach higher. This teacher has confidence and self-belief and works towards reaching set goals. The goals that she sets are realistic (Mansfield, 2012). Le Cornu (2009) concurs that resilience is shown when one has courage to move into situations even if one feels fear. A resilient teacher will not be discouraged by challenges that she faces but instead, will find a way to deal with the difficulties.

Resilience is related to "regulation of emotions and effective interaction in social environments" (Mansfield, 2012, p.4). A resilient teacher will have the capacity to build a support network and healthy relationships with her colleagues. Moreover, she will not be afraid to seek help and to receive advice from others. Her communication skills are good (Mansfield, 2012).

Since teachers are professionals it is important that they are able to show maturity in the professional dimension. Professional maturity shows ability to interact with



events in the teaching environment which will result in the teacher showing commitment to her students (Mansfield et al., 2012).

#### **2.4.2.2 Pre-service teacher resilience**

Pre-service teachers may also benefit from building their resilience. According to Tait (2005, p. 12) “Resilience is probably one of the most important strengths for novice teachers”. Moreover, Le Cornu (2009) argues that resilience helps early career teachers to cope well. Building of resilience is key during pre-service education because it is resilience that will enable a teacher to be able to withstand a number of challenges that they may come across in their teaching journey, and these challenges, if left unattended may lead to teacher burn-out. Yost (2006) contends that teacher education should be geared towards producing novice teachers who are resilient; who will be able to persist in the face of complex problems that manifest in today’s schools. “Education programmes should foster resilience and persistence” (p.16). Similarly, in a joint study on pre-service teacher resilience, Jonson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter (2010, p.3) discovered that early career resilience may be supported by conditions which include relationships, school cultures, teacher identity, teachers’ work and system policies and practices.

Teacher education ought to give more attention to programmes that will ensure that a teacher is a resilient professional who is able to withstand many of the challenges that come with teaching. Becoming a resilient professional is likely to impact a teacher in many ways; including their personal well-being as well as helping them to become efficient educators. If an educator becomes resilient, chances of suffering burn-out are minimized (MacBeath, 2012). Hence Ye He (2009) emphasises that mentoring programmes should be effective to groom the pre-service teacher, not only for classroom instruction, but also to enhance their self-efficacy. Yost (2006) affirms that quality education should be emphasised. Yost (2006) also suggests that teacher education programmes should link “field experience and critical reflection” (p.17). This, she says, will lead teachers to become reflective practitioners, which in turn will cause the teachers to become resilient since reflection has the capacity to enable one to problem-solve. “Resilient teachers are those who can think deeply, problem-solve, and feel confident in their ability to meet the needs of their students” (p.17).

Thus, induction programmes have a significant part to play in teacher education experience; this emphasises on the significant role that teacher preparation programmes should play in helping pre-service teachers gain resilience lest they suffer burn-out during their teaching career. Moreover, it is stressed that resilience is an element that enables an individual to live a fruitful life in the midst of life's daily challenges. Resilience enables us to "respond to life's challenges with courage and emotional stamina". Life's challenges may include "accidents, natural disasters, crime, illness and the economy" (Wagnild, 2010, p.1). Hence, it may be said that resilience provides protection against depression, anxiety, fear, helplessness and other negative emotions" (Wagnild, 2010, p.1). Having established the significance of resilience I shall then elaborate on self-efficacy enhancement and the role that it may play in building resilience.

### **2.4.3 Self-efficacy**

In his works Bandura (1993; 1994; 2010) describes self-efficacy and elaborates on its benefits. Self-efficacy is a belief that an individual has about her/his own abilities to influence her/his life (Bandura, 2010). People with self-efficacy are optimistic; they tend to look on the bright side of life and they are less likely to suffer from stress (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy enables an individual to understand that challenges should not be regarded as setbacks, but instead as opportunities to apply oneself fully at an assignment. A person who has self-efficacy does not see failure as a limitation, but as a result of insufficient preparation (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy is measured by the improvements that an individual makes, rather than winning over others (Bandura, 1994).

In his earlier work, Bandura (1993) argues that there are four ways of developing self-efficacy; performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological arousal and, in his later work Bandura (2010) draws from his social learning theory of (1977) to discuss the four ways. He does however; acknowledge that not much is known about the source of self-efficacy.

Bandura (1994) states that self-efficacy may result from the attainment of further competencies and success; how well a person develops cognitive skills and their occupational careers determines her self-efficacy (Bandura,1994). Earlier, Bandura

(1993) pointed out that mastering further competencies is the most potent of all four ways of enhancing self-efficacy. Later on Bandura (2010) reiterated that a sense of accomplishment boosts self-efficacy. Bandura (1994; 2010) refers to this as performance accomplishment.

Self-efficacy may also be enhanced through vicarious experiences (Bandura, 2010). When an individual is able to successfully perform a task that she has observed others perform, it may lead to feelings of self-efficacy. Vicarious experiences suggest that observing successful individuals is significant in enhancing self-efficacy.

Furthermore, Bandura (2010) states that verbal persuasion is a key factor in self-efficacy enhancement. When an individual receives encouragement on capacity to perform a task as well as constructive feedback, it may enhance self-efficacy.

The three points above on self-efficacy enhancement suggest that self-efficacy is not just an in-born trait but it is something that an individual builds. There is however one point, physiological arousal, which suggests that self-efficacy may be enhanced intrinsically.

A positive mindset plays a significant role in enhancing self-efficacy taking into consideration that many people lose their battles in the mind long before the actual battle is fought (Bandura, 2010). He goes on to add that deliberately engaging oneself in activities and habits that will strengthen one's mood is of great benefit in enhancing self-efficacy.

Of note here is that there is an overlap between intrinsic and extrinsic ways of enhancing self-efficacy; while engaging external factors, an individual may strengthen her internal aspect as well. Also, when an individual improves her external resources, she may attain inner strength.

Most importantly, Bandura discovered that self-efficacy results in resilience and improved health and habits (Bandura, 1994). On the other hand, lack of self-efficacy predisposes one to a lack of commitment to set goals and instead, being preoccupied with what might go wrong (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy is indeed necessary in the process of becoming resilient, and teachers would benefit from enhancing their self-efficacy. Bandura's contribution to literature on self-efficacy is

significant to my study because Bandura's social learning theory is one of the theoretical frameworks that influenced my study.

Klassen and Chiu (2011) affirm that self-efficacy is a theoretical framework that was provided by Bandura in his social cognitive theory. Klassen and Chui (2011) state that self-efficacy relates to an individual's capabilities and their abilities to successfully execute a course of action. Moreover, self-efficacy controls how individuals cope with stress and continue to stay motivated in their jobs (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Additionally, self-efficacy affects a person's decision to stay motivated at a job or his/her intentions to leave a profession (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) also affirm that self-efficacy is grounded in Bandura's social cognitive theory. They perceive self-efficacy as an energy that enables people to exercise their authority over the things that happen to them. Moe, Pazzaglia, and Ronconi (2010) whose definition of self-efficacy is also informed by Bandura (1997) state that self-efficacy is a belief that an individual has about her abilities to execute an action thus it becomes a motivating factor in pursuing a job that a person has. Brouwers and Tomic (2000) bring in another perspective which elaborates on how self-efficacy is enhanced. They cite Bandura (1997) to say that self-efficacy results from learning.

#### **2.4.3.1 Teacher self-efficacy**

Teacher self-efficacy has been viewed from different perspectives by researchers. As will be seen in the preceding discussion, there are some theorists who see it as an internal element that will enable a teacher to draw strength from within and let it flow outwardly to positively impact her teaching and make her career enjoyable yet others come from the perspective that teacher self-efficacy is an external element; that a teacher draws strength from external sources.

Firstly, there is Bandura (1993, 1994, 2010) who perceives self-efficacy from both dimensions as described in the section above. Bandura (1993) states that a teacher who has self-efficacy beliefs is motivated, and consequently, she motivates her learners. Bandura (1994) went further to state that a teacher who has self-efficacy belief shows maturity. Maturity is not measured through winning over others, but it is measured by the improvements that one makes. Furthermore, Bandura (2010)

asserted that a teacher who has instructional efficacy shows devotion to her work and students. Moreover, the teacher will have effective teaching skills and demonstrate a high level of organisation, which will impact learners' performance. Part of being organised is being able to manage time effectively as a professional. On the contrary, a teacher who lacks professional motivation will waste teaching time on mundane things

Bandura's work on self-efficacy influenced several researchers after him and they cited him in their discussion of teacher self-efficacy. Yost (2006, p.67) describes self-efficacy in the context of teachers, as believing in oneself and having confidence. Self-efficacy may show through, "knowing your students, being persevering and patient, showing enthusiasm, having a positive attitude, being organised, creative and personable". Viewing self-efficacy in this manner draws emphasis to the significance of internal factors, as opposed to external ones.

On some of the benefits of teacher self-efficacy Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) argue that a teacher's self-efficacy has a bearing on her classroom behaviour and learning outcomes such as students' self-efficacy beliefs, motivation and achievement. This argument is of greater importance in light of the fact that it shows the relationship between a teacher's well-being and educational outcomes. It is obvious that a teacher who is lacking in self-efficacy is least likely to impact learners positively. Even for pre-service teachers, self-efficacy is an important element because it is what causes them to develop self-worth which will enable them to handle, not only the stress of the teaching profession but also life in general. Hence, more attention ought to be given to self-efficacy in the context of pre-service teachers by exploring how pre-service teachers may enhance their self-efficacy and build their resilience (Mansfield, 2012).

#### **2.4.3.2 Pre-service teacher self-efficacy**

In a study that Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) conducted with two hundred and fifty five pre-service teachers at three universities in the United States of America, they found that beginner teachers exhibited lower self-efficacy compared to experienced teachers. They also discovered that those beginner teachers who had low self-efficacy could improve it through finding better teaching strategies. Moreover, they

found that mastering skills became a major factor in both beginner and experienced teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Furthermore, they concluded that "beginner teachers who lack significant mastery experience may benefit in verbal persuasion, vicarious experience and emotional arousal" (p.11). What I conclude therefore is that self-efficacy has a bearing to the amount of effort that teachers put in when they face adversities (Tschannen-Morana et al., 2007). Moreover, their experiences count in helping them to grow in self-efficacy.

On the basis of their research findings Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) then argued that beginner teachers who received much support during the first year of their teaching experience exhibited a higher level of self-efficacy. The kind of support network they refer to may include the school administration, colleagues, parents and community members. "There is yet greater self-efficacy in collective effort, where the teachers in the school supported each other and received support from the school administration" (Tschannen-Morana et al., 2007, p.4). But on the contrary, those beginner teachers who encountered a number of obstacles demonstrated low self-efficacy and consequently their teaching was affected adversely which resulted in students' low academic achievement. This then became a vicious cycle of teachers' self-efficacy taking a down-turn, academic failure happening, resulting in more stress and lowered self-efficacy.

Yost (2006) also joins the debate on teacher self-efficacy and argues that it is a successful teaching experience and field work that built a beginner teacher's confidence and self-efficacy. He adds that other factors such as a conducive teaching environment may add to a teacher's desire to want to remain in teaching. This assertion supports earlier studies done by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) who discuss self-efficacy from the external perspective.

Although contributions by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) and Yost (2006) show some departure from earlier work by Bandura, from the discussion above, it is obvious that self-efficacy is a positive factor enabling a sense of well-being in the life of a teacher. It is therefore vitally important to uncover strategies that may enhance self-efficacy. Review of literature indicates that reflective practices may play a significant role in strengthening self-efficacy. In the next section I elaborate on reflective practices in general and later on, I look into how reflective practices may be

incorporated in teaching and more specifically into pre-service teacher education. Reflective practices are significant in a study on self-efficacy because there is a link between the two constructs (Bandura, 2010). Some of the sources that I have consulted on reflective practices are old but they are seminal. I have also included later authors who did an in-depth study on reflective practices.

#### **2.4.4 Reflective practices**

Several studies by, Dewey (1933); Schon (1983); Symth and David (1989); Osterman, Robert and Kottkamp (1993); Kagan (1996); Bright (1996); Steffy, Wolfe and Enz (2000); Kauffmam (2003); Valiga (2003); Kottler et al. (2005) Vander Walt, Evans and Kilfoil (2009); Ghaye (2010); Bandura (2010) have been done on reflective practices. I have noted that although these researchers have different ways of looking into reflective practices, their conception is similar in many ways. Many of these researchers draw on early work that was done by Dewey (1933) and Schon (1983) and as a result, they approach reflective practices from a similar perspective. Below I outline how several scholars define reflective practices.

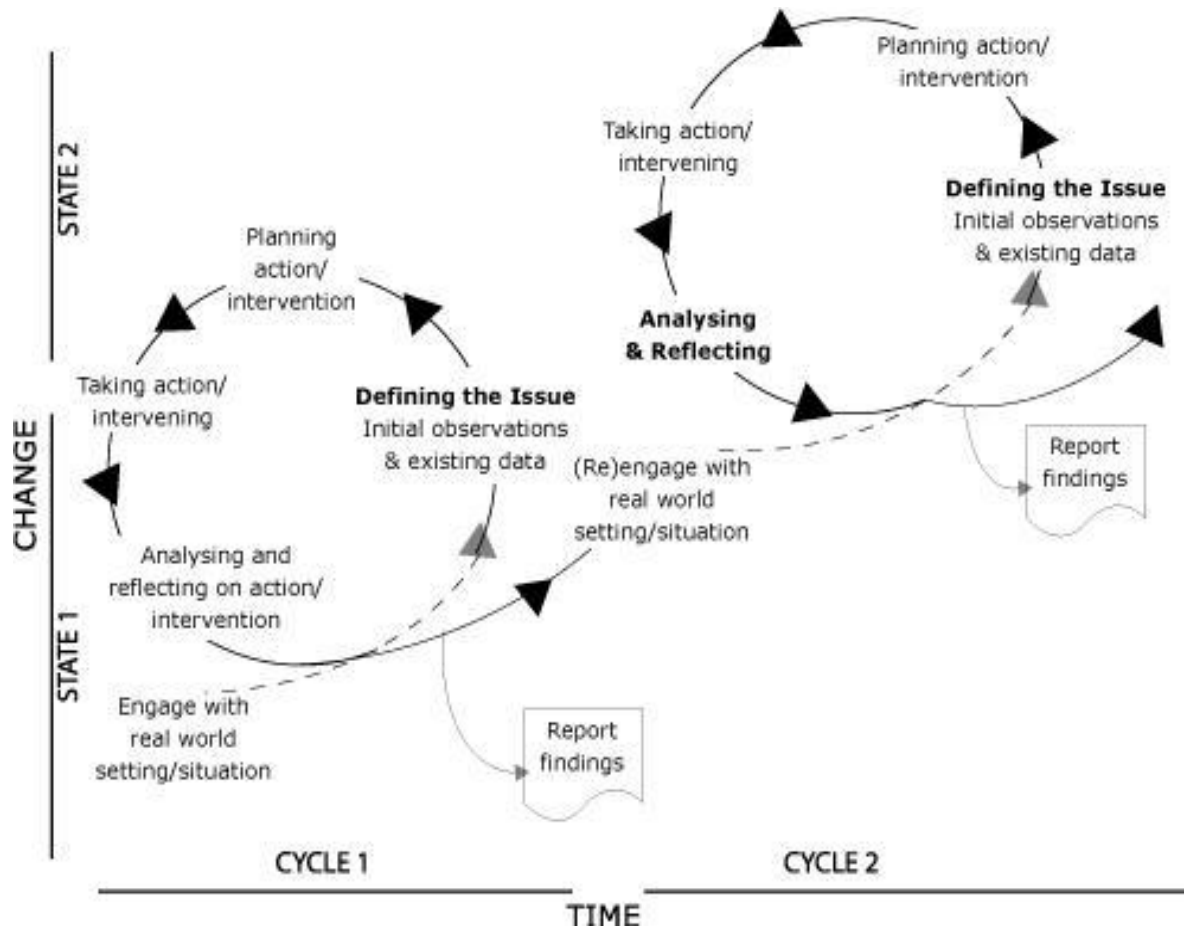
Dewey (1933) describes reflective practices as a systematic, scientific process of describing experience, articulating questions that arise from experience. Symth and David (1989) say that during reflection the reflective individual should ask questions such as; “What does this mean? How did I come to act like this? How might I do things differently? Bright (1996, p.166) says that to be reflective is not just talking or thinking about work, but instead it is “the process of stepping back and pondering the meaning of what had just happened”. Bright (1996) affirms that it is a conscious effort to change practice based on new understandings. If reflection is not done, chances are that the same old practices will be repeated over and over again. Thus reflective practices may be seen as a plan for renewal for anyone including teachers. Being reflective helps individuals alter their practice, beliefs and theories as it allows us to think through possible change. It also reduces the rate of committing error (Kagan, 1996). Similarly, Steffy et al. (2000) describe reflective practices as a means through which learning, growth and renewal continue in the development of a career. Raelin (2002, p.66) states that reflection “privileges the process of inquiry”. Furthermore, reflection helps in conflict management (Valiga, 2003). It may also be described as a process at the foundation of all professional capability and it is

necessary for making improvement in practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Furthermore, they may be viewed as an experiential cycle of learning which involves identifying a problem, observing and analysis (Osterman, & Kottkamp, 1993; 2004). Current literature adds that reflective practices are a neglected area yet they play an important part in a person's professional development (Vander Walt, et al., 2009).

Reflective practices are thoroughly thought out action aimed at achieving a goal. The reflective individual takes time to think critically about what has happened and what it probably means. From the definitions above I deduce that reflective practices are a process; being reflective is not something that happens once but it is an ongoing process of self-development.

Scholars proceed to describe how reflective practices are done; they may be done while an action is taking place or after an action has taken place. Schon (1983; 1987) describes this as reflection IN action and reflection ON action, respectively. Moreover, reflection may be done individually by “journaling , reviewing a case, reading literature, developing a technical portfolio, exercising our bodies to free our minds, taking a personal retreat, and observing, or listening to one's own practice through use of videotapes or audiotapes” (Valiga, 2003, p.21). Also, pair or group reflection may be done through “interactive journaling, cognitive coaching...and online dialogues” (Ghaye, 2010, p.22). In either case the reflective individual(s) need(s) to find an area to reflect about, purpose and an action plan. As already indicated above, reflective practices can be done at different levels; individually, in pairs, or even with a group. As members of a group, early career teachers are engaged in social exchanges with colleagues; this could come in the form of emails that teachers exchange discussing their practices and also seeking, as well as giving support to each other (Pearce, 2011). Below I present a diagram illustration of the reflective process which illustrates how the process of reflection may culminate in resilience.





**Figure 2.6: Presentation of resilience reflective process**

*Extracted from action research cycles (2015)*

Figure 2.6 above indicates that reflection is a cyclical process which begins with identifying a problem. Once the reflective individual has identified the problem, she then defines it so that there is better understanding about the nature of the problem. What follows is finding out how that problem might be mitigated. This may be seen as an intervention stage. The next step is to take action in correcting the problem. Lastly, the reflective individual takes time to look into whether there has been any improvement from the initial stage. This process may be repeated over and over at different stages because reflection is a continuous process (Dewey, 1993). Figure 2.6 is very significant to my study because the research seeks out how pre-service teachers may enhance their self-efficacy by engaging in reflective practices. The sections that follow will elaborate on the reflective plan for participants of this study. Worth pointing out is that Figure 2.6 does not suggest that action research and reflective practices are synonymous. On the contrary, reflective practices are an essential part of action research.

#### 2.4.4.1 Reflective practices for teachers

Earlier in the chapter, I noted that teachers suffer burn-out and that they need to find strategies to mitigate burn-out at chalk-face level. Mansfield (2012) asserts that part of the process of professional maturity is being reflective and adaptive. When teachers engage in reflective practices they are more likely to learn new ideas and discard old practices. Osterman, Robert and Kottkamp (1993) concur that reflective practices are used for developing greater self-awareness of one's professional practices. In light of these assertions, it might be useful to look into how teacher education programmes may incorporate reflective practices which could ensure that teachers' self-efficacy is enhanced. Yost (2006) argues that participating in problem-solving is embedded in becoming a reflective practitioner. Dewey (1993) concurs that one tool that may be employed in problem-solving is engaging in critical reflection. Since Dewey is considered the originator of the concept of reflection it would be valuable to first consider how he views reflective practices in the context of teachers.

Dewey (1993, p.6) defines reflective practices for teachers as "active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge". For Dewey, teachers who reflect are those who deliberately choose to critically evaluate their practice and consider new ways of improving, instead of following routine since routine does not allow for new ideas to be put into practice, but instead, teachers conform to "reasoned practice" Dewey (1993, p.2), which does not allow for growth.

Reflective teachers consider how they can make improved changes in their teaching practice in their specific contexts and the problems they face. Vander Walt et al., (2009) argue that reflective practices help teachers to remain accountable by being able to trace their growth and ability to adjust their teaching strategies. Being reflective also emancipates teachers from being impulsive in their actions. Their teaching practice is characterised by a sense of organisation and professionalism because they reflect on their instructional strategies and students' learning. Reflective teachers are able to critique their own teaching practices, share experiences with their colleagues and adopt new techniques (Dewey, 1993). The three qualities that reflective teachers have are "open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and responsibility" (Dewey, 1993, p.2). Being reflective will

demand that a teacher takes responsibility for her actions, both the positive and the negative. Taking responsibility implies that instead of engaging in the blame game, a teacher admits her fault or error of judgement and focuses on making the situation better.

Kauffman (2003); Yost (2006) and Pearce (2011) concur with Dewey's assertions on the benefits of teachers' reflective practices. Kauffman (2003) notes that pre-service teachers can be active contributors to the educational process by engaging in reflective practices. This he says is because learning should closely relate to understanding and solving real life problems. This is to say that if teachers reflect, they are better able to solve problems that they face, which in a way is a contribution to the learning process. In other words, learning is not just an abstract idea but it should be geared towards providing answers to real life issues. Pre-service teachers who will be successful in being reflective practitioners will have an open mind which is willing to embrace new ideas and discard old ones. They will understand that there is new knowledge out there waiting to be explored. Moreover, they will have to understand that learning new ideas and practices calls for dedication and commitment. Dewey (1993) describes this as wholeheartedness.

Similarly, Yost (2006) asserts that reflective practices may be useful in enhancing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. Furthermore, reflection helps a novice teacher to gain the ability to "effectively think about, cope with, and solve problems that arise in the classroom setting" (p.61). Also, Pearce (2011) argues that reflective practices may enhance the construction of a new self-image; for the pre-service teachers engaging in reflective practices helps to develop their resilience and also to expand their world view and to develop new perceptions about the teaching profession, and life in general. In addition, he notes that reflective practices are ideal for teachers at different stages of their teaching career.

In advocating for pre-service teachers' reflective practices for my study I drew from contributions made by these researchers and I paid special attention to Dewey (1933), whose model of critical reflection I adopted to establish the significance of reflection in the life of a teacher.

#### **2.4.4.2 Reflective practices for pre-service teachers**

Dewey's (1933) model of critical reflection which was later on affirmed by Yost (2006) includes "identifying a problem, locating its source, making connections to teacher education content or research, implementing alternative strategies, closely observing results, and altering strategies when and if necessary" (Yost, 2006, p.65). In the next section I shall elaborate on how pre-service teachers may be engaged in reflective practices using Dewey's model of critical reflection.

Pre-service teachers may implement Dewey's model of critical reflection (1933) during their teaching practice by identifying several problems related to being a teacher. These problems could include high work load, lack of support, challenging student behaviour, meeting students' needs and inadequate professional status. The pre-service teachers may then focus on one area that they might wish to work on; this is one of the processes in reflection ON action (Kauffman, 2003) where the teachers reflect on their previous practice. In so doing, the teachers could be reflecting about how they could behave in certain situations and the outcomes that might result. The outcomes could be positive or negative, and this may then provide an opportunity for considering how in future they could handle a similar situation for better results.

Locating the source of a problem is the next step that pre-service teachers may consider. While using their reflective diaries, pre-service teachers could recall how a particular problem came about. If, for instance, the pre-service teachers had decided to focus on behavioural issues, they could think about the context where learners started to show unruly behaviour. This could include thinking about the things that trigger such behaviour and also how the teachers could respond. Here pre-service teachers could be critical about their own action and how their behaviour could affect the outcomes of a particular scenario (Dewey, 1933).

Making connections to teacher education may follow; this has more to do with applying theory to practice. Here the pre-service teacher could reflect on the nature of the problem that could arise in class and strategies that could be employed to address the problem. Questions that teachers may ask could include; as a teacher, did I respond appropriately in accordance with teaching theory or did I react

impulsively? The answer to the above question, in alignment with the outcome could help the teacher to test the validity of the theory. This may help with identifying new theories that may be applicable in certain circumstances. Again, if pre-service teachers found that acting on impulse did help in solving a problem, they would then start thinking about whether or not acting on impulse would work in certain situations.

Implementing alternative strategies would be considered in cases that a certain theory that was put into practice proved to be inadequate. As the pre-service teachers reflect, they consider possible challenges that may be posed by learners' behavioural issues and how they would be addressed successfully by employing alternative means. Pre-service teachers could use their diaries to note down their reflections, and also as a way of evaluating possible solutions to a problem; how certain strategies would work better than others. Kauffman (2003) observed that during the process of reflection reflective practitioners use a reflective diary where they note down how they perceived their past practices and how they would like to improve. This he says is so that participants are given the opportunity and support to use self-direction in their learning. Here pre-service teachers could reflect on possible strengths and weaknesses of the strategies that they would employ. Outcomes from the strategies that would be employed would help them in making a decision on whether or not their method of solving a problem works.

At another level of reflection the pre-service teachers would be ready to alter their behaviour and strategies in accordance with what the journey of reflection had taught them. They would be ready to address challenges differently from how they did before. This would be done in order to improve the outcomes. Once the pre-service teachers are in a position to do critical reflection, their teaching would become easier and less stressful. Challenges would no longer be seen as obstacles but as opportunities to apply themselves fully at a task (Kauffman, 2003). This would eventually lead to an improved confidence in the teachers' beliefs about self and ultimately a boost in their self-esteem which would translate to teacher resilience (Mansfield, 2012).

Clearly, the importance of giving pre-service teachers the opportunity to reflect on their practice through analysing and assessing their own performance and

developing new perspectives and options should be emphasised because it may be significant in promoting pre-service teacher self-efficacy (York-Barr, 2006).

Although the significance of reflection is of importance to the life of a teacher, Dewey (1933) and Vander Walt et al. (2009) found that teachers still neglect reflection. The neglect may result from the fact that some teachers are not aware of the benefits of engaging in reflective practices, which is a consequence of the inadequacy of pre-service teacher programmes (Steiner-Khamsi & Simelane, 2010; Kottler et al., 2005; Yost, 2006; Johnson 2010). Nonetheless, Dewey (1933) noted that reflection may benefit any teacher who applies it in their teaching practice and that any teacher may actually apply it successfully despite the variables of “gender, age, experience and level of education” (Dewey, 1933, p.1).

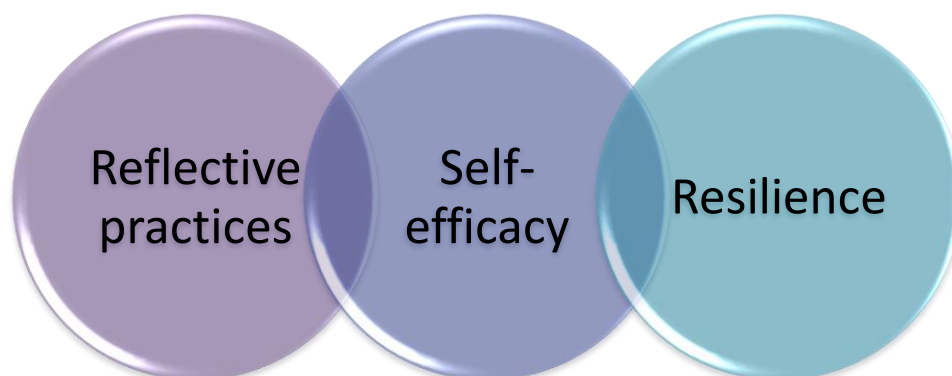
Similarly, Yost (2006) laments the fact that schools present very few opportunities for novice teachers to engage in reflection yet it is through reflection that novice teachers are able to gain the ability of solving problems and coping with challenges. In concurring with Yost (2006) I believe that reflection will be much more beneficial when done during pre-service teacher education hence my focus on educating pre-service teachers in reflective practices. And since Yost (2006, p.61) has it that “reflection is linked to teacher retention, persistence, and resiliency” I believe that it may indeed prevent symptoms of teacher burn-out.

## **2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: INTERACTION AMONG BURN-OUT RESILIENCE, SELF-EFFICACY AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICES**

In this section I describe my conceptual framework which shows an interplay among teacher burn-out, teacher resilience, self-efficacy enhancement and reflective practices.

In the preceding sections particularly the literature review I revealed that pre-service teachers do have symptoms of teacher burn-out (Kottler et al., 2005; Yost, 2006; Tschannen-Morana et al., 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Klassen & Chui, 2011; Mansfield 2012). These symptoms result from the risk factors that teachers encounter in their line of duty. Literature cited earlier also indicated that teacher burn-out is a serious threat to teachers, hence the need to find strategies to overcome the symptoms of teacher burn-out at chalk-face level. Finding strategies for mitigating symptoms of

teacher burn-out will enable affected teachers to develop resilient coping. Furthermore, studies have revealed that it is possible to educate teachers on resilience. Yost (2006) and Mansfield et al. (2012) pointed out that teacher resilience is fundamental in teacher development because resilient teachers are able to cope amidst the daily challenges of teaching but teachers who do not have resilience usually leave the profession early in their career. Literature also indicates that building resilience may be attained by strengthening a weaker inner state. This suggests that a teacher ought to engage in activities that will enable her to develop her resilience. Literature goes on to state that a resilient individual has improved self-efficacy. Improving self-efficacy beliefs may be attained by engaging in reflective practices (Kauffman, 2003 and Kottler et al., 2005). A reflective individual becomes self-efficacious (Osterman et al., 1993 and Bandura, 2010). Furthermore, Kauffman (2003) and Kottler et al. (2005) assert that engaging in reflective practices results in the enhancement of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and it ultimately leads to growth in resilience (Mansfield, 2012). Figure 2.7 shows an intersection relationship among reflective practices, self-efficacy and teacher resilience. The visual suggests that self-efficacy is what links reflective practices and resilience, meaning that a teacher who engages in reflective practices may enhance her self-efficacy and consequently improve her resilient coping. When these two factors; reflective practices and self-efficacy come together, they may enable a teacher to attain resilient coping and probably mitigate the risk factors which, if not curbed, may lead to teacher burn-out. Figure 2.7 below illustrates my conceptual framework.



**Figure 2.7: Conceptual framework - interplay among reflective practices, self-efficacy and teacher resilience**

## 2.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter I examined literature on teacher burn-out, teacher resilience, self-efficacy and reflective practices. Researchers in these fields indicate that there is a connection among the four constructs hence the need to examine all of them. Literature further indicates that burn-out is a very common problem among professionals in diverse fields which include teaching. If burn-out is left unaddressed it may have dire consequences. Literature also indicates that burn-out, including teacher burn-out may be addressed by building self-efficacy. Moreover, researchers agree that engaging in reflective practices may be the right approach in enhancing self-efficacy. An important conclusion that I drew from the preceding section is that educating teachers in resilience has implications of self-efficacy-enhancement (Pearce, 2011; Mansfield, 2012). Hence, it may be said that self-efficacy is an important element that pre-service teachers need as they prepare for their teaching profession to ensure that teachers are not just surviving but, that they “thrive as confident and healthy professionals” (Beltman et al., 2011, p.196), who will also impact their learners in a positive way. In the next chapter, I explore the research methodology for my study.





## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter three I describe my research design and methods by closely discussing my epistemological paradigm, research approach, research strategy, selection of participants, data collection protocols, analysis, quality criteria and ethical considerations. I also motivate my choice in detail showing how this research methodology enabled me to address the objectives of the study.

**Table 3.1: Summary of chapter components**

<b>Epistemological paradigm</b>	<b>Research design</b>	<b>Research approach</b>	<b>Research method</b>	
Interpretivism	Participatory action research and pre-test, post-test	Qualitative	Selection of participants	Data collection
<b>Data collection protocols and process</b>				
Resilience scale questionnaire	Participants' reflective journals	Transcribed recordings	Researcher's diary	
<b>Data presentation and analysis</b>				
<b>Quality criteria</b>				
Confirmability	Credibility	Dependability	Transferability	
<b>Ethical considerations</b>				
Securing access	Voluntary participation	Informed consent	Privacy/ confidentiality/ anonymity	Honouring intellectual property
<b>Research objectives</b>				
<b>Primary</b>	To discover how self-efficacy enhancement during initial teacher education may build teacher resilience			
<b>Secondary</b>	Find out risk factors that threaten resilient coping among pre-service teachers	Identifying sources of strength that pre-service teachers may explore to mitigate symptoms of burn-out and promote resilient coping	Find out the role of reflective practices as a protective factor to enhance resilient coping	

## 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This section below elaborates on the research design that I explored. I start by describing the interpretivist epistemological paradigm and justify why I have used it. I go further to explain how the qualitative research approach enabled me to address the research objectives in line with the interpretivist paradigm. Also the choice of research strategy; participatory action research and pre-test, post-test is explained and justified.

### 3.2.1 Epistemological paradigm

My chosen epistemological position is interpretivism because my study is subjective in nature. Moreover, my ontological belief is that knowledge is out there, waiting to be discovered (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Interpretivism developed as a response to the stance taken by objectivists; this is according to Heyman (2009). Interpretivists who are subjectivists state that social phenomena are dependent on human minds, values and perceptions and they cannot be studied like physical objects but they are interpreted through the eyes of an individual in a specific context (Heyman, 2009).

This study involved human participants and it is for that same reason that the interpretivist perspective became very relevant. Furthermore, subjectivists believe that researchers cannot distance themselves from their study. Holden (2010, p.11) asserts that researchers should be encouraged to be involved with their research, and he adds that one outstanding contrast that subjectivists have with objectivists is that subjectivists focus on the meaning of a social phenomenon rather than on its measurement. Heyman (2009, p.3) affirms this idea by stating that “it is not possible to quantify the subjectivity and individuality of human beings”. As I conducted this research I was aware that the pre-service teachers who took part in this study had to express their feelings and concerns and these phenomena could not be measured or quantified, hence subjectivity in the nature of data which I collected. As I went about with data collection, it was confirmed that the study was largely subjective because it required participants to express themselves, and there is no way that subjectivity may be avoided in a case whereby one is expressing her feelings and thoughts.

### 3.2.2 Research approach

I employed the qualitative research approach which aligned with the interpretivist paradigm which informed this study. According to Lichtman (2006) qualitative research is used to understand and construe social interactions. Usually the study is used with a small sample size where questionnaires, observation, interviews and reflections are the major tools for collecting data. Furthermore, qualitative research, through the interpretivist lens affirms that during research, the researcher will not avoid, but, be in constant contact with the research participants. What is more, participants are in touch with their social environments. Johnson and Christensen (2008) add that respondents in qualitative research are observed in a natural, dynamic, situational and personal environment. The pre-service teachers who participated in my study recorded their thoughts in their journals during the period of teaching practice, and for them, this was a natural environment because it is where they spent the better part of their day interacting with the rest of the members of the school community. Additionally, the data that I collected when I met with all participants in my study formed part of the participants' experiences that they gained in the various schools where they did teaching practice. This being the case made it possible for me to make follow up questions and clarify issues during the meetings. Since I recorded discussions and later transcribed them, I was able to quote participants during data analysis, which also is done in a qualitative study.

In using the resilience scale questionnaire I could not avoid using numbers in describing the level of pre-service teachers' resilience before and after they embraced reflection as a protective factor. Sandelowski (2001) asserts that numbers are important in qualitative studies as meaning depends on numbers, nonetheless feelings and thoughts are subjective and there is no way of quantifying them. Worth noting here is that in this study the number that each participant scored on the scale remained unimportant. What was of significance was the level of each item; whether it showed an increase or not after participants engaged in reflective practices. Thus the study remained qualitative despite the use of the resilience scale and numbers.

Nonetheless, qualitative research is subjective in nature, allowing for researcher's personal biases, but as a researcher I overcame this shortcoming by not letting my biases interfere with the research process. I did not allow my personal experiences

in teaching affect my reporting of data findings. I endeavored to report as objectively as possible by quoting participants' exact words where possible and interpreting data according to how they had been reported. During the focus group interviews, I avoided asking leading questions, but only made a follow up on what each participant had said. Furthermore, I allowed participants to read through transcriptions so as to make comments and corrections on their drafts (Ary, Jacobs & Razvich, 2002; Creswell, 2009; Putten & Nolen, 2010).

### **3.2.3 Research strategy**

To carry out this research I explored participatory action research (PAR) design. Some elements of pre-test, post-test design also featured in the study. Participatory action research (PAR) as a practical tool in professional inquiry may be employed by individuals who are looking into improving their practice. Such individuals may include teachers, among others, and more particularly those who are new in the profession. An individual may start by asking herself questions about her practice and how she may effect some change for the purpose of improving. PAR may also be considered when a professional seeks to understand her practice, and why she does what she is doing (Waters-Adams, 2006). Participants engaging in PAR identify an area that presents as problematic and thus requires attention (Waters-Adams, 2006). Reflecting on the particular problematic area then follows with the view of improving the current state of affairs.

I chose PAR because it enables a teacher to study her own work, rather than having another person studying it. Additionally, for me as the researcher, I was enabled to adopt the emic approach which gave me an insider's perspective. As I conducted the research with the cooperation of the participants, I learnt that the pre-service teachers were also benefiting from the whole process as they got to engage in reflective practices and learn more about themselves and their practices hence, Waters-Adams (2006) and Ferreira and Ebersöhn (2011) say that it helps a teacher to be a maker of knowledge, rather than just a user of existing knowledge. This is particularly interesting because this line of thinking aligns with interpretivism which is a paradigmatic perspective that my research followed. Similarly Ferreira, Ebersöhn and Botha (2013) assert that PAR is an efficient method of accumulating information, where by the researcher partners with participants in the creation of new knowledge.

These researchers also found, in their own study, that PAR involves engaging in reflective practices, which I also discovered to be very useful in collecting data for my qualitative study.

Moreover, I used PAR because it allows for reflection to be undertaken at individual level, where the reflective practitioner uses a reflective journal to note down her thoughts. Similarly, an individual may work in collaboration with other professionals. Nonetheless, PAR is fraught with researcher bias. This is because the participant is also a researcher in the study (Waters-Adams, 2006). Moreover, findings that are collected from a research that involves PAR cannot be generalised. In order to overcome these weaknesses, I used thick descriptions (Creswell, 2009).

Although my study was explorative, it yielded the benefits of intervention because as I explored how reflective practices influenced self-efficacy, participants in this study grew in resilience. Literature that I had reviewed showed that when individuals have self-efficacy, they are able to overcome many challenges that they encounter, not only in their jobs but also in life generally. “Intervention in resilience projects is significant because the resilience framework is concerned with alleviating negative effects that individuals and groups are experiencing” (Luther & Cicchetti, 2000, p.112). This is to affirm that a project on resilience has as its main focus, assisting individuals with finding strategies for overcoming stress.

The use of the resilience scale questionnaire introduced elements of pre-test, post-test which featured minimally in the study. Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, Walker (2014, p.326) state that “pre-test, post-test involves three steps (1) administering a pre-test (2) applying experimental treatment (3) administering a post-test”. During data collection, participants filled in resilience scale questionnaires, engaged in reflective practices and filled in the resilience scale questionnaires again. This completed the three steps highlighted by Ary, et al. (2014). Moreover, I compared the differences between the scores for before and after participants engaged in reflective practices as a way of interpreting the data and the effectiveness of reflective practices. However, Johnson & Christensen (2014) point out that there are other factors that may influence the results apart from the intervention. These may include history and maturation. To overcome this shortcoming I gave prominence to the PAR which

enabled me to collect qualitative data with the other protocols; participants' reflective journals, focus group transcriptions and my researcher's diary.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODS**

In the section that follows I describe the research methods I used in this research. I go further to explain why I opted for these methods and also how the methods enabled me to collect rich data for this study. Research methods include selection of participants and research site, data collecting protocols and data analysis.

#### **3.3.1 Selection of participants**

Participants were sampled using convenience sampling based on location. The physical location of the students made them easily accessible. According to Battaglia (2008) convenience sampling is a non-probability method which allows the researcher to select a sample that will be a convenient source of data.

I had anticipated that eight participants should be sufficient for the purpose of this study, but a total of ten pre-service teachers were sampled. The other two were for contingency purposes. I drew the ten participants from a population of sixty five students from the Faculty of Education at SCOT in Swaziland. Four of the ten participants came from the Department of Design and Technology (D&T), and the other six came from the Department of Commercial Teaching. This was because out of the sixty five participants only thirty (46%) were doing Design and Technology while the other thirty five (54%) were doing Commercial Teaching. A total of six of the participants were male and the other four were females. The reason for this was that out of the sixty five participants, twenty seven (41%) of them were females and the other thirty eight (59%) were males.

Later on two of the students enrolled for Commercial Teaching withdrew from the study without giving reasons. They simply made themselves unavailable. When we had an appointment they would confirm that they would be available but when time for the appointment came they would not show up. When I called them later to find out what had happened, the response would generally be that they were delayed. I continued with eight students; four from Design and Technology and the other four from Commercial Teaching. At a later stage of the research, another participant who

was doing Commercial teaching withdrew. The third participant stopped taking my calls after the first data collection point. This left me with a total of seven; four from Design & Technology and three from Commercial teaching.

All participants were in the final year of their pre-service programme - Secondary Teacher's Diploma (STD). These participating pre-service teachers had participated in a seven-week long teaching practice in the previous year during their second year of teacher preparation. By the time the study commenced, they were yet to go for another session of teaching practice in their third year of study, which would be the last one before they graduated. These students had encountered some challenges such as learners' behavioural issues during the last teaching practice, yet they were due to go for a second round of teaching practice. This being the case made them ideal candidates for this study because in participating, they were able to reflect on their previous experiences. All participants were to take part in completing the resilience scale questionnaire, focus group interviews and reflective practices.

In Table 3.2 below I present a summary profile for each of the participants of this study. The table shows that I started with a total of ten participants but as the study progressed, some participants withdrew. Detailed information on the participants who completed the study is presented in Chapter four.

**Table 3.2 Descriptions of participants for this study**

Participant's pseudonym		Sex	Age	Type of school	Subject taught	Completed/ Withdrew
1.	S'manga*	Male	22	Urban (Grant-aided)	D&T	Completed
2.	Mzee*	Male	23	Urban (Grant-aided)	D&T	Completed
3.	Khanyi*	Female	26	Semi-urban (Govt.)	Commercial	Withdrew
4.	Sisi*	Female	30	Semi-urban (Govt.)	Commercial	Completed
5.	Mfana*	Male	22	Urban (Grant-aided)	D&T	Completed
6.	Futhi*	Male	35	Rural (Govt.)	Commercial	Withdrew
7.	Thandi*	Female	24	Semi-urban (Govt.)	D&T	Completed
8.	Joy*	Female	22	Semi-urban (Govt.)	Commercial	Withdrew
9.	Buhle*	Female	23	Rural (Govt.)	Commercial	Completed
10.	Boy*	Male	26	Urban (Grant-aided)	Commercial	Completed

The table above shows that a majority of the sampled participants were placed in government schools. While six of the participants did their teaching practice in government schools, the other four came from grant-aided schools. None came from private schools. While government and grant-aided schools in Swaziland grant with ease the placement of pre-service teachers for purposes of doing teaching practice, private schools on the other hand, have a strict policy regulating their operations which includes the placement of pre-service teachers during teaching practice.

### 3.3.2 Research site

The research site where participants were selected was Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT); the only teacher preparation technical college in Swaziland which is situated in Mbabane, the capital city of the country (Swaziland College of Technology, 2013). Swaziland is one of the developing countries in southern Africa.



Swaziland is land-locked and surrounded by the Republic of South Africa and Mozambique (Sandbox Networks, 2000-2016). This country is an independent state and an absolute monarchy which got its independence from the British in 1968. Swaziland is known for its rich cultural heritage and beautiful landscape. There are two official languages; siSwati and English which are spoken in the country, nonetheless, English is given more prominence in the schools because it is not only compulsory, but in order for a learner to be deemed to have passed at primary and secondary school levels s/he is expected to pass English, among other subjects (Steiner-Khamisi & Simelane, 2010). Even tertiary institutions, including SCOT recognise its importance by using it as a yard stick for admitting students to further their education (Swaziland College of Technology, 2013). Swaziland spends 20%, the largest share of its national budget on education (Khumalo, 2013). A fair share of this allocation goes towards the education of teachers (Steiner-Khamisi & Simelane, 2010). These teachers include the ten pre-service teachers sampled for this study.

Below I present an image which shows the location of Swaziland in the map of Africa. As shown on the map on Figure 3.1 Swaziland is a small country that is located on the south-eastern part of Africa.



**Figure 3.1: Map of Africa locating Swaziland**

[www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com)

In Swaziland there are three types of schools where teachers may be posted; government schools, grant-aided (church/company schools) and private schools. All three types of schools are located in the four regions of Swaziland as reflected in Figure 3.2 below. Being posted to teach in anyone of these schools has certain implications for both learners and the teachers, but more so for the beginner teacher who lacks experience and coping strategies. While government pays salaries for all teachers irrespective of the type of school they are servicing, teachers in private schools and those in grant-aided schools get additional benefits such as bonuses, teaching facilities that are up to standard and other fringe benefits (Steiner-Khamisi & Simelane, 2010). These benefits are catered for by the extra school fees that private owned schools charge.

Teaching facilities that are up to standard refer to those amenities which enhance the smooth running of the school, and consequently affect the quality of education that is offered. According to Marope (2010) a number of the government-owned schools in Swaziland have poor maintenance and upkeep of school infrastructure. There is also a shortage of school furniture in some cases. Marope (2010) quotes a school inspector report of 2004-2008 which revealed that most schools lack physical facilities and equipment that are necessary in order to deliver the school curriculum. Unavailable facilities include “special teaching rooms such as required for design and technology, agriculture, home economics, computer studies, libraries, and multi-media centres” (Marope, 2010, p.42). Teachers posted to schools with the conditions highlighted above are at a disadvantage, as compared to those who teach in schools that are well established and well resourced. This disparity thus has a bearing on the general welfare of the teacher and their susceptibility to burn-out (Yost, 2006). In Figure 3.2 below I present a map of Swaziland which reflects the four geographic regions of the country. Pre-service teachers may choose to do teaching practice in any public school within the four regions.



**Figure 3.2: Map of Swaziland**

[www.ezilon.com](http://www.ezilon.com)

Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT) where the participants were selected was founded in 1967 (Swaziland College of Technology information brochure, 2014). The college comprises five faculties; Engineering and Science, Building and Civil Engineering, Education, Business Administration and Information and Communication Technology. Prior to becoming a college, SCOT was the principal Technical and Vocational Training Centre in Swaziland. In 1973, SCOT became a college, and it was in the same year that the first teacher education courses were offered. Out of about 1600 students enrolled at SCOT, 191 of them are in the Faculty of Education where they are pursuing a three year teacher's diploma programme. The Faculty of Education is made up of two departments; Commercial Teaching and Design and Technology. The programmes in these departments are locally examined by the college, moderated and certified by the University of Swaziland

through the Board of Affiliated Institutions (Swaziland College of Technology, 2013, p.45). Image 3.1 below shows a front view of SCOT.

*Picture taken with my mobile phone on 6 March 2016 at 1552hrs*



**Image 3.1: Picture of Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT)**

When pre-service teachers from SCOT complete their three year teaching qualification, they join the teaching work force which numbered 12511 in 2010. According to Khumalo (2013), only 73 % of those teachers have a teaching qualification. Teachers who graduate from SCOT with a teaching diploma are eligible to teach at junior secondary school level but because of a shortage of teaching posts it is not uncommon to find them teaching at senior secondary school level. Pre-service teachers from SCOT are obligated to do their teaching practice only at the junior level and it is at this level that they are assessed by their lecturers and subject inspectors. The junior secondary school level in Swaziland includes forms 1, 2 and 3. The average age range for learners in these classes is 14 – 16 years.

### **3.3.4 Data collection: protocols**

Below I present a chronologically ordered outline of the tools which I used to collect data. For the entire process of data collection I used the resilience scale questionnaire, participants' reflective journals, transcriptions from recordings of focus discussions and my researcher's notes. I found that in so doing I could address my research questions in a logical manner.

I used the *resilience scale questionnaire* to measure participants' levels of resilience before and after participants started engaging in reflective practices. The resilience scale was first developed by Wagnild and Young, and it was presented and initially used in 1988 in the field of psychiatry as a measure for a person's level of coping. Initially it was administered to a sample of older women who had been through major life events, and the goal was to measure their level of resilience. Later on it was seen that it could be used with people of all sexes in all professions and all age ranges (Wagnild & Young, 1993) hence I opted to use it in my study. Worth pointing out is that the scale was not used as a diagnostic tool but rather to obtain a baseline functioning of the participants informally yet in a structured manner.

The resilience scale questionnaire that I used had twenty five items which tested emotional, motivational, social and professional maturity of an individual (Figure 2.2). In addition to these, there were seven statements that each participant had to address on the questionnaire. These statements addressed issues of health, eating habits and physical fitness. There was also one question that asked whether or not a participant had suffered despondency in the past two weeks. While the twenty five items on the scale helped me to rate each participant's level of resilience, the other seven statements gave me a general picture about the participant's well-being and how each participant rated their own well-being. Each of the twenty five items on the resilience scale had a rating of 1 – 7 (strongly disagree – strongly agree). This being the case meant that each participant had a chance of scoring between twenty five and one hundred and seventy five (14% -100%). The score that each participant got determined their level of resilience at the time of taking the test. If the score was higher, it meant that the participant had higher levels of resilience and if the score was lower, it meant that the participant had a lower level of resilience.

I learnt that the resilience scale was the most appropriate tool I could use to measure participants' levels of resilience because my participants were pre-service teachers who were going through a potentially stressful period in their career. Windler, Bennett and Noyes (2011) state that the scale assesses a person's ability to bounce back after experiencing some difficulty. Over and above that, the resilience scale has demonstrated to be a valid measure for resilience. Using this scale ensures data quality because the scale "accurately measures what it aims to do" (Windler, Bennett

& Noyes, 2011, p.2). Since pre-service teachers were doing teaching practice, their challenges were not just problems of the profession, but they also had to bear the additional burden of being assessed by their supervisors during this period. Using the scale enabled me to understand participants' levels of resilience before and after this study. The data that I took allowed me to evaluate my initial assumption that through engaging in reflective practices pre-service teachers may enhance their self-efficacy beliefs to positively impact their resilience. As noted earlier the resilience scale was meant to assess whether participants improved in any of the four dimensions of resilience; emotionally, socially, motivationally and professionally (Mansfield et al., 2012).

After measuring participants' levels of resilience, the participants engaged in *reflective practices* and participants made use of their *reflective journals* to record their thoughts. This was after I had met with the participants to discuss how their resilience scores might be impacted by engaging in reflective practices. The reflective journals became the second tool that I explored in data collection. The participants' thoughts which are contained in their reflective journals became another set of data, from which I was able to understand participants' thoughts and their experiences during teaching practice.

A reflective journal may be used during the process of reflection to journal one's thoughts. A certain amount of time was set aside for reflection each day. Each participant chose a time that would be convenient to engage in daily reflections. During this time reflection was guided by the following questions; what happened? Why did it happen? What might it mean? What were the implications for my practice? (Table 3.5). I had anticipated that it would be beneficial that participants engage in reflective practices before and after they participated in a focus group. This was going to help by showing me whether or not the focus group session had an impact on participants' perceptions of their teaching practice experiences. Although this was not one of the research questions that the research was aimed at it was still worth finding out the effectiveness of the focus group in this research. In Chapter two of this study I gave detailed information about reflective practices, and further on in this chapter I present a table which outlines the reflective guidelines that

participants used during their time of reflection. These guidelines were informed by (Kottler et al., 2005).

The *focus group session* came a week after participants had started engaging in reflective practices. This was so because I wanted to learn from participants during the focus group interviews how engaging in reflective practices had impacted their self-efficacy (Kottler et al., 2005). During the focus group session I made use of a recording device to capture focus group discussions. Later on I transcribed the data. Detailed information on how the focus group session was conducted follows in the section where I discuss the data collection process. Having a focus group session during the period when participants' engaged in reflective practices allowed for group reflection because as the participants shared their teaching practice experience, they also got the opportunity to share about the benefits of engaging in reflective practices. When they continued with their individual reflections for another week, participants would draw from the experiences of their colleagues.

Focus groups are used as a qualitative research strategy where by a group of people belonging to the same social class meet to discuss a certain issue. Researchers have adopted this method of collecting information because information is collected in a very relaxed setting, which is convenient for the participants. The researcher, who usually acts as the moderator, is the one who guides the discussions. According to Altrichter and Posch (2009) researchers also believe that this method is advantageous because a lot of information may be generated through such discussions rather than through the use of other data collecting methods. For my study this method became very useful because it aligned with my interpretivist perspective which acknowledges the significance of the individual in meaning making. Focus groups allow participants to make their voices heard. For me as a researcher, the focus groups provided a very good opportunity to learn more about challenges that pre-service teachers contend with during teaching practice. It also provided a platform for brainstorming ideas with the group and formulating new theories on pre-service teacher burn-out.

During the focus group sessions that I had with the participants I kept a diary for my personal notes. The notes that I made included what I witnessed during the sessions, the progress that I noted from the participants, as well as any new ideas



that I learnt from the process of reflection. This was to supplement the recordings that I made during the discussions as well as for purposes of triangulation (Schutz et al., 2004). Noting down my observations came in very useful when I was interpreting the data because during the focus groups as participants shared their experiences, their voices and facial expressions gave weight to what they said.

Through the use of all the research tools reflected above I was able to collect data which enabled me to answer the research questions for this study and also to ascertain dependability of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). Being able to answer these research questions enabled me to address the main research question. All the data collecting tools worked complementary in addressing all the research questions yet at different stages of the research process. The resilience scale questionnaire became very useful in measuring participants' resilience before and after educating them in resilience thus answering all three research questions. The participants' reflective journals helped me to understand participants' mindsets with regards to the teaching profession and their level of resilience before and after engaging them in reflective practices. This information addressed all the research questions as well. My researcher's diary became very handy as a tool for recording my own personal notes during the research process. Moreover, I used the diary to note down anything that I found to be of significance during the focus group session. Like all the other data collecting tools, my researcher's diary aided me in answering all the research questions. Moreover, my researcher's diary enabled me to keep an audit trail and verify conformability (Ary et al., 2002). Through the audit trail I was able to check for inconsistencies in the data that I had collected.

**Table 3.4: Summary of how research tools addressed research objectives**

<b>Research objectives</b>	<b>Resilience scale questionnaire</b>	<b>Participants' reflective journals</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>	<b>Researcher's Diary</b>
<b>Q.1</b> <i>What risk factors do pre-service teachers face, which threaten resilient coping?</i>	Measured participants' resilience to ascertain level of resilient coping	Reflected risk factors experienced during teaching practice	Participants discussed the risk factors they experienced during teaching practice	I noted the risk factors that participants revealed and their prevalence
<b>Q.2</b> <i>What sources of strength do pre-service teachers explore to mitigate symptoms of burn-out?</i>	Measured participants' level of resilience after reflective practices to ascertain their effectiveness	Entries indicated the sources of strength for pre-service teachers	Participants talked about their sources of strength	I noted what participants stated were their sources of strength during teaching practice
<b>Q.3</b> <i>What role do reflective practices have in promoting resilient coping?</i>	Measured participants' level of resilience to assess their resilient coping	Recorded their experiences and thoughts with regards to teaching practice to show how they grew resilience through reflective practices	Participants indicated how reflective practices impacted their self-efficacy and resilient coping	I noted during the focus group what participants said was the connection between reflective practices and self-efficacy

### 3.3.5 Data collection: process

Data collection was a cyclical process which lasted for a period of six weeks starting from the last week of June 2015 to the first week of August 2015. During this time participants were doing teaching practice at various schools around the country. Data collection started with the distribution of the resilience scale question and it ended with same. In between I used participants' reflective journals, my researcher's journal and the focus group discussion. Engaging pre-service teachers in this study made it possible to maintain constant contact telephonically. Also, participants were free to contact me for any clarification during the course of the study if they had anything to ask about their reflective practices and recording their reflections in their journals. Moreover, the nature of this research demanded that the participants be in a position to express themselves by recording their thoughts in their reflective

journals. Additionally, they monitored any improvements they observed in themselves as they became reflective practitioners (Kottler et al., 2005). Below I present a timeline for the data collection process.

**Table 3.5: Data collection timeline**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
29 June 2015	➤ Distributed resilience scale questionnaire to participants
6 July 2015	➤ Collected resilience scale questionnaire from participants
6 – 16 July 2015	➤ Analysed and grouped data
17 July 2015	➤ Taught participants on reflective participants ➤ Participants started engaging in reflective practices
24 July 2015	➤ Focus group interview
3 August 2015	➤ Distributed resilience scale questionnaire
10 August 2015	➤ Collected resilience scale questionnaire from participants
10 – 24 August 2015	➤ Analysed and grouped data

When I received my ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria in the last week of June 2015, I started distributing the resilience scale questionnaires to all the participants in the schools where they were doing teaching practice, and I asked them to fill them in. Since I was interested in measuring the level of resilience for each participant, I requested them to write their pseudonyms on the questionnaires so that I did not mix up data. A week later, I went to collect the questionnaires and started analysing data right away. Cohen et al. (2011) notes the advantages of analysing data early; he says that it eases the stress of overload. In analysing the data, I was looking for themes that were emerging, and I grouped the data accordingly in terms of the emergent themes (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

Four weeks later, I distributed the same questionnaire to the seven participating students who remained and I went through the same process as noted above. What I did additionally, was to look into how the new information differed from the one that

I had collected earlier. I also made it a point that throughout data collection, I did member checking in order to ascertain the validity of the data that I had collected.

Analysing and grouping the data according to the emergent themes took me about two weeks. At the end of the second week, just after I had finished analysing the data I work-shopped the participants in reflection ON action and I also emphasised the use of their reflective journals during the process of reflection. I met with all the participants at a place that we had agreed on, which was at SCOT Faculty of Education and I spent an hour teaching them about reflective practices and how they could be done. I also explained to the participants the benefits of engaging in reflective practices (Kauffman, 2003). Participants also got the opportunity to ask questions and they also made contributions towards what they perceived to be the benefits of engaging in reflective practices. Since during this period the participants were still doing teaching practice in different schools, we agreed that we should make use of social media to discuss and clarify issues that pertain to reflection during the period when they engaged in reflective practices. I then gave each participant a reflective journal which I had prepared for them. Each journal had some points to guide participants during their time of reflection. Participants had to record their thoughts and experiences at the end of each day. Appendix E outlines the workshop content that I used to teach reflective practices to participants.

Below I present the prompt sheet that guided participants during their time of reflection. These notes are informed by Kottler et al. (2005).

**Table 3.6 Reflective prompt sheet**

*“Spending time daily sifting through our minds and hearts, reflecting on how we can become more interesting and resourceful. Think of all the valuable ideas, hunches, insights, and feelings you will trash if you fail to become a reflective person and professional” (Kottler, Zehm & Kottler, 2005, p.134).*

**Reflective notes:**

- Personal reflection is a way of life
- Set aside time for reflection every single day
- During reflection you take time to think; you may think about your life and your job
- Reflection is about taking stock of your life; thinking about things that have happened and how they may be improved in the future
- Reflection is a way of improving yourself as you get time to evaluate things and think about how best to handle a situation
- Choose the best time for engaging in reflection - a time when you are not likely to be interrupted by the telephone, children, visitors etc.
- Reflection time may range from ten to thirty minutes every day
- It is usually best to engage in reflection at the end of each day
- It is important to keep a reflective journal where you record your thoughts

**Reflective guidelines: (Ask yourself the following questions :)**

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What might it mean?
- What are the implications for my practice?
- What improvements can I make for the future?

Adapted from Kottler, Zehm & Kottler (2005)

I asked participants to spend about fifteen minutes a day in reflecting on their work; how they had performed in their teaching activities, and how they think they should improve on their practices. The participants in this study recorded their thoughts in their reflective diaries. These thoughts were guided by the prompt sheet above and Dewey’s model of critical reflection, as outlined in Chapter two. Participants continued to record their thoughts in their reflective journals on a daily basis. Kottler et al. (2005) see the benefit of teachers’ daily reflections; they noted that reflection boosts teachers’ self-esteem which in turn enhances their professionalism.

The process of reflection was interjected by a focus group interview. This session which lasted for about thirty five minutes took place at SCOT at the Faculty of Education building. I was able to secure a quiet place which allowed participants the liberty to express themselves freely. The focus group session was conducted in English, instead of siSwati, which is the native language for everyone who was involved in the study. Since English is the medium of instruction in all schools, including tertiary institutions in Swaziland I deemed it appropriate that the discussions be conducted in English, a language all the participants were very conversant in. The proceedings were videotaped and later on I transcribed the video recordings. When participants came for the session, we sat at a round table and I welcomed the participants. I went on to explain the procedure and also reminded them that the session would be videotaped. Participants seemed excited about the exercise and they were very eager to share their experiences from teaching practice; they shared their experiences and also how reflection was helping them to mature and become confident teachers. During the focus group I acted as chairperson, ensuring that all participants got a fair chance of sharing their experiences. However, there were a few drawbacks that I encountered with the focus group discussions: some of the participants, especially those who were extroverts tended to dominate discussions. Had it not been that I was there to guide the deliberations, they would have dominated the group, and this could have adversely affected the research findings. Appendix F (transcription of focus group) details the focus group interview.

After the focus group session all the seven remaining participants continued with their reflective practices on a daily basis until a week later where there was another data collection point. Again I administered the same resilience scale questionnaire to the participants.

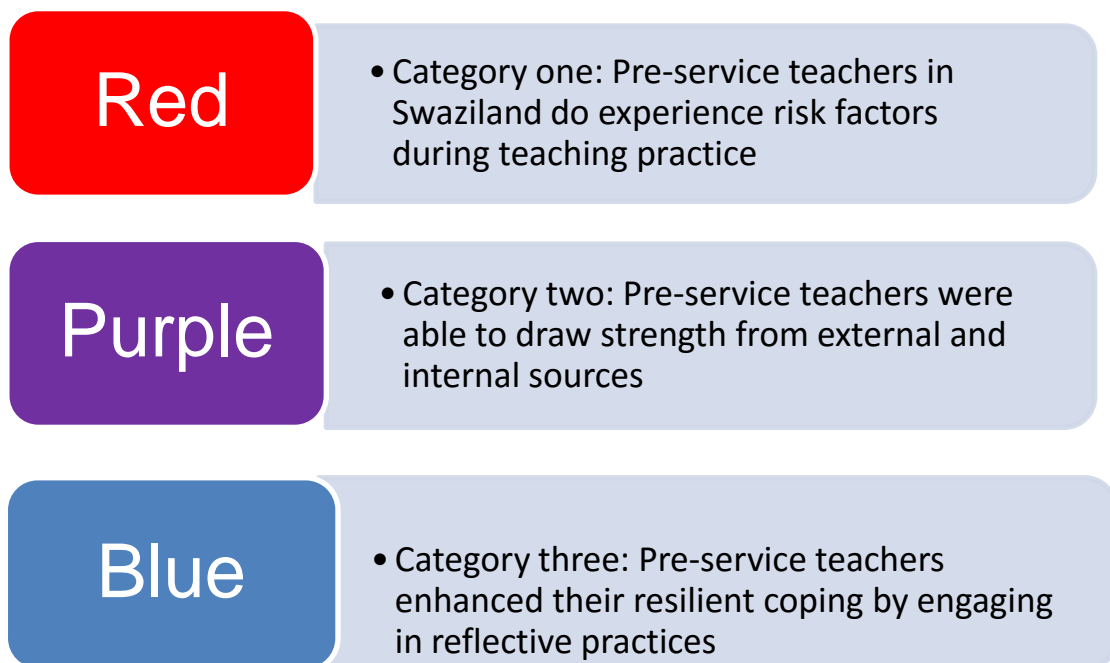
Later on I spent about seven hours transcribing the recordings. The transcribed data that I had collected with the recorder was triangulated with the data that I had collected through the use of the resilience scale questionnaire and the participants' reflective journals (Putten & Nolen, 2010). I again analysed the data immediately I had collected it. Analysing the second set of data took me two weeks.

By using the resilience conceptual framework presented by Mansfield (2012), alongside the resilience scale questionnaire I was in a position to measure the

resilience of the pre-service teachers who participated in my study. Since resilience testing was done during two collection points; before and after educating participants in self-efficacy enhancement, I was in a position to measure participants' level of growth in resilience, while at the same time testing the theory that enhancing self-efficacy may promote resilient coping for pre-service teachers.

### 3.3.6 Data presentation and analysis

To present data and ensure ease of identification of themes and categories of findings I colour-coded the data that I had collected. I then grouped it under certain headings according to emergent themes (Appendix F). According to Biddix (2015) colour-coding enables a qualitative researcher to organise data. I used colour-coding to identify the categories that emerged during the focus group discussion and also in the participants' reflective journals. Participants' speeches from focus groups and extracts from their reflective journals are colour-coded according to the following categories:



**Figure 3.3 Colour coding for categories of findings**

To interpret and analyse data I used Manual Comparison Data Analysis. According to Putten and Nolen (2010) this method involves deductive and inductive processes. This method is advantageous because it allows for consistency and precision. This happened as I constantly brought in new data to be compared with existing one. I considered participants' positions with regards to resilience before and after resilience education.

In the process of analysing data during each of the two collection points I paid attention to the following information about each participant; sex, age, the subject that the pre-service teacher was teaching, type of school where the pre-service teacher did teaching practice as well as the average class size.

By considering the sex of the participants I wanted to ascertain that I had a fair distribution of both female and male participants because my sample drew from a population that comprised both sexes. With regards to the participants' age I was interested in finding out the age range of the participants in order for me to be able to describe my sample accordingly. The subjects that each participant taught were relevant in determining whether or not the variable of subject taught was a predisposing factor in episodes of pre-service teacher burn-out. Lastly, the type of school; whether urban, semi-urban, rural, semi-rural, government owned or grant-aided, as well as the number of learners in class were to play a major role in discovering factors responsible for pre-service teacher burn-out since literature that I had reviewed showed that there is a strong link between the school environment and episodes of teacher burn-out.

Immediately after collecting the resilience scale questionnaire from participants I started analysing the data by looking into each participant's resilience score and their responses to the seven statements which pertain to participants' health, eating habits and physical fitness. My main focus was on the responses rather than the scores.

With the data from the focus group interview which I had already transcribed, I started analysing it and I paid attention to categories that emerged. I made use of colour-coding to show the different categories. Participants' reflective journals were another protocol that I used to gather data. At the end of the sixth week, which also



marked two weeks of reflective practices by participants, I collected the participants' reflective diaries and started analysing the data right away. Here also, I used colour-coding to identify emergent categories. In my researcher's diary I recorded pertinent issues that I noted during data collection and documentation. The findings which I arrived at made it possible for me to formulate a theory on how resilience education as part of self-efficacy enhancement may reduce symptoms of teacher burn-out. To triangulate findings I read through the data from different angles by analysing the scores from the resilience scale, analysing data from the focus group discussion and the data from the participants' journals. The notes that I took throughout the process of data collection also helped me during the interpretation of the data. I was also able to check for inconsistencies by comparing the data. Using Manual Data Comparison Analysis also proved viable for this study because the participants were not many (Putten & Nolen, 2010).

### **3.4 Quality criteria**

Some qualitative researchers with the likes of Golafshani (2003) advocate for quality checks which involve validation of facts in research. Quality checks may be affected by the researcher's perspective. Certain biases may arise as the researcher conducts interviews and group interviews. To eliminate biases in my study I adhered to; conformability, credibility, dependability and transferability.

Conformability relates to the trustworthiness of the findings; given similar circumstances, another researcher should be able to arrive at the same conclusions. Conformability has more to do with the interpretation of data findings and making sure that my biases as a researcher do not affect documentation and interpretation of data. To ensure conformability, I did an audit trail through giving adequate information on the steps that I took during the study. This was made possible because I used multiple methods to collect and document data. I also kept a journal to record pertinent information as well as reflecting about the research process.

Furthermore I ensured that my study had credibility by using several instruments to collect data. Credibility is about whether research results can be trusted to be a reflection of participants' perspectives on the research topic. Credibility is also concerned with the accuracy of the information that is collected from participants.

Putten and Nolen (2010) found that participants may give information that is not accurate due to various reasons including faulty memory, social acceptability and generalisations. In order to minimise the inaccuracies, I kept a journal to summarise research procedure and I gave descriptions of participants and their contexts. This was also helpful during data interpretation as well. Furthermore, I had prolonged engagement with participants, urging them to report in detail during the focus group sessions. This is in line with what Morrow (2005) says. After data had been collected and prepared for analysis, I checked for negative evidence and finally compared findings to data theory (Putten & Nolen, 2010).

Moreover, I ascertained dependability through using different instruments to collect data. Later, I interpreted data as objectively as possible. Dependability is concerned with bringing harmony between what actually took place at the research site and what is recorded. Lincoln and Guba (1995) say that dependability is when one is able to show that findings are consistent and could be repeated.

Finally, I sought to give my research transferability by giving ample details regarding time, and place which might have affected findings. Also, I gave detailed descriptions of participants. Transferability refers to the degree to which research findings have applicability in other contexts of similar research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In an attempt to adhere to transferability I provided thick descriptions, in alignment with an assertion made by Creswell (2009).

### **3.5 Ethical considerations**

As a researcher, I had certain responsibilities to abide by as I engaged human participants in my study. Part of my responsibilities entailed observing ethics. In simple terms ethics can be described as principles of right and wrong; it is these principles that guide a researcher as they do their work. Recker (2013, p.141) describes research ethics as “those actions that abide by rules of responsibility, accountability, liability and due process”. On a similar note Seedhouse (1998b) stresses the importance of ethics and he presents a four layer pyramid to explain research ethics. For this study I gained access from the relevant authorities, in this case, it was from the Faculty of Education at the Swaziland College of Technology. I

also adhered to voluntary participation and trust, informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity.

I sought access from the administration of the Faculty of Education at the Swaziland College of Technology where I conducted the study. Seedhouse (1998b) acknowledges the importance of abiding by law and code of practice. To that end, in May 2015, while I was still working on my ethics clearance I sent a letter of request to the head of faculty at SCOT asking for permission to conduct the study. I also outlined key information on the topic; what the study was about and its significance. Moreover, I specified the anticipated duration of each session and the total number of sessions I would have with each student (Appendix B). Regarding voluntary participation and trust, I sent out letters of request to prospective participants inviting them to partake in the study. Participants were given a week to think about the request and thereafter to respond. In the event that some declined the request, an invitation was extended to others. Once consent had been secured, I then drafted an agreement which set out the working relationship and guidelines. My participants and I signed the agreement, but the agreement was not meant to bind participants to the research; they were at liberty to change their decisions. I informed the participants that they were free to withdraw during the course of the research. My study relied on voluntary participation; no one was compelled in any way to take part in the study. Moreover, to eliminate the risk of enticing anyone to take part in the study, I did not use any incentives. Participants participated out of their free will and did not expect to receive any other reward. Information to that effect was spelled out in the letters of invitation (Appendix C).

On issues of informed consent from my target population which comprised final year pre-service teachers who were all aged above eighteen years and had reached the legal consenting age, I sought their permission to engage them in the research. This was after I had been granted permission by SCOT Faculty of Education administration to conduct the study with the students. In the letters of invitation to participate in the study I informed participants about consent rules which outlined their voluntary participation and freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, I informed them that I shall use data findings in writing up my dissertation. Moreover, I assured them that this research entailed limited risks but

would not cause them harm during the research process (Appendix C). This is in accordance with consent rules, as charted in the University of Pretoria ethics document (2014).

In my study I also respected participants by observing confidentiality and anonymity of individuals. This was in line with Seedhouse's (1998b) ethical considerations which guide researchers. I informed participants in my study, through the invitation letter, that findings generated would be used for the purpose of writing my dissertation. Smith (2003) concurs that researchers should discuss limits of confidentiality with participants. Limits of confidentiality means how findings will be used. Moreover, confidentiality has to do with protecting human subjects by showing respect towards them and their privacy. Although my study had a low level of sensitivity in that it required information about "institutional processes", University of Pretoria (2014, p.2) I still made it a point that confidentiality was maintained through not attributing data to specific participants. Although at times I used direct quotes, all identification marks pointing towards a participant were eliminated. I further concealed the true identities of my participants by using pseudonyms which I had chosen for them in alignment with their personalities, instead of using their real names. Participants were not informed about the pseudonyms that I had chosen for them, but if they had asked to know them, I would have freely informed them. I allowed my participants, according to the University of Pretoria Ethics document (2014, p.6), to "give informed consent in terms of which data may be used". Participants allowed me to use all data that I collected from this study to use in writing up my dissertation. Furthermore, on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016 I submitted all data that I collected for safe keeping to the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years. Resnick (2011) validates the protection of confidential data. Nonetheless, data findings have been made available to the University of Pretoria Library and also publically worldwide via e-platform.

I also made it my responsibility to honour intellectual property by acknowledging all sources that I consulted during the course of the study and I avoided false claims, and misrepresentations through studying documents carefully and interpreting them correctly. I was also careful to document research activity and records in order to avoid error and data misrepresentation (Resnick, 2011).

### 3.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter I described the research methodology that I employed while I embarked on this study in order that I may give a picture of the process that I went through in collecting and analysing data at the Swaziland College of Technology. In the next chapter I present data that I collected through the use of research tools that I described in Chapter three. I present the data in terms of categories that emerged as I was analysing it. To analyse data, I shall continually refer to literature that I have presented in Chapter two so that I may arrive at my conclusions.



## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present integrative data that I collected using the resilience scale questionnaire, focus group interviews, participants' reflective journals and my researcher's diary. I adopted a narrative approach throughout the presentation of the data which is enriched by quotes from participants' voices. I introduce each participant by giving their age, site description; where each one of the participants did teaching practice, and the subject taught. Data presentation is followed by data discussion and then the findings that I arrived at. The chapter concludes with a summary of the salient points from this section. Throughout data presentation I triangulated the findings through analysing and comparing data that I had collected through the use of the different research tools, I was able to ascertain the credibility of the data and checked for negative evidence by comparing the data with data theory (Putten & Nolen, 2010).

### 4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

I presented data according to the themes that emerged from the study, and I allotted each theme a colour code as follows:















**Red...** Theme one: pre-service teachers – sources of stress (risk factors)

**Purple...** Theme two: pre-service teachers – sources of strength

**Blue...** Theme three: reflective practices as a protective factor promotes resilient coping

According to Dr Biddix from the University of Missouri colour coding enables a qualitative researcher to organise data. I used colour coding to identify the themes that emerged during the focus group interviews as well as from participants' reflective journals. The order of data presentation is; first Commercial pre-service teachers followed by Design and Technology pre-service teachers.

**Table 4.1: Summary of data collected using the resilience scale questionnaire**

Participant	1 Sisi	2 Buhle	3 Boy	4 Thandi	5 Mfana	6 Mzee	7 Smanga
Sex	F	F	M	F	M	M	M
Age	30	23	26	24	27	23	22
Subject taught	COM.	COM.	COM.	D&T	D&T	D&T	D&T
Type of school	Semi-urban (Govt.)	Rural (Govt.)	Urban (Grant-aided)	Semi-urban (Govt.)	Urban (Grant-aided)	Urban (Grant-aided)	Urban (Grant-aided)
Integration into school community	Good	Not good	Good	Neutral	Good	Good	Good
Level of resilience prior to reflective practices	77% 	86% 	84% 	68% 	73% 	78% 	69% 
Level of resilience after reflective practices	74% 	90% 	88% 	69% 	79% 	83% 	66% 
Frequency of despondency before reflective practices	None	Sometimes	Sometimes	Frequently	Never	Never	Sometimes

<b>Frequency of despondency after reflective practices</b>	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Frequently	Sometimes
<b>Risk factors</b>	Learners' behavioural issues, work-load, demanding supervisors	Learners' behavioural issues, Unsupportive colleagues,	Learners' behavioural issues, teaching learners who were high achievers, language barriers	Learners' behavioural issues, work-load, feelings of inadequacy	Learners' behavioural issues	Demanding supervisors	Lack of prioritising, work-load
<b>Sources of strength</b>	Supportive colleagues, observing experienced teachers	Supportive school administration , learners' warm attitude, prayer	Supportive colleagues, supportive administration , learners' attitude, reflective practices	Reflective practices	Supportive colleagues, learners' attitude, observing experienced teachers, reflective practices	Supportive colleagues, observing experienced teachers	Supportive colleagues, learners' positive attitude, reflective practice
<b>Attitude towards reflective practices</b>	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Problematic	Positive



#### **4.2.1 Participant (Joy\*)**

Joy is one of the participants who withdrew from the study; she withdrew just before the second data collection phase, hence I decided to omit all data that I collected from her during the initial data collection phase. Detailed information about Joy is in Chapter three.

#### **4.2.2 Participant 1 (Sisi\*)**

Sisi is a female pre-service teacher aged thirty. She did her teaching practice at a semi-urban government school where she was teaching commercial subjects. Normally schools that are government owned face a number of challenges due to poor funding. However, in this school there were no signs of inadequate funding as the teaching environment was very conducive with adequate teaching and support material. The infrastructure was also very impressive. What was particularly of concern was the high enrolment rate in the school which resulted in some classes exceeding eighty learners. During the initial data collection where I administered the resilience scale questionnaire, Sisi scored 134/175 (77%). Her own health assessment revealed that the participant was in perfect health. Sisi also reported that she had not suffered despondency in the past two weeks. After considering the scores from the resilience scale, her own health assessment as well as her assertion that she had not suffered despondency in the past two weeks, I concluded that these results were credible (Putten & Nollen, 2010). Yet still, Sisi needed to improve on the emotional and professional aspects where she scored the least.

After administering the same resilience scale to Sisi after educating her in resilience, her resilience score was lower compared to the first instance where she obtained a higher score. During the second data collection, Sisi scored 129/175 (74%). Her lowered resilience score which signified teacher despondency could be attributed to her teaching practice experience which she described, during the focus group interview, as “hectic”. Five times, Sisi used the term ‘hectic’ to express her sentiments on her TP experience. She cited several factors as being responsible for her ‘burn-out’. Worth noting is the fact that the second data collection point took place after the participant had undergone resilience education in the form of self-efficacy enhancement which was done through engaging in reflective practices. Also

of note was that Sisi's journal entries were so scanty, which might suggest that she did not take full advantage of reflective practices.

Firstly, Sisi pointed out that she was under a lot of pressure because her supervisors would come to assess her, and when they did come, she had to make certain that her lesson plans and lesson delivery were good. "Actually my TP this time around was so hectic than before. First of all, last year when I was doing TP I was just afraid of the teachers because they were my ex-teachers, just respecting them... the hectic part, came with teaching....eish, it was so hectic! This time around because of being supervised a lot of times I was so stressed because I had to do everything perfectly. I was so stressed, ngaze ngehla nasemtimbeni (I even lost weight) (Focus group transcription, p.3). Sisi mentioned that the stress was so bad that she even lost weight. Another source of stress for Sisi was teaching a large class. "...learning/teaching is not effective at all, where the teacher failed to give full attention to an individual...I taught Form two pupils fully packed; as a teacher I failed to move around supervising the learners" (Sisi's reflective journal, p.2). The large class resulted in learners' behavioural issues, which was another stress that she encountered. "I was so stressed because the kids, especially the form 1s, eish! They were so hectic, Form 1As, I even developed a negative attitude, bad attitude towards them because they were so chaotic... even if you tried anything to discipline them, they didn't care about the punishment you were giving them " (Focus group transcription, p.3). Sisi pointed out that the learners caused chaos in class, without specifying the nature of the chaos. She mentioned also that the learners did not respond to discipline measures that she had in place.

On a positive note, Sisi enjoyed the support she got from her colleagues in the school. "Whenever you want to consult, they just give you the attention. They are just supportive." (Focus group transcription, p.6). Another source of strength for Sisi was working among teachers who were hard workers; "I so much love the teachers, they inspire me. They are hard workers - every teacher, especially in my department...they are role models, all of them" (Focus group transcription, p.6).

My general observation was that Sisi had mixed feelings about TP. Sisi also seemed to have a lot to share but at the same time she was overwhelmed by the TP experience, particularly the learners' behavioural issues (Researcher's diary, p.4).

### 4.2.3 Participant 2 (Buhle\*)

Buhle is a female pre-service teacher aged twenty three. She did her teaching practice at a rural government school where she was teaching commercial subjects. The school was characterised by poor infrastructure and minimal teaching resources. Being a school that is situated in the rural areas, it was largely populated by learners who belonged to the lower social class. The average class size was fifty learners. The learners were generally predisposed to many hardships and poverty, which hampered their learning.

During the initial data collection, Buhle scored 150/175 (86%). This score showed a high level of resilience despite the fact that her teaching environment was not good in comparison to the other participants. Furthermore, when Buhle assessed her own health, her response was that her health was “good”. However, she did note that she had suffered despondency in the past two weeks, which was an indication that she was not immune to teacher burn-out. During the second data collection Buhle got a resilience score of 157/175 (90%). This score showed an increase from the score that she obtained during the initial data collection, which signified further growth in resilience.

Sources of stress for Buhle were hostility from some teachers, lack of support from her head of department and learners’ behavioural challenges. Buhle faced hostility from the head of department from the first day of her teaching practice. **On my first day she (HoD) said, “ you are here for TP, are you qualified? Where are you from? She had that kind of attitude.** (Focus group transcription, p.5). Buhle’s reflections on her journals echo what she shared during the focus group discussion about the hostility that she endured. **“The head of department was so cold towards me, she couldn’t even hide it. So many things came into my mind. I thought of quitting and finding another school but it was too difficult for me because it was the only school nearby”** (Buhle’s reflective journal, p.2). Buhle’s reflections revealed that the HoD was not the only teacher who was unfriendly, but others also, especially the lady teachers. However, Buhle did not reveal why the lady teachers were mean towards her. This hostile attitude was the first source of stress for Buhle. Another source of stress was that the HoD was unsupportive towards her when she needed assistance. **“When I had certain problems and I went to the HoD, she would be like,**

go and consult with the other teachers, I am kind of busy'... like she would be busy with something, and she would not attend to me..." (Focus group transcription, p.5).

Learners' disciplinary issues were another source of stress that Buhle faced. She reported in her journal that two boys had got into a fight while she was busy writing notes on the chalk board. As a result of this incident, she got into trouble with the head teacher who blamed her for not being vigilant in class. Reflecting on this encounter made Buhle realise that she had to be firm with the learners, and not allow herself to be carried away by their friendliness towards her. (Buhle's reflective journal, p.6). Despite the stressors highlighted above Buhle drew strength from the warm welcome she received from the head teacher. "Ok, with me, I can say that I had a good relationship with my head teacher, other than my HoD... I felt like, the head teacher was more supportive than my HoD... the head teacher was like, 'ok Buhle, we are happy to have you (Focus group transcription, p.5). Moreover, Buhle found solace when she was in class because the learners liked her. "The kids were very excited to see me. They even mentioned that I shouldn't go... my joy came back...I felt like, these are the people who will make my teaching practice enjoyable" (Buhle's reflective journal, p.4). Apart from these two sources, Buhle drew strength on her spiritual faith and prayer. "I kept on praying, asking God to be with me through out and solve or calm the problem" (Buhle's reflective journal, p.5).

During the focus group Buhle seemed somehow emotional especially when she spoke about her negative TP experiences. Nonetheless, she tried to contain her emotions and spoke casually (Researcher's diary, p.4).

#### 4.2.4 Participant 3 (Boy\*)

Boy is a male pre-service teacher aged twenty six. He did his teaching practice at an urban grant-aided girls' school where he was teaching commercial subjects. The average class size at the school was forty learners. Teaching conditions were very conducive as the school had adequate teaching resources and materials. The infrastructure was also excellent. Moreover, this school was acclaimed as one of the top performing schools in the country.

During the initial data collection, Boy's resilience score was 147/175 (84%). For his health assessment, he indicated that it was good. However, he reported having had

bouts of despondency in the past two weeks. Although Boy's resilience score was good, he could be at risk of teacher burn-out, considering that he sometimes felt despondent. This therefore, warranted an intervention. Boy's resilience score increased after post-intervention. He scored 154/175 (88%) on the resilience scale.

The stresses that Boy encountered included teaching in an all-girls' school, teaching learners who were high achievers and language barriers. Initially Boy had feared that teaching in an all girls'-school would be a challenge as this made him feel vulnerable. Some of the girls, he reported, made attempts to lure him into having inappropriate relationships with them, but he was determined to uphold his moral integrity as a professional “ **Being a teacher at my age, in a girls' school has always been a disaster with most teachers. The pupils would often do things to challenge me**”. (Boy's reflective journal, p.7).

Teaching learners who were high achievers became another source of stress for Boy because he was inexperienced and he lacked confidence in his competencies as a teacher. In one of his classes all the learners but one had obtained first class with merit or a first class in grade seven. That qualified the learners to be classified as top achievers or learners who may be described as being an above average learner. “**Since this school was one of the best performing in the country I had to toughen up and prepare my lessons properly**”. (Boy's reflective journal, p.3).

Another source of stress for Boy during his first days of TP was language barriers. When he got to the school he found the teachers speaking standard siSwati and English yet with his township background he was accustomed to speaking slang during casual conversation. “**I didn't know which words to use since we use different words in the ghetto when chatting. This would make me keep quiet for the whole day**” (Boy's reflective journal, p.1). Ultimately, Boy opted to be himself and speak freely in his slang. It was during class where he felt compelled to alter his language and spoke Standard English. “**I did my best. However, this would mean absolute adoption of big terms**” (Boy's reflection journal, p.1). The language barrier became a problem and made him to feel intimidated when Boy had to discuss a learner's performance with a parent who was a native English speaker.

Sources of strength for Boy included receiving support from colleagues and the school administration. When Boy first came to the school he was filled with doubts about how to handle the girls but it turned out that everything went well because the other teachers helped him by offering advice on how male teachers should handle problematic behaviour of girls. Moreover, when Boy was able to resist the girls' charm, he was able to earn himself respect from the head of the school and this became a source of strength. "I noticed that the head teacher had confidence in me such that he would allow me to take the girls for debate classes as part of extra-curricular activities. (Boy's reflective journal, p.7). Furthermore, the learners began to respect Boy for being a teacher who had integrity, and this also boosted his confidence. "The pupils treated me with great respect after they had noticed that I was not falling for their charm or their colleagues' charms on me. They respected me for being the teacher that I was" (Boy's reflective journal, p.7). Coupling his determination to act professionally and the advice that he received from the teachers about how to handle girls, Boy managed to earn himself much respect from both the teachers and the learners. Another source of strength for Boy was from reflecting on past achievements as well as on how he could improve on his practices. " By taking a reflection back to my academic achievements in life, having represented my school in the commercial quiz competition in my school days, I was able to overcome those doubts on my subject knowledge" (Boy's reflective journal, p.3). Engaging on daily reflections enabled Boy to improve on his efficiencies as a teacher. He stated that daily, he would take time to reflect about his practices, thinking about areas that needed to be improved. He felt that since he was practising in a school which had learners who were high achievers, it was imperative for him to work at building his competencies, particularly improving his language skills, and so Boy explored reflective practices as a strategy towards attaining that goal. "I think this exercise (reflection) is more helpful especially to teachers because those are the people who get to deliver their services directly to the people. It is not really all about how much you know in terms of content, but as well as how well you deliver the content. That is, it calls for you to take a daily reflection on the activities you have been doing and for you to identify the loopholes as far as your profession is concerned and where you can actually improve (Focus group transcription, p.9). After enjoying the rewards of reflective practices, Boy recommended that pre-service teachers be taught on reflective practices while they are still doing their teacher preparation studies. "This is

something I get to notice with time as I have been doing it (reflection) since I was introduced. It might be a good exercise for us to be introduced to - to actually take it on as we were studying as teachers. I think it is good” (Focus group transcription, p.9).

My observation on Boy during the focus group was that he had so much to share and he spoke with enthusiasm. From what he shared I learnt about some of the unique challenges that pre-service teachers encountered during TP (Researcher’s diary, p.8).

#### **4.2.5 Participant 4 (Thandi\*)**

Thandi is a female pre-service teacher aged twenty four. She did her teaching practice at a semi-urban government school where she was teaching Design and Technology (D&T). The school where Thandi did her TP is the same one as Joy’s. The school had a poor infrastructure and minimal teaching resources. Learners were many per class with an average class size of fifty learners, but for Thandi’s group, the learners were twenty three. The reason for the small number of learners in her class can be attributed to the fact that schools which offer D&T make the subject optional, and that being the case, it becomes the norm that about half the average class size enrolls for the subject. The rest of the learners register for other subjects such as Fashion and Fabric or Agriculture.

When I administered the resilience scale questionnaire during the initial data collection, Thandi scored 119/175 (68%). Her score was relatively lower than that which was recorded by the other participants. This indicated that her predisposition to teacher burn-out was also higher. I concluded this on the basis that the same scale was used to measure the resilience of each participant. Furthermore, when Thandi addressed the question which required her to assess her own health, her response was that her health was “fair”. To the question on the frequency with which she had suffered despondency in the past two weeks, Thandi said that she had had frequent episodes. Although Thandi scored average or lower on the three areas of maturity, she managed good scores for her emotional maturity.

During post-intervention data collection Thandi’s resilience score increased slightly from 119/175 (68%) to 120/175 (69%). She also improved her emotional well-being

and reported that she had rarely felt despondent in the past two weeks in comparison to before she started reflective practices where she reported that she had felt despondent frequently in the past two weeks.

About her teaching practice, Thandi shared that she had had a generally good experience. What was most challenging was that she had been allocated many classes to teach. “As for me, my TP was good, but because I was teaching in a big school, the biggest school I have ever met nje, so, I had so many classes” (Focus group transcription, p.4). Thandi also experienced slight challenges with the boys who wanted to flirt with her during class. “Some boys would just sit back and just watch... no matter how hard I tried to explain, they just watched, and if I’d say, “What’s wrong”, they would be like, “No teacher, I am just admiring you (participants laughing) and I’d be like, what if my supervisor was here, what was I going to do? See! so yah... they gave me a hard time” (Focus group transcription, p.4). The flirting of the boys seems to have bothered Thandi because even during her reflections she noted the problem. “There was one learner who challenged me a lot...one day he asked if we could chat on social network” (Thandi’s reflective journal, p.13). Thandi was also stressed when she felt inadequate professionally when she failed to explain a concept to learners. “There was a time when I was teaching Graphics to one of my Form two classes, but they did not understand” (Thandi’s reflective journal, p.11). This experience caused her stress and so she sought out how she could improve on that. She later discovered during her reflections that as a teacher she had to explore several instructional methods “This incident taught me that for all my classes I need to have more than one method of teaching” (Thandi’s reflective journal, p.11).

Despite the stresses noted above Thandi was able to find recourse during her daily reflections. “I was able to look back at the things that I have done and the things that I will improve in future; like to help myself or help the students” (Focus group transcription, p.7). Thandi discovered that reflection was a good way of taking stock of her daily activities as well as improve her practices. It was during her reflections that she realised that what the boys wanted was attention and so she gave them the attention they wanted from her by being friendly; when she started to show a more affable attitude towards them, the boys started to cooperate with her. It was from this experience that Thandi learnt the benefits of engaging in reflective practices. Like



Boy, she too, stated that reflective practices ought to be taught to pre-service teachers. “I would like if we could have this module (reflective practices) in the college but if you can introduce it when we start our third year, after we finish our first TP. I think this could be helpful because when you are going for the second TP you will know your mistakes and you will jot them down, and you will be able to reflect on what you have done wrong so next time you will not repeat the same mistake” (Focus group transcription, p.10).

I noted that although reflective practices were an entirely new concept for Thandi, like it was for the other participants, she took full advantage of them and she benefited (Researcher’s journal, p.7).

#### **4.2.6 Participant 6 (Mfana\*)**

Mfana is a male pre-service teacher aged twenty two. He did his TP at an urban grant-aided school where he was teaching D&T. Most grant-aided schools in Swaziland have up-to-date facilities and adequate teaching resources. Teachers in such schools enjoy benefits that other teachers in the ordinary government schools do not have. The class size in this school ranged between thirty and forty, which made teaching less strenuous in comparison to those who taught bigger numbers. Moreover, this school was situated in town, which became another advantage because of the caliber of learners who enroll. Generally, learners in urban Swaziland schools are motivated to learn.

When I administered the resilience scale questionnaire during the initial data collection, Mfana’s resilience score was 128/175 (73%). He also indicated that his health was excellent. Moreover, he reported that he had not felt despondent in the past two weeks. Nonetheless, Mfana had to enhance the motivational and emotional dimensions of maturity because it was in these two areas where he scored the least.

After the second data collection, Mfana scored 139/175 (79%) which showed an increase from his previous score which he got before starting on the resilience reflection course. However, I got worried by the fact that this time around he reported to have suffered despondency in the past two weeks, yet during the initial data collection phase he stated that he had never had any episodes of such in the past two weeks.

Sources of stress for Mfana included learners' behavioural issues and feeling inadequate when he thought that he had not taught well in class. Mfana noted that learners' behavioural issues could have been prompted by the fact that he was almost the same age as some of his learners. "Some of the learners misbehaved because I was of almost the same age as them" (Mfana's reflective journal, p.2). However, when he addressed them about their conduct, they changed their behaviour for the better. Another incident that unsettled Mfana was when he gave a test to the learners and most learners finished writing the test very early and because they were idle, they started to make a noise and disturbed those who were still writing. During his reflection, he discovered that he was partly responsible for the disorder that ensued in his class.

There were many factors that were favourable in the school, such as supportive staff, learners who liked him as well as observing how a certain teacher conducted himself. Both the teaching and support staff were very supportive towards Mfana. Teachers, both from his department and other departments welcomed him. "They welcomed me and made me feel at home." (Mfana's reflective journal, p.4). Later on in his reflections Mfana stated that this warm attitude made it easy for him to seek help as well as offer a helping hand where there was a need "After break I was asked by a teacher from the Science department to supervise his class as they were writing a test because he had to rush home to his sick wife" (Mfana's reflective journal, p.5). The head of the school also trusted him with the responsibility of conducting the morning assembly yet this was usually done by full-time teachers. This gesture made Mfana feel that he was part of the school, and it increased his confidence as a teacher. Moreover, the learners made Mfana's teaching practice a worthwhile experience. "Again after lunch I met my other group, which is Form two. They showed a liking for me and also told me that they understood me better" (Mfana's reflective journal, p.4). Hearing learners speak positively about his practice as a pre-service teacher helped build his confidence.

Another source of strength for Mfana was observing teachers who were successful in the profession. The HoD was a very good role model, who not only modelled good behaviour, but also conveyed job satisfaction. "My colleague in Design and Technology-the HoD, he is a very good example of a teacher. The way he does his

job...he gave me advice at times and, I'm out of words to describe him... he was a very good role model" (Focus group transcription, p.6). The HoD, according to Mfana, had been in that position for about fifteen years, and he still executed his duties with excellence. Mfana stated that by merely observing how the senior teacher conducted himself motivated him and consequently caused him to also enjoy his teaching practice, as well as to actually love teaching.

Apart from these external sources, Mfana drew strength from engaging in reflective practices and that is why he was able to improve on his practices such as it was the case after learners became disruptive when they finished writing a test early. "I also learnt that as a teacher you have to prepare a test that will cover all the allocated time because if not, the pupils will make a noise" (Mfana's reflective journal, p.7). Over and above this, Mfana stated that he had decided to embrace reflective practices "It (reflective practices) was very useful and it will be my daily routine now" (Focus group transcription, p.6).

During the focus group interview, I discovered that Mfana was a reserved person. He did not volunteer to share about his teaching practice experience. It was only when I probed him to do so that he gave very brief responses (Researcher's diary, p.4).

#### **4.2.7 Participant 6 (Mzee\*)**

Mzee is a male pre-service teacher aged twenty three. He did his TP at an urban grant-aided boarding school where he was teaching D&T. As already noted with Mfana's case, grant-aided schools in Swaziland have up-to-date facilities and adequate teaching resources. Teachers in such schools enjoy benefits that other teachers in the ordinary government schools do not have. The class size in Mzee's school was average. Learners enrolled in this school were admitted on academic excellence and they were usually very motivated to learn.

During the initial data collection, Mzee's resilience score was good, an indication that he was not at risk of suffering teacher burn-out. Mzee scored 138/175 (78%). He also indicated that his health was very good. Moreover, he reported that he had not felt despondent in the past two weeks.

During the second data collection phase Mzee recorded a significant increase in his resilience score; he scored 145/175 (83%). What was peculiar was that despite his improvement in resilience, he recorded that he had felt despondent frequently in the past two weeks.

During the focus group interview Mzee did not have much to say about his teaching practice experience. Apparently, he had minimal contact with most teachers in the school. He ascribed this to the fact that the D&T offices and workshops were situated remotely from the common staff-room, yet he spent most of his time in the departments' workshop. In his reflective journal however, he reported that the teachers in the school were very friendly. My interpretation of this seemingly contradictory presentation of facts is that Mzee was referring to the teachers in his department, not necessarily the entire teaching staff.

What became a source of stress for Mzee, were his supervisors who had very high expectations of him during teaching practice. They had high demands more than what he thought was required of him. **“What was discouraging were our supervisors who were demanding a lot from us theoretically yet they taught us less. They would slam you for not adding details you were not taught about. This can mean that for the supervisors to get outstanding results in the practice part, they themselves should work extra hard to ensure that we perform well in the practice”** (Mzee's reflective journal, p.1). This was the only source of stress that Mzee noted otherwise he said that his teaching practice was a good experience.

He noted two issues that were sources of strength for him; a warm welcome in the school as well as observing how experienced teachers did their work. **“I met teachers who were very welcoming and friendly. They were also serious with their work”** (Mzee's reflective journal, p.1). This conducive working atmosphere compensated for the stress that he got from his supervisors. Talking about reflective practices Mzee said that he found this exercise (reflection) somewhat challenging **“I think it would take time, maybe some of us won't do it (reflection) because it is wasting time”** (Focus group transcription, p.7). Nonetheless, Mzee was optimistic that if reflective practices were to be introduced in secondary schools it could be a good idea because learners could grasp the concept early.

Mzee's reflective journal showed that he had difficulty doing reflections and journaling. Information on his journal was scanty and somehow incoherent. I attributed this to his inadequately developed reflective skills and him not ascribing significance to reflective practices (Researcher's diary, p.6).

#### **4.2.8 Participant 7 (Smanga\*)**

Smanga is a male pre-service teacher aged twenty two. He did his TP at an urban grant-aided boarding school where he was teaching D&T. Smanga did teaching practice in the same school where Mzee was practising which means that their conditions of teaching practice were similar. He also taught the same grades as Mzee.

When I administered the resilience scale questionnaire during the initial data collection Smanga scored 117/175 (69%). For his health assessment, he indicated that it was excellent. However, he also reported having suffered episodes of despondency in the previous two weeks. Having scored in the region of the 60s Smanga did appear to be at risk of teacher burn-out. His resilience score, coupled with the episodes of despondency warranted an intervention.

During the second data collection, Smanga scored 115/175 (66%) which showed a slight drop in his resilience score. At face value this score signified that self-efficacy enhancement was not successful in addressing symptoms of pre-service teacher burn-out. Nonetheless, Smanga had a lot to share about his teaching practice experience both during the focus group interview as well as in his reflective journal which revealed that reflective practices were a successful strategy for mitigating teacher burn-out and enhancement of self-efficacy. Smanga reported that during this year's teaching practice he was more confident than during the last one that he had when he was in his second year. He stated that he had learnt from the mistakes of the previous year and he worked at improving his relationship with colleagues. Smanga said despite spending most of his time in the workshop where his department was stationed, he also made an effort to mingle with the teachers in the school in order to strengthen his relationship with them.

Like all the other participants, Smanga experienced stressful moments but through engaging in reflective practices, he was able to recover quickly, and emerged

stronger with better strategies for handling stressful situations. During his first day of TP Smanga reported late for work and as a result he missed the opportunity to be introduced to the staff and learners. This resulted in his having to restrict his movements within the school premises. “People looked at me as if they saw a stranger, and I do not blame them because they did not know who I was” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.1). This sad experience made Smanga feel like an outsider in the school and this is something that no pre-service teacher would like to experience. Despite the discomfort that he went through on that day, Smanga was able to learn an invaluable lesson about keeping time and setting priorities, a lesson that none of his peers reported to have learnt. Perhaps, it was because none of them had to endure this unfortunate experience. Reflecting about how his day went made Smanga determined to always keep to time. Learning this lesson during his early days of teaching ought to help him to become a better teacher. After the previous day’s stress and learning from his mistakes, the next day was a good one for Smanga and he felt so contented and he even had a sense of optimism about being a teacher. Despite this good feeling, Smanga did not neglect reflection. As he reflected about the day he was able to note that the success was a result of his being able to prioritize and plan carefully for the lesson ahead of time. “I had all the material I needed. What happened on Monday helped me to make a better Tuesday...my well prepared lesson made the pupils trust and believe that their teacher will dish out the best material for them. I realised that preparing yourself very well helps in boosting one’s confidence...the way I conducted myself on this day, it shows that I have the potential of being a good teacher in the future, but only if I try and prepare myself very well for the day” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.2).

As time went by and things normalized, Smanga started to slack again. On a particular day he was to give a test to learners and so he waited until the last moment to print and make test copies but unfortunately the computers in the school started to malfunction. This put him under a lot of pressure and he was so stressed because the time for giving the test was approaching. “I went to the library early in the morning to print the test, I found that the computers were not functioning...after the computer issue was sorted, I had to queue for photocopying...” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.6). When this happened Smanga recalled one of the teachers from his previous teaching practice, whom he described as his role model. Smanga

spoke so passionately about Mr Mamba\*; about how well he taught, interacted with learners and most importantly, how much he was organised. “He did everything on time. For example if he was going to give a test the following week, he usually set his tests seven days before because he normally says that it is highly possible that a problem can develop ...” (Focus group transcription, p. 6-7). After giving the test Smanga sacrificed his evening and dedicated it to marking the test, the next day he gave back the marked scripts to the class. “They (learners) were so happy to get feedback so soon...I noted that it is reinforcement to students to be given feedback early” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.7). As a result of the immediate feedback the learners were motivated to learn and to behave well in class.

Another stressful event came. Smanga recalled a particular day when he had many teaching periods. At the end of the day he was so exhausted and was not even sure how he would be able to cope on similar days. “Thursday was one of the worst days that I have ever experienced. Although this was my second teaching practice, I don’t recall being so tired after teaching...after the first two hours I was already dragging myself for the next class” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.4). During reflection later that day he discovered that it would ease the burden if he could plan to have a variety of class activities for the learners on such days. “Since this is how the time table has been set such that I have four hours on a Thursday, it means that for the next Thursdays I will always feel so exhausted...I have to make a plan” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.4). During the following week he implemented his plan and it worked out well for him. At the end of the day he was still energetic and happy. “Otherwise it was a good Thursday and I enjoyed almost everything that I did and this was because I had learnt from the previous Thursday where I had a rough tiresome day” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.9). Engaging in reflective practices also taught Smanga the importance of maintaining a good relationship with his colleagues and to be sensitive during conversations. He learnt this after he had unintentionally offended a colleague by making unkind comments about the colleague’s religion. “I have a feeling that the comments that I made might affect our relationship” (Smanga’s reflective journal, p.5).

Through engaging in reflective practices, Smanga was able to draw inner strength while at the same time improved his practices as a teacher, which eventually paid off

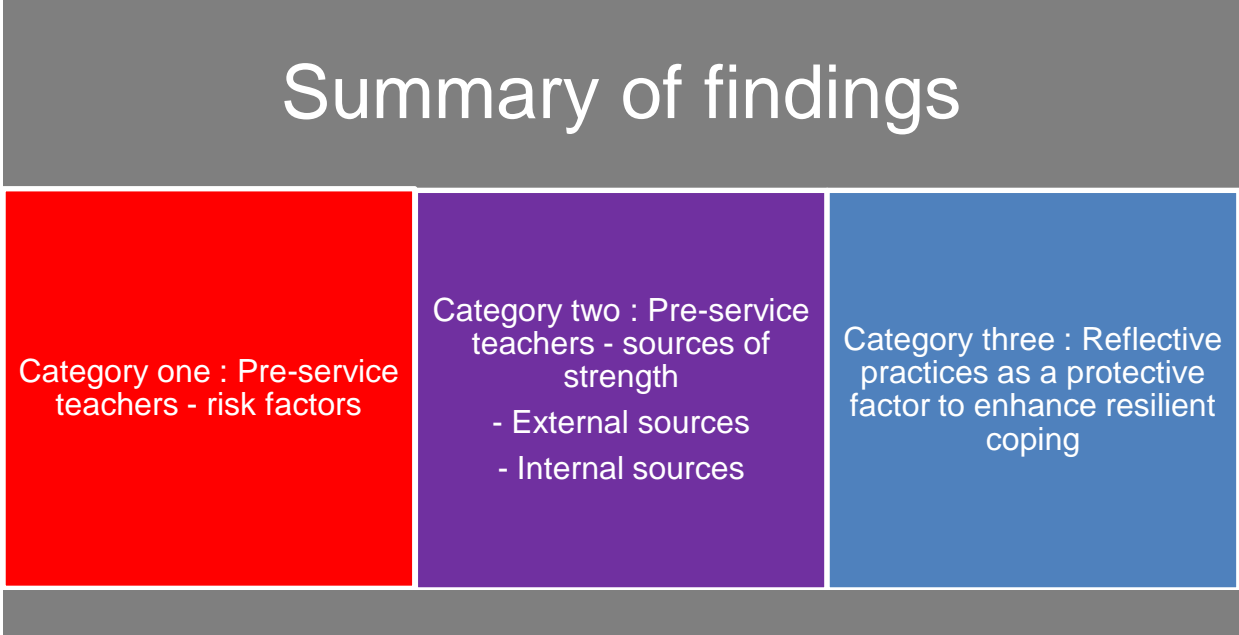
because Smanga emerged strong and happy to be a teacher despite the numerous challenges that he encountered. It was during his time of reflection that he was able to think about how best he could overcome any challenge that he encountered. Worthy of note was that Smanga took full advantage of the reflective exercise as evidenced by his rich reflective journal entries. Going through his reflective journal I noticed that there was so much that he learnt which helped him to make amendments to his practices and made him a better teacher. The valuable lessons that Smanga learnt through reflection included the importance of setting priorities right, the benefits of preparing learners' work early and avoiding rush hour, how as a pre-service teacher he may earn respect from learners by making sacrifices, developing strategies for coping with a heavy work load as well as the importance of maintaining good relationships with colleagues. Smanga said that he appreciated the benefits of reflection because it was during these times that he got to look back at his performance and strategised on how to handle a difficult situation.

During the focus group Smanga had so much to share and he spoke so freely about his TP experience and the benefits that he got from engaging in reflective practices (Researcher's diary, p.4).

### **4.3 DATA DISCUSSION**

In the next section I discuss the data presented above. I have grouped the data according to the emerging ideas. Data findings reveal that pre-service teachers experience stress which, if left unattended, may cause symptoms of burn-out while they are doing teaching practice. It also came out that despite the high prevalence of symptoms of teacher burn-out among pre-service teachers; they were able to utilize both external and internal protective resources to fight symptoms of burn-out. Moreover collected data indicated that pre-service teachers who embraced and explored reflective practices after they had been taught on them discovered that they were a successful measure against pre-service teacher burn-out.





**Figure 4.2: Summary of findings**

**4.3.1 Pre-service teachers: risk factors**

Pre-service teachers got scores ranging between 117 - 150 (67% - 86%) on the resilience scale questionnaire during the initial data collection phase. This was an indication that they were prone to suffering teacher burn-out if no measures were put in place during the early days of their teaching careers. Moreover, half of the pre-service teachers sampled reported having suffered despondency at varying degrees in the previous two weeks. Pre-service teachers encountered stress from different factors which may be categorised under external and internal factors. Below is a table summarising the seven stress factors that my study uncovered. The table also shows the prevalence of each risk factor for the seven participants who completed the study.

**Table 4.2: Risk factors for pre-service teachers**

Risk factor	Category	Number of participants affected	Percentage of participants affected %
Learners' behavioural issues	External	5/7	71
Heavy work-load	External	3/7	43
Demanding supervisors	External	2/7	29
Lack of support from colleagues	External	1/7	14
Teaching learners who are high achievers	External	1/7	14
Feelings of inadequacy	Internal	1/7	14
Lack of prioritising	Internal	1/7	14

As shown in Table 4.2 above pre-service teachers experienced stress which resulted from seven factors. Five participants (71%) were challenged by learners' behavioural issues, three (43%) were stressed by work-load, two (29%) complained about demanding supervisors, one participant (14%) lacked support from colleagues in the school, one (14%) was challenged by teaching learners who were high achievers, one participant (14%) had feelings of inadequacy and one (14%) was stressed due to his failure to prioritise. Five (71%) of the factors are external and two (29%) are internal. Of note is that different participants experienced the risk factors at different levels. While some faced fewer risk factors, others had to contend with several of the risk factors.

Out of the seven participants who completed this study five (71%) of them reported that they had to contend with learners' behavioural issues which caused them stress during teaching practice. Sisi, Buhle, Boy, Thandi and Mfana encountered learners' behavioural challenges which varied in nature. Sisi kept saying that the learners were hectic, without stating clearly the kind of stress that they posed. During the focus group interview she used the term 'hectic' five times to describe a certain group of learners that had challenging behaviour. These data support early research by Mansfield et al. (2012) who found that learners' behavioural issues are

challenges that teachers encounter. Sisi went on to state that the learners' unbecoming behaviour caused her to have a negative attitude towards them. Sisi's statement is in line with Kottler et al. (2005) who assert that teacher burn-out may manifest in negativity and callousness towards learners. Efforts to try and calm the learners did not help because the learners continued with their unruly behaviour despite any effort that she made towards calming them. Buhle was initially challenged by learners' who had got into a fight in class while she was also present. This happened because as a teacher, Buhle was not vigilant and she failed to enforce discipline among the learners. As a result, the head of the school blamed her. After this incident, Buhle felt incompetent and she had feelings of low self-value. Boy was challenged by the girls who attempted to entice him to be involved in inappropriate relationships with them. This became a source of stress for him. Thandi had a similar experience as Boy. Thandi reported that while teaching, the boys in class would flirt with her. For Mfana, learners' behavioural issues presented in learners' failure to show him respect. He believed that the learners acted disrespectfully probably because they were of almost the same age as he was. Mfana also discovered that he was in a way responsible for the learners' behavioural issues because he failed to prepare adequately for his classes which left the learners with free time to cause disruption in class. This could have been caused by his lack of experience as a result of his career stage and growth (Klassen & Chui, 2011).

These challenges highlighted above became stress factors for the pre-service teachers and they support initial research that was done by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) which found that teacher burn-out may be caused by inadequacy to meet classroom demands and difficult students' behaviour. Similarly, Goodwin (2012) discovered that beginning teachers say that their pre-service programmes did little to prepare them for the realities of classrooms. Some of the challenges that were encountered by these pre-service teachers were not something that they had anticipated. The pre-service teachers felt overwhelmed by learners' behavioural challenges. For instance, Sisi was so stressed to the point of losing weight.

Secondly, pre-service teachers were stressed by heavy work-load. Out of the seven participants three (43%) of them; Sisi, Thandi and Smanga complained that they had heavy work-loads. Sisi practised in a school with high enrolment which translated in

big numbers in each class. As a result of the large number of learners in the class Sisi failed to give full attention and monitor the learners and this resulted in pupils' behavioural issues. Thandi, although she had fewer learners in her classes, she was allocated many classes to teach and this caused her stress. With Smanga, there were days when he had many teaching periods above what he could initially successfully handle such that by the end of the day he would be feeling so exhausted and not wishing for similar days because of work stress. Data that I sourced from the three participants above support earlier research that was conducted by Yost (2006) and Mansfield et al. (2012) who discovered that large class size and heavy work-loads respectively are factors responsible for teacher burn-out (Klassen & Chui, 2011) .

Thirdly, pre-service teachers suffered symptoms of burn-out as a result of demanding supervisors. Supervisors included the lecturers who mentored pre-service teachers while doing their pre-service education. Others were officers from the Ministry of Education and Training and those from the University of Swaziland – Faculty of Education who came unannounced to assess pre-service teachers during teaching practice. Two out of the seven participants (29%); Sisi doing Commercial teaching and Mzee doing Design and Technology reported that they were under a lot of pressure from supervisors who came frequently to assess them and also made very high demands yet they felt inadequate professionally. The supervisors were said to be demanding when they had very high expectations regarding the students' performance disregarding the fact that student teachers were still novices who were navigating their path into the teaching profession. Klassen and Chui (2011) discovered that teachers' career stage and growth may cause teacher burn-out. Moreover, these supervisors tended to make negative remarks which caused stress to the student teachers who then began to wonder if they would pass the teaching practice, let alone make good teachers upon completing teacher preparation. The data I got from Sisi and Mzee affirm a discovery that was made by Jonson et al. (2010) that pre-service teachers' induction programmes are not adequate, they do not provide quality education. This then becomes a source of stress for the pre-service teachers.

In the fourth place, lack of support from colleagues became a source of stress for pre-service teachers. Out of the seven participants, one participant (14%) reported that she had to contend with hostility from some teachers in the school where she was practicing. The head of department and other female teachers were very unfriendly towards Buhle to the point of refusing to offer assistance. During the focus group interview and in her reflective journal Buhle expressed her frustration which caused her to even contemplate leaving the school and finding another one where she would do her teaching practice. This experience confirms an assertion by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) that working with unsupportive colleagues may be a source of stress for teachers.

A fifth source of stress for pre-service teachers was teaching learners who were high achievers, one participant out of the seven (14%) reported. Teaching learners who were high achievers made Boy feel under pressure to put in more effort when preparing for his classes. Similarly, Thandi mentioned that feelings of inadequacy caused her stress during TP. Worth of note is that while Boy was challenged by teaching learners who were high achievers, Thandi on the other hand, had feelings of self-doubt when she had failed to explain certain concepts to learners. This became a stress which resulted from what Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) describe as a deficiency in instructional strategies. If Thandi had been able to explore alternative instructional strategies, she would not have suffered stress on account of failure to explain a concept to learners.

Lastly, one participant (14%) cited poor planning as a source of stress. Poor planning according to Smanga resulted when he failed to set priorities right and also when he found himself working under pressure because he had neglected to prepare for his test ahead of time. This experience could be linked with his career stage and growth as well as a lack of experience on how poor planning could negatively impact his practice.

While some of the risk factors discussed above may be classified as external, others result from internal elements. External stress factors were learners' behavioural issues, work-load, demanding supervisors, unsupportive staff members as well as teaching learners who were high achievers. In my study I also discovered that internal stress factors include feelings of inadequacy, language barriers and lack of

prioritising. These factors caused pre-service teachers to suffer symptoms of burn-out. These findings support early research by Bandura (1994) which showed that stress may be caused by internal factors. Later on Kottler et al. (2005) and Klassen and Chui (2011) affirmed these findings. Drawing from the argument advanced above I am persuaded that pre-service teachers' stress results from both external and internal factors. This finding supports early research by Mansfield et al. (2012) who discovered that teacher burn-out results from both internal and external factors.

#### **4.3.2 Pre-service teachers: sources of strength**

Despite the stressors highlighted in the section above I discovered that pre-service teachers were able to combat the stress by drawing strength from external and internal sources and consequently their resilience improved as indicated by their improved resilience score during the second data collection phase. During the initial data collection participants' resilience scores ranged between 117/175 (69%) to 150/175 (86%) and during the second data collection phase their resilience scores showed an increase. Their scores ranged between 115/175 (66%) to 157/175 (90%). The increase in their resilience scores signified that participants' resilience improved as a result of drawing from both external and internal sources of strength. External sources include supportive colleagues, supportive school administration, learners' warm attitude as well as observing successful teachers, while internal sources of strength were engaging in reflective practices and drawing on faith through prayer. The table below summarises five pre-service teachers' sources of strength. I have presented external sources first in order of prevalence and I followed with the internal source of strength.

**Table 4.3: Sources of strength for pre-service teachers**

Source of strength	Category	Number of participants affected	Percentage (%)
Learners' warm attitude	External	4/7	57
Supportive colleagues	External	3/7	43
Observing experienced teachers	External	3/7	43
Supportive school administration	External	2/7	29
Reflective practices / Prayer	Internal	5/7	71

External sources of strength; four participants (57%) drew strength from learners' warm attitudes, three participants (43%) drew strength from supportive colleagues, three (43%) drew strength from observing experienced teachers, two (29%) drew strength from support they got from the school administration. From internal sources five (71%) drew strength from engaging in reflective practices and prayer. Worthy of note is that each participant had their own sources of strength. For some, they were able to draw strength from a variety of sources while others had fewer sources of strength.

The most prevalent external source of strength for pre-service teachers was to receive love, acceptance and respect from the learners. Four participants (57%); Buhle, Boy, Mfana and Smanga drew strength from this source. Buhle stated that it was the love that she got from the learners that sustained her during teaching practice. When her HoD showed hostility, the learners, on the other hand showed love and acceptance for her. Boy stated that the learners showed him respect after they saw that he was not falling for their 'charm'. Boy was not just lucky that the learners respected him but he had to earn their respect by showing that he had integrity. With Mfana, the learners showed that they liked him and they even voiced it out and told him that they understood him better. This helped build Mfana's confidence, thus becoming a source of strength. These findings align with early research done by Yost (2006) and Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) on sources of strength for teachers.

Another external source of strength was receiving support from colleagues in the schools. Three participants (43%) spoke about how teachers and other staff members were willing to offer support and advice on both professional and social matters to them. Sisi, Boy and Mfana went into detail about how the teachers' affable attitude helped to enhance their sense of well-being which compensated for the stressors that they had to contend with. Sisi stated that all the teachers in the school, particularly those from her department were supportive towards her. Whenever she needed to consult, they would be willing to assist. This became an external source of strength for her. Boy also received support from teachers in the school when they gave him advice on how to handle problematic girls' behaviour, which was initially a source of stress for him. Mfana is another participant who enjoyed working in a welcoming environment. In his reflective journal he noted that both the teaching staff and support staff were very supportive towards him. Also, teachers both from his department and other departments welcomed him and they made him feel that he was part of the school community. This warm attitude made him feel at ease to seek advice as well as to lend a helping hand whenever he could. Mfana felt that he was part of the school community. These data are in line with earlier research done by Yost (2006) and Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) which affirm that beginner teachers who received much support during the early days of their careers enjoyed their teaching practice experience.

Observing how certain experienced teachers conducted themselves became another external source of strength for pre-service teachers. Three participants (43%); Sisi, Mfana and Smanga revealed this. These pre-service teachers described the teachers as their role models. The participants expressed their admiration for those teachers and desire to emulate them in the profession. This is in line with findings made by Bandura (1977). Sisi said that she was inspired by the teachers for being hard workers. The teachers in this school worked hard despite the high student-teacher ratio and this became a source of strength for Sisi. Mfana was also motivated by observing the conduct of experienced teachers. During the focus group Mfana shared that the head of department in his school still executed his duties with excellence, more than fifteen years into the profession. For Mfana this was a source of encouragement; it made him believe that even after serving for a long period in the teaching profession, it was still possible to have job satisfaction and to execute



the job with excellence. Similarly, Smanga expressed great admiration for a certain teacher whom he had met during his previous teaching practice. Smanga spoke so passionately about Mr Mamba\*, a teacher who demonstrated excellence in his work. These findings from the three participants support Bandura's social learning theory (1977). According to Bandura's theory, self-efficacy may result from socialisation and observing how successful, seasoned individuals carried themselves.

The last external source of strength for pre-service teachers was to receive support and affirmation from the school administration. Two participants (29%); Buhle and Boy received support from the school administration. Buhle said that the school head gave her a warm welcome when she started teaching practice and she contrasts this warm attitude with the hostility that she endured from the HoD. Boy also stated that the head teacher in his school received him well and later on during the period of TP the school head gave Boy responsibilities that showed that he had confidence in Boy; the head teacher would allow Boy to accompany all-female students for extra-curricular activities that were held outside the school premises. This affirmed Boy; hence it became a source of strength. These findings support early research that was done by Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007).

Internal sources of strength for pre-service teachers included engaging in reflective practices and prayer. Participants recorded their daily reflections in their reflective diaries. Five of the participants (71%) in the study realised the significance of engaging in reflective practices which proved to be the most effective source of strength for the pre-service teachers. They shared the benefits that they got from these practices and consequently how their self-efficacy was enhanced (Yost, 2006; York-Barr, 2006).

Buhle made use of reflection and prayer to overcome the obstacles that she encountered at her school; dealing with hostility and learners' behaviour issues. Buhle shifted her focus from the negative aspects in her school and drew strength from the positive elements. Reflection and prayer helped her to transcend this boundary and caused her to grow more as affirmed by her increased resilience score during the second data collection phase. This aligns with Yost (2006) and Tschannen-Morana et al. (2007) in their claim that an inner state promotes the building of resilience.

Through reflective practices Boy was able to overcome what he initially considered to be potential challenges of teaching in an all-girls' school. Boy embraced reflective practices and daily sought how to overcome the challenge of flirtatious school girls. Boy also took time during reflection to seek how to overcome his language barriers and learnt through reflection that he had to improve his vocabulary and adopt new English terminology so that he could be able to communicate more comfortably with his colleagues. This aligns with Mansfield (2012) who asserts that part of the process of professional maturity is being reflective and adaptive. When teachers engage in reflective practices they are more likely to create new ideas and discard old practices. Additionally, Boy overcame his initial fear of teaching learners who were high achievers by reflecting back on his own past achievements. These findings affirm Kauffman (2003) on reflection ON action and Yost (2006) on the benefits of "field experience and critical reflection" and boosting teachers' capacity to problem-solve (p.17).

Thandi explored reflective practices and sought how to deal with the boys who flirted with her in class. First she looked into what could be behind the learners' behavioural issues before finding ways to correct them. This practice aligns with Dewey's (1993) model of critical reflection which was later affirmed by Yost (2006) that during reflection teachers ought to "identify a problem, locate its source in order to implement alternative strategies (Yost, 2006, p.65). Thandi was able to identify that the source of the learners' flirtatious tendencies was rooted in the learners' need for attention. After showing a more affable attitude towards the learners, Thandi noted that their behaviour improved. Moreover, Thandi dealt with her feelings of inadequacy by finding different teaching strategies. This concurs with Osterman et al. (1993) that reflective practices are used for developing greater self-awareness of one's professional practices. Through reflective practices she learnt that in order for her to teach well and be in a position to explain concepts clearly in class, she had to employ more than one teaching method.

Mfana managed to overcome the challenge of learners' behavioural issues by looking into what might have caused learners to make a noise when they finished writing a test. Through reflection, Mfana learnt that it was important for a teacher to plan his work carefully so that teaching time is fully utilised lest learners became idle

and started misbehaving. Mfana employed Dewey's model of critical reflection (1993) to identify a problem, locate its source and sought out measures to mitigate the challenge.

From Smanga's reflective journal I gathered that he was able to make a number of adjustments in many areas in his practice after starting on the reflection practices. Looking into the issues that had challenged Smanga, there were two major areas that he had to improve; setting his priorities right and also finding strategies to handle his heavy-work load. Smanga's TP started on a bad note when he missed the opportunity to be introduced to the school as a result of his late coming. Also, later on during TP, Smanga found himself under pressure to produce a test because when he went to print the test, the computers started to malfunction and he had no choice but queue for his test to be duplicated. Reflecting on these experiences, he learnt that in order to avoid such in future, he had to do things in time. It was during his reflection that he was reminded about a former colleague, from his previous teaching practice who did his work on time. During reflection, Smanga also worked out strategies for dealing with the work-load that caused him stress on certain days. He learnt through reflection that on days when he had many teaching hours, he should plan a variety of activities for the learners as this would ease the stress. This supports an earlier assertion by Kauffman (2003) that during reflection, an individual focuses on one area that he needs to improve.

Smanga also took time to reflect on how he could gain learners' confidence and he discovered that as a teacher, he had to make sacrifices sometimes so that he could be able to give learners prompt feedback. This strategy worked out well because he tried it out after he had given learners a test. He stayed up late to mark the test and learners got feedback promptly. This yielded the desired results because the learners were very happy to get their marked scripts back early and consequently learners' confidence for him was enhanced. Moreover, reflective practices helped Smanga to improve his relationship with his colleagues. On a certain day during reflection, Smanga recalled how he had made a crude joke about a colleague's religion. At this moment he discovered that careless jokes may have an adverse effect on his relationships with his colleagues and so he learnt that joking should be kept within safe confines. The lesson that Smanga got from this encounter extends

beyond the school environment because Smanga was able to expand his world view and to develop new perceptions about the teaching profession, and life in general, as suggested by Pearce (2011).

Towards the end of his reflective journal there was an indication that Smanga had grown to be more confident and happier in the teaching profession. Reflective practices had helped him learn invaluable lessons in the life of a teacher. Additionally, Smanga's confidence was enhanced and he was optimistic about being a teacher. This was despite his lowered resilience score. Smanga had attained maturity in all four dimensions; emotional, motivational, social and professional which was a sign of resilience (Bobek, 2002; Tait, 2008; Castro, 2010).

#### **4.3.3 Reflective practices as a protective factor to enhance resilient coping**

While going through the participant's reflective journals especially Smanga's I learnt that pre-service teachers can experience job satisfaction. In one of his last journal entries he noted that he felt that he was ready for the job after having overcome several related challenges. A conclusion that I made therefore, on the basis of these data was that the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy was enhanced through engaging in reflective practices. There was a general increase in participants' resilience scores after the resilience education programme. This concurs with Pearce (2011) and Mansfield (2012) that resilience has implications of self-efficacy enhancement. Moreover, Beltman et al. (2011) noted that self-efficacy will ensure that a teacher enjoys a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, self-efficacy will cause a teacher to enjoy a long lasting teaching career. This revelation confirms an assertion by Dewey (1993); Kauffman (2006) and Yost (2006) that reflection may be a critical feature in bringing a solution to real life problems. What is more, Dewey (1993) showed that challenges were no longer seen as obstacles, but as opportunities to apply oneself fully at a task (Kauffman, 2003).

These data indicate that participants' self-efficacy was enhanced after they started engaging on daily reflections and consequently their resilience grew. Participants' narratives show that they attained growth in the four dimensions of resilience; emotional, motivational, social and professional (Mansfield, 2012). This was supported by their resilience scores which showed a general increase. Out of the five

participants who embraced reflective practices with a positive attitude, four of them (80%); Buhle, Boy, Thandi and Mfana recorded improved resilience scores during the second data collection phase. Paradoxically the one participant Smanga, who recorded a lowered resilience score, seemed to have benefited much from reflective practices. His sense of well-being and confidence as a teacher improved as a result of reflective practices. Additionally, Smanga's journal entries were very rich, they showed that he took reflection seriously and from the daily reflections he was able to make adjustments to his practice as a teacher. From this, I conclude that there might have been other factors that affected his resilience score. Possibly, when he completed the resilience scale questionnaire he was not feeling at his best.

On the *emotional* dimension of resilience Buhle managed to focus on the positive elements in the school and overlooked the hostility that she got from some colleagues. She delighted in the support that she got from the school administration and the learners' positive attitude. Boy learnt to adjust to the school environment and learnt to speak in standard siSwati and English. This enabled him to overcome the language barrier that initially challenged him. Thandi learnt to adjust to the environment of teaching boys who flirted without getting herself worn-out. Mfana learnt strategies of dealing with problematic learners and this helped him to stay emotionally stable. Smanga reported in his reflective journal that he felt in control after reflecting on strategies to overcome the obstacles that he encountered during TP. These data align with Mansfield et al. (2012) who argue that resilience in a teacher shows in emotional maturity. Earlier, Le Cornu (2009) stated that emotional maturity is a process that occurs over time and results in the ability of a teacher to adjust to varied situations and to increase competency in the face of adversity.

On the *motivational* dimension Buhle drew inspiration from prayer. This strategy worked for her because she stayed positive and increased her resilience. Buhle recorded the highest score on the resilience scale during second data collection phase. Similarly, Boy improved his motivational dimension by seeing challenges as opportunities to reach higher. This supports Mansfield et al. (2012). When the school girls flirted with him, he maintained his integrity and as a result, he earned trust from the head of the school. Thandi improved her motivation by improving her competencies and as a result she managed to overcome her initial feelings of

inadequacy. This supports earlier findings by Bandura (2010) that motivation may result from a mastery of skills. Mfana improved his motivation by not allowing learners' behaviour issues keep him in despondency. He took a bold stand and addressed learners about their behavioural issues and overcame this challenge. Similarly, Smanga did not allow any setback to cause him stress. When Smanga was under pressure to produce a test, which resulted from poor planning, he took that as a learning experience where he learnt the importance of prioritising. These data affirms earlier research by Bandura (2010) who asserted that motivation may result from working at improving competencies.

Participants showed *social growth* by being able to interact with teachers in the schools. Buhle tried to build social relations with the teachers in her school by seeking advice from them. Her effort was met with antagonism from some teachers but Buhle attempted to build relations with the teachers. Boy also displayed social growth by receiving advice from teachers in the school about how to handle difficult girls' behaviour. Data from Thandi did not show much on her social aspect of growth. Data from Mfana indicated that his social growth was good. Mfana interacted well with colleagues; he received help and he too offered help to his colleagues. Smanga also interacted well with his colleagues. What was remarkable about Smanga was that he took time to reflect about how to keep healthy relations with his colleagues. These data from these participants support an assertion by Mansfield (2012) that a resilient teacher will have the capacity to build healthy relationships with colleagues. Moreover, resilience will cause a teacher to seek help and to receive advice from others.

*Professionally* participants improved. Buhle's professional growth caused learners to like her, which in turn became a source of strength for her. Similarly, Boy earned learners' respect after he refused to give in to inappropriate advances . Thandi also committed herself to finding out the cause of learners' flirting and the knowledge that she got enabled her to correct the problem by giving learners the attention that they desired. Mfana demonstrated professional growth by improving his organisational skills. Mfana knew that in order to avoid the problem of learners making a noise when they finished a task ahead of time, he should plan his work carefully and avoid a situation where learners would find themselves idle. Smanga too showed that he

was growing as a professional. During his reflections he found strategies for coping on days when he had a heavy work-load. The strategies that he discovered enabled him to teach effectively. Additionally, Smanga sought out ways of motivating learners and he discovered during reflection that making a sacrifice and marking learners' work during his free time and give them prompt feedback on tests given would encourage the learners. These data from the participants affirm early studies by Kottler et al. (2005); Mansfield et al. (2012) and Bandura (2010) that a professionally matured individual shows commitment to work and students.

#### **4.4 FINDINGS**

In this next section I outline the findings that emerged from the data that I presented above. I have grouped the findings according to the themes that emerged. I started off by presenting (1) the risk factors that predispose pre-service teachers to burn-out. I then showed (2) the different sources from which pre-service teachers drew strength to mitigate the symptoms of teacher burn-out. Lastly I showed (3) the role of reflective practices in promoting resilient coping. This being the most significant finding because it proves that when pre-service teachers engage in reflective practices their self-efficacy is enhanced and consequently they grow resilience which helps them to mitigate risk factors and overcome symptoms of teacher burn-out. My findings enabled me to prove my initial assumption that self-efficacy enhancement during initial teacher education may build resilience to prevent teacher burn-out, hence addressing the research questions that underpinned this study. *Three themes* emerged from this study which I now discuss.

##### **4.4.1 Pre-service teachers experience stress during teaching practice**

From the data and the preceding discussion it emerged that, while doing teaching practice, pre-service teachers do experience stress which threaten resilient coping. Behavioural issues among learners was the main risk factor. Data from this study also revealed that the second most prevalent risk factor was heavy work-load. Work load constituted many classes to teach, many learners per class and also many teaching periods on certain days. Other risk factors related to lack of support from colleagues, teaching learners who were high achievers, feelings of inadequacy and

failure to prioritise. This finding identifies the risk factors that pre-service teachers face during teaching practice, hence addressing the first objective of this study.

#### **4.4.2 Pre-service teachers draw strength from external sources**

The second theme that emerged from my study was that pre-service teachers were able to draw strength from *external* sources. The first external source of strength was teaching learners who showed a friendly attitude towards the pre-service teachers. Secondly, getting support from other staff members became an external source of strength. A third external source of strength was observing successful significant others; those experienced teachers whom pre-service teachers considered as role models. This kept the pre-service teachers motivated and in turn, they were motivated to emulate the behaviour of those experienced teachers. This finding aligns with my interpretivist perspective which affirms the role of observation in the building of pre-service teacher resilience. Lastly, when pre-service teachers received support from the school administration, it became an external source of strength (Tschannen-Morana et al., 2007; Yost, 2006). This theme shows a slight departure from my initial assumption that resilience is a result of internal factors. Here I have found that both internal and external factors are significant in strengthening a pre-service teacher's resilience. This finding supports earlier research by Mansfield et al. (2012).

#### **4.4.3 Pre-service teacher resilience: drawing strength from internal sources**

The third theme that emerged from this study was that pre-service teachers drew strength from internal sources to enhance their self-efficacy and consequently, they became resilient. After the participating pre-service teachers had learned to reflect, and subsequently started engaging in daily reflective practices their self-efficacy was enhanced and they learnt to alter their strategies. Participants endorsed reflective practices and firmly stated that they would make reflective practices an integral part of their lives. Even during the focus group interview, participants stated that their classroom practice improved and they felt more confident in their work. They also recommended that reflective practices be introduced as part of their programme of study during teacher preparation. Of note is that participants scored relatively well on the resilience scale questionnaire even before they engaged in reflective practices



but their scores showed a marked improvement after they engaged in reflective practices. Worth mentioning also is that prayer was another source of internal strength. One participant stated that she found solace in prayer.

These findings answer the research question on the role of reflective practices as a protective factor to promote resilient coping. Reflective practices proved to be an effective strategy to enhance resilient coping, but I also discovered that prayer may also play a significant role in promoting resilient coping.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

In this chapter I presented the data findings and analysis and later I presented the themes that emerged. Pre-service teachers from SCOT experience stress while doing teaching practice. Both males and females, teaching Commercial and Design and Technology were not exempt from this problem as all participants reported to have suffered stress due to different risk factors. Moreover, I found that all pre-service teachers were prone to burn-out despite the variable of age, sex, subject taught and type of school where they did their teaching practice. In this study I also discovered that initially pre-service teachers relied on external factors to cope with the challenges that they encountered during TP because they were not aware that they could draw strength from within by enhancing their self-efficacy. When participants embraced reflective practices they discovered that the setbacks that they encountered could be overcome by altering their strategies and adopting new practices (Kauffman, 2003). This new learning was an outcome of engaging in reflective practices. Participants lamented the inadequacy of teacher preparation education programmes at SCOT which did not prepare them for the realities of the teaching profession. Participants also noted that reflective practices were an entirely new concept to them. In the next section, Chapter five I present what I have found to be significant from the entire study and also implications both for practice and further research.



## **CHAPTER FIVE: SIGNIFICANCE, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I present an overview of the entire study and the conclusions that I arrived at. I compare the conclusions against the research objectives that this study set out to address. Further on I highlight the significance of the study as well as limitations that I encountered as I conducted the research. To conclude I make recommendations for practice and for further research.

### **5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

In this study I investigated the role of self-efficacy enhancement through reflective practices in building pre-service teacher resilience in order to prevent teacher burn-out. Studies on teacher burn-out indicate that many teachers globally are burned-out and as a result teaching is affected as some opt out of the profession during the early years of their career. This results in problems of teacher retention in some countries in the Western world. In other countries, particularly in the third world burned-out teachers remain in the profession, unhappily. This becomes a problem again because the burned-out teachers are prone to engaging in disruptive behaviour such as industrial strike actions which then affect the running of the schools and adversely impacted learner performance. In Swaziland the problem of teacher burn-out is very real such that pre-service teachers start experiencing its symptoms while they are doing teaching practice in various schools all over the country.

In Chapter one I gave an overview of the entire study and the assumptions that informed the research. I then discussed the rationale together with the aim and objectives for conducting this research. I went on to explain key concepts and I situated them in my conceptual framework. I then described the research design and methods as well as research ethics. Also included in Chapter one are delimitations for the study.

In Chapter two I started by discussing the contextual framework and theoretical framework in detail before reviewing literature relevant to my study. I looked into burn-out from a broader perspective and I narrowed down to burn-out in the context of teachers, more specifically pre-service teachers. I went on to review literature on teacher resilience; looking into how self-efficacy may promote resilient coping. Further on I reviewed what the literature says about reflective practices as a strategy for enhancing self-efficacy and mitigating symptoms of teacher burn-out. From the literature review, I managed to formulate my conceptual framework which reflects the interaction among the four concepts that underpin my study.

In Chapter three I discussed the research design and methods in detail. I started by describing the interpretivist epistemological paradigm and I explained its relevance in this study. I went further to describe the qualitative research approach and I motivated why I opted for qualitative methods. Further on I described the research strategy that I followed; how PAR and pre-test, post-test research strategies enabled me to successfully conduct the research. Description of research methods included an explanation of how I selected participants. The description of the research site where participants were sampled was elaborated on. I went on to describe the data collection protocols and I explained how each one of them enabled me to collect rich data. Data analysis followed. I explained the procedure that I followed to analyse data. My study also explained the quality criteria that I observed and finally, I described how I observed research ethics.

In Chapter four I presented and discussed the data that I had collected. I then grouped the data according to the themes that emerged from the findings. I also showed how the findings addressed the research objectives that underpinned this study. I analysed the data aligning it with literature that I had reviewed earlier in Chapter two. From the data analysis I was able to draw a conclusion from my own study and I compared my conclusions against what earlier literature on similar studies had said.

### **5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

In my study I discovered that pre-service teacher burn-out was a real problem threatening the teaching profession yet that was an area that was under researched.

While many studies have been done on burn-out for in-service teachers, not much has been documented on pre-service teacher burn-out; the challenges that predispose them and also intervention strategies. My research found that pre-service teachers started experiencing job-related stress during teaching practice. Factors that earlier studies had overlooked yet they are responsible for pre-service teachers' stress included supervisors who were putting a lot of strain on the pre-service teachers during teaching practice. Moreover, I discovered that learners' behavioural issues included flirtatious tendencies by learners who enticed pre-service teachers to engage in illicit affairs with them. This problem was experienced by both female and male pre-service teachers. Another discovery that I made was that pre-service teachers suffered stress as a result of poor prioritising. Previous literature had overlooked these factors yet they were sources of stress for pre-service teachers. Even more significant was my discovery that in Swaziland where my study was based, research on teacher burn-out was scant. I noted this to be a major gap in literature pertaining to teacher burn-out.

Furthermore, since my study paid attention to how pre-service teachers could enhance their self-efficacy by engaging in reflective practices, I learnt that these practices were indeed a successful intervention. However, I discovered that reflective practices were an entirely new concept for pre-service teachers. Nevertheless, after I had introduced the participating pre-service teachers to reflective practices, they discovered that they could enhance their self-efficacy and build their resilience by tapping inwardly for strength. Pre-service teachers embraced reflective practices and started engaging in them on a daily basis, and this saw their self-efficacy getting strengthened, and their resilience scores generally increasing. Participants embraced reflective practices after they discovered the benefits for themselves and they endorsed them by recommending that reflective practices be taught to all pre-service teachers. Another finding that I made was that another internal source of strength for pre-service teachers was drawing on their faith through prayer. The findings that I have outlined above are possible contributions that my study is adding to existing knowledge on the role of reflective practices in enhancing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy to build their resilience.

#### **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

Among the data collection protocols that I utilised for this study was the resilience scale questionnaire. This questionnaire is largely used for collecting quantitative data but in my research, the quantitative element was restricted because my study was largely interpretivist, paying attention to narratives and description of participants' emotions. Hence, during interpretation of the data I did not delve into the quantitative jargon, but I used the numbers to describe participants' levels of resilience before and after they had undergone resilience education. Also, I learnt that the resilience scale questionnaire was not the best protocol for collecting qualitative data because the scores that some participants scored during the second data collection phase did not seem to be an accurate representation of the participants' levels of resilience. This is because one participant in particular, scored lower on the resilience scale questionnaire, yet the other sets of data that I collected from him using the other protocols indicated that his resilience had improved after he started engaging in reflective practices. Moreover, with the reflective practices I could have provided a more elaborate orientation on reflective practices.

Other limitations that I encountered included sampling, and the withdrawal of some of the participants. With regards to the sample, I drew participants from only one teacher preparation institution. There is a possibility that the experiences of these participants during teaching practice might have been influenced by their educational background. This limitation might affect my conclusions and cause outcomes from my study to be not generalised to other institutions which offer pre-service preparation programmes. Another constraint was the withdrawal of some of the participants from the study. A total of three withdrew during the entire duration. When I started, I had ten participants, but my target was only eight participants. The other two were for contingency purposes. When the first two participants withdrew, I could still continue with the eight without a problem but when the third participant withdrew, it did affect the findings and also the subsequent conclusions that I drew from the study because the one participant who withdrew accounted for 12.5% of the initial sample. Consequent to this, my final data came from 87.5% instead of 100% of the intended sample.

## **5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

It emerged from this study that some pre-service teachers had to endure the stress of working with hostile staff members from the schools where they did teaching practice. Another cause of stress was supervisors who placed very high demands on pre-service teachers during teaching practice which put them under a lot of undue pressure. It also emerged from this study that reflective practices were a new concept for pre-service teachers yet engaging in them helped to enhance self-efficacy. Thus, on the basis of these findings I have noted the following implications for policy and practice:

- That seasoned teachers be educated about their responsibility to support pre-service teachers who do teaching practice in their schools. Seasoned teachers should be constantly reminded that pre-service teachers look up to them for support.
- That pre-service teachers be given more support by their supervisors during teaching practice. Supervisors ought to make constructive comments instead of adding stress to the pre-service teachers by consistently focusing on and magnifying the mistakes that pre-service teachers have made. Supervisors may be constantly work-shopped about their role of grooming the pre-service teachers instead of destroying them by being unreasonable in their expectations during teaching practice.
- That the core curriculum for initial teacher education in Swaziland be reviewed to accommodate modules on pre-service teacher development which may include self-efficacy enhancement skills

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

Research on teacher burn-out in developing countries, including Swaziland is still very scant. Also, teachers in the schools and supervisors for pre-service teachers seem to be unaware of the role they should play in supporting student teachers during teaching practice. Hence, I would recommend that more research is done on:

- The factors responsible for pre-service teacher burn-out so that this problem may be effectively addressed.
- Whether or not there is any disparity in the prevalence of teacher burn-out according to participants' gender and subject taught.

- The role of in-service teachers and supervisors in pre-service teacher development.
- How reflective practices or similar strategies may be infused in the curriculum for pre-service teacher education.

## 5.7 CONCLUSION

This research sought to discover how pre-service teachers may enhance their self-efficacy to promote resilient coping in order to mitigate risk factors which may lead to symptoms of burn-out. This problem is a real life challenge that teachers face globally, hence the importance of investigating it. What is more, earlier research which looks into a similar problem is very scant. A lot of literature focus on in-service teachers and there is not much research on the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers. This study was able to make new discoveries that may be applicable in other context where pre-service teachers are doing internship at a global context.

New insight into risk factors that threaten resilient coping among pre-service teachers was gained. Challenges such as learners' flirtatious tendencies and supervisors who assess pre-service teachers during teaching practice had not been addressed by earlier research yet they are a threat.

The study went on to identify external and internal sources of strength that pre-service teachers may explore to mitigate symptoms of burn-out and promote resilient coping. It was interesting to discover that reflective practices were an entirely new concept for the participants yet it proved to be a very successful strategy to promote resilient coping. Participants embraced them and endorsed them. Yet still, I discovered that prayer played a significant role in promoting resilient coping.

These new insights may serve to show other challenges that teachers globally experience and the strategies that they may explore to build their resilience. This new understanding may have implications for practice and further investigation.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Clearance certificate



**UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA**  
**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**  
**YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA**  
Faculty of Education

**RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

<b>CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</b>	CLEARANCE NUMBER: <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">HU 15/04/02</span>
<b>DEGREE AND PROJECT</b>	MEd The role of self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher development: building resilience to prevent burn-out
<b>INVESTIGATORS</b>	Siphiwe Angelica Langa
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Humanities Education
<b>APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY</b>	26 June 2015
<b>DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</b>	14 December 2016

Please note:

For Master's application, Ethics Clearance is valid for 2 years  
For PhD application, Ethics Clearance is valid for 3 years

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE:** Prof Liesel Ebersöhn


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**CC:** Bronwynne Swarts  
Dr Sonja Coetzee  
Prof Rinelle Evans

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The Ethics Clearance Certificate if issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. if the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application of ethical clearance must be submitted
3. it remains the student's responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries

## Appendix B: Consent letter - SCOT Head of Faculty



The Head of Faculty

Swaziland College of Technology

Mbabane

Dear Madam

### **Masters Research**

I am a student studying through the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for my Masters in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module and one of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work. I am seeking permission to conduct part of this research with some students in the Faculty of Education at the Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT). The topic of my research is: ***Self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher education: Building resilience to prevent burn-out.***

Teacher resilience plays a major role in the social, emotional, psychological and professional development of a teacher. It also helps one to be able to cope with the challenges of being a teaching professional. Resilience training also promotes teacher retention hence, becoming one of the ways to fight teacher burn – out. Some research has been done on this topic in overseas countries, but we hope that it would be beneficial to address the topic of resilience training for pre service teachers in Swaziland.

If you agree to let me conduct my research with your students, I shall engage a total of ten completing students; four from the department of Design and Technology and six from the department of Commercial Teaching. Participating in this study will not interfere with college activities or lecture time. Only my supervisors and I will have access to information relating to my study.

Students are not compelled to participate in this research and if they decide not to take part, they will not be penalized in any way. If they decide to participate, but later change their mind, they can withdraw their participation at any time.

Students' identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know the real name, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. Your institution will not be identified either. The information given will only be used for academic purposes. In my research report and in any other academic communication, pseudonyms will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the Pretoria University's Education Department according to the policy requirements. If you give your consent, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below, or via Email.

**Student**

Name : Sphiwe A. Langa  
Contact number : (+268) 7608 9753  
E-mail : [sphiwe4me@yahoo.com](mailto:sphiwe4me@yahoo.com)  
Signature: -----

**Supervisor**

Dr Sonja Coetzee  
(+27) 8424 84761  
[sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za](mailto:sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za)  
-----

## Consent form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name and designation), give consent / do not give consent (*delete what is not applicable*) for you to conduct a research project titled : ***Self- efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher education: Building resilience to prevent burn-out.***

I understand that the selected students will participate in this study, but that will not interfere with college activities or learning time. I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

## Appendix C: Consent letter – Participants



Dear Student

I am a student studying through the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for my Masters in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module and one of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work. I would like to ask you whether you will be willing to participate in this research. The topic of my research is: ***Self- efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher education: Building resilience to prevent burn-out***

Teacher resilience plays a major role in the social, emotional, psychological and professional development of a teacher. It also helps one to be able to deal with the challenges of being a teaching professional. Resilience training also promotes teacher retention hence; it may be seen as one of the ways to fight teacher burn – out. Some research has been done on this topic in overseas countries, but we hope that it would be beneficial to address the topic of resilience training for pre - service teachers in Swaziland.

Only my supervisors and I will have access to information pertaining the study. You do not have to participate in this research if you do not want to, and you will not be penalized in any way if you decide not to take part. If you decide to participate, but you change your mind later, you can withdraw your participation at any time.

Your identity will be protected. Only my supervisors and I will know your real name, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. Your institution will not be identified either. The information you give will only be used for academic purposes. In my research report and in any other academic communication, your pseudonym will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the university's Education Department according to the policy requirements.



If you agree to take part in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below, or via Email.

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
Name:	Siphiwe A. Langa	Dr Sonja Coetzee
Contact number:	(+268) 7608 9753	(+27) 8424 84761
E-mail:	<a href="mailto:siphiwe4me@yahoo.com">siphiwe4me@yahoo.com</a>	<a href="mailto:sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za">sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za</a>
Signature:	-----	-----

### Consent form

I, \_\_\_\_\_(your name), agree / do not agree (*delete what is not applicable*) to take part in the research project titled : **Self- efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher education: Building resilience to prevent burn-out** . I understand that I will participate in the study but that will not interfere with college activities or learning time. I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Resilience scale questionnaire



### How Resilient Are You?

\*Type of school where I completed my Higher Secondary Education:

Please select your educational level

\*My age :

\*My gender:  Female  Male

### The Resilience Scale™ (RS™)

May 2015

Please read the following statements. To the right of each you will find seven numbers, ranging from "1" (Strongly Disagree) on the left to "7" (Strongly Agree) on the right. Cross the circle below the number which best indicates your feelings about that statement. For example, if you strongly disagree with a statement, cross the circle below "1". If you are neutral, cross "4", and if you strongly agree, cross "7", etc. You must answer every question to submit the test for scoring.

1. When I make plans, I follow through with them.	1   2   3   4   5   6   7 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2. I usually manage to get things done one way or another.	1   2   3   4   5   6   7 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3. I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span>Strongly Disagree</span> <span>Strongly Agree</span> </div> 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4. Keeping interested in things is important to me.	1   2   3   4   5   6   7 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



5. I can be on my own if I have to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I usually take things in stride.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I am friends with myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I am determined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I seldom wonder what life is all about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I take things one day at a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I have self-discipline.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I keep interested in things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I can usually find something to laugh about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. In an emergency, I'm someone people can generally rely on.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



20. Sometimes I make myself do things whether I want to or not. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. My life has meaning. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. I do not dwell on things that I can't do anything about. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. When I'm in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I have enough energy to do what I have to do. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. It's okay if there are people who don't like me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

- I have felt despondent in the past 2 weeks  Never  Sometimes  Frequently  All the time
- I rate my health as generally:  Excellent  Very Good  Good  Fair  Poor
- I am at my ideal body weight: (±5 pounds)  Yes  No
- I exercise 30 minutes or more most days:  Yes  No
- I eat a healthy diet most days: (with 5 fruits/vegetables)  Yes  No
- I DO NOT use tobacco products: (smoke, chew, or dip)  Yes  No
- I have FEW\* or NO alcoholic drinks: (\*female: 1/day, male: 1 or 2/day)  Yes  No

*Adapted from: The resilience scale. Gail M. Wagnild & Heather M. Young (2014)*

## Appendix E: Workshop outline for reflective practices

# Reflective practices

*"Spending time daily sifting through our minds and hearts, reflecting on how we can become more interesting and resourceful. Think of all the valuable ideas, hunches, insights, and feelings you will trash if you fail to become a reflective person and professional (Kottler, Zehm & Kottler, 2005, p. 134).*

### Time to reflect

- ✓ Take time to think about your life and your job etc.
- ✓ Reflection is a very rewarding experience
- ✓ Anyone may engage in reflective practices
- ✓ Reflection time may range from ten to thirty minutes every day
- ✓ Be committed to your reflection schedule

### What is reflection? (contd.)

- ✓ Reflection is a way of improving yourself as you get time to evaluate things and think about how best to handle a situation

### How to engage in reflective practices (contd.)

- ✓ It is usually best to engage in reflection at the end of each day
- ✓ It is important to keep a reflective journal where you record your thoughts

### What is reflection?

- ✓ Reflection is a way of improving yourself as you get time to evaluate things and think about how best to handle a situation

### How to engage in reflective practices

- ✓ Set aside time for reflection every single day
- ✓ Choose the best time for engaging in reflection - a time when you are not likely to be interrupted by the telephone, children, visitors etc.

### Ask yourself the following questions :

- ✓ What happened?
- ✓ Why did it happen?
- ✓ What might it mean?
- ✓ What are the implications for my practice?
- ✓ What improvements can I make for the future?

(Kottler, Zehm & Kottler, 2005)

## Appendix F: Transcription - focus group

**Place:** Swaziland College of Technology

### Participants' pseudonyms

Below I present the pseudonyms for each participant.

#### Pseudonym

- Smanga
- Sisi
- Buhle
- Boy
- Mzee
- Mfana
- Thandi
- Joy

### Transcription from focus group interview with participants

Topic: The role of self-efficacy enhancement during pre-service teacher education: building resilience to prevent teacher burn-out

Researcher: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for honouring my invitation to come and participate in my study. As you are aware, this afternoon we will be engaging in our focus group meeting. Here, basically, we will be bouncing ideas on our experiences on TP, and also what we learnt during reflection, if at all there is something that you did learn. I am going to act as a coordinator to see to it that everything is going on smoothly. I did explain to you earlier that our discussion will be captured on video, so don't be surprised that we are recording, and I shall appeal with each and every one of you that you please speak loudly as we continue with or discussion. Thank you very much.

So guys, here, as I have already said that we are talking about our TP experiences, one key concept that I'd like to explain is the term 'pre-service teachers; and that is how I describe you. I take it that you are pre-service teachers, because at this point

you are not yet teachers, but you are being groomed to become teachers. Here we are concerned about your well fare, your resilience, that is; how well you are as a teacher, your maturity, professionally, motivationally, emotionally and socially. So the RSQ was intended to measure those aspects. We are going to see whether there have been any improvements after engaging in the reflective practices. This is because it is the kind of intervention that we proposed for this study. So our main intention here is to fight the effects of teacher burn-out. That is stress; occupational stress which is what many teachers are at risk of suffering. Thank you very much.

So, I am going to ask one of you to briefly summarise their TP experience. Who wants to start? Antonio... ok (participants laughing...)

S'manga: *Thank you. My TP experience was one of the moments that I enjoyed because this was my second TP as I did it last year. So this time around I was more confident because I was in a position to correct some of the mistakes that I did during my first TP and also I really liked cooperating with the teachers because last year when I was doing my TP I was very much reserved , most of the time I spent my free time in the offices that we normally use, as we use workshops instead of the staff room but this time around I tried to mingle with them; as in, go to the staff room and socialise with them so that we may know each other so that we can develop a relationship, and one day maybe, we can be able to help each other in one way or the other.*

Researcher: Thank you very much S'manga, I take it that your TP experience was very very enjoyable. Can we now hear from someone who was doing Commercial teaching? May we have a volunteer...yes, Happy?

Sisi: *Thank you Ma'm. Actually my TP this time around was so hectic than before. First of all, last year when I was doing TP. Ok, I was just afraid of the teachers because they were my ex-teachers, just respecting them... the hectic part , this came with teaching....eish, it was so hectic! This time around because of being supervised a lot of times I was so stressed in a way that everything I had to do it perfectly, so stressed, ngaze ngehla nasemtimbeni (participants laughing) I was so stressed because the kids, especially the form 1s, eish! They were so hectic, form 1As, I even developed a negative attitude, bad attitude towards them because they*

*were so chaotic, especially when babona supervisor, they were so chaotic, even if you tried anything to discipline them, they didn't care about the punishment you were giving them. It was so hectic, this time around. Yah...*

Researcher: I really appreciate that we are getting different perspectives on this issue, at first we heard S'manga, who had a very enjoyable experience, and now we have happy who had something quite different. Now I'd appreciate if we could have somebody who shares the same sentiments with Sisi, somebody who didn't really enjoy their TP experience. Who is that one?

S'manga: *What if maybe I had a good experience, but somehow, as the TP continued there were some incidents where by there were some bad experiences. What if there is that bad part?*

Researcher: Yah... you are free to share,.. I believe there is somebody else... Mfana... (participants laughing).

Mfana: ( ----)

Thandi: *As for me, my TP was good, but because I was teaching a big school, the biggest school I have ever met nje, so, I had so many classes.*

Researcher: Was there a point during TP when you felt that you were not cut out for this job, ' I am not going to last in this profession?'

Thandi: *...not really, but yes, because I was teaching only boys, and some boys would just sit back and just watch... no matter how hard I tried to explain, they just watched, and if I'd say, " what's wrong", they would be like, " no teacher, I am just admiring you. (participants laughing) and I'd be like, what if my supervisor was here, what was I going to do? See! so yah... they gave me a hard time.*

Researcher: How would you respond to such?

Thandi: *I would be like, "no guys we are in class" this is your future, its either you do it now or, you make something with it, uyabo! They tried to listen, and I tried to make friends with them and when you make friends with them, they listen and*



*they get the attention. So I tried to be friendly with them, but at the same time make sure that they get what they came for.*

Researcher: Thank you very much. So now I'd like to hear from Boy, the school where you did TP. Were they supportive?

Boy: *Errh, errh, first of all, I had a challenge that in the school it was a girl's school and at the staff room, I was the only male there. And all of them they were females except for the science teachers. The science teachers, there were three guys there. But in terms of support from the teachers, I did get a lot. The teachers allowed me to go for the higher classes, actually so that I get more challenge and get more experience.*

Researcher: Ok, what kind of support?

Boy: *Ok, errh, the kind of support they were giving me, it would be advice, because of the challenges you would get from the pupils, and how you should get out of them, and the different signs and charming things they do, how to be able to avoid that one and not to fall for them.*

Researcher: Mzee, was the administration supportive?

Mzee: *Well, not really, because I spent most of my time in our offices - the workshops and the admin was just over there... and when it comes to monitoring they are the people who were handful over there because the deputy was busy walking around checking if is there anyone who is absent, or coming late to our class, because our class was there, at the back. Far, back of the school. So some students would run and hide at the back and you would find that while I am teaching they are making noise, so he would come and chase them. He would call his sticks... "This is the red devil" (participants laughing)... the blue one I have forgotten it.*

Researcher: So there was not much interaction with the administration?

Mzee: *...yes...*

Researcher: What about you Buhle?

Buhle: *Ok, with me, I can say that I had much relationship, I had close relationship with my head teacher, other than my HOD, I felt like, the head teacher was more supportive than my HOD. I had a certain crush with my HoD. (participants laughing) actually, she is a she, on my first day she said, “ok, you are here for TP, are you qualified? Where are you from? She had that kind of attitude. The head teacher was like, “ ok Buhle, we are happy to have you” when I had certain problems and I went to the HoD she would be like, “ ok, go and consult with the other teachers, I am kind of busy... like she would be busy with something, and she would not attend me. That was my challenge with the HoD, but with the deputy, it was fine. Yah...*

Researcher: Ok, thank you. So now, I'd like to know about the teachers in the schools where you were practicing. Mfana, was there any particular teacher .... Whom you found to be a role model.

Mfana: *....yes.... umm..., my colleague in Design and Technology- the HOD, he is a very good example of a teacher. The way he does his job...he gave me advice at times and, I'm out of words to explain him... he was a very good role model.*

Researcher: How long has he been a teacher?

Mfana: *About 15 years, he has been an HOD for 15 years.*

Researcher: Does he seem to enjoy his job?

Mfana: *Yess... very much...that made me to even enjoy the job very much.*

Researcher... anyway...

Happy: *Actually I liked the teachers, but I don't like the school because of the enrolment. I so love the teachers, they inspired me. They are hard workers, every teacher, especially in my department... because it's a big school. Whenever you want to consult, they just give you the attention. They are just supportive. They are role models, all of them.*

Researcher:

Sisi: *Yes... Mr Simelane, just the way he is, quiet, disciplined, supportive, nje...just did his work differently from the others. He did his work earlier....yes.*

Researcher: Now let's hear from S'manga, ok S'manga, did you have any role model from your school?

S'manga: *Yes, I can say I had a role model but not from my second TP but from my first TP because last year I did TP at a different school from where I was this year. The teacher was referred to as Mr Ngena, I like the way he was teaching, the way he interacted with pupils, the way he mixed with other teachers from the school. He was a very good teacher, and then another thing that I really liked about him is that he was very organised, he prepared his work early-on time. He did everything on time. For example if he was going to give a test the following week, he usually set his tests seven days before because he normally says that there are, most of the time when you are going to give the test. It's highly possible that a problem can develop electricity and some other things. He was always organized...and also with the teaching material, let's say he was teaching form 1 this year, he used some of the material even next year. He had a file, somehow it made his job easier. I liked the way he did things.*

Researcher: Thank you very much. So now we are moving on to our next session of the focus group which is the reflective practices and our experiences there; whether reflection has enhanced our resilience or not. Who is ready to start. I think Boy is ready to start. Boy, would you say that reflective practices were beneficial?

Boy: *Actually it was beneficial because it's a form of like doing something like stock-taking; activities, and take a proper reflection on what did you do, and how you want to improve.*

Researcher: Thandi, has it been useful?

Thandi: *Oh, yes ma'm because I was able to look back the things that I have done and the things that I will improve in future, like to help myself or help the students.*

Researcher: Now, I want us to think about reflection in terms of it being a tool that enhances our growth professionally. You are teachers... How do you grow in the profession, how does reflection help you in that? Firstly we are going to talk about the benefits of reflection in enhancing our growth professionally and there after we are going to move on to motivational. Did it help you in any way to boost your motivation? Was there anyone, I mean; is there anyone among you who would say that reflection helped them in their professional dimension? ... Buhle?

S'manga: *I think reflection is ok, the way I defined reflection is learning more about myself, so, somehow I can say that it is very important to look back at what I did on that day and then somehow, get a way to correct what I did wrong, or to improve on what so ever I did wrong or what I feel is not good. Even professionally I find that it helps because I have seen how students have reacted after teaching, then I normally think about that, whether it was good, a positive reaction or what then I try to improve on that.*

Researcher: Which aspect do you want to address?

Boy: *I would like to talk on the professional aspect of it, well with me I look at TP as to deliver what you have been taught at school, at college, and also we have some personal perspective about education, about teaching, something we didn't know, abilities we would like to explore on the field. So my intention, I chose a school that is one of the best performing schools in the country, and making some reflection on my professional aspect of it, I get to notice that where do I need to improve, because those pupils are unlike those average pupils on performances and staff, and so I look at where do I need to improve and far better so that I may increase my efficiencies as a teacher.*

Researcher: Mfana will you continue with reflection after this exercise or you will not want to continue....

Mfana: *It was very useful and it will be my daily routine now. Yes.*

Researcher: Mzee, what would you like to say about reflection?

Mzee: *Maybe I can say if I can get to do more of it, and then in the future I can say that I can do more of it, because now this one, it was a bit challenging on my side.*

Researcher: I understand, because this was a new concept

Mzee: *It was like, I had to write a diary of what I was doing, which was something I thought I would never do.*

Researcher: Now ladies and gentlemen I want us to reflect collectively about our own program of study, I know that others are doing Design and Technology, and others are doing Commercial teaching. Do you think that the courses that are in the program are sufficient to groom you as teachers, or it is just matter that you are being taught? Is there anything that is in the program that is enhancing your wellbeing as teachers because now we are talking about resilience? Is there anything that is in the program that is helping you in that aspect, or, if you were to make recommendations to the Ministry of education, you would say that I think we should have a course on self-development or something? So I want us to reflect and think along those lines. What can you say about what I've just said? Who would like to respond? Boy?

Boy: *I think this exercise is more helpful especially to teachers because those are the people who get to deliver their services directly to the people. It is not really all about how much you know in terms of content, but as well as how well you deliver the content. That is, it calls for you to take a daily reflection on the activities you have been doing and for you to identify the loopholes as far as your profession is concerned and where you can actually improve. This is something I get to notice with time as I have been doing it since I was introduced. It might be a good exercise for us to be introduced to us, to actually take it on as we were studying as teachers. I think it is good.*

Researcher: Thank you very much Boy. Is there anyone who would like to add anything on this exercise about your course of study- your program of study. Is it sufficient? We have heard from Boy. He thinks that perhaps if we could consider including reflection as part of the course, one of the courses that are offered which would improve you as teachers. Who would like to address that one? Yes...Mzee

Mzee: *Infact the way we are taught at school and at college, I think it's one and the same thing. Somehow, I think, when you would tell us here at college level that we should do something on reflection, I think it would take time, maybe some of us won't do it, some of us, you find us wasting a lot of time to write what they think, so you see, maybe in the future, maybe in form 1, upwards.*

Researcher: So you are suggesting that this program be introduced early, during school days, not just at tertiary?

Mzee: *Yes, early, not at tertiary.*

Researcher: Perhaps I need to emphasise that, or to explain that the purpose here was for you as pre-service teachers to enhance your resilience, ok. We know that all individual should have resilience because you need coping skills generally but now we are focused on you as professionals, as teachers. So what programs should we include to build that resilience? Thandi?

Thandi: *Ok, first of all, me I would like if we could have this program in the college but if you can introduce it when we start our third year, after we finish our first TP. I think this could be helpful because when you are going for the second TP you will know your mistakes and you will jot them down, and you will be able to reflect; what I have done wrong so next time you will not repeat the same mistake, so if you can have it, it could be a good thing to do especially on... Micro-teaching, I think ...yah, be part of Micro-teaching so that after you have... angitsi in class we do this , we teach each other how we delivered, maybe afterwards you write short notes on what you think was good about your delivery in class you see, I think it would be helpful, you see.*

Researcher: Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. I really appreciate your input, all the ideas that we brought forth as a team. They are going to be helpful to me as I pursue my study, and this program of pre-service teacher resilience, the ideas that you have given to me are really helpful. Thank you very much!

(Participants clapping hands)