



**A presentation of findings on a survey study
that investigated professional development
needs of novice teachers and mentor teachers
in Namibian schools**

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>GRN</i>	<i>GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA</i>
<i>ETSIP</i>	<i>EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM</i>
<i>NIED</i>	<i>NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT</i>
<i>NPST</i>	<i>NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS IN NAMIBIA</i>
<i>NQA</i>	<i>NAMIBIAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY</i>
<i>EMIS</i>	<i>EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM</i>
<i>MOE</i>	<i>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION [</i>
<i>NANTU</i>	<i>NAMIBIA NATIONAL TEACHERS' UNION</i>
<i>SPSS</i>	<i>STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES</i>

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1. Introduction and background

Vision 2030 envisages transforming Namibia into a highly innovative, industrialised and knowledge based society that is supported by a dynamic, responsive and highly effective education and training system (Government of the Republic of Namibia [GRN], 2004). In order to contribute to the attainment of the aspirations of Vision 2030, the Ministry of Education developed a fifteen year plan, the Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP).

ETSIP seeks to strengthen the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the general education and training sector. It aims at improving the educators' skills and knowledge to enable them to facilitate the acquisition of skills and competencies among learners in schools. This objective is echoed by the National Standards for Teachers that calls for a structured training and support system for the training of novice and mentor teachers. In this context, a nation-wide needs assessment survey was conducted by NIED in order to establish the professional development needs for novice and mentor teachers with the ultimate intention of producing a professional development program that would strengthen teaching effectiveness in our classrooms and enhance learner-performance.

Also worth noting is that the call for nationally supported, intensive training for newly appointed teachers began in 1999 with The Report on the Presidential Commission on Education and Training. This call was repeated in the 2005 Report on the Scoping Study to precede the development of National Standards for the Teachers in Namibia. Further, the 2007 approved National Standards for Teachers in Namibia (NST), mandated through the Namibian Qualifications Authority (NQA) as part of Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme, called for the introduction of standards as a measure to guide pre-service and in-service teacher training as well as the continuous professional development of teachers to ensure that the national education goals of equity, democracy, quality and access are addressed adequately.

1.1 Key definitions

The term **novice teacher** refers to teachers who are professionally qualified, practicing teachers but with less than two years' teaching experience because the school teaching environment differs from colleges experiences. It was assumed that new teachers may experience difficulties in adapting to school routines, classroom management and organisation, and also in applying the knowledge they have learned at the college, thus the need for an induction training program.

The term **mentor teacher** refers to professional qualified practising teachers who have teaching experience of more than four years. It was assumed that these teachers have had the opportunity to merge theoretical and practical knowledge, giving them the ability to induct the novice teachers.

1.2 The aim of the study

The aim of this study was to identify the professional development needs of both novice and mentor teachers in all the thirteen regions of Namibia. Furthermore, the study intended to propose a support and mentoring program for the novice and mentor teachers.

1.3 Research questions

- a) What were the professional development needs of novice and prospective mentor teachers in Namibia?
- b) What were the teachers' perceptions regarding continuous professional development?
- c) What were the most needed components of training programs for the novice and prospective mentor teachers?

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN

2. Sampling and population

The study was conducted in the public, private and including special, project, and satellite schools in Namibia. A systematic random sampling method was used to select 20% out of a total of 1,640 schools in Namibia. The schools were selected from a list of schools in the Education Management Information System (EMIS) report. The sample was drawn by selecting every 5th school from the top of the school list from each region as listed in the EMIS Report (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2006). A total sample of 328 schools was drawn.

Two survey instruments, one for novice teachers and the other one for mentor teachers, were designed and distributed in order to generate professional development needs for novice and mentor teachers. The survey instruments were mailed to the selected schools. It was decided to send three survey questionnaires for novice and mentor teachers for the selected schools. This was necessary as a possibility was foreseen that one may find one or two novice teachers in a given school. The presence of mentor teachers in schools was obvious.

As the number of mailed questionnaire instruments for novice and mentor teachers was three times the number of the sampled schools, it was then assumed that there would be a total of 984 novice and mentor teachers participating in the study. Despite a disappointing return rate, a decision was made to proceed with the data analysis because the returns for both the novice and the mentor teachers were above 50%. The achieved sample of the novice teachers was 175 out of 328, which is 53%. Likewise, the achieved sample of the mentor teachers was 214 returned questionnaires out of 328, which is 66%.

As will be elaborated on in the subsequent paragraphs, interview data were also collected in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the professional development needs of novice and mentor teachers. To this effect, the regions were clustered for the purpose of selecting schools and teachers to participate in the interview. The clustering procedure was based on the common characteristics that some regions depicted. The characteristics that determined a cluster such as: historical facts, language, culture, school disparities and proximity. Thus, 5 clusters were formed and labelled as Ohangwena, Erongo, Khomas, Karas and Caprivi.

In each cluster, 4 schools which responded to the questionnaire were purposefully selected. Interviews were conducted after the survey questionnaires were analysed. The reason for doing that was to follow up on issues that emerged after the analysis. There was also a need to have face-to-face interviews in order to find out the views of mentors and novice teachers as regards training and the mentoring process. The mentor and novice teachers in each school were interviewed on site by the researchers from NIED.

2.1 Data collection and administration

As stated in section 2, data were collected using the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The survey questionnaire mainly investigated the skills that teachers needed to have in order to teach effectively. Similarly, the questions in the interview schedule focused on the same skills; however the interviews were done mainly to seek clarity and get in depth views on training

needs and perception of teachers towards mentoring. The questionnaires and interview guides were compiled by a working group. The working group comprising of inspectors, advisory teachers, principals, one NANTU representative and education officers from the professional and resource development division of NIED. The questionnaires were mailed to all regional offices and representatives of the working group in the regional offices distributed them to sampled schools. The principals in the sampled schools administered the questionnaires and ensured that questionnaires were completed on time and sent back to representatives of the working group in the regions. The representatives mailed the questionnaires back to NIED.

The interviews were administered differently from the survey questionnaires. Researchers from NIED travelled to sampled regions and schools and conducted on-site interviews. The interview was recorded using a tape recorder; notes and comments were put down to make probing easier. The recorded interviews were later transcribed word for word (verbatim).

2.2 Description of the instruments

Survey questionnaire for novice and mentor teachers

The aim of this survey questionnaire was to identify professional development needs of novice and mentor teachers. The items in the survey questionnaire explored the extent of the professional development needs of novice and mentor teachers using a five-point scale. The five-point scale was designed as follows: 1 for strongly agree, 2 partially agree, 3 undecided or don't know, 4 partially disagree, and 5 strongly disagree. The five-point scale allowed respondents to either strongly or partially agree on one hand or strongly or partially disagree on the other. It also made provision for those who were not very sure if they needed training or not.

Interview guide

This instrument consisted of guiding questions. The guiding questions were structured to explore the perceptions and the professional development needs of novice and mentor teachers and allowing researchers to probe for clarification and seeking for deeper meaning.

2.3 Data analysis

Data collected from the questionnaires were statistically computed using the SPSS data processing program. The frequencies of the teachers' responses on each skill were converted into percentages. The percentages were entered into the excel spreadsheet programme and graphic figures were produced. The figures illustrated in percentages showed the extent to which novice and mentor teachers strongly agreed, partially agreed, not sure, partially disagreed and strongly disagreed on whether or not they needed professional development training on given areas.

Data collected through the interviews were coded and analysed. The qualitative responses from the interviews were used as supportive evidence and direct comments were incorporated for the purpose of triangulating the data.

In the subsequent chapters, a report detailing the findings on the professional development needs of novice and mentor teachers, are outlined.

CHAPTER THREE

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

3. Introduction

The findings of this study are presented in two sections. Section one presents the findings on the professional development needs of novice teachers in the rank order of importance while section two presents the findings on the professional development needs of prospective mentor teachers also in the rank order of importance.

3.1 The training needs of novice teachers

3.1.1 Classroom management and organization

Teachers required classroom management and organisation skills to be able to manage teaching and learning in the classroom. Classroom management and organization was therefore one of the areas that was investigated in order to determine the professional development needs of novice teachers. The findings in this regard are presented in Figure 1 below:

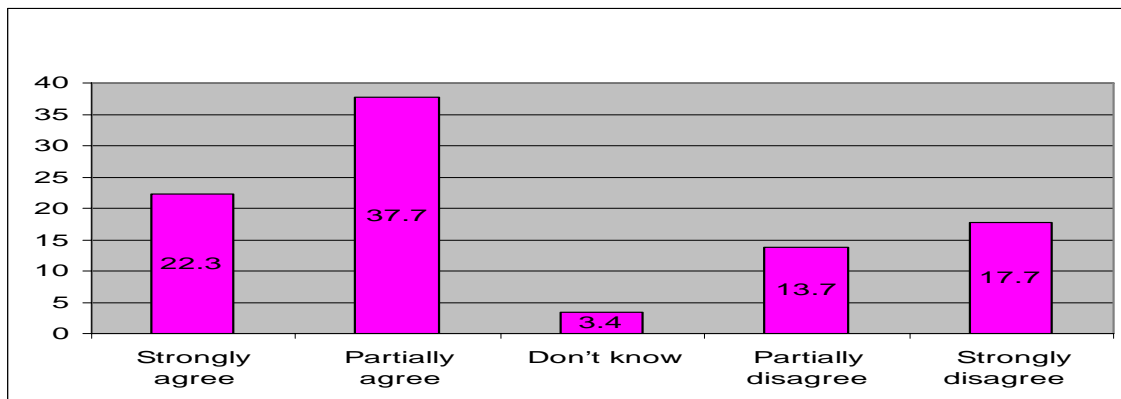


Figure 1: Classroom management and organisation

The findings illustrated in Figure 1 indicated that many novice teachers (**60%** of which 22.3% strongly and 37.7% partially) agreed that they needed professional development on these skills compared to those who indicated no need for professional development (**31.4 %** of which 13.7% partially and 17.7 strongly disagreed).

A number of specific components on which the training should focus were highlighted during the interviews with novice teachers. On classroom management and organization, teachers indicated that they needed assistance on how to deal with larger classes. For example a teacher learner ratio of 1/67 in the class made it difficult to implement learner centred approaches. It was also noted that it was often impractical to organise learners into groups due to lack of space:

“The space is very small in the classroom, and at the end of the day I end up teaching, using this teacher centred just like preaching in the classroom without involving learners in the lesson, so it was really a challenge for me”.

Maintaining discipline and correcting homework regularly were nightmares to most teachers who handled overcrowded classes since it took a long time to control the learners, thus, prolonged the homework feedback session:

“it is very difficult if I have to give homework and assignments every day, so I have to provide immediate feedback to the learners, so it is very hard for me, so I don’t know how to manage this”.

It was clear that novice teachers needed training on managing and organising large classes. Novice teachers insisted on being exposed to various management and organisational strategies. This was an indication that according to teachers’ views, the professional development training was insufficient and theoretical. The change of the college to teaching environment at schools made it difficult for teacher to merge theory and practice. The novice teachers strongly articulated this sentiment:

“As a new teacher it was too challenging for me when I started you know, because the institution where I went we did not do in depth about classroom management. Like how to manage learners in the classroom; for this situation I came to realize that there at the institution we were doing it theoretical, here it is more practical, so it was very challenging for me to deal with the learners, facing the learners” .

3.1.2 Maintaining discipline in and outside the classroom

Figure 2 outlines findings pertaining to novice teachers’ need for professional development in maintaining discipline in and outside the classroom.

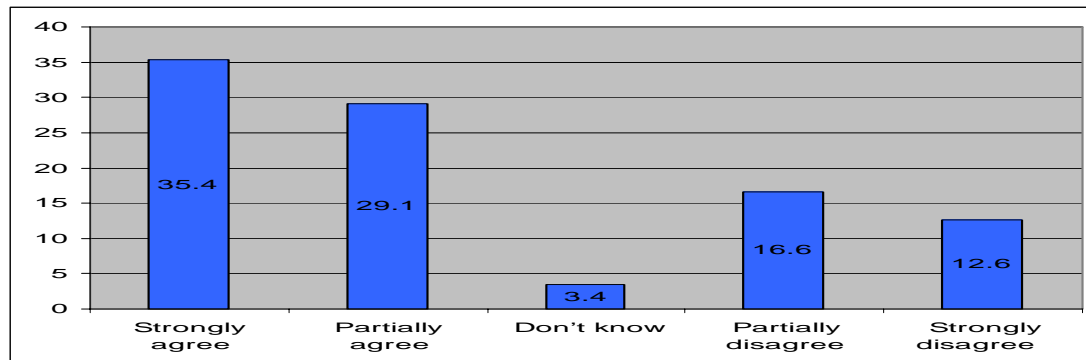


Figure 2: Maintaining learners discipline in and outside the classroom

Discipline continues being a problem in schools. It was not surprising, therefore, seeing that the majority of the novice teachers, **64.5 %** (35.4% strongly agreed and 29.1% partially agreed), agreed that they needed professional development in the area of discipline in and outside the classroom. Only 29.2% of the novice teachers disagreed that they needed professional development in this area, probably because they came from schools where discipline was well managed or did not experience discipline problems in and outside their classrooms.

Their responses on classroom management corresponded well with the ability to maintain discipline in the classroom. The novice teachers faced challenges maintaining discipline due to large classes:

“Actually, on discipline, I will need assistance, as I mentioned it is a very big group of learners, it is very difficult to maintain discipline, and really I need help on that one. How do I go about that one, if I am having that big number of learners?”

Many of the novice teachers questioned the teacher/learner ratio policy and the extent to which this policy was being carried out in schools and monitored by the ministry officials. It was obvious that maintaining discipline in overcrowded classes challenges the new teachers. In addition it took time for the new teachers to command authority among learners:

“The teacher- learner ratio, we were told one class has to carry 30 learners, so for example, if you are having a class of 70 or 67 learners, how do you maintain discipline. I really need help on that one”.

3.1.3 Understanding the Broad Curriculum

The need for professional development on the Broad Curriculum was immense as **70.3%** (38.9% strongly agreed and 31.4 % partially agreed) of the novice teachers indicated the need for training compared to **19.4%** (11.4% partially disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed respectively) who disagreed. These results indicated that training on understanding the Broad Curriculum was essential to novice teachers. These findings are presented in Figure 3 below:

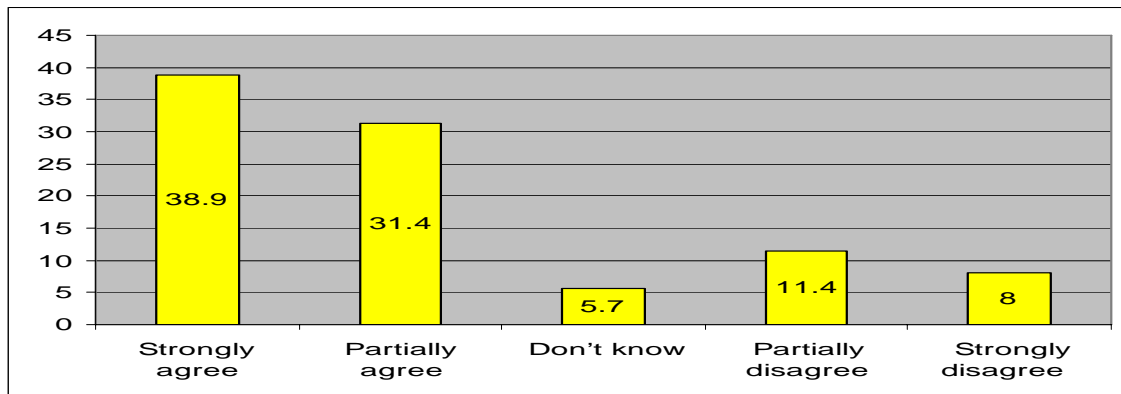


Figure 3: Understand the ‘Broad Curriculum’

The responses from the interviews are somewhat shocking. The initial concern was to find out if novice teachers understood the Broad Curriculum. But it turned out that most of the novice teachers were not introduced to this essential document that gears teaching plan. Some of them did not have a slightest idea about the document:

“The one where I will need assistance is the Broad Curriculum, even now if you provide me with the document, I don’t know how that document the Broad Curriculum is, so it is really a problem, I cannot tell more about the Broad Curriculum. I have not being introduced to the Broad Curriculum, just to be honest, even at the college I was not”.

This suggested that the training program designers should therefore, first introduce the novice teachers to the document, and thereafter, help them understand the contents and how they related to other documents such as syllabi.

3.1.4 Interpretation of the syllabus

Syllabi documents are readily available in schools. The study investigated the extent to which novice teachers needed professional development in interpreting syllabi, including the extent to which they faced difficulties in extracting information from it for purposes of developing a scheme of work and planning for teaching. The findings are presented as follow:

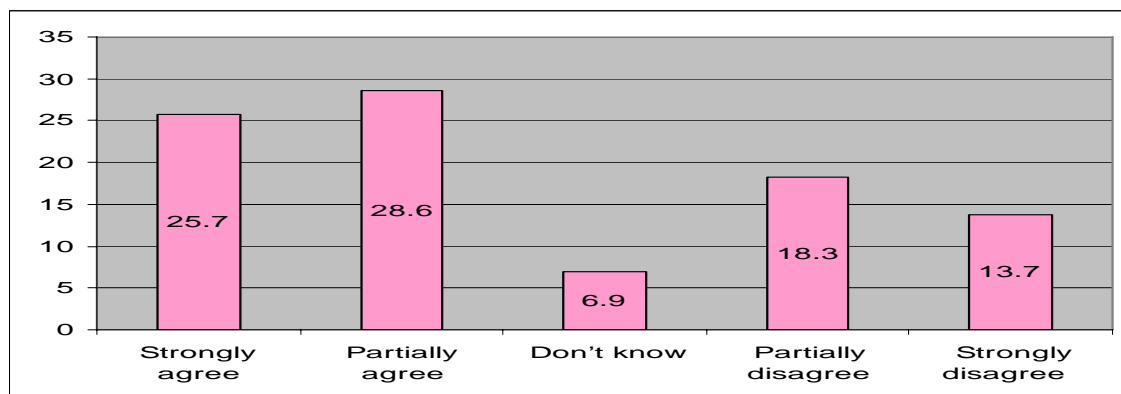


Figure 4: Interpretation of the syllabus

Evident in Figure 4 above, **54.3 %** (25.7% strongly agree and 28.6% partially agree) of novice teachers indicated that they needed training on interpretation of the syllabus and **32%** indicated that they did not need training.

It was interesting noting that there were fewer demands for training in interpretation of the syllabi as shown in figure 4. This response corresponded to the teachers' responses during the interviews. Novice teachers seemed to have acquired sufficient knowledge in interpreting the syllabi:

“Like, let me talk about the syllabi itself, I don't have a problem on that document, it is something that I was trained on at the college”.

Since 54% of the novice teachers indicated the need for training compared to 32% who did not need training, it was ideal incorporating interpretation of the syllabi in the training program for novice teachers especially on extracting information from the syllabi for purposes of developing schemes of work and planning for teaching.

3.1.5 Development of a scheme of work

Developing a scheme of work is an essential skill in assessing teachers' competencies in preparing for teaching. Teachers were expected to have this skill. However, one does not expect beginner teachers to be proficient in developing a scheme of work given the limited prior experience related to this skill. Developing schemes of work is one of those skills learnt whilst on the job. The results on the need for training on development of schemes of work present a different picture. **65.7%** (of which 38.3% strongly agreed and 27.4% partially agreed) of novice teachers indicated the need for training in developing schemes of work compared to **24%** who did not need training or 7.4% who did not know. The findings are presented as follow:

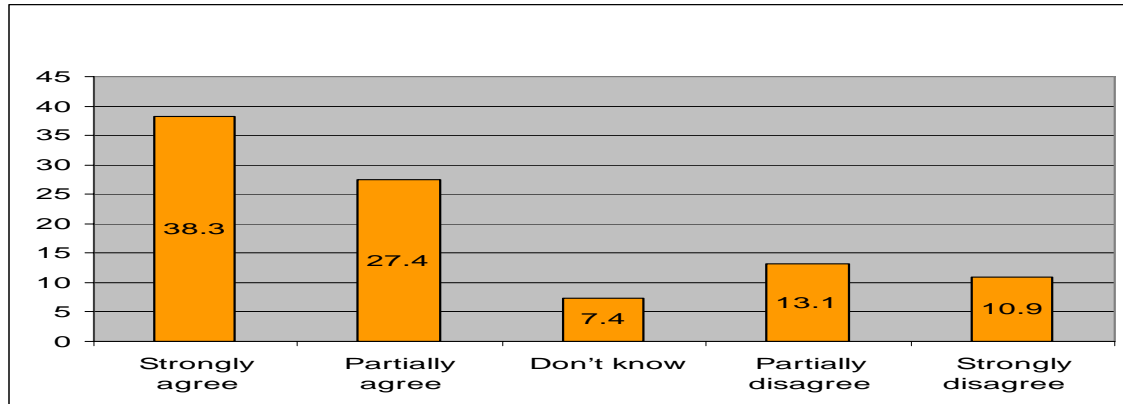


Figure 5: Development of scheme of work

Contrary to these findings was that the qualitative responses from the novice teachers in this study indicated that they did not have problems developing a scheme of work. They claimed that the skill was sufficiently developed during formal training. The novice teachers were more concerned about what one teacher referred to as a ‘hidden curriculum’. These worries rose from the understanding that schools organised and carried a number of unplanned events. These eventualities interfered with the programmed activities as result teachers did not complete all planned activities on time:

“The hidden curriculum is one of the things that hinder us from reaching these targeted dates. There are so many programs that are happening which are not planned; and those will hinder us from reaching the targeted dates which you have in the scheme of work”.

The problem stated by the teachers was at the level of the school. The school should reconsider the timing of such activities. It might be possible and perhaps logical assuming that the training program designers suggest ways of helping teachers with time savings strategies or mechanisms for compensating for the lost time.

3.1.6 Multi-grade teaching

Despite the need, only few schools currently practice multi-grade teaching. As part of the survey, this area was investigated in order to determine the extent to which novice teachers felt that it is an area in which they needed professional development. The findings are presented in figure 6 as follow:

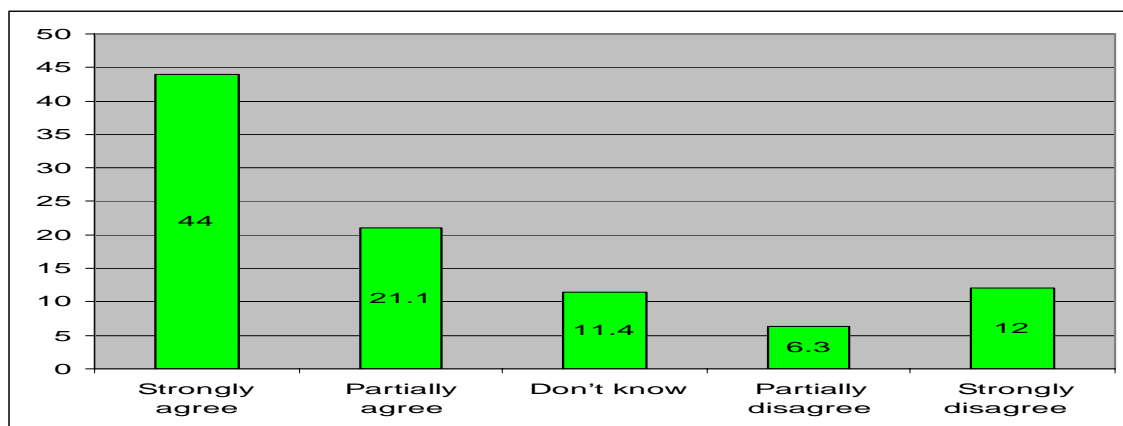


Figure 6: Multi grade teaching

It is evident from Figure 6 that multi-grade teaching was an area where novice teachers indicated a high need for professional development. More specifically, 65.1% (44% strongly agree and 21.1% partially agree) indicated a high need for professional development in the area of multi-grade teaching while only 18.3% (12% strongly disagree and 6.3% partially disagree) indicated that they did not need training in this area.

It was not surprising that novice teachers during interviews underscored the need for training in multi grade teaching. Multi grade teaching was a new concept to most of the novice teachers. One could logically question if 18.3% of the novice teachers who indicated confidence in multi grade teaching reflected a true picture. Nevertheless, the need for training was clearly emphasised:

“I think I cannot handle it, multi grade. I don’t know how to go about combining two grades like grade 5 and 6; I really don’t know how to handle such a class. I think I need help from the scratch, from zero. I don’t know really”.

Indeed this made a lot of sense. All teachers, as much as resources can allow, need to be trained, as they might otherwise be caught off guard.

3.1.7 Application of different teaching and learning strategies

Regarding the need for novice teachers’ professional development in the application of different teaching and learning strategies, the following picture emerged from the data:

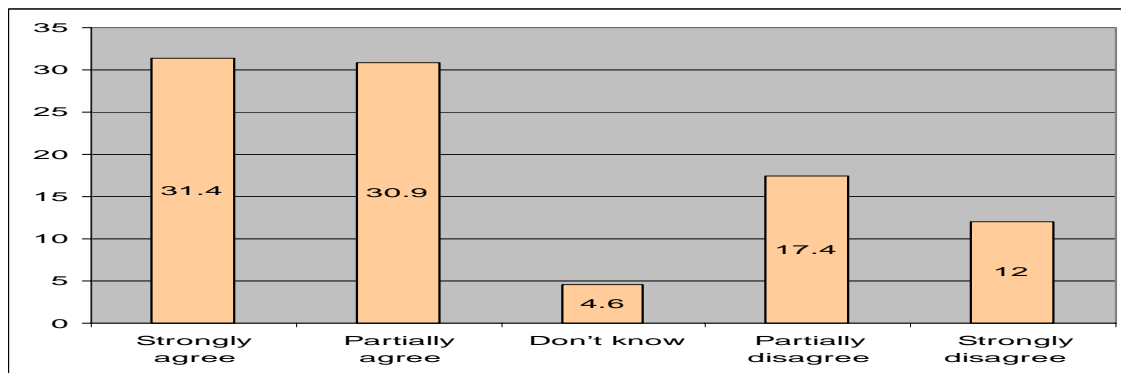


Figure 7: Application of different teaching and learning strategies

It emerged that novice teachers needed input on teaching and learning strategies to equate theory based knowledge with practice. About **62.3%** (31.4% strongly and 30.9% partially agreed) of the novice teachers agreed that they needed training on application of different teaching and learning strategies. On the other hand **29.4%** (of which 17.4% partially disagreed and 12% strongly disagree) of them disagreed that they needed training on teaching and learning strategies. Their judgements might have been based on the fact that were fresh from the college and were taught different teaching and learning strategies.

In specifying the teaching and learning strategies teaching components, teachers stressed the importance of being competent in teaching strategies. However, they failed to specify specific areas where training was needed. There were few emphasised areas of interest such as Agriculture specifically the laboratory teaching methods where training was needed:

“I think like in my subject that I am teaching something that I am not using, the teaching method that I am not using is laboratory method. That one I am not using, even if you tell me now to use it, I don’t know because that one were just told this is the laboratory teaching method, but I don’t know how to go about it. It is very important to use this method”.

Despite the fact that needs for training were vaguely stated, one could deduce from the responses that novice teachers needed exposure to different teaching and learning strategies and skills of applying them effectively.

3.1.8 Effective teaching of literacy skills

Literacy continues being a serious problem in schools. Many learners completed school with minimal functional reading and writing skills. The need for training on effective teaching of literacy skills was prompted by this notion. Findings pertaining to novice teachers’ needs for professional development in effective teaching of literacy are presented in Figure 8:

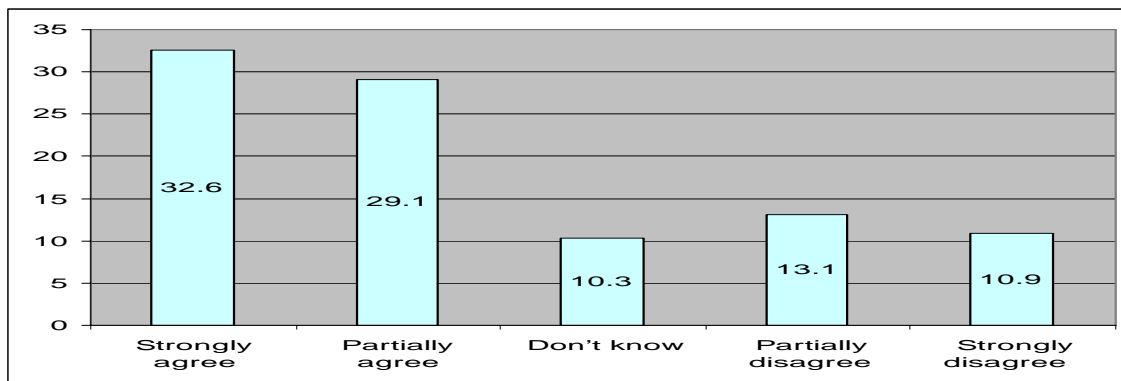


Figure 8: Effective teaching of literacy

As can be seen in Figure 8, **61.7%** novice teachers (32.6% strongly agree and 29.1% partially agree) indicated needs for professional development on the effective teaching of literacy. **24%** of those who disagreed and 10.3% of those who did not know, showed that they did not see literacy as a problem in schools most probably because of the levels and subject areas to which they were engaged with learners.

It became very clear during interviews, that among the literacy components, the teaching of writing skills was problematic. Teachers were concerned about learners' poor literacy skills. Most of them attributed this to teachers. Teachers found themselves not sufficiently equipped with skills for teaching of writing skills:

"I will need assistance on writing, basically we are having a problem, and some learners are having a problem. We really need assistance. Some learners do not know how to write, we will need assistance in our schools. Some of the learners are coming from primary to junior secondary they don't know how to write".

Furthermore, teachers specified the need for training on how to teach reading skills. Reading specifically for understanding was a major problem among learners in schools; it is therefore not surprising that, a sizeable number of teachers were not comfortable with the skills they had acquired in teaching reading.

3.1.9 Effective lesson planning and presentation

Though lesson presentation is a prerequisite skill to be possessed by all teachers, **49.7%** of (24.6% strongly agreed and 25.1% partially agreed) novice teachers indicated a need for training on production of effective lesson plans and presentation. This infers that the block teaching or teaching practice which was the best platform for practicing and enhancing this skill was not adequate. On the other hand **41.1%** of the teachers (20% partially disagreed and 21.1% strongly disagreed) disagreed that they needed training.

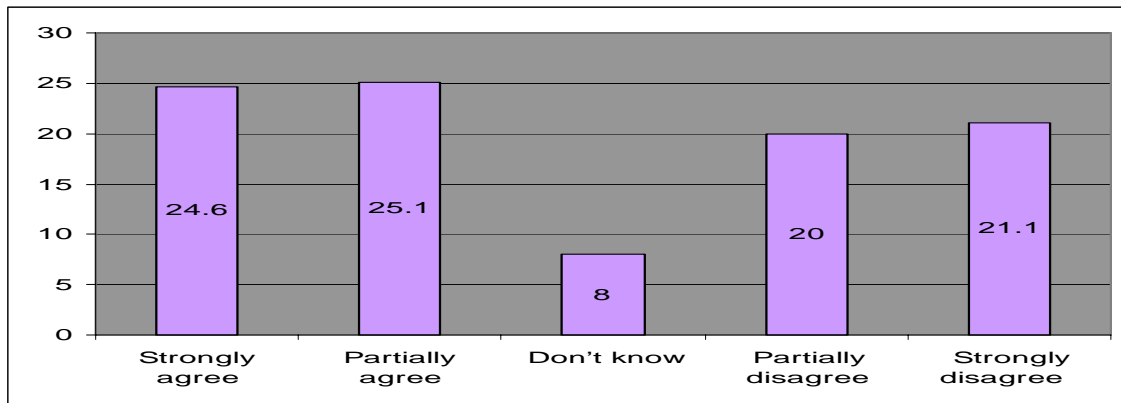


Figure 9: Effective lesson planning and presentation

Although teachers did not strongly pronounce the need of training in this area, few observations are worth mentioning. Some teachers expressed the need for training on how to design writing and reading activities for their lessons. This corresponded with the assumption made by some teachers on why there were needs for training on the teaching of literacy skills:

“...at the end of that lesson we should include writing activity and reading activity; so it is something which I don’t understand really more how to include a writing activity and reading activity”.

3.1.10 Reflection on own teaching and learning

Reflecting on own teaching and learning emerged as an area where novice teachers required training. The findings are presented in Figure 10.

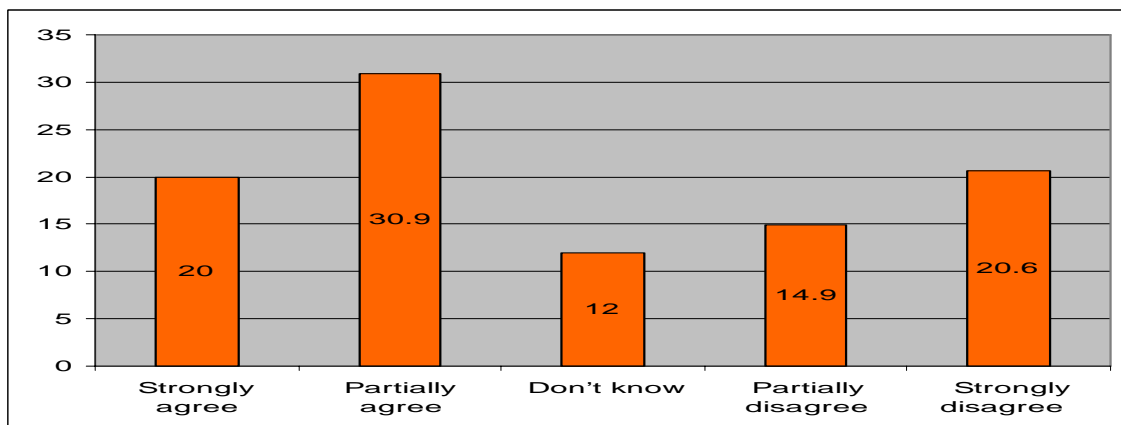


Figure 10: Reflection on own teaching and learning

Based on the results in Figure 10, it was logical concluding that beginner teachers needed training on reflective practice (50.9% in total of which 20% strongly agreed and 30.9% partially agreed). In total 35.5% (20.6% strongly disagreed and 14.9% partially disagreed) of the teachers who disagreed and 12% who did not know created doubts on the need for training especially if assumed that they did not agree on the importance of training.

During interviews, novice teachers did not find this skill necessary. Many of them claimed that they knew how to reflect on teaching and learning. One might assume, taking into consideration

the responses of those who indicated the need for training that they were competent in reflecting on their own teaching and learning. This should be so because reflective practice was a component of the BETD program; a crucial component that contributed towards the final grading. However, it was important to have this skill included as part of the training to help those who might still need more assistance.

3.1.11 Application of ICT skills in the classroom situation

The need, awareness and use of recent technology in teaching were increasing among teachers. Hence, application of ICT skills in the classroom situation was identified as an area where novice teachers required training. Figure 11 presents the findings:

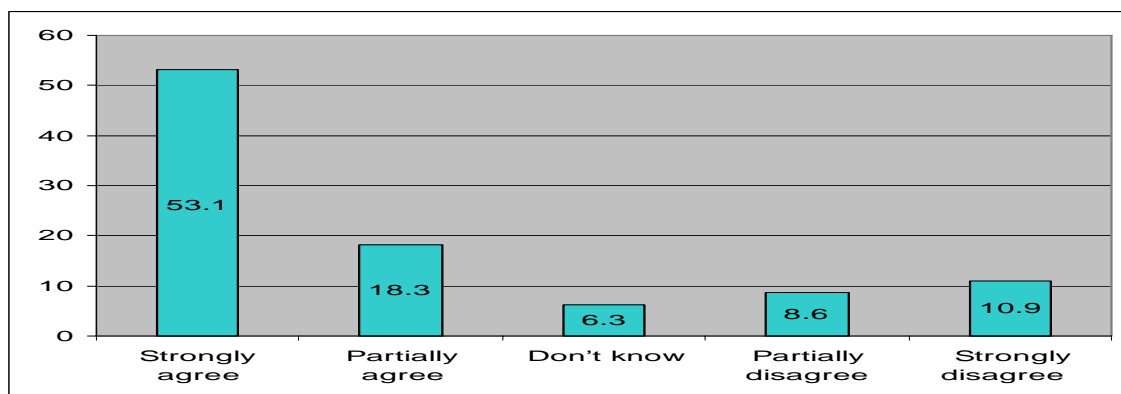


Figure 11: Application of ICT skills in the classroom situation

Figure 11 indicates that **71.4%** (53.1% strongly agreed and 18.3% partially agreed) of the novice teachers supported the application of ICT skills in teaching and indicated the need for training in this area. And only a fraction of the novice teachers (**19.5%**) disagreed and **6.3%** who remained neutral.

The responses during the interviews underscored the importance of this skill. The training components indicated, varied from basics to advanced levels of using computers to plan, teach and use the internet to search for information. This would mean first achieving the strategic plan for the ETSIP’s general education objective on ICT laboratories.

It was amazing noting how much new technology such as ICTs has infiltrated the teachers’ thinking. This was not an exception from the way teachers viewed ICT development. Teachers saw an opportunity of using computers to plan and present lessons:

“I need training really on ICT. Because at the college where I was, we were not taught more on how to use of computers, doing all the activities on the computer and then present them as a lesson. We really need help on that one”.

“But focusing on the planning, because planning means a lot, not just the lesson plan, like if you want to put all the activities that you want to do, even the scheme of work, so it has to be done on the computer, so this is why I am saying we need training”.

3.1.12 Communication with the principal

The findings on communication with the principals are presented in Figure 12:

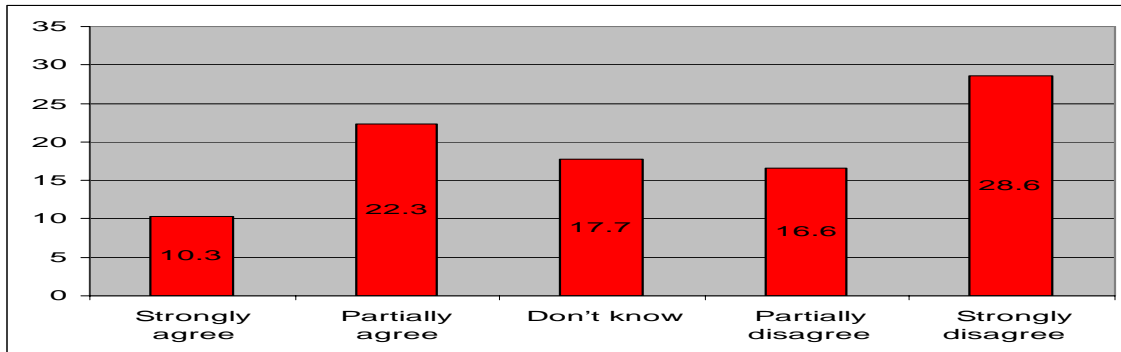


Figure 12: Communication with the principal

Figure 10 illustrates the need for training on communication with the principal. The results show that there were slight needs for training on communication with the principal especially in considering **45.2%** (28.6% strongly and 16.6% partially disagreed) of the novice teachers who disaffirmed compared to **32.6** (22.3% partially and 10.3% strongly agreed) of the teachers who affirmed.

3.1.13 Communication with other teachers

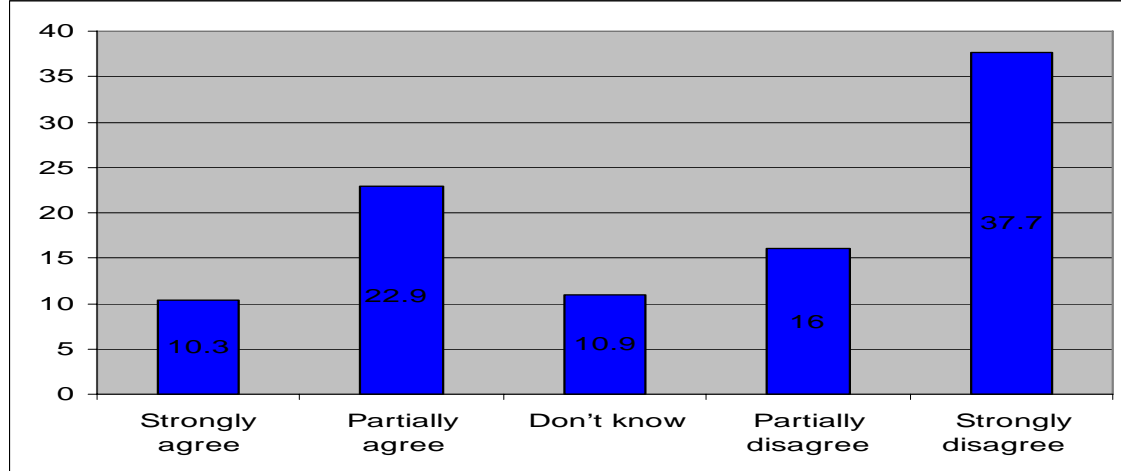


Figure 13: Communication with other teachers

A total of **53.7%** (37.7% strongly and 16% partially disagreed) of the novice teachers indicated that they did not need training on how to communicate with other staff members. This infers that no training was needed although a third of the teachers (**33.2%** of which 10.3% strongly and 22.9% partially agreed) indicated that they needed training on how to communicate with the principal.

3.1.14 Communication with parents

Communication with parents was very essential for attaining success on different aspects of the school program. Figure 14 presents findings regarding whether or not novice teachers saw communication with parents as an area where they needed training.

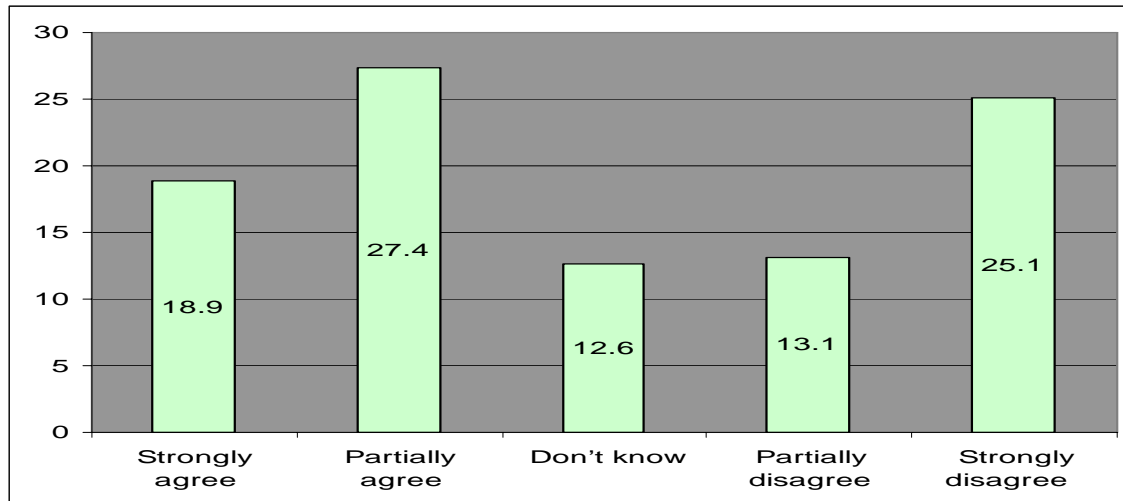


Figure 14: Communication with parents

Although there were slight differences in the need for training between novice teachers who indicated they needed training (46.3% in total who agreed) and (38.2% in total) those who disagreed, communication with parents was seen as a challenging area probably due to socio cultural and socio economical background of the parents.

3.1.15 Communication with stakeholders

Findings in this regard are presented in Figure 15:

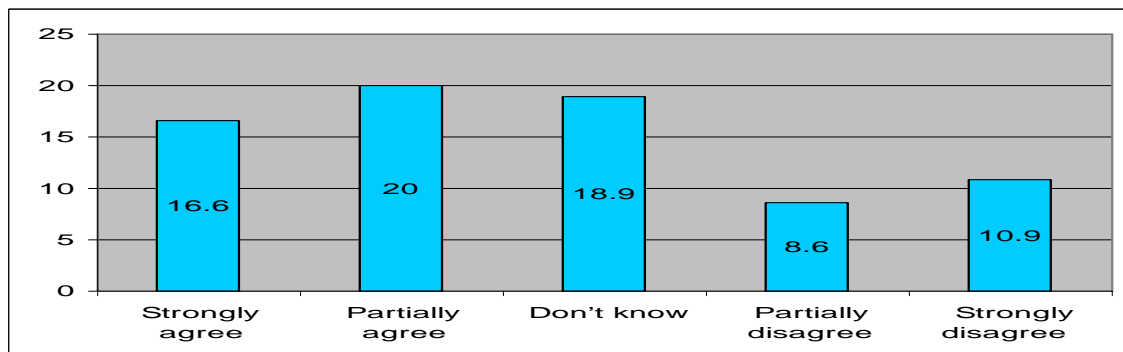


Figure 15: Communication with stakeholders

It was logical to raise doubts on whether novice teachers understood who were stakeholders due to low responses on do not know (18.9%) on the need for training in communication with stakeholders. However, since the majority of novice teachers in the survey (36.6%) affirmed the need for training in this area as compared to 19.5% who disaffirmed, it made sense concluding

that communication with stakeholders was one of the areas where novice teachers required training.

3.1.16 Understanding the school culture

A school is a community. A community has its own culture, values and norms. Adaptation to the culture, values and norms of the community posed challenges to beginner teachers. The findings pertaining to training needs of novice teachers are presented in Figure 16.

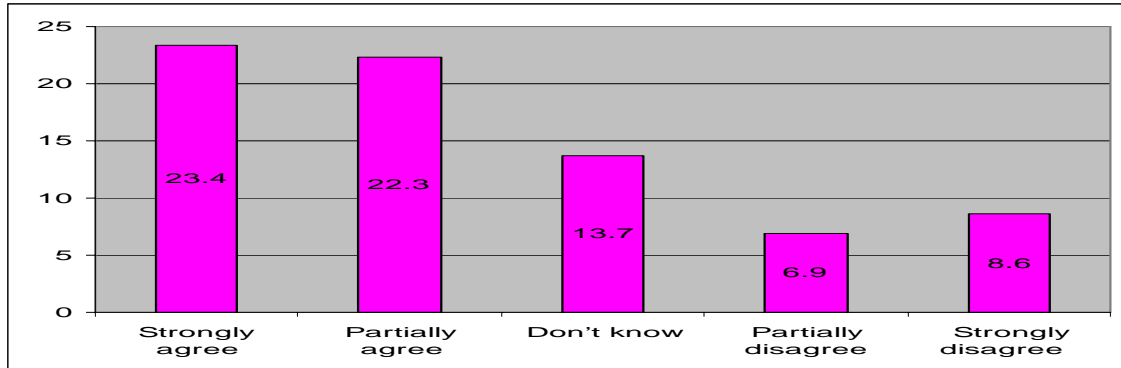


Figure 16: Understanding the school culture

Figure 16 indicates that a majority (45.7% of which 23.4% strongly agreed while 22.3% partially agreed) of novice teachers who participated in the study indicated the need for training in understanding the school culture most probably due to the fact that beginner teachers faced problems in adjusting to the new school culture.

The novice teachers' responses indicated that they acknowledged that they were from different backgrounds and had different experiences. They found it important getting assistance on how they could quickly adapt to the new environments:

“But when time went on I had to adapt on how they are doing it here, so the saying, when in Rome do as Romans do. So it is like I adapted to the situation, so there are a lot of things that they are doing here which we are not doing in our region, which I have to encounter here, so I had to adapt to that”.

3.1.17 Understanding and adhering to mentoring, coaching and professional support

Findings pertaining to the need for training in this area are presented in Figure 17.

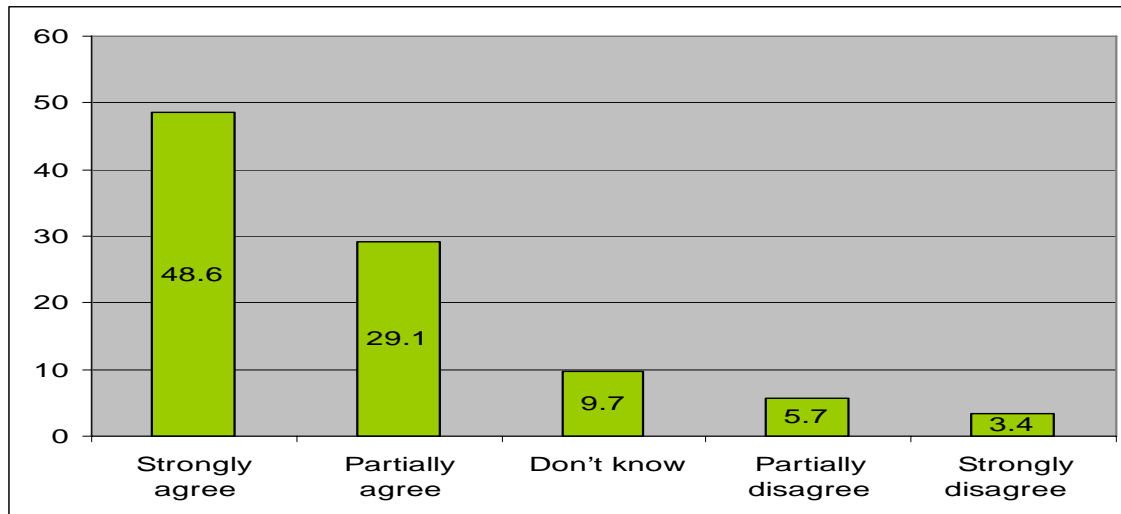


Figure 17: Understanding and adhering to mentoring, coaching and professional support programme

It is sound mentioning that the role of mentoring and coaching was not well known among novice teachers. This was because mentoring in schools was not well structured or more specifically formalized. Due to this, the need for training in mentoring, coaching and professional support was important. In total **77.7%** of the teachers agreed they needed training compared to those who disagreed (**9.1%** in total).

3.1.18 Understanding and applying inclusive education

The evolution of terms and principles in inclusive education left many teachers feeling confused on what to do and how to help learners with special learning needs in mainstream classes. Training needs by novice teachers on this subject were expressed as follows:

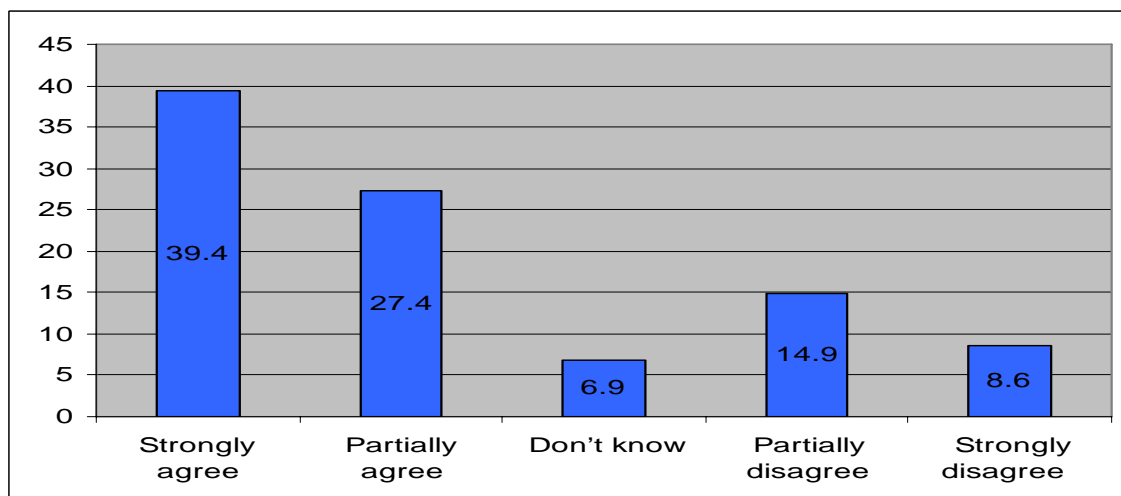


Figure 18: Understanding and applying inclusive education

The need for this training was obvious as **66.8%** (of which 39.4% of the teachers strongly and 27.4% partially agreed) of the teachers indicated urgent need for training compared to those who did not see the need for training (**23.5%** of which 8.6% strongly and 14.9% partially disagreed).

Novice teachers interviewed, confirmed this need. They wanted the training to focus on identification of learners with special needs, how to go about helping such learners, typical examples of challenges that a teacher might encounter in the classroom and involvement of such learners in activities in which they were incapacitated:

Yes, I want to learn about inclusive education. Sometimes it is very difficult when you have a learner with a special need, for instance if the learner is physically challenged, it is very difficult to involve such a learner in other activities, there are practical activities that you need to involve such kind of learners in; so I don't know how to go about it involving that particular learner so that he is also involved in the lesson so. So when you are assessing learners in the practical activity, if that learner did not do the activity, how do you go about assessing such a learner? Do you just give free marks? It is really a challenge.

When asked if professional teacher institutions had prepared them sufficiently, a typical response was:

“On inclusive education it is not too much, it is only on the theory of what inclusive education is, we did not go into depth about the challenges you would face in real life situation and how you go about those problems if you encounter those problems”.

3.1.19 Motivation skills

One of the qualities of a competent teacher was the skill and ability to inspire learners to accomplish tasks. Figure 19 illustrates the need for training on motivation skills.

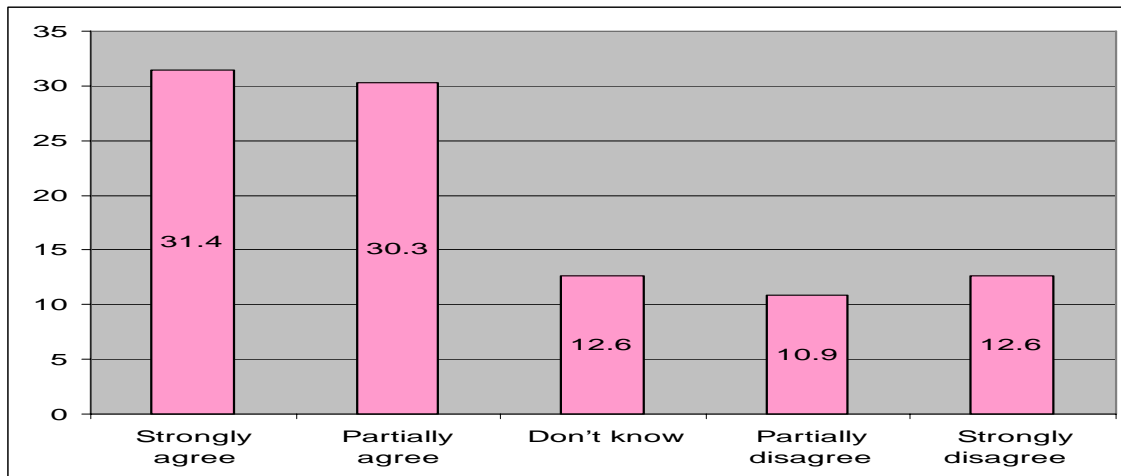


Figure 19: Motivation skills

According to the results presented in Figure 19, many novice teachers indicated they needed training in the area of motivating learners (**61.7%** of which 31.4% strongly and 30.3% partially agreed). Only **23.5%** of the novice teachers in the study did not seem to need training.

Teachers' interview responses indicated that learners in most cases dropped out of school because of lack of motivation. Likewise, teachers believed that learners did not perform well for the same reason. Novice teachers found it necessary in particular to be equipped with the necessary skills especially how to go about identifying learners who were not motivated, as well as rendering the right assistance. This need was clearly testified:

“I think in this regard teachers need to be coached on how to motivate learners, especially extrinsic motivation”.

3.1.20 Diagnosing learners’ skills

Findings pertaining to novice teachers’ training needs in this area are presented in Figure 20:

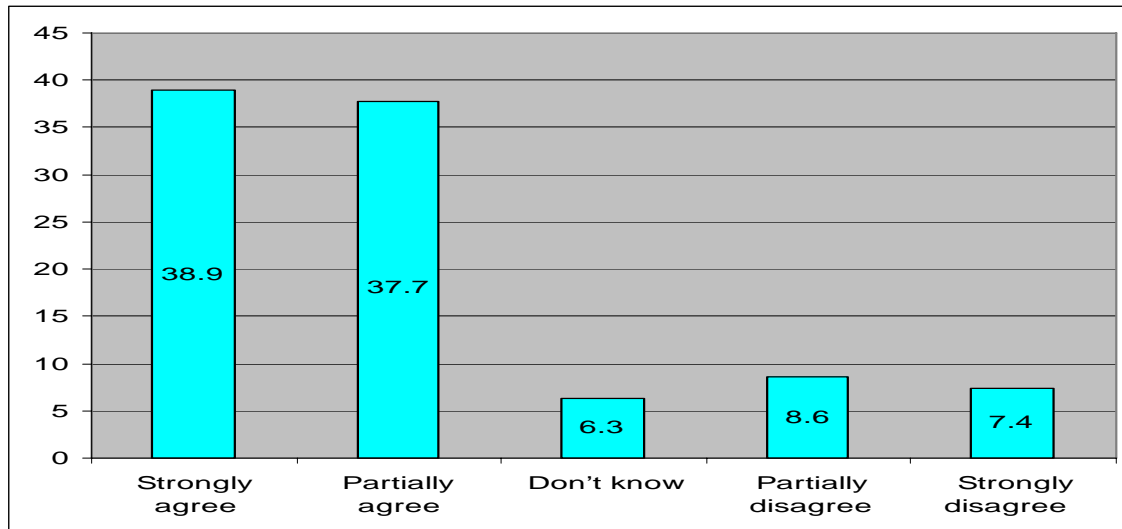


Figure 20: Diagnosing learners’ skills

Within the context and concept of inclusive education, teachers were expected to identify learner’s needs. There was a growing need for training in this area as shown by **76.6%** (38.9% strongly agreed and 37.7% partially agreed) of the novice teachers compared to **16%** who indicated no need for training.

From the teachers’ responses, skills on how to identify learners’ needs seemed to be highly needed. Teachers felt they did not have the necessary skills; thus the expressions:

“Learners are having different needs so to say. So identifying needs, we need training on how to go about identifying learners’ needs in this regard”.

“How do you go about identifying these learners? We really need training on how you can identify that this learner has this need and how do you go about that one”.

“By just looking at the learner, you may not know that this learner has this need”.

3.1.21 Counselling skills

Learners face a number of behavioural and emotional problems that interfere with learning and progress at school. Counselling skills are therefore deemed necessary if the teachers were to enable learners overcome such problems. Figure 21 presents findings regarding whether novice teachers saw counselling skills as an area where they needed training.

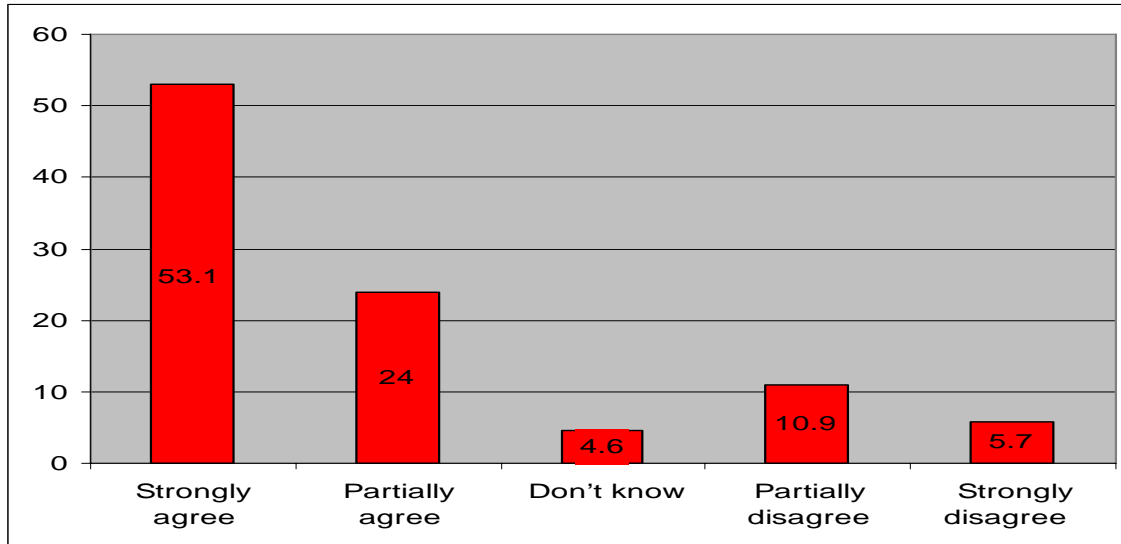


Figure 21: Counselling skills

It seemed very apparent according to novice teachers' responses that counselling was not adequately catered for within the teacher training program. Training on counselling skills was highly needed as **77.1%** (53.1% strongly agreed and 24% partially agreed) indicated the need for training. **16.6%** of the novice teachers did not seem to need training.

The novice teachers were not contented with the prevailing patterns of school dropout, family abuse and teenage pregnancies. Due to such patterns, novice teachers wanted counselling skill training to prepare them as teacher counsellors. They wished that every teacher should possess counselling skills:

“Learners have different problems and therefore a teacher has to play the role of a counsellor”

“We need to counsel learners, especially those who are dropping out of school, we need training”.

“And there are those learners with problems with their families like the abuse and whatsoever; we also need to know how to counsel those learners”.

“Some other issues that we are facing are pregnancy at school also, how do we counsel that particular learner. Say for example is pregnant for instance in grade 6 or 7, that thing is happening. There are learners who are pregnant in grade 7; how do you counsel such a learner to come back to school? We need training”.

3.1.22. Dealing with orphans and vulnerable children

Regarding novice teachers training needs in dealing with orphans and vulnerable children, the findings are as follows:

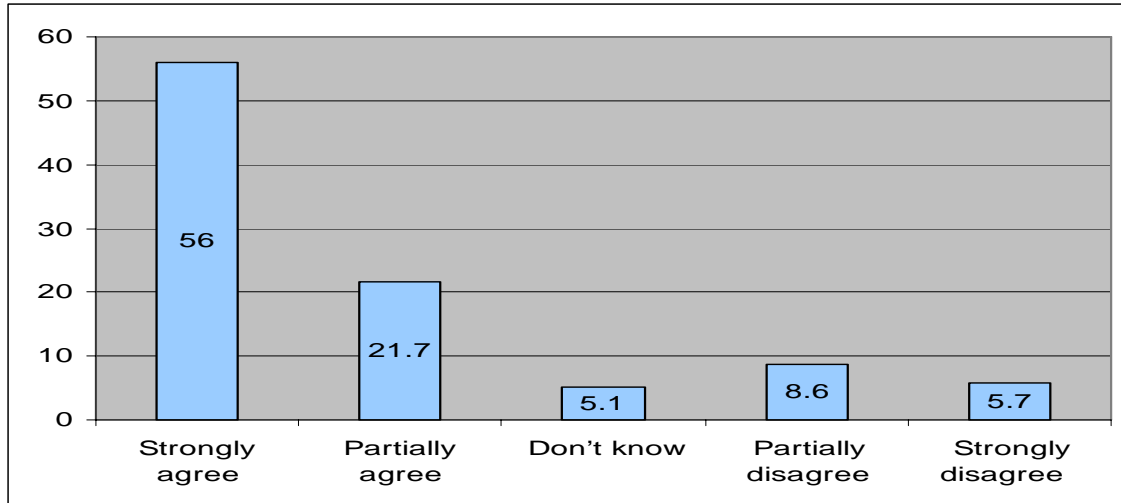


Figure 22: Dealing with orphans and vulnerable children

The impact of HIV and AIDS, poverty and the decreasing social support system in the communities has increased the prevalence of orphans and vulnerable learners in schools. The need for training on how to deal with these groups of learners was supported by **77.7%** (56% strongly and 21.7% partially agreed) of the novice teachers. On the contrary, very few (**14.3%** in total disagreed) novice teachers disagreed on the need for training on how to deal with orphans and vulnerable children.

These responses were confirmed by teachers' responses during the interview testimonies. Novice teachers wanted to be equipped with the necessary skills especially counselling skills as well as how to handle various social cases affecting learners at school:

“the vulnerable children at school, need to be taken care of by us teachers, because we are regarded as parents, you know, they need love those people so to say, they need care. So you know, we would really need training on how to go about helping these kids, not just about providing money, they also need counselling”.

“Orphans need counselling; so how do you go about counselling those learners. We need training also. It is very much different counselling an orphan and one who is facing abuse at home”.

3.1.23. Completing administration documents

Handling of certain administration documents constitutes other roles of the teacher. Results pertaining to training needs in this regard are presented in Figure 23.

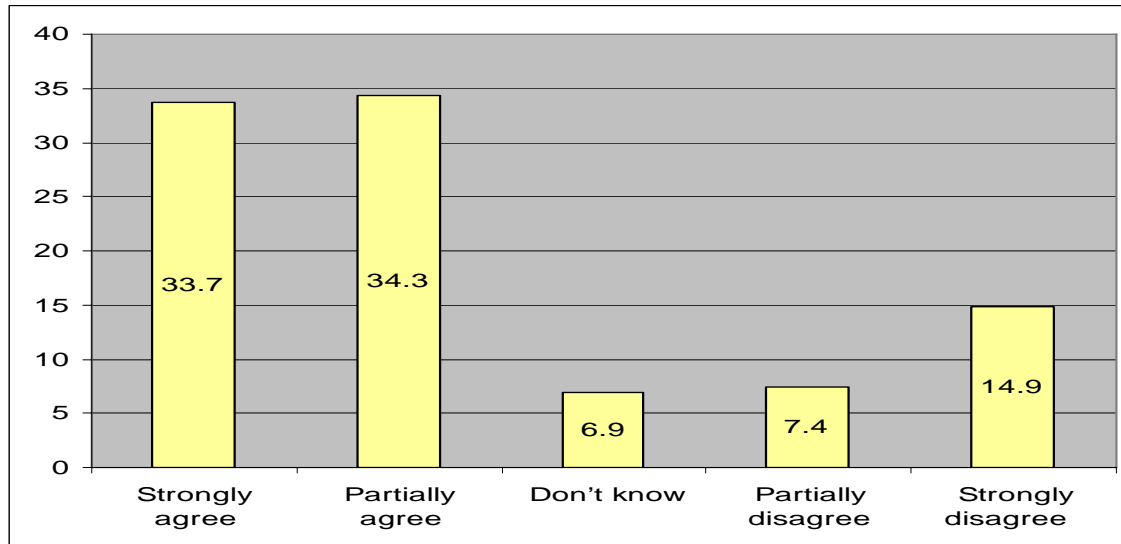


Figure 23: Completing administration documents

The responses of the novice teachers on how to handle administrative documents shows that there was a need for training in this area as **68%** (33.7% strongly and 34.3% partially agreed) indicated so. This evidence supposes that teacher training programs did not include the completion of administrative documents. On the hand **22.3%** did not seem to need training in this area.

3.1.24. Understanding the teachers' professional ethos, values and work relations

Results on whether beginner teachers require training on understanding the teachers' professional ethos, values and work relations are presented in Figure 24 below:

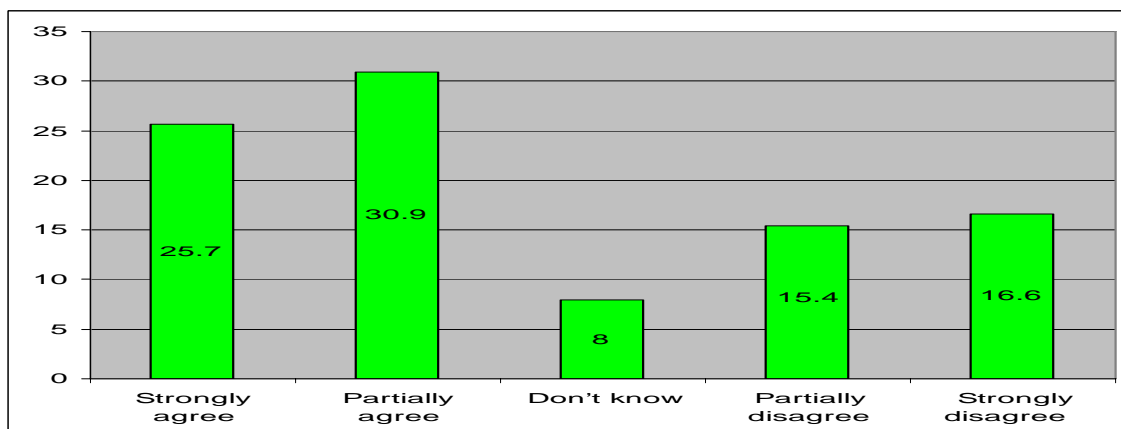


Figure 24: Understanding the teachers' professional ethos, values and work relations

It was surprising to note that novice teachers indicated that they needed training on understanding the teacher professional ethos, values and working relations (**56.6%** in total agreed). One would have expected professional ethos, values and working relations to be embedded into the teacher training programs. The results, however, showed the opposite as only **32%** did not need training.

These views were also articulated during interviews. Novice teachers wanted training to focus on collegial work relations and professional ethos. It was worth noting that many of novice teachers seemed to know about the professional ethos especially on the dress code.

3.1.25. Obtaining and using various resources for teaching

Regarding the need for professional development of novice teachers on obtaining and using various resources for teaching, the findings are presented in figure 25.

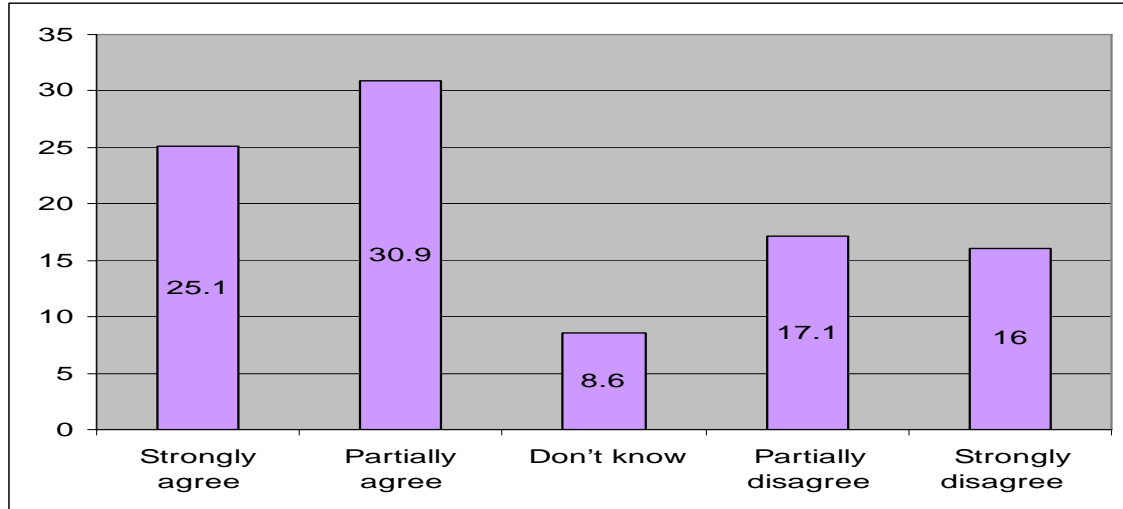


Figure 25: Obtaining and using various resources for teaching

56% of novice teachers felt they needed training on how and where to obtain and how use various resources for teaching. More than a third (33.1%) of the novice teachers who did not need training seemed to have been in training programs where this aspect was sufficiently covered. This was surprising because teacher training programs were expected to have this component as a module. It was most likely that this aspect pointed to another need for inducting beginner teachers on where to locate and how to develop resources necessary for teaching within their work environment. The lack of resources frustrated teachers:

“Yes, for other teachers it might be easy, like in my case I teach keyboard and word processing; I am finding it very difficult because sometimes, because some of work I need learners to go on internet, but we don’t have those resources of internet”.

Other novice teachers wanted assistance on how to use a variety of teaching and learning resources within the specified time. Teachers were concerned about this situation:

“Sometimes you will find that in one lesson, you will need to use more teaching aids, but sometimes what normally kills us as teachers is time. So really, we really don’t know how to manage time using these kinds of materials; at the end of the day you find that you have not managed your time very well. And the aids are not used also so you know we really need the skills on how to go about using these different teaching aids and different varieties of teaching materials”.

3.1.26. Application of learner-centred teaching methods and principles

Learner-centred pedagogy was adopted shortly after Namibia's independence as an official pedagogical approach to be used in schools. One aspect of this study was to investigate whether beginner teachers required training on the application of learner-centred methods and principles. Figure 26 illustrates the findings.

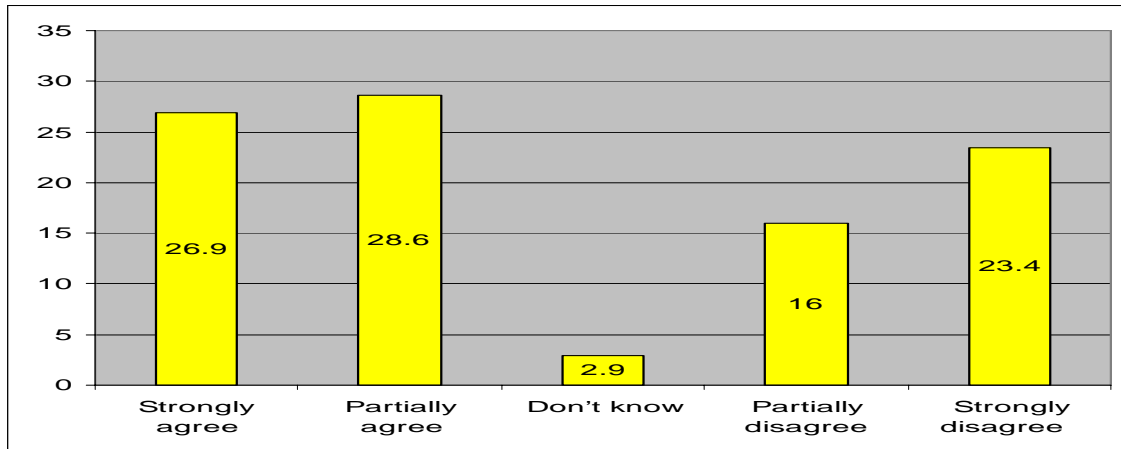


Figure 26: Application of learner centred teaching methods and principles

This figure presents the need for training on the principles of Learner Centred Education. The results showed that the principle of learner-centred education was not well understood by many teachers. It was therefore not surprising to note that **55.5%** (26.9% strongly and 28.6% partially agreed) of the novice teachers indicated that they needed training on the application of Learner Centred teaching methods and principles. **39.4%** (23.4% strongly and 16% partially disagreed) of the novice teachers did not need training.

According to teachers' responses, they wanted training to cover the philosophy and principles of Learner Centred Education in much more detail. Most of them claimed that what they received at the teacher training institutions was not enough. Not much was done:

"I think what I received was not that much enough. So there are certain things that I don't know about Learner Centred Education".

"I think I need an in depth understanding of Learner Centred Education, what does Learner Centred Education require. Even though at the college we were taught what Learner Centred Education is; and the distinction between Learner Centred and Teacher Centred, I don't think it is enough".

"I want to know about this philosophy Learner Centred Education".

3.1.27. Problem solving and conflict management skills

Problem solving and conflict management are essential skills for all teachers. Conflicts at schools occur among teachers as well as learners. Thus, teachers most likely needed knowledge and training on how to handle such situations when they occurred inside and outside the

classroom. Findings on whether this was an area on which beginner teachers needed training are presented in Figure 27 below.

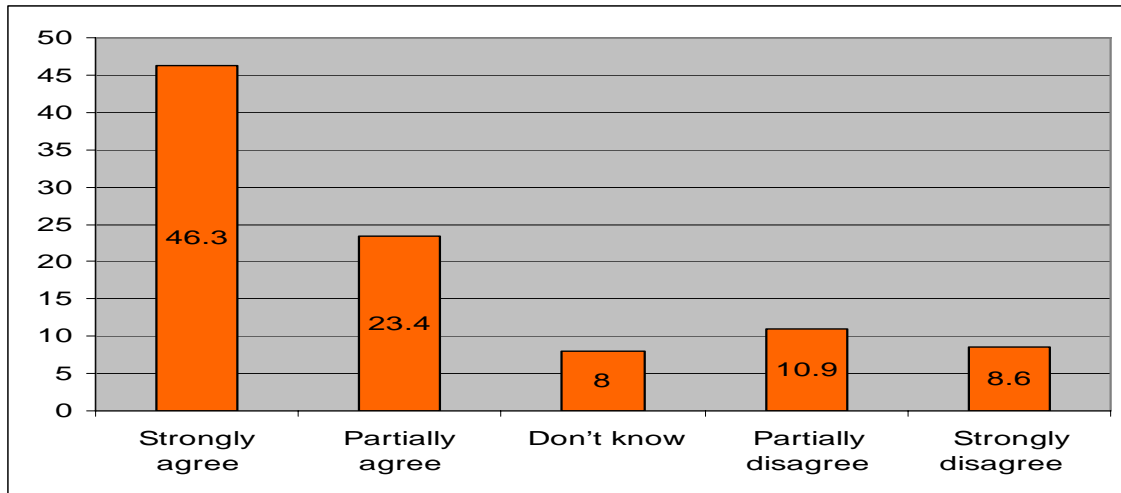


Figure 27: Problem solving and conflict management

As seen in Figure 27, many teachers (**69.7%** of which 46.3% strongly and 23.4% partially agreed) agreed that they needed training in problem solving and conflict management skills compared to **19.5%** who disagreed. This denoted that there was a need for training in problem solving and conflict management.

When asked what the training components should be, most of them wanted to be equipped with some basics of problem solving; as well as conflict management skills. It could be concluded that this skill was noted important due to the fact that so many conflicts arise in work places, and knowing how to deal with such situations should be emphasized.

3.1.28. Using a variety of assessment strategies

Figure 28 presents the need for training on the use of a variety of assessment strategies.

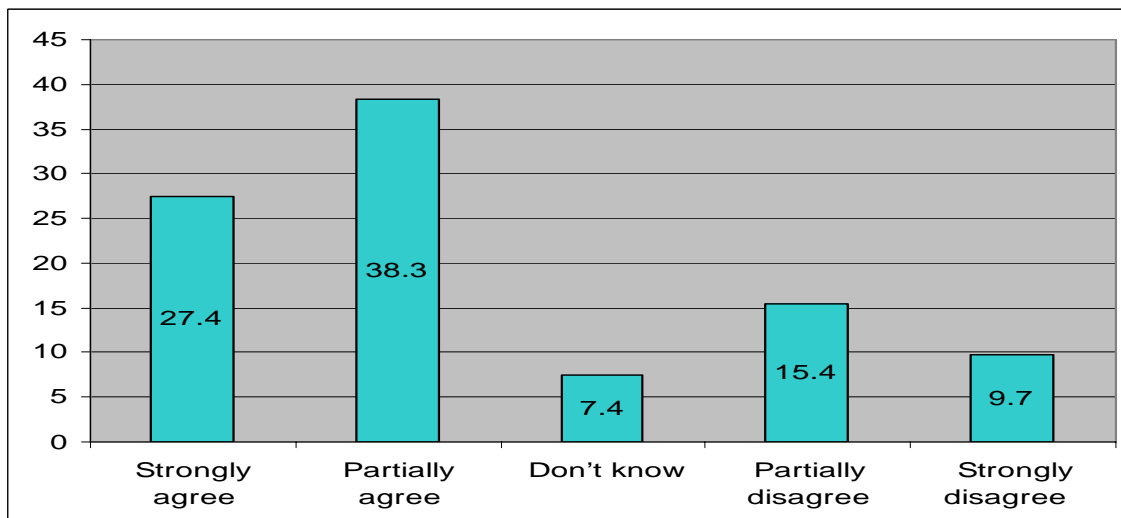


Figure 28: Using a variety of assessment strategies

The results presented in Figure 28 infer that assessment of learners seemed to be a problem among novice teachers. This was indicated by the novice teachers' responses that they needed training on the use of a variety of assessment strategies (65.7% of which 27.4% strongly agreed and 38.3% partially agreed) compared to 25.1% did need training.

When asked during interviews what specific issues should be addressed? They pointed out that they needed assistance on the principles of Continuous Assessment, when to assess or not to assess, what to assess and how to assess:

“I think I will need training on continuous assessment itself. Because, you know, say we are doing it, but I think it is not more effective. Say we are not doing it the way it is stipulated. So, we need assistance on that one, how do you go about it, when do you need to assess, when shouldn't we assess?”

3.1.29. Time management in school context and in general

Time management skills are essential to all teachers. Figure 29 presents findings on whether beginner teachers required training on time management skills.

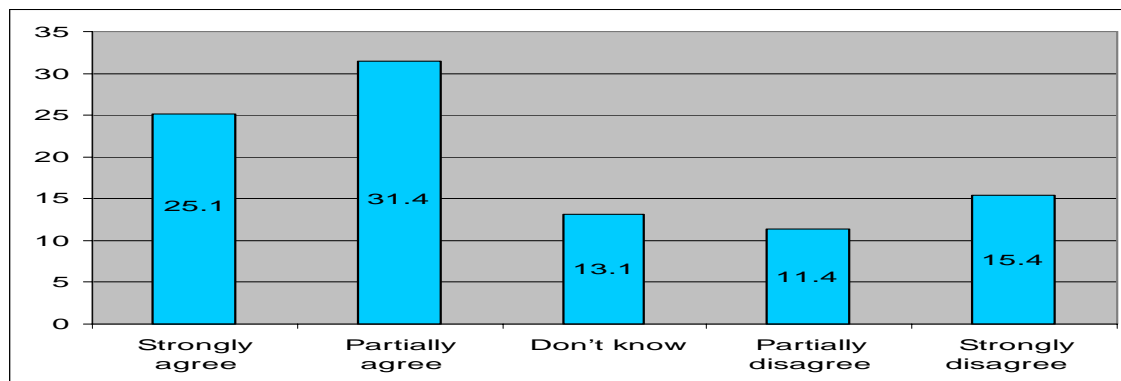


Figure 29: Time management in school context and in general

Evident in Figure 29, a majority of beginner teachers, 56.5% (25.1% strongly agree and 31.4% partially agree), indicated that they needed training on time management. Only about a quarter (26.8%) of the teachers indicated that they did not need training on time management.

Although the outcome of the survey does not reflect much on the need for training in this area, some teachers pointed out few issues that they felt should form part of the training. The most common one was assistance on how to plan lessons, without overloading or devalue the lesson contents. Some of them realized that planning to do too many things in one period affected time and the use of a variety of teaching strategies and resources:

“...when we normally plan, we used to plan a lot of things, so in my situation when I started I used to plan a lot of things. Let me just give an example, one day I was teaching about plant processes; so when you talk about plant processes, we are talking about four plant processes. So the first time how I tackled this you know, this chapter, I tackled them the same time, all the four, to an extent that the learners could not understand. When I gave an exercise, I found that learners did not understand what I was teaching. So I think this is one of the problems which we

normally encounter when plan, we intend to put a lot of things so that you finish all at the same time”.

3.1.30. Understanding the education development programme and issues of national level

Findings on whether novice teachers required training on this area are presented in Figure 30.

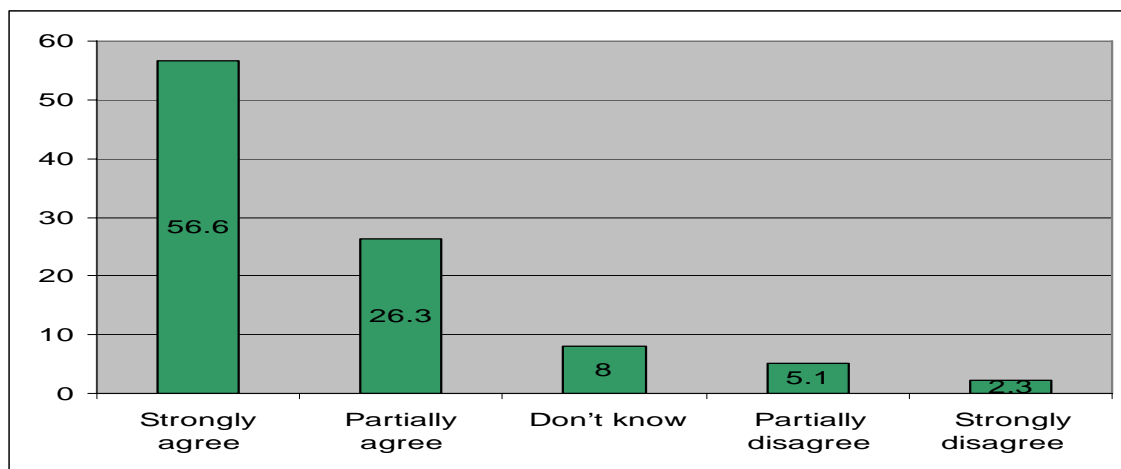


Figure 30: Understanding the education development program and issues of national level

There were strong needs for training on education development programs and issues at the national level as **82.9** (56.6% strongly and 26.3% partially agreed) needed training compared to a **7.4%** (2.3% strongly disagreed and 5.1% partially disagreed) who indicated they did not need training.

The outcome of the interviews confirmed the need for training in understanding different educational programs at the national level. There were indications of lack of understanding of ETSIP and its objective. Most of the novice teachers did not seem to understand what ETSIP entailed. Furthermore, novice teachers indicated the need for being assisted on how to align their planning and teaching to National Standards for Teacher in Namibian. From their responses, one can deduce that a number of teachers may not be aware of some of the national programmes. There was a need to re-look at the ways on how such information had been or would be disseminated to all schools. One would have concurred with the teachers' frustrations:

“ETSIP, whatever you call it, because it is my second time hearing about it. Someone needs to explain what it is to me. I only heard about it when the director was talking about ETSIP, ETSIP in the meeting, that's all. I don't know what it means”.

“I don't have much knowledge on that one. I need assistance on this, I really need it, I don't know about ETSIP”.

3.1.31. Understanding the national external school evaluation process

The National External Schools Evaluation (NESE) is a new activity in Namibian schools aimed at quality assurance. As illustrated in Figure 31 below, it appeared that not many novice teachers

were aware of what was expected of them when visited by the evaluation team. The results of this observation are presented in figure 31.

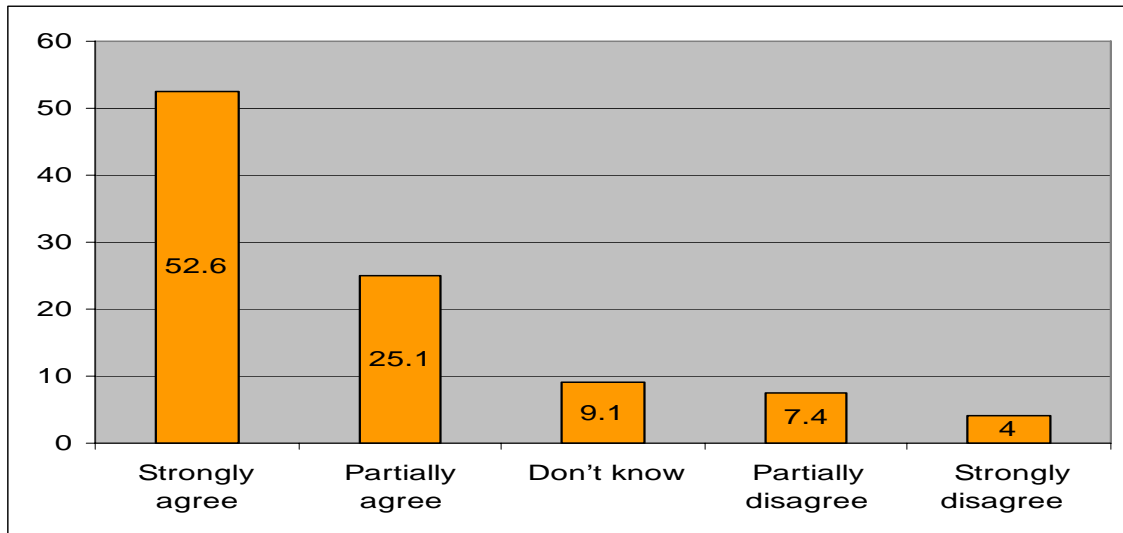


Figure 31: Understanding the national school evaluation process

It can be inferred from Figure 31 that novice teachers needed training in order to understand the national evaluation requirements. It was therefore not surprising that **77.7%** (52.6% strongly and 25.1% partially agreed) of the novice teachers needed training compared to **7.8%** who disagreed most likely received the training and thus saw no need for further training.

3.1.32. Understanding the condition of employment and service benefits

Findings are presented in figure 32:

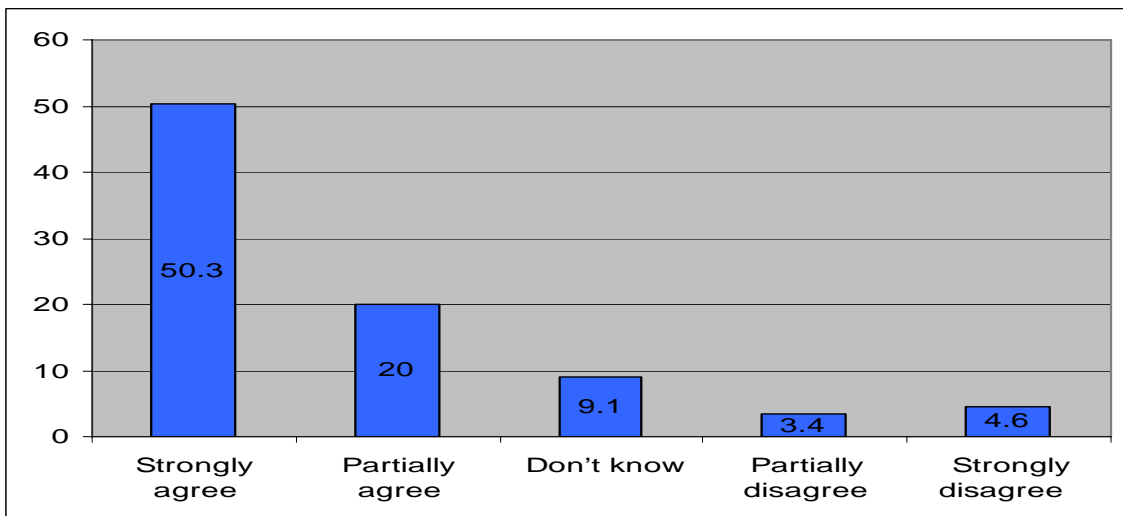


Figure 32: Understanding the condition of employment and service benefits

It was apparent that beginner teachers would have little knowledge on the condition of employment and benefits destined to them. This conclusion followed the responses of the majority of the teachers (**70.3%** of which 50.3% strongly and 20% partially agreed) on the need

for training on this area. Those who indicated don't know (9.1%) showed lack of information on the rights and privileges they might miss as civil servants.

3.2 Rank order of Novice Teachers Training Needs

In order to give a clear picture, training needs of novice teachers were rank ordered starting with the area where the highest need for training was expressed. Table 1 below presents the rank order.

Table 1: Training needs of novice teachers – rank ordered

	% YES	% NO
Understanding the education development program and issues at national level.	82.9	7.4
Understanding and adhering to mentoring, coaching and professional support program.	77.7	9.1
Understanding the National External School Evaluation process	77.7	7.8
Dealing with orphans and vulnerable children	77.7	14.3
Counselling skills	77.1	16.6
Diagnosing learners' needs	76.6	16
Application of ICT skills on daily classroom situation.	71.4	19.5
Understanding the Broad Curriculum	70.3	19.4
Understanding the conditions of employment and service benefits.	70.3	8
Problem solving and conflict management skills	69.7	19.5
Completing administrative documents	68	22.3
Understanding and applying inclusive education	66.8	23.5
Development of scheme of work	65.7	24
Use of a variety of assessment strategies	65.7	25.1
Multi-grade teaching	65.1	18.3
Maintaining learners discipline in and outside the classroom	64.5	29.2
Application of different teaching and learning strategies	62.3	29.4
Motivation skills	61.7	23.5
Effective teaching of literacy skills	61.7	24
Classroom management and organization	60	31.4
Understanding the teacher professional ethos, values and working relations	56.6	32
Time management in the school context and in general	56.5	26.8
Obtaining and using various resources for teaching	56	33.1
Application of learners centered teaching methods and principles	55.5	39.4
Interpretation of syllabus	54.3	32
Reflection on own teaching and learning practices	50.9	35.5
Effective lesson planning and presentation	49.7	41.1
Communication with parents	46.3	38.2
Understanding the school culture and adaptation skills	45.7	15.5
Communication with stakeholders	36.6	19.5
Communication with the teachers	33.2	53.7
Communication with the principal	32.6	45.2

Table 1 presents a summary of novice teachers' needs rank ordered from the highest to the lowest percentage of teachers who needed training. As can be seen in this table, 70-83% of the novice teachers needed training on issues pertaining to education development programs, mentoring, coaching and support programs, national external school evaluation, handling orphans and vulnerable children, counselling of learners, diagnosing learners' needs, ICT skills, the Broad Curriculum and conditions of employment and service benefits, and this constituted about 25% of the total number of skills in this study. 52% of the skills were identified by 50-69% of the teachers as areas they needed training. Among such skills were problem and conflict

management, multi grade teaching, classroom management and organization, time management, and interpretation of the syllabus. The remaining 34% of the skills seemed to be possessed by the majority of teachers because only 49-33% of the novice teachers needed training on lesson planning and presentation, communication with stakeholders, parents, teachers and principals, and also understanding the school culture and adaptation skills.

3.2. The Training Needs of Prospective Mentor Teachers

3.2.1. Effective classroom observation of novice teacher

Effective classroom observation is a skill that a mentor teacher needs in order for him to observe how novice teachers teach and support accordingly. Thus, one aspect of the study was to investigate whether mentor teachers needed training in this regard. The findings are presented in Figure 33.

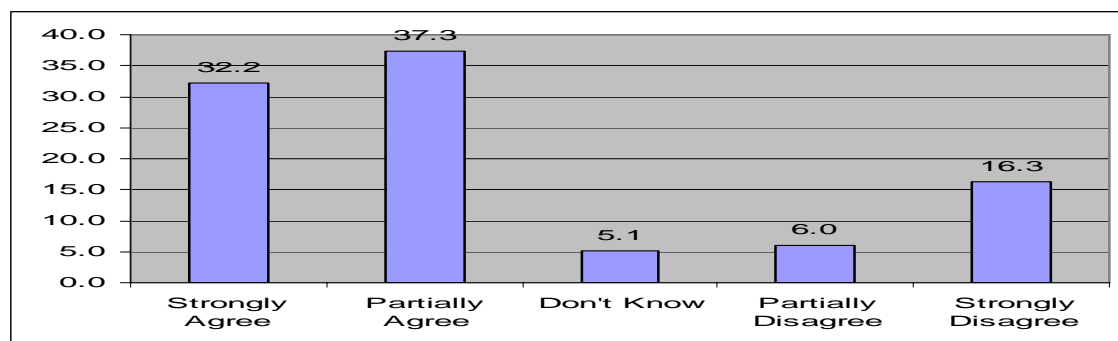


Figure 33: Effective classroom observation of the novice teacher

The results in this figure illustrate that prospective mentor teachers needed training in this area as 37.3% partially agreed and 32.2% strongly agreed (**69.5%**) compared to 16.3% who strongly disagreed & 6.0% who partially disagreed (**22.3%**).

It was also clear from the teachers' responses that mentor teachers needed this skill. They suggested that the training should focus on LCE methods and strategies and clarification of the classroom observation instrument (the ministerial observation form 4a and 4b):

"...during our time of the BETD, we were not getting learner-centred skills properly from our teacher educators". One teacher suggested that a similar training be initiated for college lecturers as well as some of them seemed to lack the skill; and this is how the teacher put it: *"We need a lot of training also for the lecturers in order for them to train students on learner-centered approach".*

3.2.2. Analytical and diagnostic skills

Both analytical and diagnostic skills require a high level of thinking, reasoning and reflection and many prospective mentor teachers in this study wanted to strengthen these skills through professional development/training (**68.6%** of which 27.5% partially agree & 41.1% strongly agree).

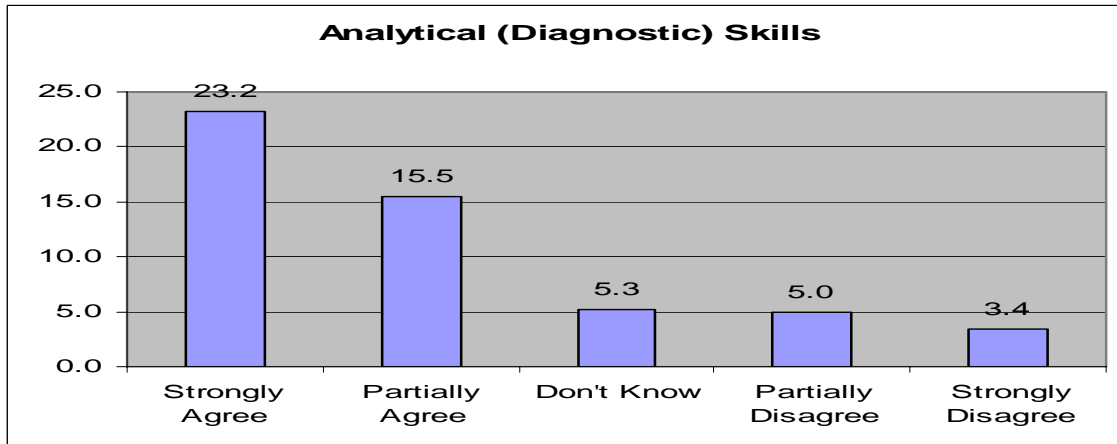


Figure 34: Analytical and diagnostic skills

Only a small percentage of **14.8%** (6.0% strongly disagree & 8.8% partially disagree) did not seem to need training in analytical and diagnostic skills.

Similarly, all teachers interviewed indicated that they needed the skill. Some of them claimed that senior teachers too needed the skill as not everybody could identify learners' needs:

“Yes, very much...we need those skills. Because it is difficult even if it is not a novice teacher, some of the teachers, senior teachers even, they still cannot identify a learner and be able to help a learner who has a problem. It is also hampering some of the learners though we end up saying that the learner is not doing well or this learner has a problem because the teacher does not have that skill to diagnose and see that this child it is because of ABC that is why the child is in this way”.

3.2.3. Problem solving skills

The results on whether prospective mentor teachers required training on problem solving skills are presented in Figure 35.

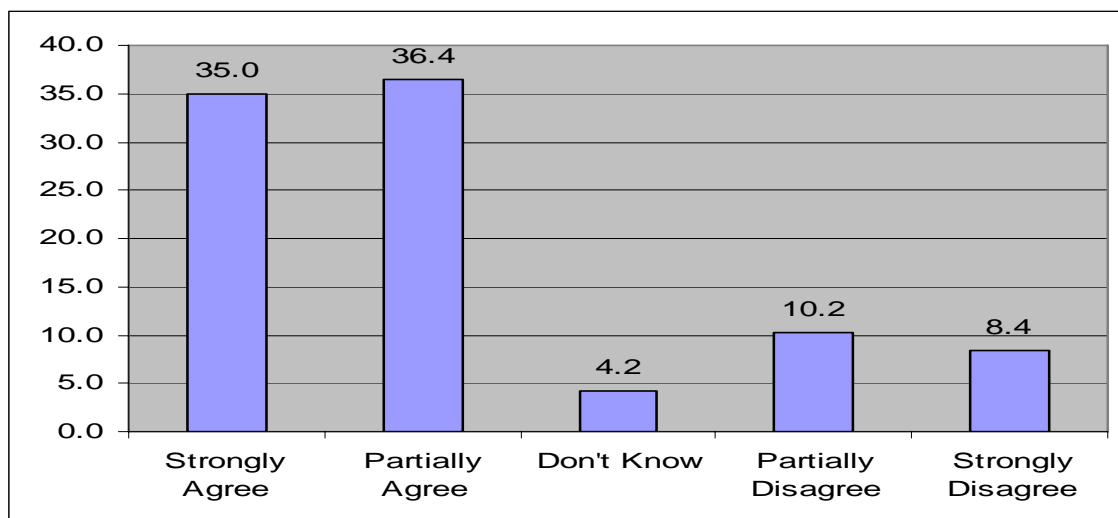


Figure 35: Problem solving skills

Teachers encountered problems almost every day in their practice. It was therefore imperative that they possess sound problem solving skills in order to deal with such situations. Hence there was a need for mentor teachers to help beginner teachers developing such skills. However, that would only be possible if mentor teachers were equipped with the necessary skills of empowering novice teachers. The results showed that prospective mentor teachers needed training in this area as **71.4%** (36.4% partially agree & 35.0% strongly agree) indicated so and only 8.4% strongly disagree & 10.2% partially disagree (**18.6%**).

3.2.4. Lesson presentation skills

The ability to present effective lessons cannot be overemphasized. It was a skill that every teacher needed particularly the mentor teachers who would be expected to provide models of good practice to novice teachers. The mentor teachers' training needs in this area were investigated and the results are presented in figure 36.

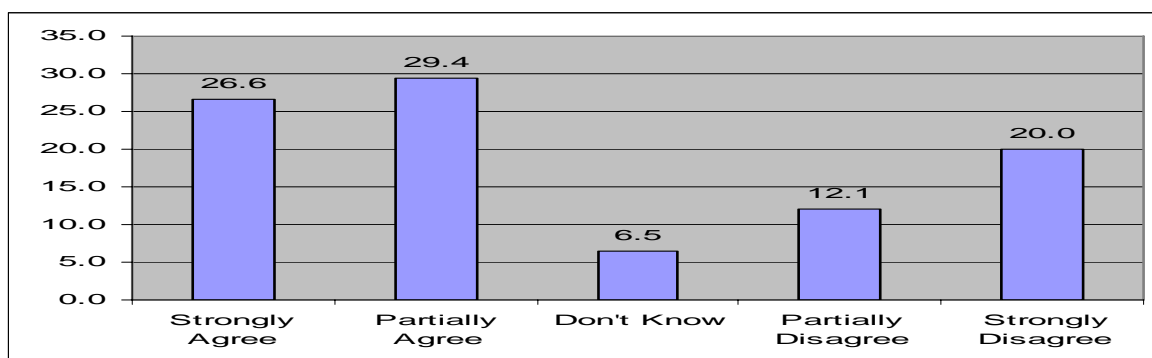


Figure 36: Lesson presentation skills

This figure shows that **56.0%** (29.4% partially agree & 26.6% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed training on lesson presentation skills, and only **32.1%** (20.0% strongly disagree & 12.1% partially disagree) did not find it necessary.

This inferred that many of them did not have the skill and the know-how of helping novice teachers develop good presentation skills. Supportive evidence from interviews showed that mentor teachers needed assistance on content knowledge, the language competence, classroom management, LCE strategies and many of them found the lack of materials and resources in schools as an obstacle:

“The problem lies with English itself, whereby some of the teachers cannot interpret what the syllabus means. They cannot even analyze what they mean by this or that”.

The lack of learning support materials and resources was a concern of almost all the mentor teachers interviewed. They blamed the government. However, others had different perspectives. They felt that teachers should be creative enough in improvising and using the local environment. Others needed training on how to use some of the available resources and materials in their schools. From these responses one can infer that the problem in some schools was not availability of teaching materials but lack of knowledge on the usage of the available teaching materials in schools.

3.2.5. Assisting novice teachers in classroom management

Handling and managing diverse classrooms could be a challenge particularly to novice teachers. Mentor teachers therefore would have the responsibility of assisting novice teachers acquiring these skills. Figure 37 illustrates the findings on this area.

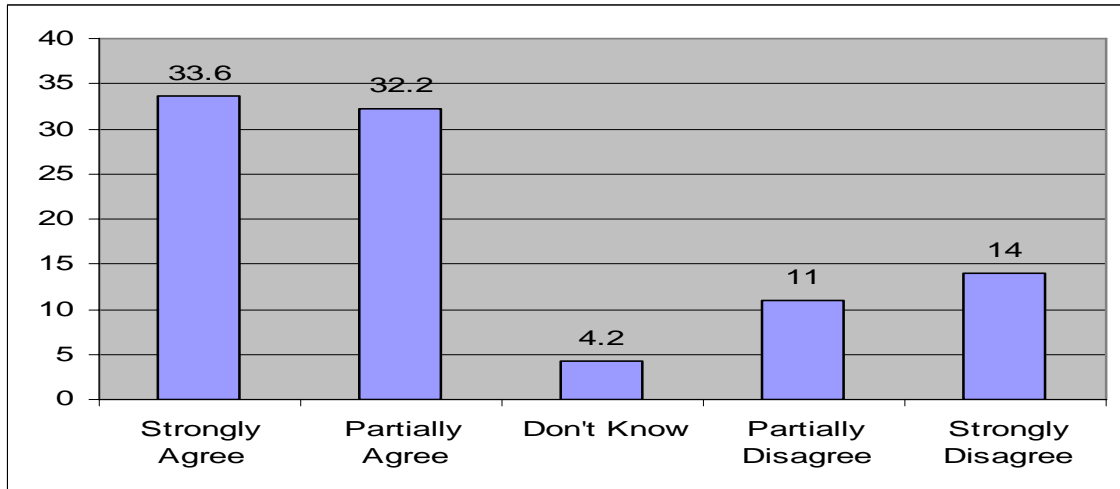


Figure 37: Assisting novice teachers in classroom management

The results show that **65.8%** (32.2% partially agree & 33.6% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed training in order to assist novice teachers acquire skills in classroom management as compared to **25%** (14% strongly disagree & 11% partially disagree) who did not seem to need training.

By inference, it meant that mentor teachers could be able to assist novice teachers in attaining good classroom management skills before training. The responses from interviews supported this need. The following aspects of classroom management were identified: preparation of different activities for different learner abilities and ways of disciplining learners. Some teachers claimed that making lessons interesting curbs indiscipline. From these responses we could infer that mentor teachers needed help on how they could help novice teachers make their lessons interesting:

“The programme should focus on, for instance, issues like how a teacher can prepare different activities for different learners because that is where we have a problem whereby you have to design activities for a fast learner, a medium learner and average one and the learner who needs more help”.

“They will all do the same thing while it is not supposed to be the case. It is not supposed to be like that because each learner has to be helped according to his or her own ability”.

Some mentor teachers argued that teachers who are well prepared and who know the subject content well enough enable learners understand the content and improve classroom management. Thus, control indiscipline:

”Also when you are well prepared, you know the content of the lesson and you give that content to the learners whereby the learners will understand what the teacher wants them to know. It usually helps the teacher to manage the class very well”.

3.2.6. Developing reflective and critical inquiring skills

The results are presented in figure 38.

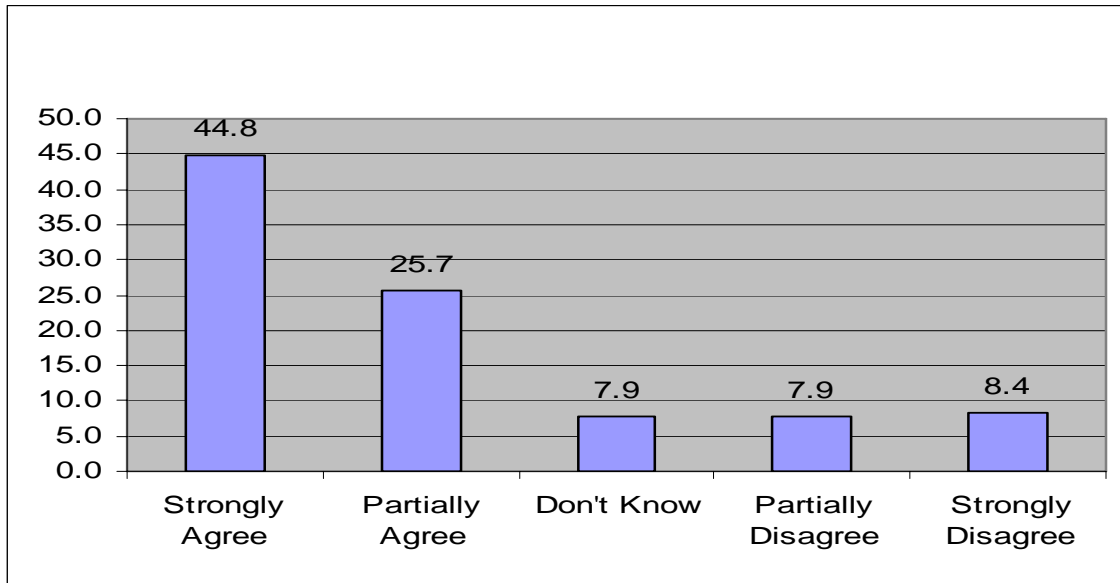


Figure 38: Developing reflective and critical inquiring skills

The results in figure 38 show that **70.5%** (25.7% partially agree and 44.8% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed professional development on reflection and critical inquiry. It would have been interesting finding out if **16.3%** (8.4% strongly disagree and 7.9% partially disagree) of the prospective mentor teachers who did not seem to need assistance reflected on their own practice. Furthermore, if they did what avenues do they use and how often as this seemed not to be a common practice by many teachers.

The teachers’ responses clearly indicated that teachers indeed needed the skill. Accordingly, the training should focus on how they could go about assisting novice teachers carry out action research in their classrooms as well as how they could help novice teachers evaluate their lessons:

“... for me to help a novice teacher in class to identify some issues and also to reflect back on what happened, what went wrong and what went right, I also need some expertise to tell or show the novice teacher... That is where the mentor needs help. How can I as a mentor make my novice teacher to be able to identify his/her weaknesses in the lesson?”

3.2.7. Interpretation and administration of official documents

Official documents are the guidelines of what teachers should do. If teachers could not interpret and administer the documents then no effective teaching could take place. Findings on whether this was an area of need in terms of mentor teacher training are presented in figure 39.

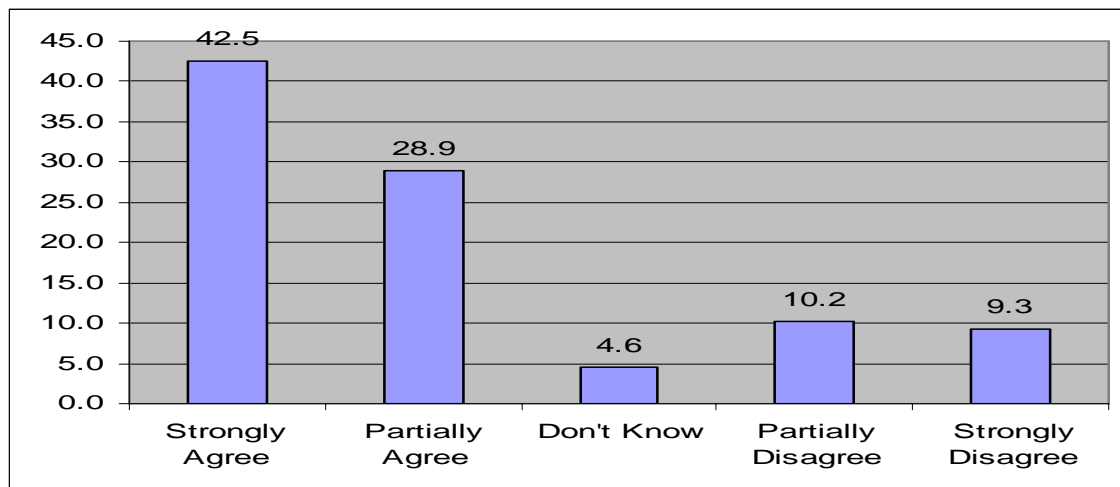


Figure 39: Interpretation and administration of official documents

Evident in Figure 39, the majority (**71.4%** of which 28.9% partially agree & 42.5% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers indicated a need for training on how to administer and interpret official documents such as syllabuses and teachers' guides. Only **19.5%** (9.3% strongly disagree & 10.2% partially disagree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed no training on assisting novice teachers to interpret and administer official documents.

Teachers interviewed had different views on this skill. Some teachers did not find this skill necessary. They claimed that all prospective mentor teachers should have been quite familiar with most of the official documents. Meanwhile, the remaining had opposing views because they argued that not all prospective mentor teachers could interpret syllabuses especially the learning objectives and basic competencies. They wanted the training to focus on the Broad Curriculum, the subject syllabuses, and other official documents such as the ETSIP Strategic Plan.

3.2.8. Application of ICT in daily classroom situation

The use of ICT in teaching is another emerging issue in schools. Among others, the study investigated whether prospective mentor teachers would have required training on ICT application in order for them to be able to assist novice teachers acquire similar skills. The results are presented in figure 40.

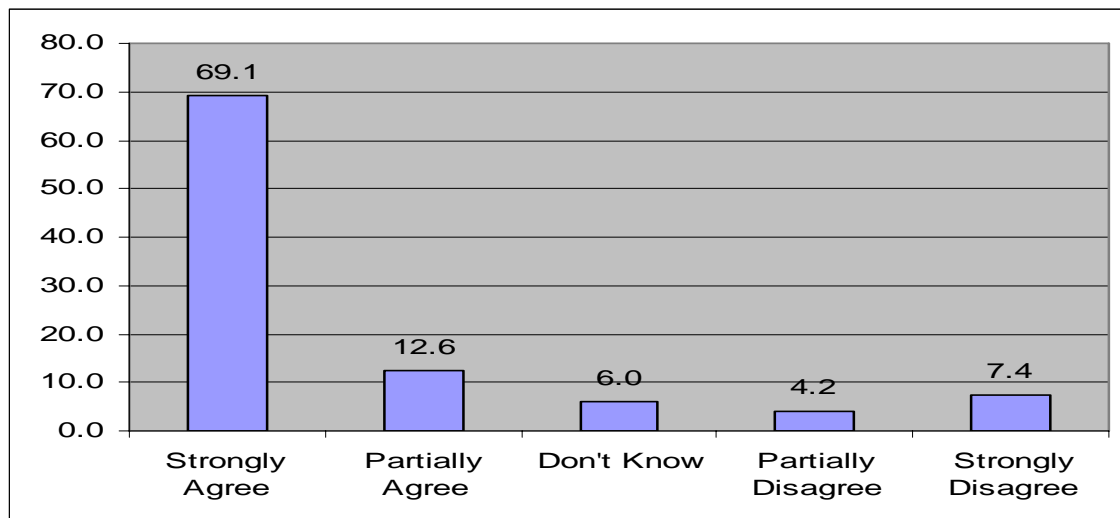


Figure 40: Application of ICT in daily classroom situations

Since the application of ICT skills in daily classroom situations was quite a new phenomenon in education, particularly in Namibia, it was not surprising that a big number of prospective mentor teachers (**81.7%** of which 12.6% partially agree & 69.1% strongly agree) wanted training on how to apply such ICT skills in their daily classroom situations. A small percentage of **11.6%** (7.4% strongly disagree & 4.2% partially disagree) did not need training.

There was no difference of opinions when teachers were interviewed. Most of them wanted to be trained in basic computer skills. It seemed that the teachers could not wait to receive such a skill from either NIED or the ministry:

“So, we need a lot of training from NIED or from the Ministry. We would like to have the knowledge of computers but unless the Ministry or NIED comes in to help us that will not happen”.

Those who were a bit conversant with computers wanted the training to go beyond basic skills and to include advanced computer skills of internet and e-mail. It seemed that some teachers wanted to stay abreast with the latest technology:

“For us it is very difficult, we need to be trained and to get more information and get connected to the world”.

3.2.9. Use of compensatory teaching skills

The rate and level at which learners learn differ and affect teaching and learning. Hence there was a need for compensatory teaching skills to enable slow learners benefit from schooling. Therefore, all teachers needed such skills, particularly mentor teachers who would assist novice teachers. As seen in Figure 41 below, the results seemed to capture what was on the ground as most teachers did not seem to practice compensatory teaching.

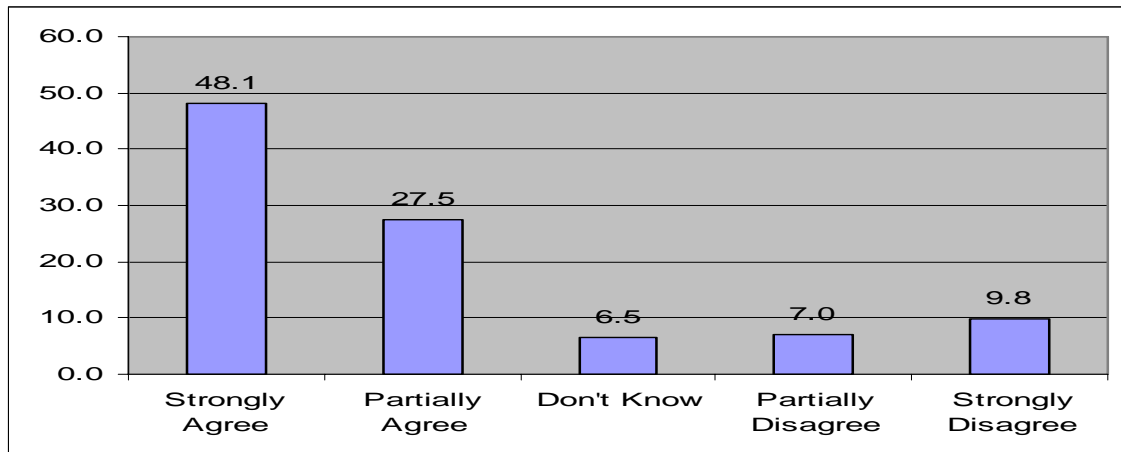


Figure 41: Use of compensatory teaching skills

As illustrated in Figure 41, most of the prospective mentor teachers, **75.6%** (27.5% partially agree and 48.1% strongly agree) indicated that they needed training compared to only **16.8%** (9.8% strongly disagree & 7% partially disagree) who seemed to have the skills. The outcomes of the interviews were supportive to this need.

According to teachers' responses, there were indications of understanding the importance of compensatory teaching as an avenue of learner support. However, mentors teachers wanted additional training that would enhance this skill especially on how to go about doing it, when it should be done and how to motivate learners to take it seriously. The comments below shaded more light on this issue:

"... I can see that compensatory teaching is a helpful thing, because to me is an extra mile that as teacher can go to help, as we know we have slow learners and quick learners that can understand very easily , so with compensatory teaching you can help those left behind".

".....we need training because compensatory teaching is very important if in the first place, you didn't manage or you failed to make learners understand the work that you gave them. You have an extra one, so, at least you need to change, so that you can also make this compensatory teaching effective".

3.2.10. Modelling a variety of subjects related teaching and learning strategies to novice teachers

Novice teachers need to observe mentor teachers teach using a variety of subject-related teaching and learning strategies. This was necessary to help novice teachers see how theory translated into practice. Therefore, mentor teachers would be empowered to do that. Figure 42 presents the findings.

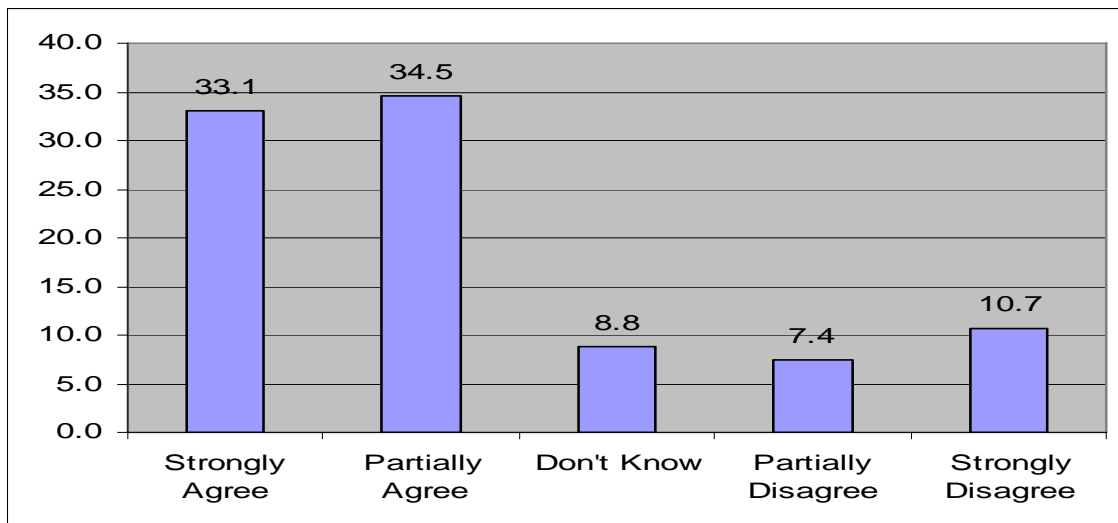


Figure 42: Modelling a variety of subject related teaching and learning strategies

Training was needed as the results show that **67.6%** (34.5% partially agree & 33.1% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed staff development and only **18.1%** (10.7% strongly disagree and 7.4% partially disagree) needed no professional development on modelling a variety of subject related teaching and learning strategies.

The teachers' responses tallied with the findings shown in the figure 42. They needed the skill, since they felt that being in the field for many years they might be new teaching approaches. Hence they did not feel comfortable modelling lessons to novice teachers who they felt might be more knowledgeable and better informed than them. This might imply that they felt intimidated and wanted to be empowered with the latest teaching and learning strategies.

3.2.11. Demonstrating and coaching multi-grade teaching strategies and skills to novice teachers

Although teacher training colleges train student teachers in multi-grade teaching, not all student teachers might have experienced this during SBS due to the fact that most schools did not have multi grade classrooms. Thus, there was a need for mentor teachers to coach them. Findings on whether prospective mentor teachers require training in this regard are illustrated in figure 43.

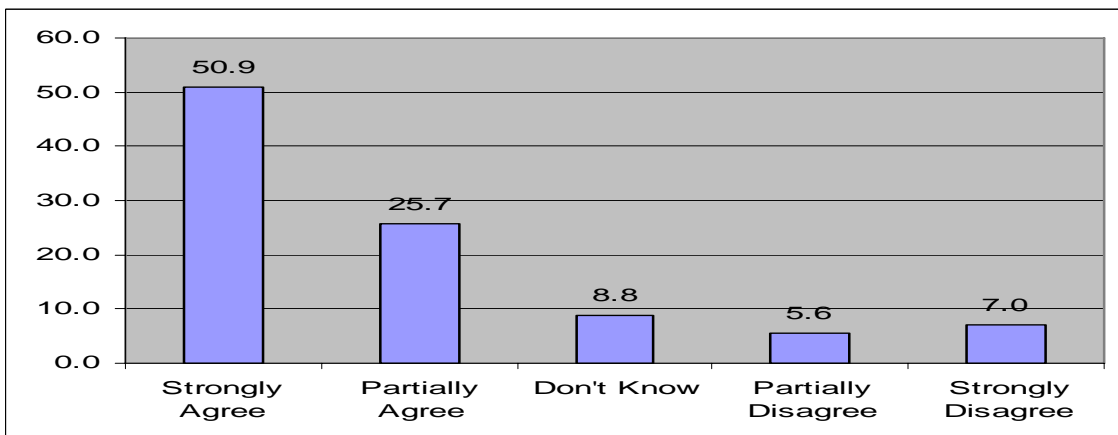


Figure 43: Demonstrating and coaching multi-grade teaching strategies and skills to novice teachers.

As illustrated in Figure 43, a high percentage (**76.6%** of which 25.7% partially agree & 50.9% strongly agree) of prospective mentor teachers needed professional development in multi grade compared to **12.6%** (7% strongly disagree & 5.6% partially disagree) who didn't need training. The teachers' responses did not deviate much from above results.

Many teachers interviewed could not wait for training on multi grade teaching. They highlighted the following challenges: what multi grade teaching entailed, how to administer tasks to different grades and how to handle different grades in one class:

“So I don't have any clue about it. I don't know how to handle two grades in one class. I will need training on that”.

“As we know that things are changing, so we need also to have knowledge if one day you fall in the same situation so that you can operate on the knowledge that you have”.

“And us, also we need to be trained on how maybe to handle all those different grades at once”.

Due to the current dwindling demographic patterns, multi grade classes and most probably the mobile schools are perhaps likely to continue. Hence, where possible, all serving teachers should be equipped with the skill and teacher training institutions should offer multi grade teaching modules.

3.2.12. Using the principles of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of Novice teachers

Lifelong learning is being advocated in Namibia. Therefore, all teachers need to keep on learning in order to stay abreast with current trends in their areas of specialization. It should therefore be the task of mentor teachers to use this principle of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of a novice teacher. Among others, the study investigated whether prospective mentor teachers saw this as an area where they needed training. The findings are presented in Figure 44.

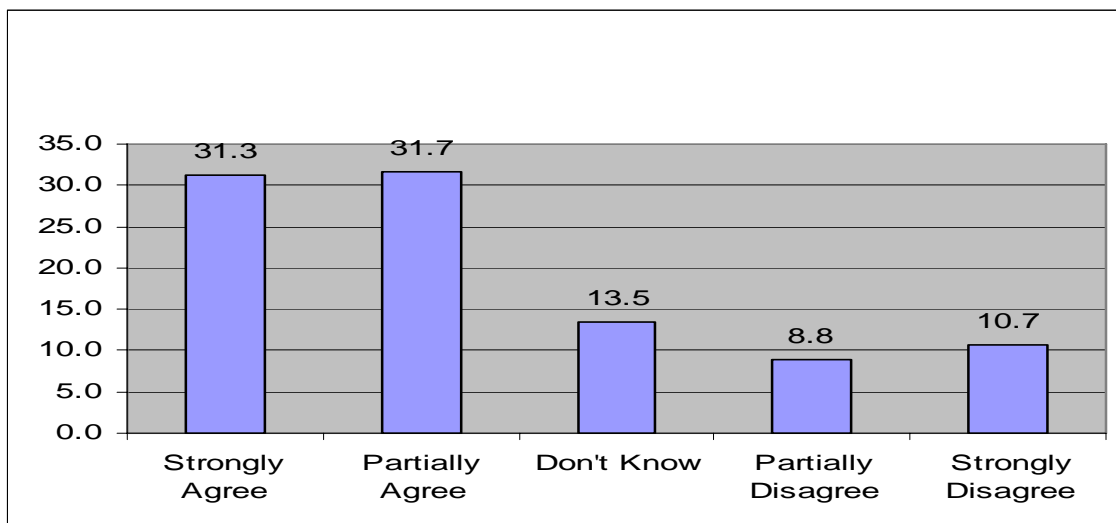


Figure 44: Using the principle of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of novice teachers

The prospective mentor teachers seemed to find training crucial for professional development since **63%** (31.7% partially agree & 31.3 strongly agree) indicated the need for training compared to **19.5%** (10.7 strongly disagree & 8.8% partially disagree) who did not indicate need for training. Based on the findings in figure 44, it could be concluded that there was a need for training of mentor teachers on using the principle of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of novice teachers.

The need for training on this skill was also confirmed through interviews. Prospective mentor teachers understood why there was a need for continuous professional development as encompassed in adult learning:

“As you know, teaching or learning is not something that stops. A person always learns, learning new things”.

Again, some teachers felt that some novice teachers did not recognize the expertise that senior teachers possessed. They sensed that they were undermined and regarded as “old fashioned”. Novice teachers did not seem to realise the potential of senior teachers:

“That they know everything. So those teachers who they will find there, they are old. They feel that they are doing maybe the old fashion. So we need, training on that one - how mostly we can make them understand. So, we also we want to help them”.

Mentor teachers wanted the training to focus on how prospective mentor teachers would have influenced and changed the mindset of the novice teachers.

3.2.13. Assisting novice teachers to understand the school culture and adaptation

As indicated in this report, understanding and adaptation to the school culture was one of the problems that novice teachers were usually faced with. Among others, this study investigated whether prospective mentor teachers needed training in assisting novice teachers to understand and adapt to the school culture. Figure 45 illustrates the findings.

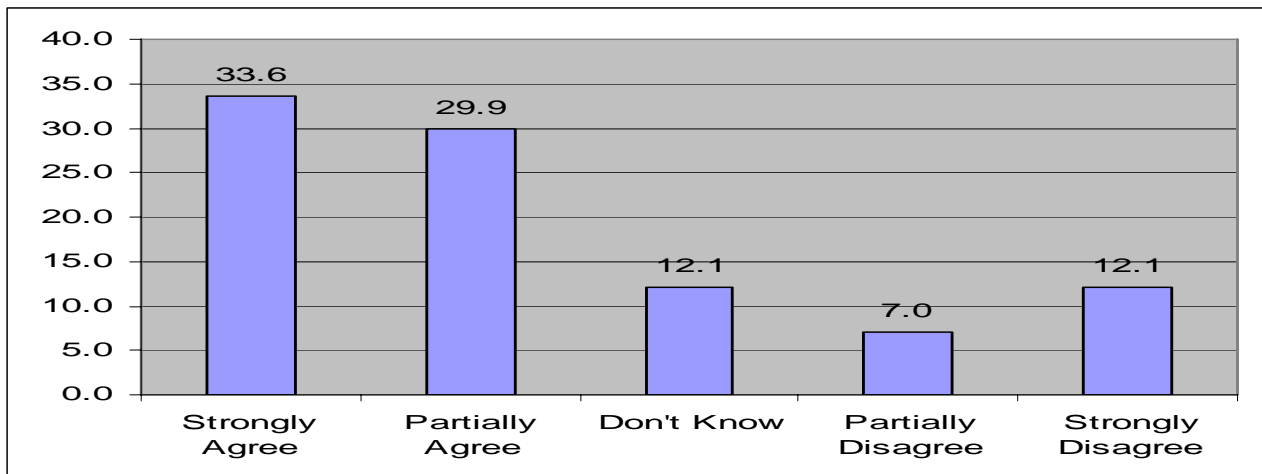


Figure 45: Assisting novice teachers to understand the school culture and adaptation

Figure 45 indicates that 63.5% (29.9% partially agreeing and 33.6% strongly agreeing) of the prospective mentor teachers in the study indicated a need for training in assisting novice teachers understand the school culture and adapt to it. Only 19.1% (12.1% strongly disagreeing and 7% partially disagreeing) indicated no need for training in this area. Assisting novice teachers to understand the school culture and adapt to it was therefore another areas where prospective mentor teachers required training.

The need for training was also confirmed through interviews. Prospective mentor teachers saw this as a challenge as they did not have the skills of putting together a comprehensive induction program. Usually, when they inducted novice teachers, they felt that they lacked in a number of skills and methods essential for assisting the novice teachers. Hence they suggested that if possible, there must be a brochure outlining what ought to be done:

“We don’t really have that brochure, because when I came to the school somebody was responsible for induction. But then later, I was also asked to do induction but then the school does not have anything on paper. The school does not have a brochure which describes what induction means. So, I had to go on my own and read books on what induction means, what you really need to tell a person when you are inducting a person on the new environment. But it is not really that much. That is why I am saying I don’t have skills in that regard. I don’t know what skills you need for you to do a proper induction for a novice teacher”.

3.2.13. Developing a continuous professional development program

In order to render systematic and effective mentoring services, it would be expected that mentor teachers would be able to put together a professional development program or a schedule that novice teacher would follow. Another target of the study was to find out whether prospective mentor teachers saw this as an area where they would need professional development. The findings are presented below.

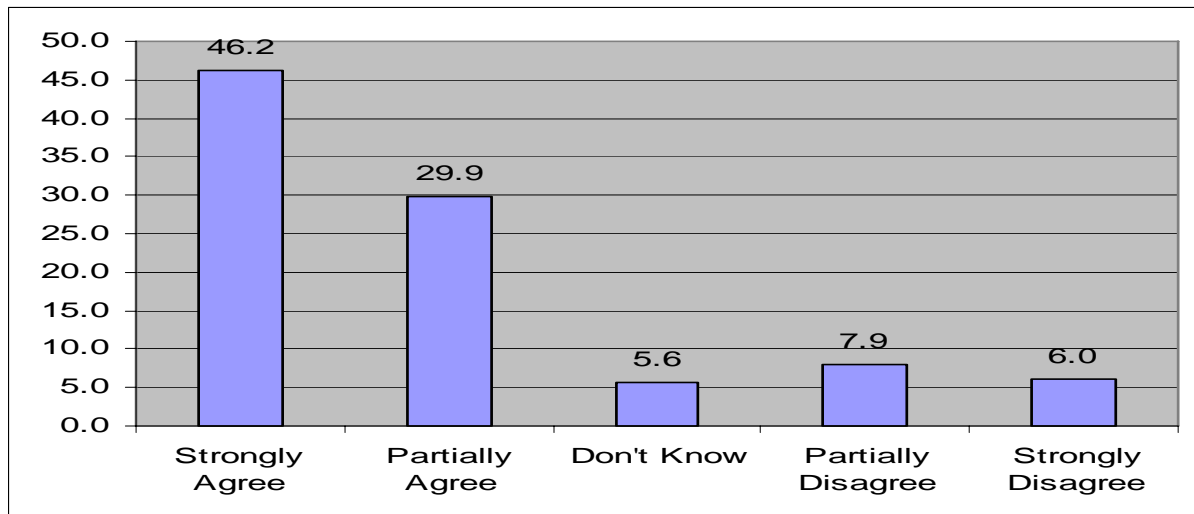


Figure 46: Developing a continuous professional development program.

Figure 46 shows that the majority of prospective mentor teachers participated (76.1% of which 29.9% partially agreed while 46.2% agreed) in the study expressed a need for training in developing a continuous professional development program. Less than one quarter of the

participants (13.9% of which 6% strongly disagreed while 7.9% partially disagreed) expressed no need for training in this area. The extent to which training was needed was also echoed during interviews. It was obvious from their responses that teachers faced challenges:

“It is necessary to develop something for the novice teacher. Because even though we are mentors, we too are still lacking knowledge in some areas.

“This also needs someone who knows, even if I sit there and have to plan, if I am not aware of what to put on that paper, so it will be difficult. A person tries but you also need some guidance in that regard”.

Teachers therefore wanted clear guidelines on the process of developing a continuous professional development plan.

3.2.14. Counselling skills

Sometimes teachers and learners do find it difficult to cope on a daily basis with some behavioural and emotional problems that could have interfered with the teaching and learning process at school. Knowledge in this skill could be vital in this profession as some learners need counselling due to a number of reasons. Figure 47 below illustrates these findings.

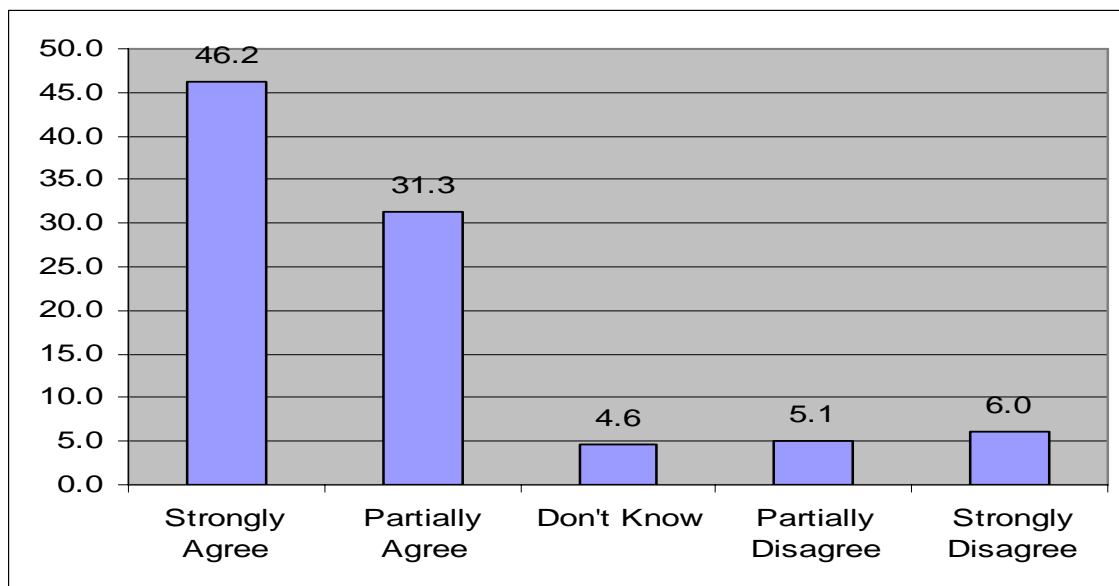


Figure 47: Counselling skills

Figure 47 reflects an overwhelming need for training on counselling skills as 77.5% (46.2% strongly agree and 31.3% partially agree) indicated that they needed training compared to 11.1% (6% strongly disagree and 5.1% partially disagree) who did not need such training.

This need was also echoed during interviews. All the prospective teachers interviewed found training necessary to equip all teachers with at least the basics of counselling. Of course there were teachers who were trained. Besides, such teachers claimed at times getting stuck on how to go about handling some of the situations. Below were some of the captured supportive evidences:

“For me to help a novice teacher to do counselling it will be difficult because I also don’t have the skills on how to approach a child or how I should act. It is too difficult because some of the things are very sensitive. You think maybe something is ok but it is a sensitive issue, and you might even end up hurting the child”.

“At our school, there are only few teachers at the school, two or three, those are the only teachers trained Sometimes they also fail. It would be better if counselling could also be included in the training that we have always been receiving so that each teacher could know the basics of counselling”.

“ we need to know, I attended a course but I would say we need more because normally you are working with a group of people who might face problems on a day to day. So which mean you need to be skilled so that when the problem arises where you are staying among these people, the solution must be there. Counselling must be there; so that people can live in peace and harmony we need to be skilled”.

“This is a very crucial part. I think all the teachers; they need to be trained on how to handle these skills on how to counsel.”

3.2.15. Application of problem solving and conflict management skills

Resolving interpersonal conflict is an essential skill in teaching and could be attained through training and experience. Data pertaining to whether prospective mentor teachers saw this as an area where they needed training are presented in Figure 48.

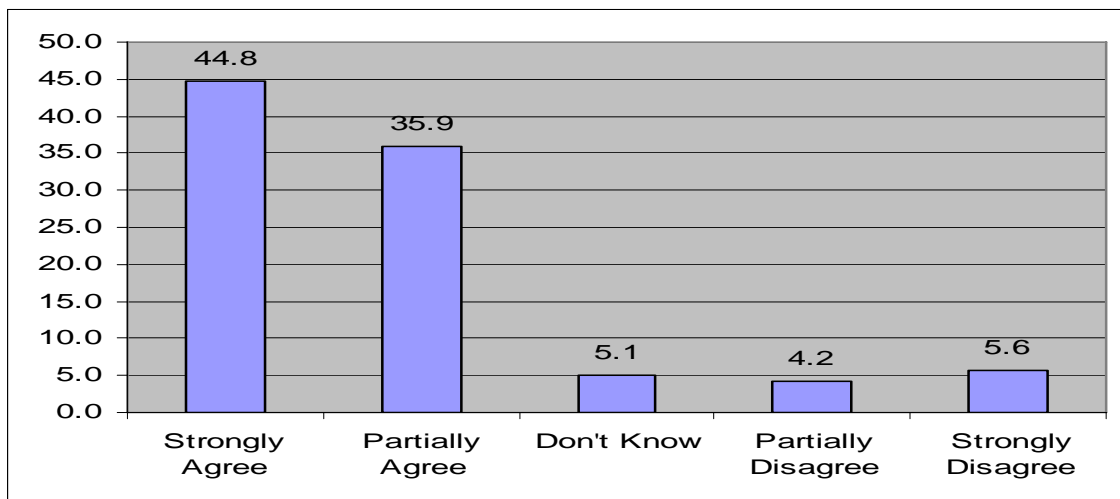


Figure 48: Application of problem solving and conflict management skills

As can be seen in Figure 48, a big number of the prospective mentor teachers (**80.7%** of which 44.8% strongly agree & 35.9% partially agree) saw the need for training in problem solving and conflict management as compared to **9.8%** (4.2% partially disagree & 5.6% strongly disagree) who did not need training in this skill.

The same pattern was witnessed through interviews. All the teachers found training necessary. They wanted training to focus on empowering all teachers with problem solving and conflict management skills specifically, the ability to find solutions to different situations. The teachers

were aware that where ever people were, conflicts will always arise and that conflicts should be solved amicably. This need was evident:

“We really need those skills because on the school premises, every environment has different people. Wherever you go, you will find different people, different characters. But as a mentor one has to know ways and means how to handle different situations that arises. We need training on how to handle different situations”.

“Where people are, problems will be there and conflicts are there... have knowledge on how to solve some problems that may arise among the people that you are working with so that you can have a smooth environment”.

3.2.16. Helping novice teachers to motivate learners

Not all learners are motivated to learn and therefore need someone (teacher) to motivate them. Therefore, teachers should have the skill to do that. In this regard, a novice teacher will need the service of a mentor teacher on how to motivate learners. Prospective mentor teachers were asked to determine whether they needed training on motivation in order for them to be able to support novice teachers. Findings are presented in figure 49.

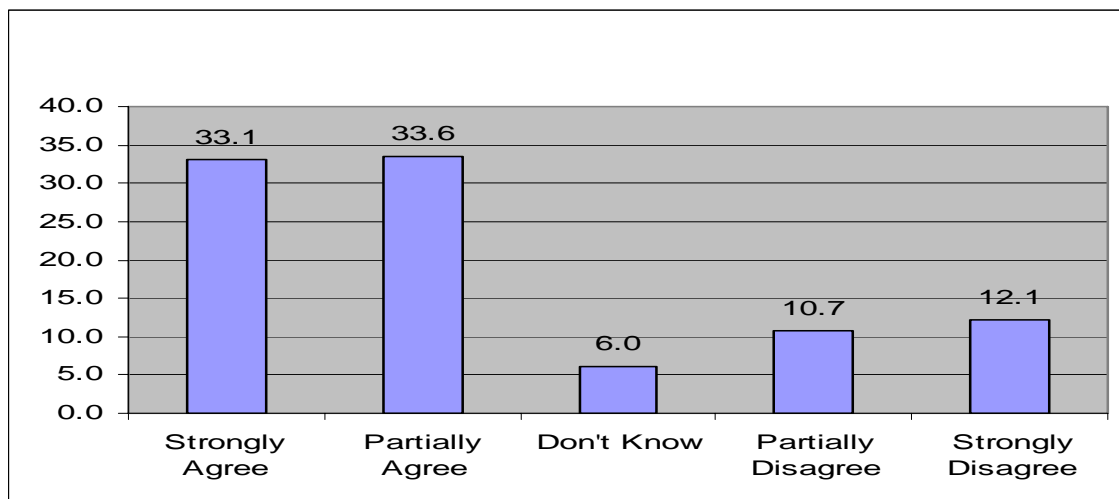


Figure 49: Helping novice teachers to motivate learners

As figure 49 indicates, many prospective mentor teachers indicated (**66.7%** of which 33.6% partially agree & 33.1% strongly agree) that they needed training in this area. And only **22.8%** did not need training.

When prospective mentor teachers were asked to specify their training needs on this skill, they indicated that they wanted assistance on how to go about helping novice teachers be exposed to different ways of motivation. Some of the prospective mentor teachers understood that each situation demanded different kinds of motivation:

“ I have a feeling that there are different types of motivation and a motivation is going to what you want to achieve, for example, the motivation of someone who is looking after cattle’s is not the same of the one who is a learner, so we need more about the different motivation”.

It could therefore be concluded that prospective mentor teachers required training so that they could help novice teachers to motivate learners.

3.2.17. Assisting novice teachers to diagnose their learners' needs

Diagnosing learners' needs in overcrowded classrooms could pose challenges to teachers, particularly the novice teachers. It was therefore important that novice teachers get assistance from mentor teachers on how to overcome this challenge. The views of prospective mentor teachers on whether they required training on this area are reflected in the figure 50.

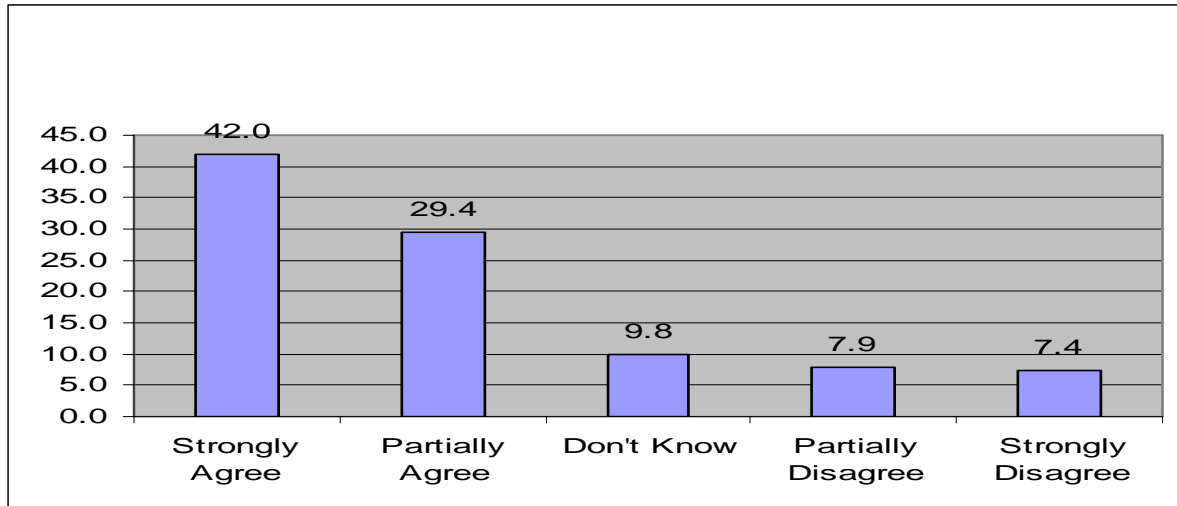


Figure 50: Assisting novice teachers to diagnose their learners' needs.

As the results show, a significant number of prospective mentor teachers (**71.4%** of which 42% strongly agree & 29.4% partially agree) indicated that they needed training in assisting novice teachers to diagnose their learners' needs compared to the **15.3%** (7.9% partially disagree & 7.4% strongly disagree) who did not see the need for training.

It was further confirmed during interviews that prospective mentor teachers needed training. Most of the prospective mentor teachers claimed that, they were not confident enough to help novice teachers:

“Yes, for the mentor to be able to assist the novice teacher with these kinds of skills, he or she needs skills. The mentor teacher needs knowledge and skills in order to be able to assist the novice teacher in this regard”.

“It is also difficult for me to give to the novice teacher. I might do it right myself in my own class but for me to tell the novice teacher that this is what you have to do, sometimes it is difficult”.

One could conclude from this that they wanted training to focus on how to go about assisting novice teachers identify learners' needs.

3.2.18. Assuming leadership and management role

There is always an opportunity for someone to assume new leadership and management roles, and teachers are not an exception. Such new roles come with frustrations, challenges and

emotional breakdowns. Hence, training in this area should be highly considered, especially mentor teachers in order to assist the novice teachers to assume such roles. Figure 51 below presents the findings on professional development needs of prospective mentor teachers on the area of leadership and management.

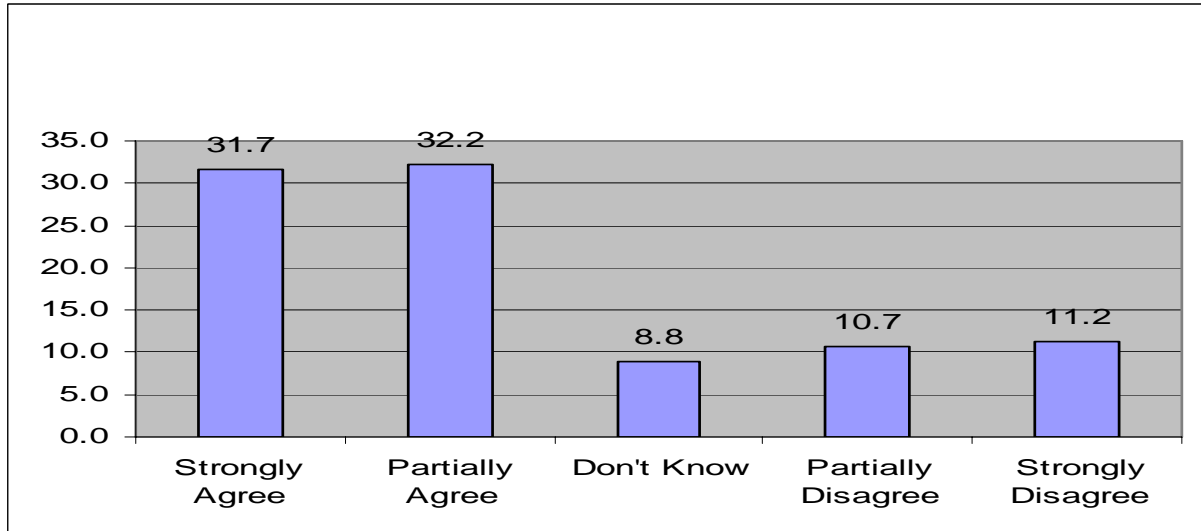


Figure 51: Assuming leadership and management role

According to the findings in this figure, the prospective mentor teachers could not comfortably assist the novice teachers without receiving training since **75.2%** (27.1% partially agree & 48.1% strongly agree) needed training compared to **12%** (7.4% strongly disagree & 4.6% partially disagree) who did not need training.

The same responses were reflected during interviews. The prospective mentor teachers interviewed needed to be equipped with leadership and management skills:

“I definitely need such skills. Leadership also brings somebody’s self-esteem. Without self-esteem, you cannot see yourself as a manager or a leader. Unless you have self –esteem and motivate yourself you cannot guide others”.

However, it was also noted that some teachers did not consider themselves as leaders and this was captured in the comment:

“Sometimes you can be chosen to day maybe to lead a group and there you are... you get one of the people that you are leading so which means that you are lacking the quality of leadership. We need much knowledge there”. It is therefore crucial for them to understand that every teacher is a leader and manager.

3.2.19. Helping novice teachers to access and use a variety of resources

A variety of teaching and learning resources are essential for the enhancement of teaching and learning. Regarding whether prospective mentor teachers needed training in order for them to assist novice teachers on this subject, the following picture emerged:

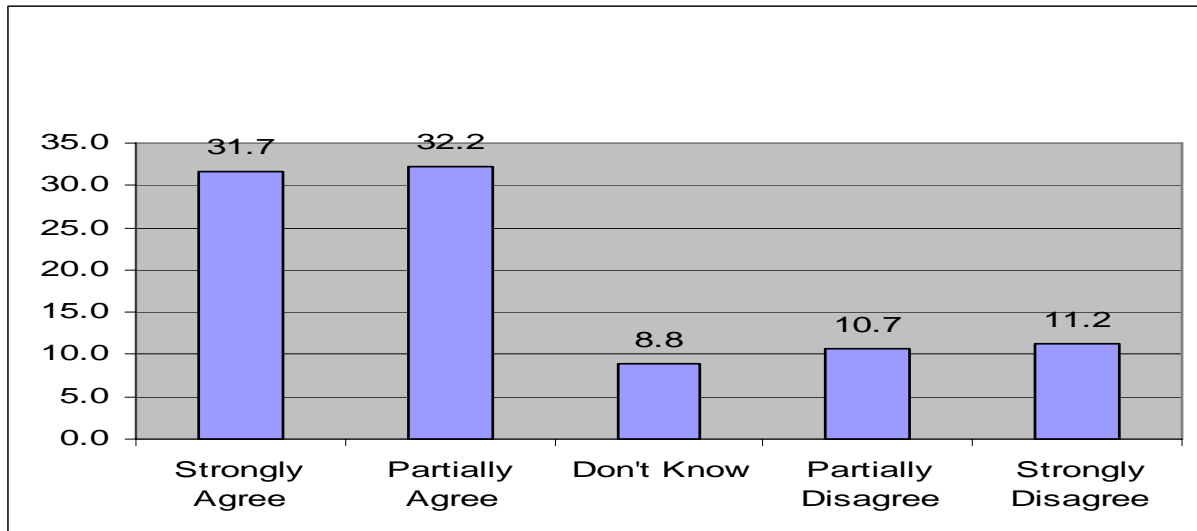


Figure 52: Helping novice teachers to access and use a variety of resources

This skill normally formed part of the teacher training and it was a surprise that **63.9%** (32.2% partially agree & 31.7% strongly agree) of prospective mentor teachers indicated that they needed training in this skill compared to the **21.9%** (11.2% strongly agree & 10.7% partially agree) who did not need training. As for teachers who were interviewed, they found this necessary. They felt that they should be empowered on how to go about convincing novice teachers to be creative and use the available resources:

“For materials, we don’t only have to say that the Government has to provide materials for us. In our case the lower primary teachers, we use a lot of different things. You can go and pick up a lot of scrap material, news papers, egg shells, and a lot of things. Delivering an effective lesson does not mean unless the Government provides the teacher will all material, the teacher has to use his/her creativity. You have to be creative every time”.

This seems worthwhile as most teachers did not seem to understand that creativity and improvisation could simplify and improve teaching. This was further supported by some interviewees who felt that teachers should not rely only on textbooks:

“Like most of people are just relying on the textbook if the text book is not there, what can I do? ... so this is why we want to know more! ... if the text book is not there, what’s the resource that we can use? This still boils down to creativity and improvisation.

3.2.20. Helping the novice teacher to apply a variety of alternative assessment strategies

Knowledge of various types of assessment strategies is essential for teachers to determine learners’ performance and for formative purposes. A number of official documents and policies

provide information on this aspect. Findings regarding mentor teacher training on the application of a variety of alternative assessment strategies are presented in figure 53.

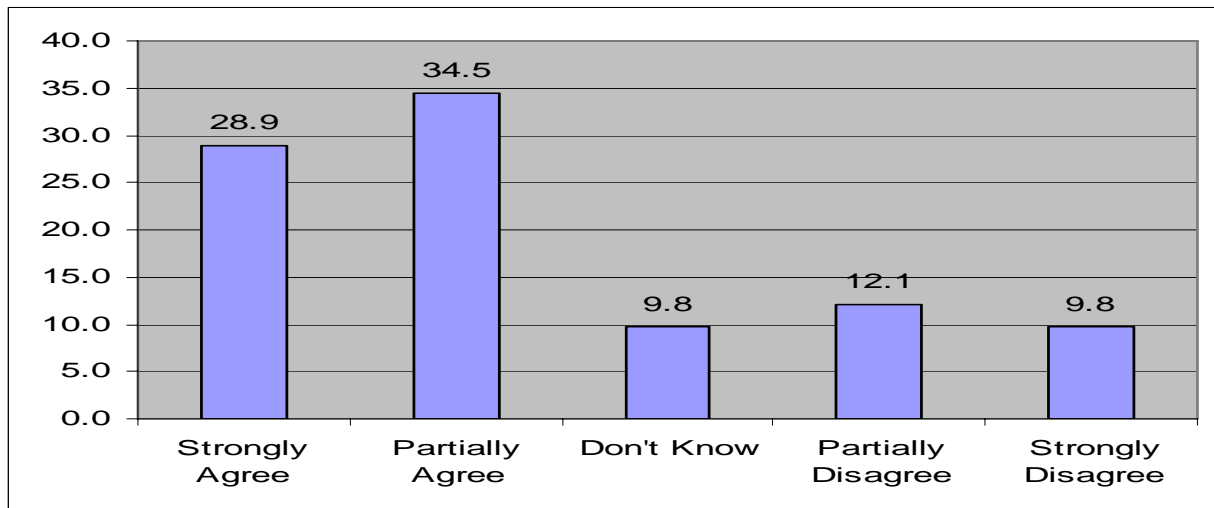


Figure 53: Helping the novice teacher to apply a variety of alternative assessment strategies

It could be concluded from Figure 53 that varying assessment strategies still posed a problem to some mentor teachers. This was evident through prospective mentor teachers' responses of which **63.4%** (28.9. % strongly agree & 34.5% partially agree) of the mentor teachers agreed needing training on the use of a variety of assessment strategies compared to **21.9%** (12.1% partially disagree & 9.8% strongly disagree) who did not need this training.

The need for training was also confirmed during interviews. Teachers needed the training to focus on the different assessment strategies especially in the lower primary phase as well as how to simultaneously assess learners while teaching. Prospective mentor teachers would want the training to empower them on how to budget their time so as to continuously assess all the learners:

“I will say both mentor and novice teacher will need training about assessment. This is where the main problem lies with Lower Primary. The main problem is that we are lacking knowledge on how to assess learners using different strategies”.

“The difficult part with assessment is the time you give work to learners to be assessed. If it is written work, it is easy to do that. But there are times that you need to teach and at the same time assess learners on the topic you have just taught. The problem here is time. Time is not enough. To assess each learner at the same time is really the problem. You end up assessing some of the learners while others are left out”.

3.2.21. Communication with principal

Findings on this area are presented in figure 54.

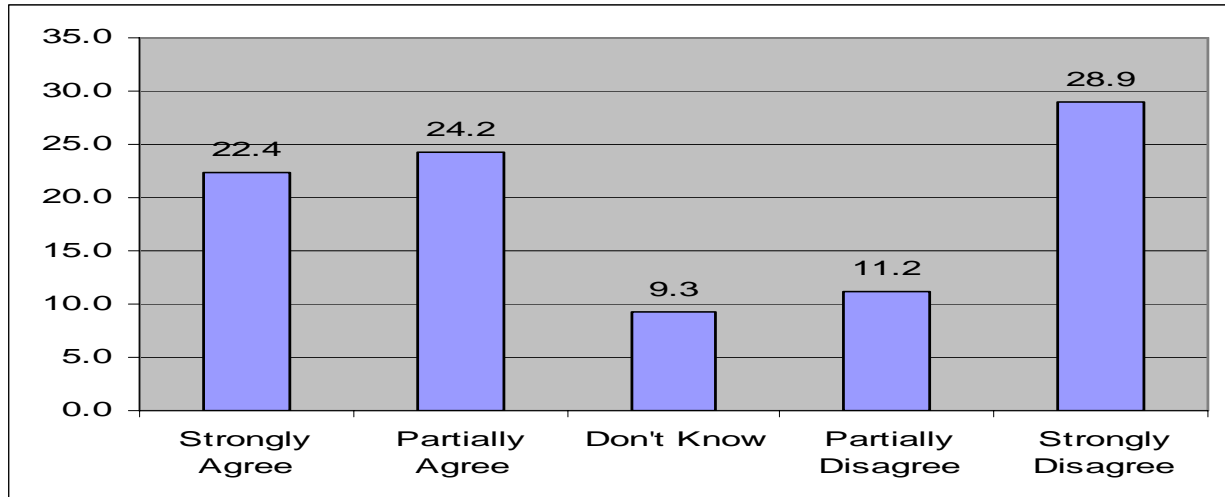


Figure 54: Communication with the principal

The findings in this graph show that there was a need for training on communication with the principal (**46.6%** of which 24.2% partially agree & 22.4% strongly agree) but however there were slight differences to those who did not need training (**40.1%** of which 28.9% strongly disagree & 11.2% partially disagree). But if we compared differences between those who strongly agreed to those who strongly disagreed, we would conclude that the need was not strong.

3.2.22. Communication with teachers

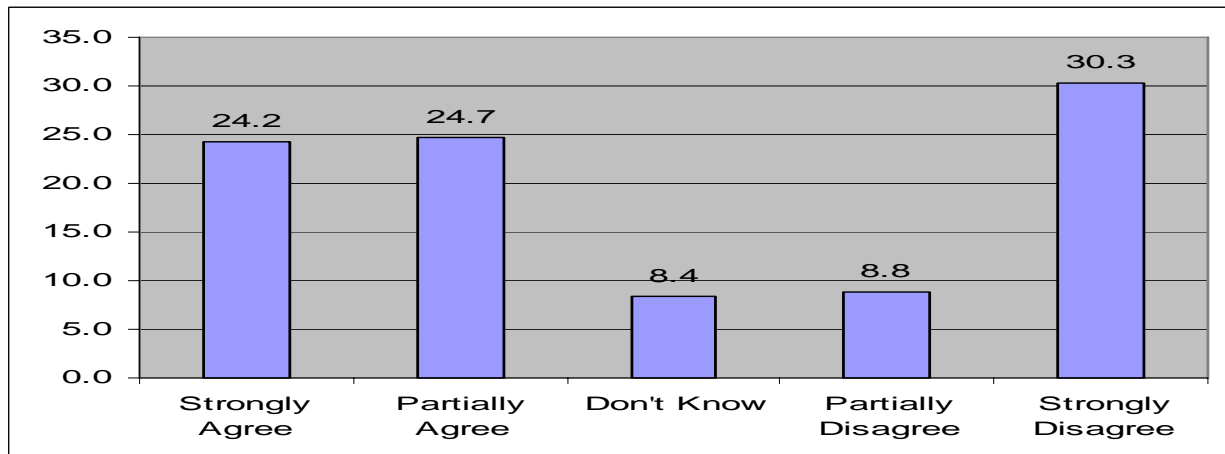


Figure 55: Communication with the teachers

The outcome in this figure was similar to the communication with the principal. The prospective mentor teachers who needed training were not different from those who did not find training necessary. About **24.2%** of the prospective mentor teachers strongly agreed compared to the **30.3%** of those who strongly disagreed. But if one considers, **48.9%** who agreed for training,

and **39.1%** who did not agree for such training, it was sensible concludes that many teachers saw the need for training on how to communicate with fellow teachers.

The need to communicate with fellow teachers did not seem pressing compared to other issues. However, there was a need for professional development as some teachers had a different perspective. The observation of one of the prospective mentor teachers was that:

“If I go and communicate with her, she will say that maybe I don’t know how to teach. That is really what hampers us teachers. While you are supposed to get help from your colleague, instead you bring yourself down”.

The training should therefore aim at changing the negative perception. Teachers should be open to one another and promote the spirit of teamwork.

3.2.23. Communication with parents

Regarding the need for mentor teachers to receive training on communication with parents, the findings are presented below.

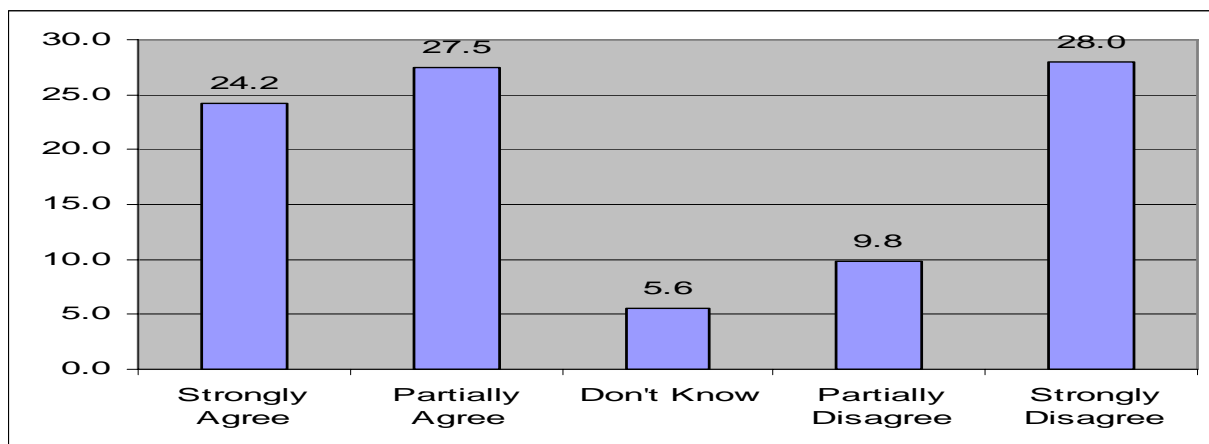


Figure 56: Communication with the parents

The results in this figure indicate that there was a need for training since **51.7%** (27.5% partially agree & 24.2% strongly agree) compared **37.8%** (28% strongly disagree & 9.8% partially disagree) who did not need training.

This was however true to what was happening on the ground. Parents don’t seem to be fully involved in the education of their children. Research has shown that schools should do what they could to develop a healthy attractive relationship where parents could get involved in the education of their children. Parents’ roles should not be undermined. Training of this kind could be a step in the right direction.

3.2.24. Communication with the stakeholders

Knowing who the other stakeholders are and having the skill of communicating with them was important as the success of a school was a combined effort with other stakeholders. It was

therefore worthwhile knowing how to communicate with them. The findings on this area are presented in Figure 57 below.

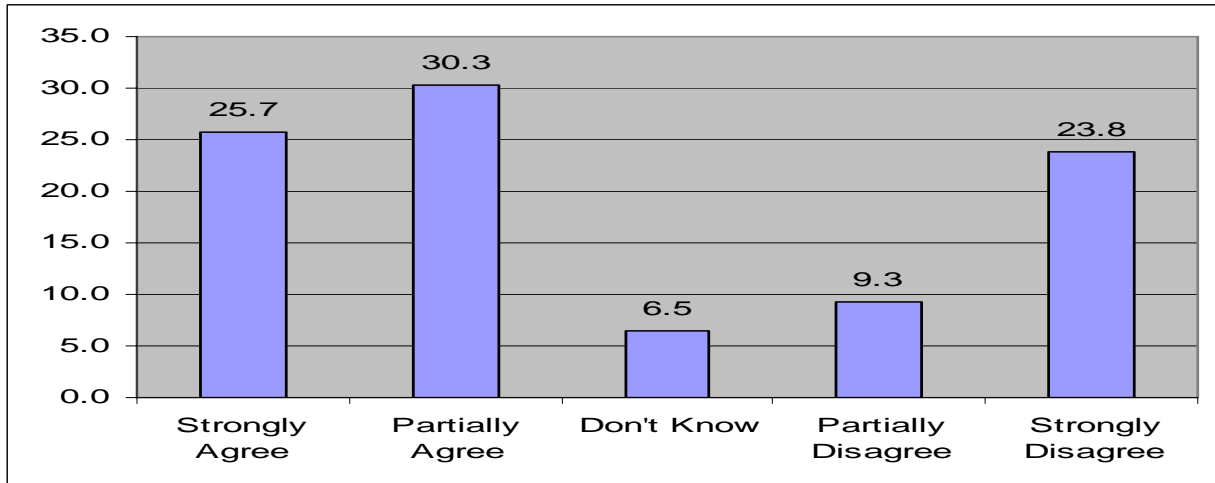


Figure 57: Communication with the stakeholders

The results in this figure show that the majority of the prospective mentor teachers (**56%** of which 25.7% strongly agree and 30.3% partially agree) needed training compared to **33.1%** who did not need training. One could infer from this that the prospective mentor teachers did not have the skill and could not comfortably assist novice teachers to attain the communication skills with the stakeholders.

3.2.25. Learner-centred teaching methods and subject content

Both the pedagogical and subject content knowledge are crucial to every teacher. Teachers needed both forms of knowledge to teach. If one skill lacked, as it was said about the BETD graduates, then such teachers would experience problem in teaching. Therefore, mentor teachers need to assist the novice teachers in improving the pedagogical and subject content knowledge. Figure 58 shows these results.

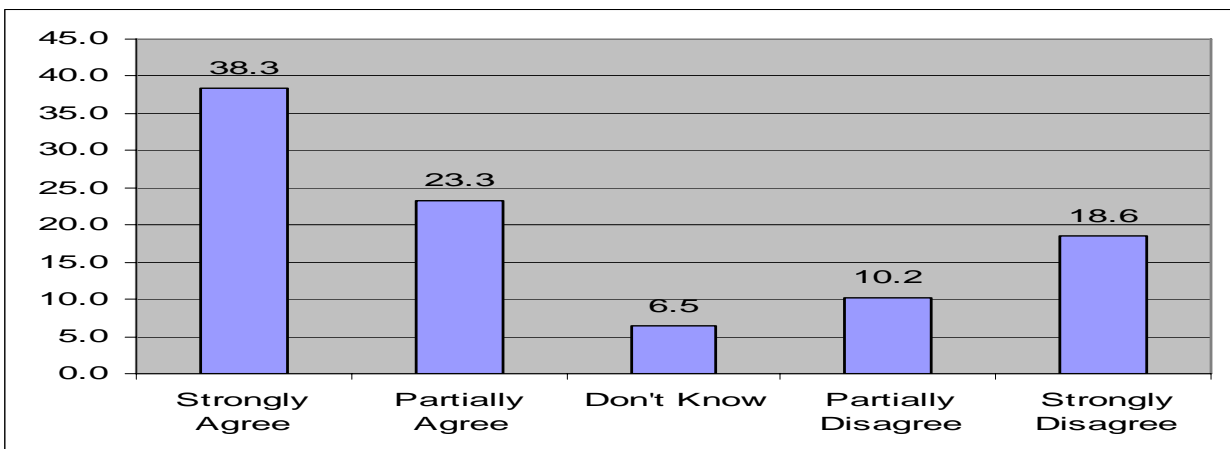


Figure 58: learner-centred teaching methods and subject content

The results in this figure show that the majority (**61.6%** of which 23.3% partially agree & 38.3% strongly agree) would have a problem assisting novice teachers compared to **28.8%** (18.6% strongly disagree and 10.2% partially disagree) who did not seem to need training.

This need was further confirmed through interviews. The prospective mentor teachers had the same opinion that BETD graduates lacked content knowledge and as well as pedagogical content knowledge. They were not very sure of the reasons behind such an inadequacy. Some felt that it could be curriculum based while others pointed fingers at lecturers, especially the modelling of LCE strategies. They therefore wanted the training components to include: the preparation of lesson plans, the interpretation of the syllabus, and well as to run workshops that would enrich prospective mentor teachers' content knowledge:

“We don't know whether the problem lies with the BETD curriculum that is causing BETD graduates to lack in content. It is true BETD graduates lack content knowledge. This we have observed in the schools”.

“The teacher does not even know how to write a lesson plan, for instance, he/she does not know what should be mentioned in the introduction”.

“We need training on how to assist a novice teacher work with the syllabus and to put together a lesson”.

“Now they don't know how to use the objectives and the basic competencies. They don't know how to extract these from the syllabus. Even if you put the syllabus there and say to them get for me the objectives and competencies from this document, they won't do it”.

“In that case, I will not know much what our BETD is doing at the college because the student teacher is supposed to be introduced to the syllabus at the college level. But if he or she was not introduced to the syllabus at the college it will be difficult for the teacher to analyze the basic competencies in that syllabus”.

3.2.26. Assist novice teachers to align their teaching and learning to the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

The National Standards for Teachers in Namibia became effective in 2007. Findings regarding whether prospective mentor teachers needed training in order to assist novice teachers align teaching to these standards are presented in Figure 59.

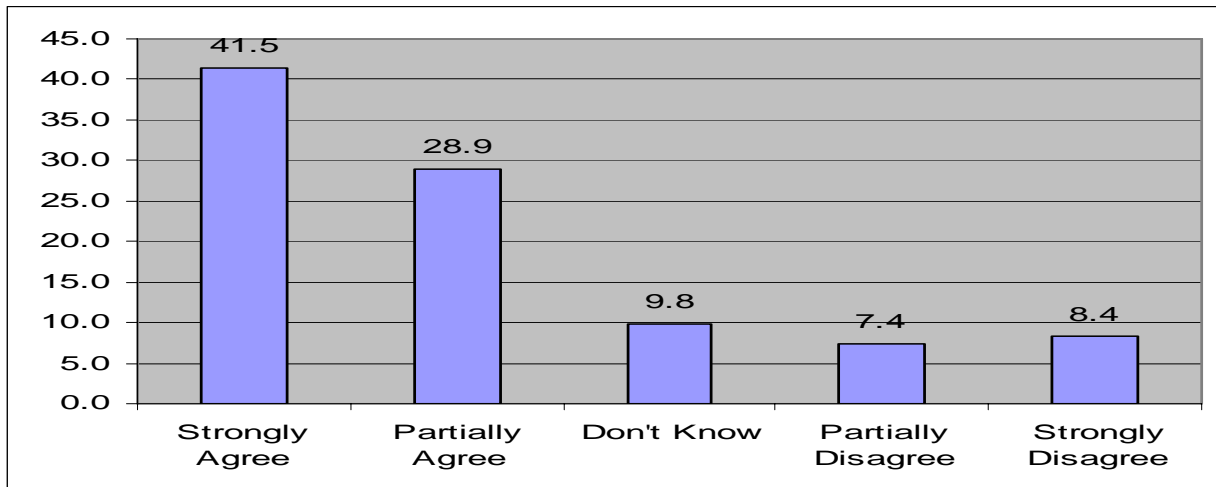


Figure 59: Assist novice teachers to align their teaching and learning to National Professional Standards for teachers

The findings presented in figure 59 show that 70.4% (41.5% strongly agree, and 28.9% partially agree) of prospective mentor teachers indicated that they needed training in aligning teaching to the National Standard for Teachers in Namibia. Only a small percentage of **15.8%** (7.4% partially disagree and 8.4 strongly disagree) did not indicate the need for training.

One can logically infer that prospective mentor teachers could not assist novice teachers in aligning teaching and learning to National Standards for Teachers and as such they needed help. This was also confirmed during the interviews. More precisely, prospective mentor teachers indicated the need for training in National Standards for Schools and National Standards for Teachers in Namibia. The majority of them did not seem to be informed about National Standards for Teachers in Namibia:

“That maybe it is difficult for us to explain, we don’t know why we need it because we don’t know what exactly national standard is for teachers”.

“Mentors need a lot of workshops for them to master the requirements of the National Professional Standards in order for them to assist novice teachers. There are various things that a mentor teacher needs to know in order for him or her to be able to assist a novice teacher”.

3.2.27. Moral and ethical issues in mentoring

There are a number of ethical and moral issues to be considered in the mentoring process. Data regarding the need for training in this area are presented in Figure 60.

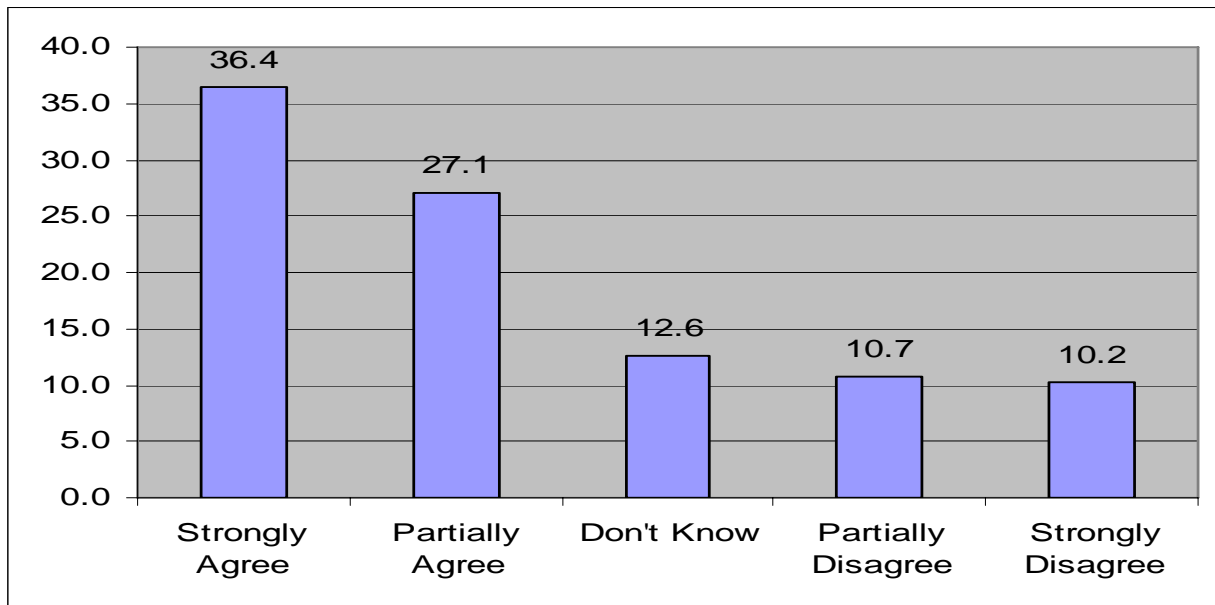


Figure 60: Moral and ethical issues in mentoring

In this survey, **63.5%** (27.1% partially agree & 36.4% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed training compared to **20.9%** (10.2% strongly disagree and 10.7% partially disagree) who did not need training on moral and ethical issues in mentoring.

These responses were complemented by teachers' responses during the interviews. Prospective mentor teachers emphasized the need for training on how to work with confidential issues:

“I need training on this, especially when working with things that are confidential, private or sensitive. I need some training on that”.

3.2.28. Coaching and mentoring skills

The reasons for understanding the coaching and mentoring process – the methods used and results achieved – should be common to all teachers. Mentoring teachers are expected to understand the fundamental philosophy of coaching and mentoring in order to enhance the process of teaching and learning. The findings on this subject are presented in figure 61.

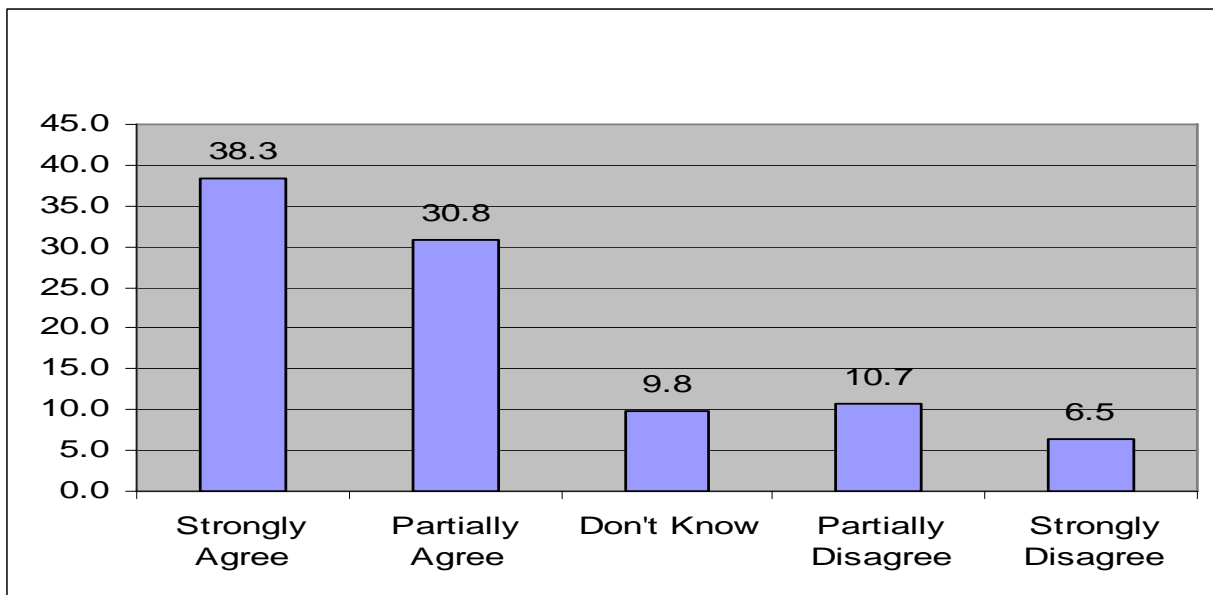


Figure 61: Coaching and mentoring skills

The findings in figure 61 clearly show that the majority of prospective mentor teachers (**69.1%** of which 30.8% partially agree and 38.3% strongly agree) needed training in this skill. Only **17.2%** of which 6.5% strongly disagreed and 10.7% partially disagreed to have training in this skill.

3.2.29. Assisting novice teachers with time management

Time management could be a challenge to novice teachers. It is imperative for mentor teachers to assist novice teachers on how to effectively manage time. Among others, the study investigated whether prospective mentor teachers required training or professional development on assisting novice teachers with time management. The findings are presented in figure 62:

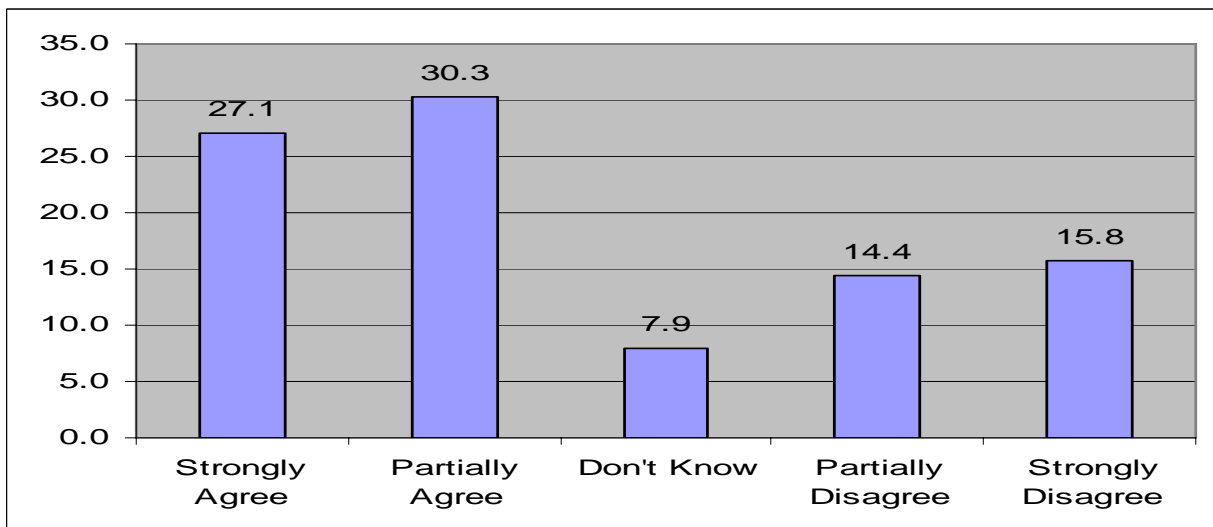


Figure 62: Assisting novice teachers with time management

The results in figure 62 show that **57.4%** (30.3% partially agree & 27.1% strongly agree) of the prospective mentor teachers needed training in assisting novice teachers with time management

compared to **30.2%** (15.8% strongly disagree & 14.4% partially disagree) who did not need training. Supportive evidence from the interviews showed that prospective mentor teachers needed training especially on how to assist novice teachers plan. A claim was made that some novice teachers did not know how much time to budget for a specific task and that they did not seem to realize that every minute in class was important:

“So we can also help others, I mean to know what the small time they think is small time means, they don’t know the consequences of those few minutes”.

3.2.30 Peer teaching skills and strategies

With the new cluster system in Namibia, peer-teaching skills and strategies are vital for the process of continuous professional fulfilment of teachers. To make this a success, mentor teachers needed to be equipped with the necessary skills and strategies of peer-teaching. Figure 63 below illustrates professional development needs of prospective mentor teachers.

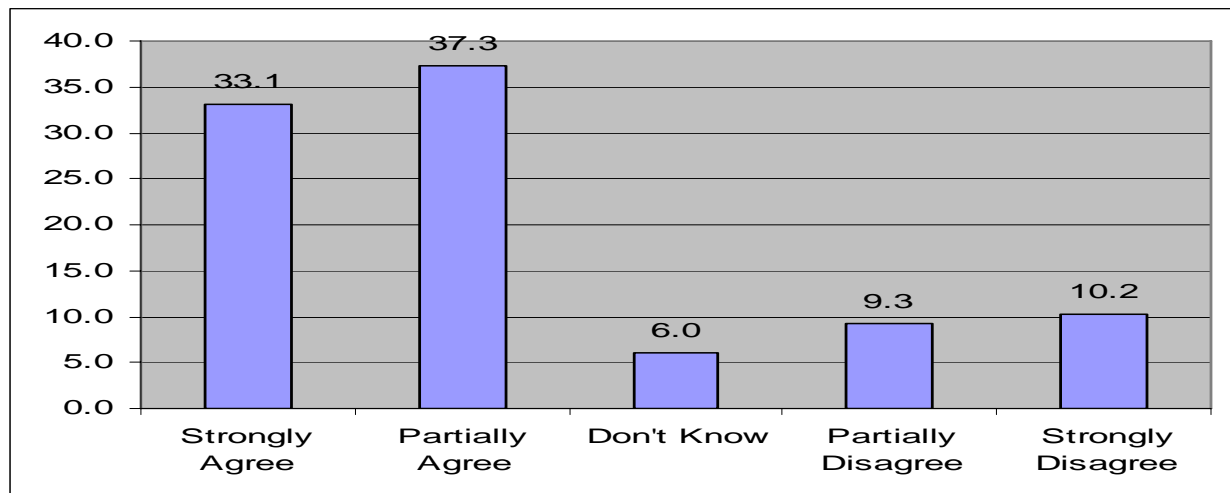


Figure 63: Peer teaching skills and strategies

The majority of the prospective mentor teachers strongly saw a need (**70.4%** of which 37.3% partially agree and 33.1% strongly agree) of receiving training in peer teaching skills and strategies compared to 19.5% (10.2% strongly disagree and 9.2% partially disagree) who did not see the need for training.

3.4 Rank order of Prospective Mentor Teachers Training Needs

Table 2: Training needs of prospective mentor teachers – rank ordered

	% YES	% NO
Application of ICT skills in daily classroom situations	81.7	11.6
Application of problem-solving and conflict management skills	80.7	9.8
Counselling skills	77.5	11.1
Demonstrating and coaching multi-grade teaching strategies and skills to the intern teachers	76.6	12.6
Developing a continuous professional development plan	76.1	13.9
The use of compensatory teaching skills	75.6	16.8
Assuming leadership and management roles	75.2	12
Assisting novice teachers to diagnose their learners' needs	71.4	15.3
Problem- solving skills	71.4	18.6
Administration and interpretation of official documents	71.4	19.5
Developing reflection and critical inquiry skills	70.5	16.3
Peer-teaching skills and strategies	70.4	19.5
Assisting the novice teachers to align their teaching and learning to NPS for teachers	70.4	15.8
Effective Classroom Observation of the intern teachers	69.5	22.3
Coaching and mentoring skills	69.1	17.7
Analytical/ diagnostic skills	68.6	14.8
Modelling a variety of subject-related teaching and learning strategies to the novice teachers	67.6	18.1
Helping novice teachers to motivate learners	66.7	22.8
Assisting novice teachers in classroom management	65.8	25
Helping novice teachers to novice teachers to access and use a variety of resources	63.9	21.9
Moral and ethical issues in mentoring	63.5	20.9
Assisting novice teachers to understand the school culture and adaptation skills	63.5	19.1
Helping novice teachers to apply a variety of alternative assessment strategies	63.4	21.9
Using the principles of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of novice teachers	63	19.5
L-C subject teaching methods and subject content (pedagogical .and subject content knowledge.	61.6	28.8
Assisting novice teachers with time management	56.4	30.2
Presentation skills	56	32.1
Communication with stakeholders	56	33.1
Communication with parents	51.7	37.8
Communication with the teachers	48.9	39.1
Communication with the principal	46.6	40.1

Table 2 summarizes the training needs of prospective mentor teachers rank ordered from the highest percentage to the lowest. Between 70-82% of the prospective mentor teachers needed training in most of the skill areas. Application of ICT skills was top on this list, plus others such as problem solving and conflict management, counselling, multi-grade teaching, CPD, compensatory teaching, leadership and management roles, diagnosing of learners' needs, interpretation of official documents, reflection and critical inquiry skills, peer teaching and national professional standards for teachers. More than half (52%) of the total skills lied between 50- 69% of the prospective mentor teachers, and among such skills were mentoring and coaching, classroom observation, classroom management, time management, assessment strategies and motivation of learners. Lowest on this list were communication with teachers and principals. Only 47 – 49% of the teachers identified them as areas needing training and this constitutes only 6% of the skills.

3.5 Teachers' perceptions regarding continuous professional development

It would not serve much purpose to design a training program for teachers who were not motivated and ready for it. The success of any training program would depend highly on its participants. It was therefore imperative to gauge teachers' perceptions regarding their readiness and willingness towards continuous professional development. Although no direct questions were asked, teachers' readiness could be examined through their responses. In addition, each question asked was based on finding out if they needed the training, what would be the focus of the training. This approach made it easier to spot their perceptions. Through the process of analyzing teachers' responses and identifying patterns, the following themes emerged.

3.5.1 Teachers as agents of change

It was evident from the teachers' responses that they found continuous professional development a necessity. Most of them had a strong belief that teaching and learning practices changed with time. And as long as practices change, they too should be kept abreast with new developments:

"Usually in lower primary we have those teachers that were on the Afrikaans schools where they were using Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. The problem lies with English itself, whereby some of the teachers cannot interpret what the syllabus means. They cannot even analyze what they mean by this or that".

Since English was the medium of instruction, all teachers should be comfortable using the language. This constituted a need for training to help teachers use the language confidently.

In the comment below, teachers lamented about lack of skills in computers. This technological shift leaves teachers with no option but to be part of it. They seemed to be ready:

"Because in our Ministry we don't have anything for training in computers but at the same time they want us as teachers to know how to use computers".

The teachers understood that practices in education keep on changing. New ideas were emerging:

"I think we also need to be trained on since there has been a world of change. So, we might have just got the idea of, about the compensatory teaching, but there are some new ways of how to do it".

"We.. we need more, because even like some of us the time we started teaching we were trained to teach at upper primary like grade 5,6 and whatever ,so we are doing two grades in one class. As we know that things are changing, so we need also to have knowledge if one day you fall in the same situation so that you can operate on the knowledge that you have".

"...when it comes to presenting the lesson so, also to be given also some new strategies for how to conduct a certain area, a certain topic".

"As time changes, we are also changing and developing ourselves. We are also changing. . Because as times goes on, new things are invented and we must change our lifestyles to new things that are coming in line with the development plan".

3.5.2 Low self-esteem of prospective mentor teachers

Some of the prospective mentor teachers seemed to lack confidence in what they were doing. It was clear from their comments that they were not ready to assist novice teachers before they were trained:

“Yeah, like, when I am visiting also these new teachers sometimes you find them teaching some interesting topics, or maybe they are kind of doing their lessons so nice. Later, we can say whoa, this one is done more than the way I do it”.

“But, at least, we might need it because we don’t know what is new with it...because we were only taught how to present the lesson and nothing else is added from there. I think on our part, we are also just like them from the College. We did not really end up another new part on our side it’s all, here, it’s just depend on the personal potential on how to deliver a lesson”.

3.5.3 Inadequacy of teacher education

The teachers interviewed confirmed the national outcry of the inadequacy of the BETD and other teacher training institutions. There seemed to be a need for training to close the gap they were experiencing. However, the biggest portion of the blame was put on the BETD program:

“Yes, I feel that I don’t have enough skills when it comes to learner-cantered approach. If I can give an example, during our time of the BETD, we were not getting learner-centred skills properly from our teacher educators”

“I will say both mentor and novice teachers will need training about assessment. This is where the main problem lies with Lower Primary. The main problem is that we are lacking knowledge on how to assess learners using different strategies”.

“We don’t know whether the problem lies with the BETD curriculum that is causing BETD graduates to lack content knowledge. It is true BETD graduates lack content knowledge. This we have observed in the schools”.

“In that case, I will not know much what our BETD is doing at the college because the student teacher is supposed to be introduced to the syllabus at the college level. But if he or she was not introduced to the syllabus at the college it will be difficult for the teacher to analyze the basic competencies in that syllabus”.

“So because I’m still learning, so which means we need more even the one we got, is the one we got from the college. I think is not enough at all. Yah... is just like you need to be reminded and reminded so that maybe you know exactly what to do, and things are from... from far coming to us today because, if we have started when we were there.. this time we could know very well by this time. Just like for example someone driving when he was five, so there is a difference, so we need more much in the content”.

3.5.4 The desire to learn more

The desire to learn more was evident in a number of comments made by teachers. In some cases, teachers acknowledged having knowledge in some areas. For example some of the teachers received training in multi-grade teaching. However, their comments indicated they still needed more training:

“We want to get more information in formation and training on how to teach multi-grade classes”.

“As you know, teaching or learning is not something that stops. A person always learns, learning new things”.

“Every person wants to grow; either professional or either a person wants to grow academically, because our aim is to reach the top”.

“They should be given workshops so as to remind them on how to work with the syllabus. They need workshops”.

CHAPTER FOUR SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

4. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary and concluding remarks. It also proposes the common training components for novice and prospective mentor teachers. A separate training program for prospective mentor teachers would focus on the mentoring aspects on areas that novice teachers strongly indicated that they needed training. While, the training for novice teachers would focus on the identified areas that were most challenging.

4.1. Concluding Remarks

The findings of this study showed that both novice and prospective mentor teachers needed training in most of the listed skills training areas since scores for both groups lied on the positive side of the five point scale were above 50% should this be taken as yardstick. The summary of the scores for novice and prospective mentor teachers as presented in table 4 was assumed from scores that were 70% and above. This was the parameter set for this study in choosing skill training areas that was most demanded by both group of teachers.

Table 3: Summary of the findings

Prospective Mentor teachers		Novice teachers	
Application of ICT skills in daily classroom situations	81.7	Understanding the education development program and issues at national level.	82.9
Application of problem-solving and conflict management skills	80.7	Understanding and adhering to mentoring, coaching and professional support program.	77.7
Counselling skills	77.5	Understanding the National External School Evaluation process	77.7
Demonstrating and coaching multi-grade teaching strategies and skills to the intern teachers	76.6	Dealing with orphans and vulnerable children	77.7
Developing a continuous professional development plan	76.1	Counselling skills	77.1
The use of compensatory teaching skills	75.6	Diagnosing learners' needs	76.6
Assuming leadership and management roles	75.2	Application of ICT skills on daily classroom situation.	71.4
Assisting novice teachers to diagnose their learners' needs	71.4	Understanding the Broad Curriculum	70.3
Problem- solving skills	71.4	Understanding the conditions of employment and service benefits.	70.3
Administration and interpretation of official documents	71.4		
Developing reflection and critical inquiry skills	70.5		
Peer-teaching skills and strategies	70.4		
Assisting the novice teachers to align their teaching and learning to NPS for teachers	70.4		

The extent to which both groups of teachers need training in specific training areas differed significantly. For instance, application of ICT in daily classroom situations was top on the list of

prospective mentor teachers, whereas communication with principal was down on the list. For novice teachers, understanding the education development programs and issues at national level was first in the list while it was last in the case of prospective mentor teachers. It makes sense judging that differences in needs for training in specific training areas were caused by the time on when the initial teacher training program took place. The demand for training among the prospective mentor teachers were based on practical understanding of the problem that novice teachers faced at school firstly, and secondly, the recent technological transformations. The novice teachers on the other end were challenged by adaptation to the teaching and learning demands and the process of applying the theoretical knowledge into the classroom situation.

4.2. Key common training program components for novice and prospective mentor teachers

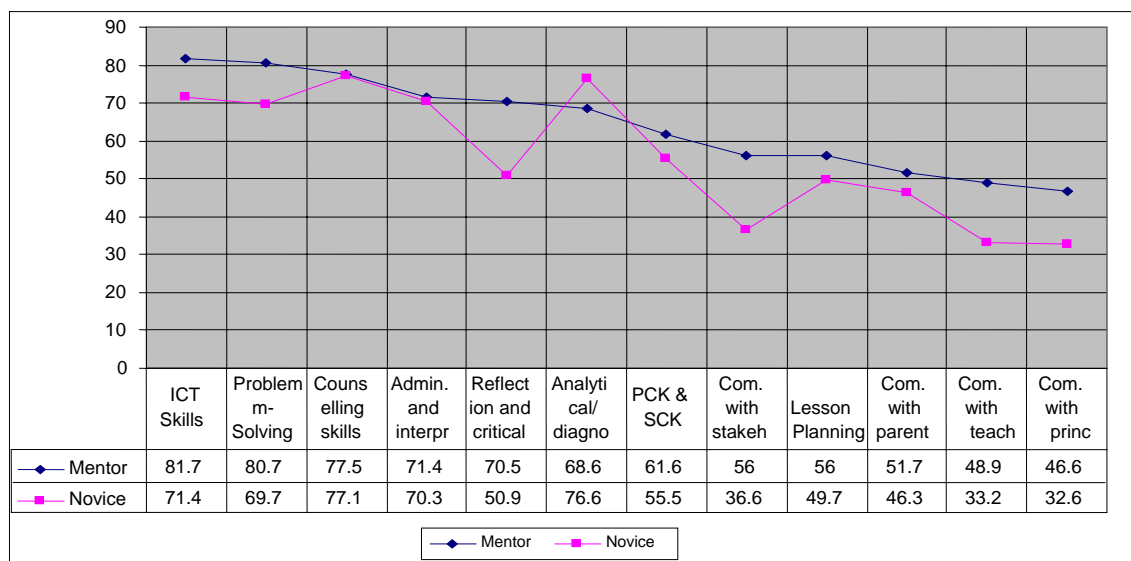


Figure 64: Common training needs for novice and prospective mentor teachers

As the figure shows, both novice and prospective mentor teachers needed training in the following areas: ICT skills, problem-solving and conflict management, counselling skills, interpretation of official documents, reflection and critical inquiry skills, analytical and diagnostic skills, pedagogical and subject matter knowledge, communication with various stakeholders, and lesson planning and presentation skills. These areas would form a training module where both novice and prospective teachers would interact. The remaining training areas would be unique to particular groups. This was necessary. For instance, most of the remaining skills on the list of the prospective mentor teachers were those that would require mentor teachers to be trainers. Whereas, the majority of the training needs on the list of the novice teachers were of orientation in nature. Besides, such teachers still had a lot to learn than prospective mentor teachers. Hence the following training programs were identified and seemed necessary.

Table 4: Training components unique to prospective mentor teachers

	% YES	% NO
Demonstrating and coaching multi-grade teaching strategies and skills to the intern teachers	76.6	12.6
Developing a continuous professional development plan	76.1	13.9
The use of compensatory teaching skills	75.6	16.8
Assuming leadership and management roles	75.2	12
Problem- solving skills	71.4	18.6
Peer-teaching skills and strategies	70.4	19.5
Assisting the novice teachers to align their teaching and learning to NPS for teachers	70.4	15.8
Effective Classroom Observation of the intern teachers	69.5	22.3
Coaching and mentoring skills	69.1	17.7
Modelling a variety of subject-related teaching and learning strategies to the novice teachers	67.6	18.1
Helping novice teachers to motivate learners	66.7	22.8
Assisting novice teachers in classroom management	65.8	25
Helping novice teachers to novice teachers to access and use a variety of resources	63.9	21.9
Moral and ethical issues in mentoring	63.5	20.9
Assisting novice teachers to understand the school culture and adaptation skills	63.5	19.1
Helping novice teachers to apply a variety of alternative assessment strategies	63.4	21.9
Using the principles of adult learning to facilitate the professional growth of novice teachers	63	19.5
Assisting novice teachers with time management	56.4	30.2

Table 5: Training components unique to novice teachers

	% YES	% NO
Understanding the education development program and issues at national level.	82.9	7.4
Understanding and adhering to mentoring, coaching and professional support program.	77.7	9.1
Understanding the National External School Evaluation process	77.7	7.8
Dealing with orphans and vulnerable children	77.7	14.3
Understanding the Broad Curriculum	70.3	19.4
Understanding the conditions of employment and service benefits.	70.3	8
Understanding and applying inclusive education	66.8	23.5
Development of scheme of work	65.7	24
Use of a variety of assessment strategies	65.7	25.1
Multi-grade teaching	65.1	18.3
Maintaining learners discipline in and outside the classroom	64.5	29.2
Motivation skills	61.7	23.5
Effective teaching of literacy skills	61.7	24
Classroom management and organization	60	31.4
Understanding the teacher professional ethos, values and working relations	56.6	32
Time management in the school context and in general	56.5	26.8
Obtaining and using various resources for teaching	56	33.1
Interpretation of syllabus	54.3	32
Understanding the school culture and adaptation skills	45.7	15.5

In terms of prioritization of target areas for CPD interventions, the 70-82% category could be considered as first priority. This could be followed by the 50-69% category.

4.3 Research implications and implied actions

The findings of this study implied the following:

1. The mentoring of new professional teachers should be formalized in schools so that novice teachers are given consistent assistance in schools.
2. Prospective mentor teachers should receive training to be able to give effective induction to novice teachers.
3. Formal training program of novice teachers should be developed following the identified areas and be used to train all teachers in Namibian schools.
4. Formal training program of prospective mentor teachers should be developed following the identified areas and be used to train prospective mentor teachers nationally.
5. Trainers of the prospective mentor teachers should be identified and receive an intensive training.
6. Teacher education curriculum developers should incorporate identified weak training areas and find mechanisms of strengthening the identified areas through teaching and coaching student teachers.

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