

Global Schoolroom 2008

Evaluation

**September 2008
Boyle & Associates**

Global Schoolroom – Evaluation September 2008.

1. Introduction and Background

Global Schoolroom has its origin somewhere around about Christmas 2005 when both Gwen Brennan and Garret Campbell planned to travel to India, not as tourists but to get a little under the skin of the sub-continent and give something back. Both Gwen and Garret had considerable travel experience and had also been involved in teacher training both at home and abroad. Through a friend, Fr. Donal Neary S.J., they were put in contact with a Salesian priest from Kerala, Fr. Anthony Valluran, who was based in Silchar, the second biggest city in Assam.

In July and August of 2006, Gwen and Garret travelled with Fr. Anthony to some of the more remote villages in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram and delivered week-long teacher training workshops to the local teachers in Umswai, a jungle area outside Guwahati the capital of Assam, Garabada in the Garro Hills of Meghalaya and in Silchar. It was clear that teacher training was necessary and that the future involvement of Irish teachers in this training would be very beneficial. Shortly before Gwen and Garret left for India, Robert Power, Deputy Managing Director of Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. and friend of both Gwen and Garret, became interested in what they were planning - Irish teachers working with their colleagues overseas - and suggested that sponsorship from his company could support this work. This much needed financial support ensured that the project had a future and together the three set up Global Schoolroom. By September of the same year, plans were put in place to increase the numbers of teachers travelling to India for 2007 and with the financial support offered through the Cornmarket sponsorship, eight teachers and two Cornmarket staff went back to India in 2007 to continue the teacher training started in 2006. During that summer, over 350 Indian teachers took part in Global Schoolroom programmes.

In the last twelve months, Global Schoolroom has developed links with the College of Human Sciences, University College Dublin, and in partnership with them have launched The Diploma in Teacher Education in India. This relationship was built mainly through the efforts of Professor Bairbre Redmond, Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, and Dr. Marie Clarke, Head of School of Education and Lifelong Learning. University College Dublin will offer those Indian teachers who successfully complete the 3-year programme, as set out by Global Schoolroom, 60 European Credit Transfer System credits and an undergraduate Diploma in Teacher Education. In July 2008, the first set of modules of this Diploma were delivered in five locations in the Northeast. Fifteen Irish teachers and three Cornmarket staff were involved in the delivery of this programme to almost 200 Indian teachers. A film crew also travelled with the group to document the work.

While in India in July, Garret and Robert had the opportunity of visiting the Faculty of Education at the University of Delhi. This was brought about by contacts made by Dr. Erik Lithander, Director of International Affairs, University College Dublin, with Professor Deepak Pental, Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi. During this visit, where they met Professor Bharati Baveja, Head and Dean of the Faculty of Education along with other members of the Faculty, including Professor Rama Mathew, Dr. Sailaja Chennat, Dr. Neera Narang, Mr. Sandeep Kumar, Mr Ashish Ranjan and Ms. Dipi Pathak. Professor Baveja felt that Global Schoolroom was a very worthwhile initiative and of great significance to the teachers of the areas where the programmes were taking place. While recognising that teacher training in India was, on the whole good, she suggested that standards could be much higher in both the Northeast and in West Bengal. She also felt that there could be greater development of in-service training. In this regard she felt that Global Schoolroom could have a very important role. Professor Mathew spoke of a pilot Teacher Mentoring programme which she was co-ordinating in Delhi and felt that this would fit very well with the programme offered by Global Schoolroom. She felt that the Global Schoolroom Teacher Education programme could be integrated with the University of Delhi's mentoring programme and a possible role for Global Schoolroom graduates in this mentoring programme was discussed.

With three years experience in India and following a fact finding visit to Ethiopia last April, and with a return trip to Ethiopia and Uganda planned for October, Global Schoolroom believes that this Teacher Education course can be modified to address local needs in other countries throughout the developing world, offering local teachers not only the much needed training they desire but an internationally recognised qualification. This will rely on developing partnerships with local agencies, similar to those developed in India. Preliminary work has begun in this regard. Provision of this training will, in some cases, have a direct bearing on the teachers, thus improving the quality of life of the teachers themselves. The broader context is in the benefits which accrue from having a more qualified and professional teaching body. The children attending the schools of these trained teachers will benefit too through the promotion of child centred methodologies.

In Ireland, the teachers' unions have long argued that their members have played a key role in Ireland's economic success thanks to the quality of the education they have delivered. Global Schoolroom believes that this is true for teachers in the developing world as it is for Ireland. Global Schoolroom is dedicated to sharing educational experience between communities worldwide to help eradicate poverty, promote economic development and build sustainable communities.

With the financial support of Cornmarket and its close links with both individual teachers and the teaching unions, Global Schoolroom has ready access to the full resources of the teaching profession. Recruiting the best people in the profession is simplified thus uniquely placing Global Schoolroom to deliver the pilot project in India and to replicate this in other countries in the future.

2. The Evaluation

A one-day evaluation of Global Schoolroom's 2008 Teacher Education Programme took place in Dublin, Ireland, on Saturday 27th September 2008. 12 Irish teachers and 2 Cornmarket staff participated, with an additional Cornmarket staff attending for feedback purposes. There was no direct input from the Indian partner, teachers or organisers. However, Indian partner evaluation data was submitted and is attached as *Appendix 1*. Adrienne Boyle of Boyle and Associates undertook the evaluation day with the Irish team.

During the day, participants explored:

- The success of the project
- Its challenges
- The learning from the experience
- The critical areas which require attention for the future success of the project

2.1. The Successes of the Project

The successes of the 2008 project were identified as:

The Internal Environment and Organisation

- o The publicity for the programme which was distributed to all Irish primary and secondary schools; this was seen to be professional and attractive to Irish teachers.
- o The Irish teachers initial contact with the scheme. They found this to be very welcoming.
- o The UCD input; this was found to be very positive and affirming of what the project was aiming to achieve.
- o The overall cultural learning of the Irish team was seen to be one of the major successes of the whole programme.
- o Generally Irish teachers felt very well 'minded' and taken care of with all the travel and accommodation organised by Global Schoolroom. *'This was so well organised; it was great that all you had to do was to turn up at the airport.'*
- o The teamwork of the Irish teacher group itself. *'People were very flexible and adaptable. They didn't really know what they were going to face but they didn't shirk from jumping in.'*
- o The interaction between the Irish team while in India; this was identified as very positive.
- o The documentation of the programme in 2008; this had not been undertaken to any major extent previously.
- o The 3 briefing sessions teachers had prior to leaving for India were seen to be a very positive opportunity for the Irish team to get to know each other, and to plan the programme *'The days were facilitated and organised well. This continued the earlier process of knowing we were all moving in the one direction.'*

The External Environment – the Programme

- o The courses given to the Indian teachers – these were seen to be very well received. *‘The appreciation of the Indian teachers went well beyond the course we gave. They were people who had never had any type of professional input and really valued it.’ ‘The Indians’ enthusiasm was inspirational.’*
- o The personal hospitality the Indians gave to the Irish team was identified as underpinning the success of the programme *‘The local priests were very welcoming and took us around and showed us things, took us to our accommodation, made arrangements for the staff etc.’*
- o The registration process for the Indian teachers was identified as a positive process.
- o The follow-up communication between the Irish and the Indian schools. While this was identified as a success, it also poses challenges to the Irish team.
- o The observation by the Irish team of the Indian teachers in their schools was identified as very positive and very informative for the Irish team and the future contextual planning of the programme. *‘When we saw how the confidence of the Indian teachers had been built this was great affirmation for us and really informed us that we were making a difference. ...We were amazed at the ability of the teachers following just a 4 week programme and how they really took on board what we were saying e.g. child centredness, lesson plans etc.’* This impacted on the Irish teachers in allowing them see the value of the programme.

2.2. The Challenges

The Internal Environment and Organisation

- o *The Cornmarket staff.* there were challenges in terms of understanding their role clearly. They were aware this was a support role where flexibility was required. Some felt their time might have been more productively used if the role was clarified more specifically.
- o *The team leaders* found it was challenging at times to fully understand their roles particularly where difficult decisions had to be made from geographically isolated positions. Examples used included decisions concerning the moderation of the course Booklet and the re-location of Irish staff. They were of the view that the moderation of the Booklet required particular expertise. Some felt they would liked to have been clearer about their level of responsibility prior to departure.
- o *Preparation.* This was both a success and a challenge. The Irish team were of the view that there could have been better preparation, particularly for team leaders and in terms of the delivery of the course module. This will be a particular issue for 2009 with a full new set of modules.

The External Environment – the Programme

- o *Language issues.* This was a real challenge on a number of different fronts. (a) The Indian partner's level of English was at a basic level. (b) The Irish teacher's knowledge of local languages was non existent in the main. (c) There was limited experience of teaching English as a foreign language in the Irish team. (d) At times, there was a mismatch between the language in the course booklet and the local knowledge of English.
- o *Isolation.* The Irish teams in India were spread across a large geographical area, some of which were very isolated. During the programme, there were therefore challenges in terms of communication.
- o *Local organisation.* The Irish team found it challenging not to be able to work on all the days available; they found on arrival a number of local festivals/holidays had been planned and it was not always possible to undertake the programme.
- o *Not being able to visit all teachers' schools for observation purposes.* Safety and transportation impacted on whether or not the Irish team could visit and observe the Indian teachers. Because this was such a positive experience when it was possible to undertake, the Irish team were of the view that some teachers lost out not having this additional support.

2.3 Balance between Successes and Challenges.

The Irish team were asked to rate the programme in terms of its successes and challenges on a scale of 100%. In terms of successes the overall mean was 68% and 32% for challenges. The highest rating for successes was 80% with the lowest 50%; the highest rating for challenges was 50% and the lowest 20%. The programme could therefore be analysed as a strong and successful programme but some serious attention needs to be brought to some key areas to improve its success.

2.4. The Learning

The Irish team felt there was enormous learning from the experience of 2008 which needed to inform the programme for 2009.

- o The *language* issue gave rise to the Irish team asking themselves some key questions about the Vision which was informing the programme. They questioned themselves about the basic purpose of the programme i.e. ‘*Was it to complete the course booklet or was it to teach good methodologies*’. They were of the view that they had got caught up with the former at the cost of the latter. They felt that the delivery of the modules needed a whole new approach and a different level of preparation. This would include the preparation of the Irish team in more appropriate ways to more effectively deliver modules to people for whom English was not their first language.
- o There was a strong and almost unanimous view that a great deal more local knowledge needed to go into the re-designing of the *Booklet* so that it became more appropriate and user friendly to the local partner.
- o *Local partner involvement*. There was a strong realisation of the need to involve the Indian partner more equally across all strands of the programme, in its design, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- o The Irish team were evolving a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the *team leader*, and the type of situations which were likely to face any potential team leader. This resulted in an understanding of the high level of expertise, flexibility, ability to use initiative and a willingness to take responsibility, in isolated positions, of those allocated to team leader roles.
- o *Communication*. The team identified the critical importance of effective communication systems between teams during the fieldwork phase, particularly where unusual or unexpected decisions had to be taken.
- o *R&R*. It was felt that the programme would benefit from a more structured R&R for the Irish team as a whole.
- o *Team composition*. There were differing views as to the best composition of the teaching teams. In terms of gender it was felt to be inappropriate to have all male teams, whereas the all female team found there were no issues in terms of gender composition. In terms of primary/secondary composition, there was agreement that there needed to be at least one primary and one secondary teacher included in the team composition. However the composition of the third members of the team created a debate as to the appropriateness of having a second primary school teacher, who was perceived by one team member to have more expertise on methodologies. Organisers of the teams indicated that in putting the teams together, they had to take a range of thinking into

consideration: the skill/experience mix, as well as how the team would get on with each other especially working in isolated positions.

- o A good *preparation programme* for Irish staff was seen to be a key component to the effective running of the Indian programme.

2.5. How well did you meet your Principles?

The Irish team were asked how well they undertook the programme in the light of the stated principles of the programme. This was how they rated their own work:

PRINCIPLE	Minimal	A small amount	A fair amount	A good deal	A huge amount
Shared education experience: - one way from Irish to Indian		2		7	3
- one-way - from Indian to Irish	1	2	2	6	1
- 2 way		2	1	8	
Enlightened me			1	3	8
Enlightened the Indian partner			2	9	-
Expanded my scope for opportunities			1	4	6
Expanded the Indians scope for opportunities		1	2	8	1
Links were respectful			1	2	9
How <i>mutually</i> beneficial was it			2	5	5
Enriched my educational experience			1	3	8
Enriched the Indian partners educational experience			2	8	2
Widened my cultural horizons				1	11
Widened the Indian partners cultural horizons			4	5	3
Built a strong framework locally		1	6	5	-
Sustainable by local networks		2	6	2	1

The principles which were most substantially met concerned the Irish team itself: the widening of the Irish team's cultural and educational experiences and horizons, and enlightenment from the Irish team's viewpoint. The links with the Indian partner were undertaken in a respectful manner and was also identified as being well met by the majority of the team. The analysis of the work being undertaken on a two way shared experience will need to be explored further to develop on a more full and equal two-way process, as will the building of strong local networks and local sustainability.

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Internal Environment and Organisation

- a) Review the *Vision* and Aims of the Programme, ensuring the Indian partners have equal input into this process. In reviewing the Vision, take particular cognisance of the desired outcome of the programme, exploring the impact on both Irish and Indian partners of the delivery of an academic qualification.
- b) *Preparation*. Review the whole of the preparation process, including that for team leaders, Irish teaching staff and Cornmarket staff. Build in adequate time for preparation for the delivery of the modules for 2009, particularly bearing in mind the 2009 programme will differ substantially from that delivered in 2008. (See also 3.2 (b)). Link into the Irish Aid/Worldwise scheme (www.irishaid.gov.ie/worldwise/) and in particular into the development education programme of workshops for teachers which is currently taking place – see *Appendix 2*.
- c) *Team leaders*. Review the roles and responsibilities of the team leaders, setting out this role more clearly, while taking into account the need for adaptability and flexibility within the role. Ensure the person specification includes experience in the moderation of teacher training material. Identify the skills required in such a position prior to appointment of team leaders.
- d) *Define the role of Cornmarket staff* while in India more clearly, while at the same time taking into account the need for adaptability and flexibility within the role. The role of Cornmarket staff needs to commence following the appointment of the Irish teaching staff, and if feasible be part of the whole of the programme process. During the programme delivery, if feasible, Cornmarket staff should work with each of the Irish teams at each of the Centres, spending 3-4 days at each centre during the programme; they should be involved from the outset with the planning of the programme. Local priests might identify how Cornmarket staff can identify the specific skills they bring to the programme and local staff might identify where these skills could best be used. Cognisance will need to be taken of local cultural sensitivities in developing any specific roles for administrative staff.
- e) Within all reviews on various aspects of the programme, consider the impact on, and implication for, the local partner. Specifically seek out the Indian partner perspective.
- f) Continue the professional *publicity* for the scheme and its dissemination.
- g) *Review the insurance arrangements*, particularly in the case of emergencies, medical or otherwise.
- h) Revisit the *team composition* to ensure it meets the needs of the local partners.
- i) Build in structured *R&R time* during the field trip for the whole of the Irish team. This could be structured to review and reflect on progress and seek advice on any essential matters. This can be reviewed following the 2009 programme. Continue to have time in Kolkata with the whole team at the start of the programme.
- j) Establish more specific and appropriate *communications* systems while undertaking the fieldwork e.g. satellite phones, particularly for teams working in isolated positions. Consider the possibility of a ‘floating’ member of the team who would travel between sites. Develop *emergency communication* for all the teams and all

members of teams e.g. in the case of illness, systems where family members will be quickly informed.

- k) Continue the *documentation* of the programme, ensuring a local partner input.
- l) With a view to developing the programme based on its stated *principles*, link in to the Worldwide development education workshops (see also 3.1(b)).

3.2. The External Environment – the Programme

- a) *Substantially review and re-design the course Booklet*, particularly the use of language within the publication. Vet, proof and pilot the Booklet with local Indian staff, and re-design it to meet the English language needs of the local partner. In reviewing the Booklet, review all aspects of the programme to ensure it is tailor made to suit the Indian partner needs, recognising also that not all of the Indian teachers will want to complete an academic programme. The review needs to take into account how the needs of those who are primarily interested in improving their methodologies can be met, as well as those who are interested in the UCD qualification. This will connect in with 3.1 (a).
- b) In the context of the *language* issues and the effective delivery of the Modules, consider a range of options which could be built into a pre-programme for the Indian teachers which would assist them to more effectively succeed in the completion of the programme. Options to consider should include: (a) preparation on the language in the course Booklet (b) English language preparation classes. In the context of the Irish teachers, consider (a) the feasibility of building in some type of ‘TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)’ programme and (b) the feasibility of Irish teachers learning some basic level of one key local language.
- c) Central channels of *communication* need to be established for the 2009 programme. This can be built upon during the preparation meetings between Irish and Indian partners from Christmas 2008 onwards. Initial visits of Irish staff need to have direct contact with each of the centres to ensure the programme is meeting diverse needs. The Irish team on those visits need to have direct discussions on the local timetables and how best to deliver the programme in 2009. A rough draft of the Booklet should be ready prior to the interim visit and should be vetted and piloted as part of the interim visit programme.
- d) Continue a structured process which will build a *strong local network* of support for the project and which will be sustainable locally. Set specific targets for this recommendation.
- e) As far as possible, in the *local preparation*, identify the days where the team is unlikely be able to conduct the programme because of holidays/festival etc and adapt the programme accordingly.
- f) Continue the *local observation* of Indian staff and make appropriate arrangements for local staff to undertake some level of observation where it is not possible for Irish staff to visit local schools.
- g) The *follow-up* contact between Irish and Indian partner needs to be more formalised, while retaining its flexibility.
- h) During or following the programme, local peer *evaluation* needs to take place with the Indian partners and participants.

- i) For the long term future, review the options of running the programme in a smaller number of areas, versus the current delivery which is over 5 areas with a wide geographical spread.

Appendix 1: The Indian Partner Evaluation.

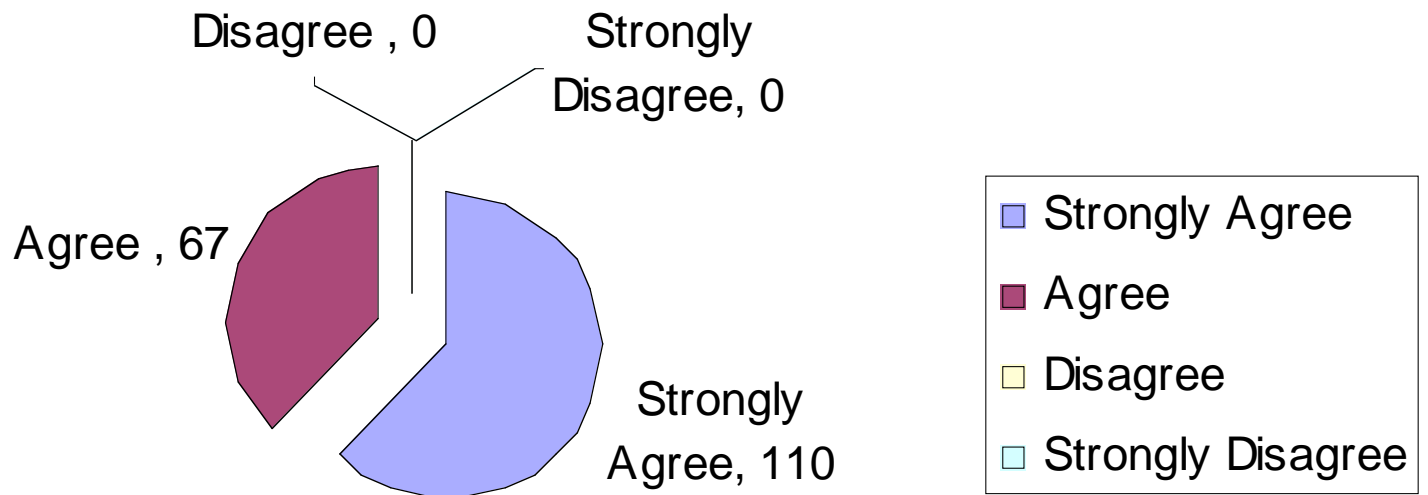
The following Indian partner's evaluation data was submitted to the external evaluator.

Global Schoolroom Diploma in Education 2008

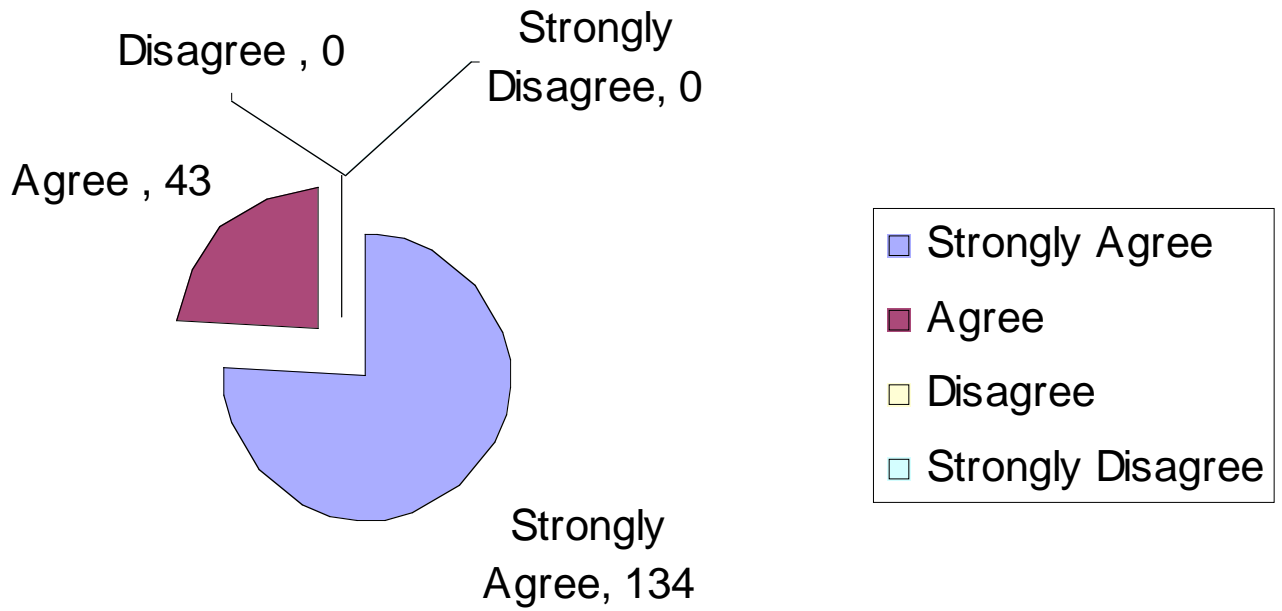
Results of Questionnaires Module 1

Classroom Teaching, Portfolio Development, Educational Psychology, Teaching Practice 1.

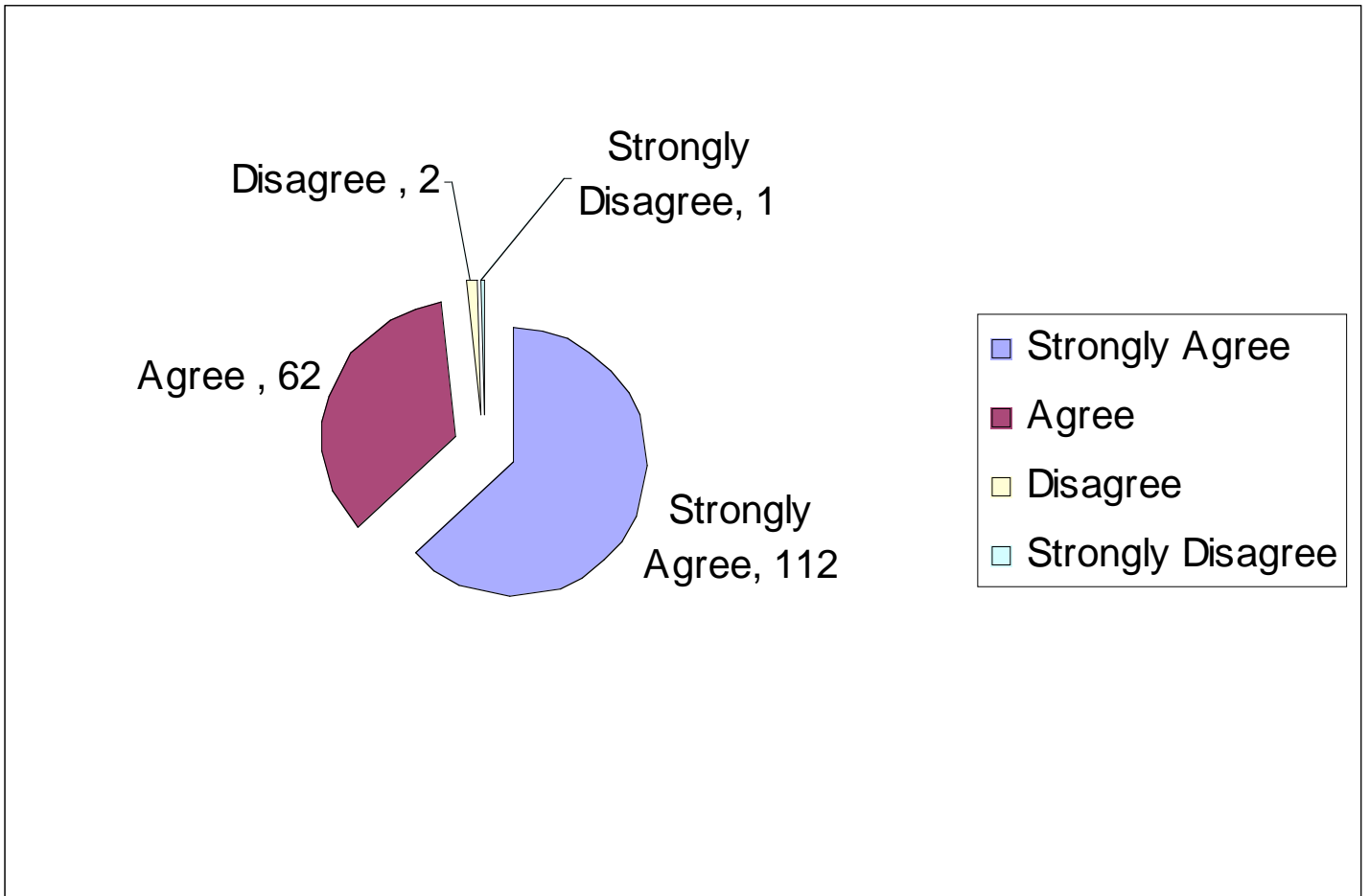
Q1. I thought these modules were clearly presented



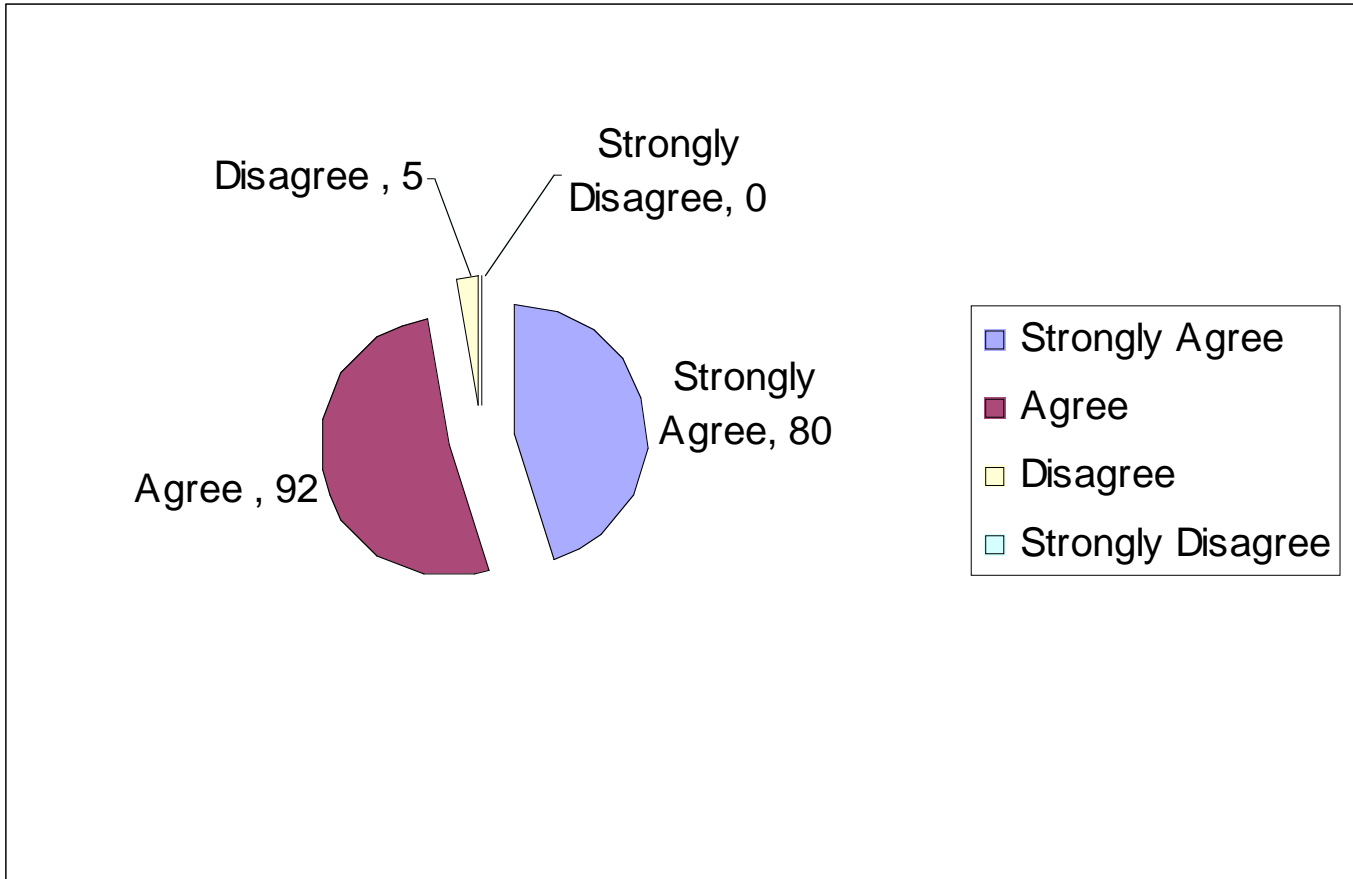
Q2. I thought these modules were well organized



Q3. I have a new understanding of classroom management and lesson planning

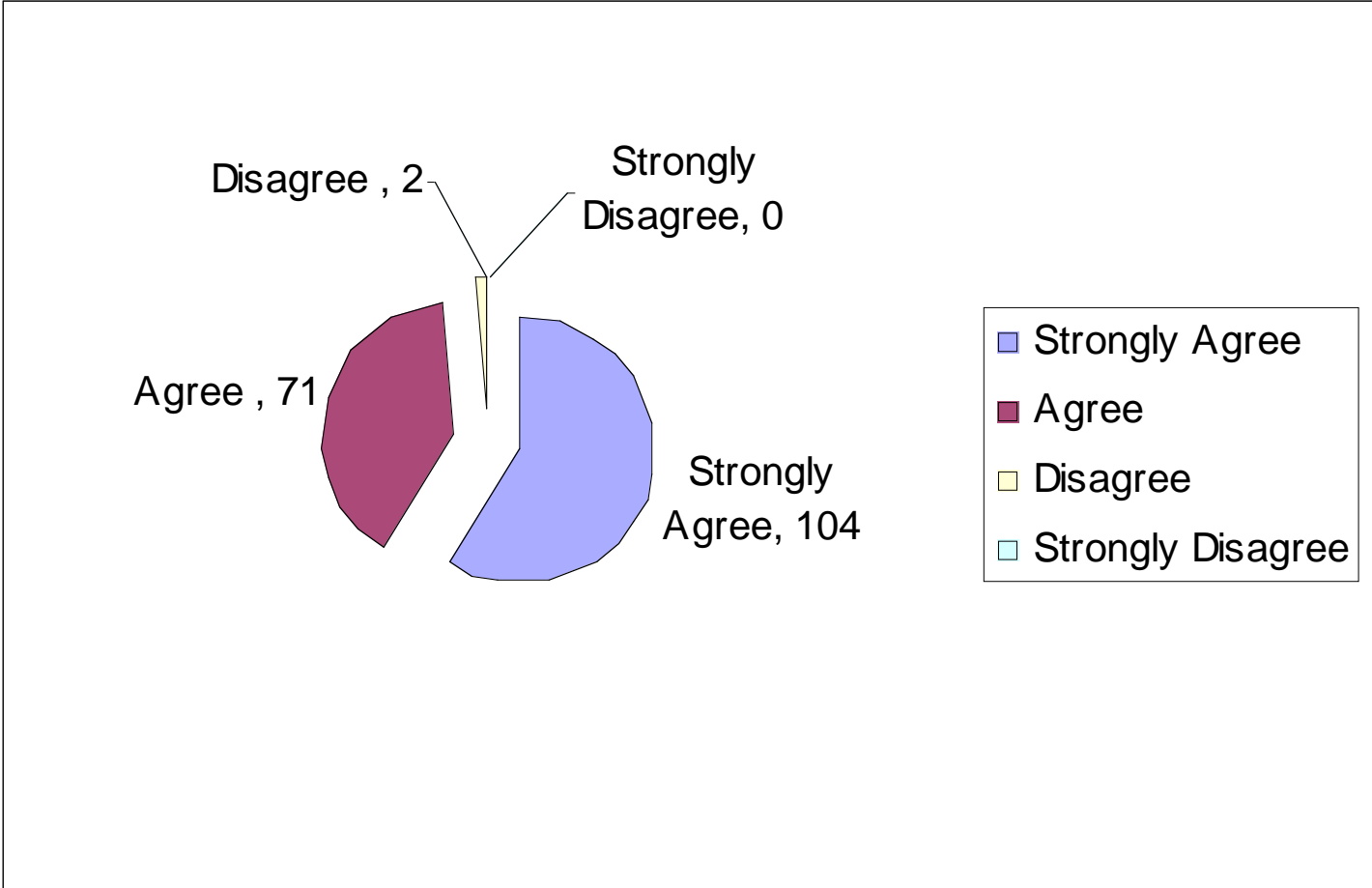


Q4. I was satisfied with the information in these modules

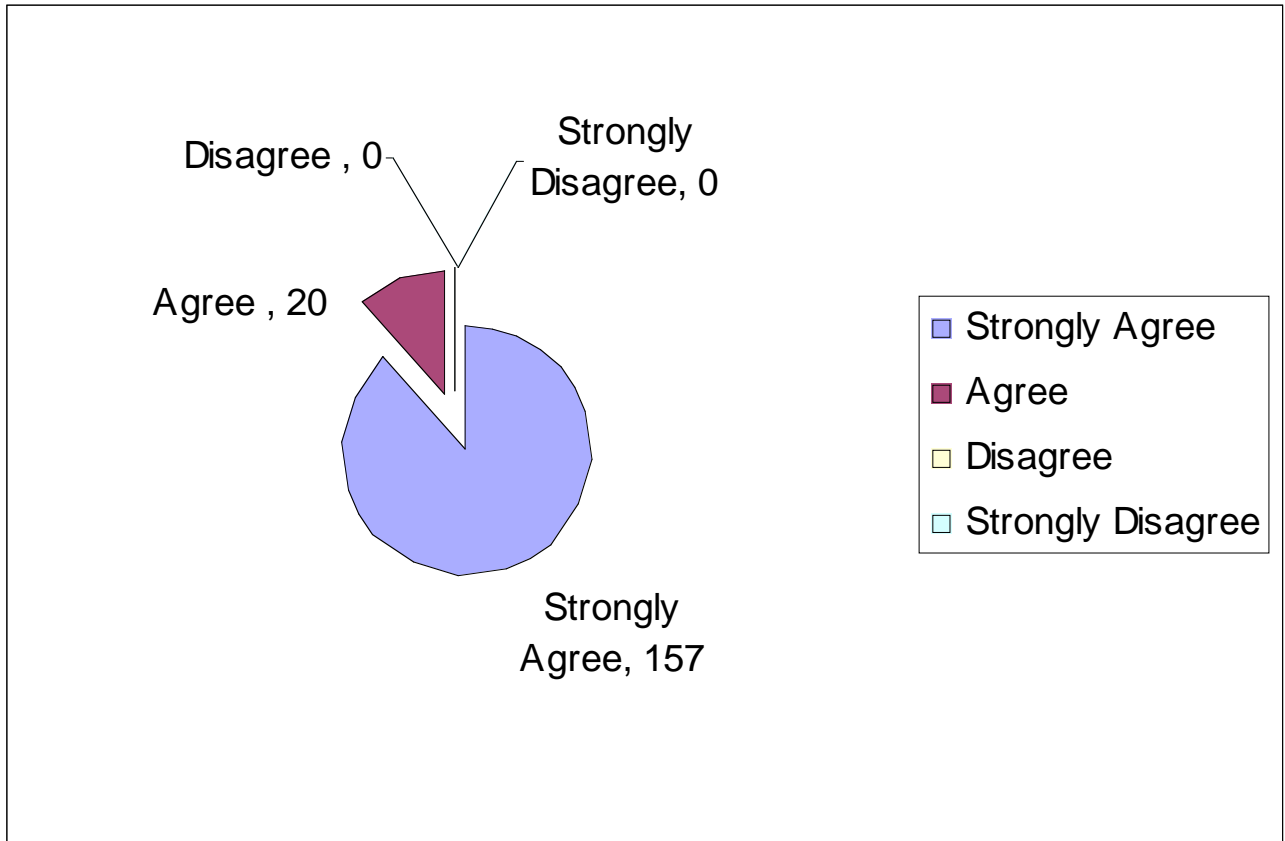


School Experience, Observations, and Reflective Journal Development

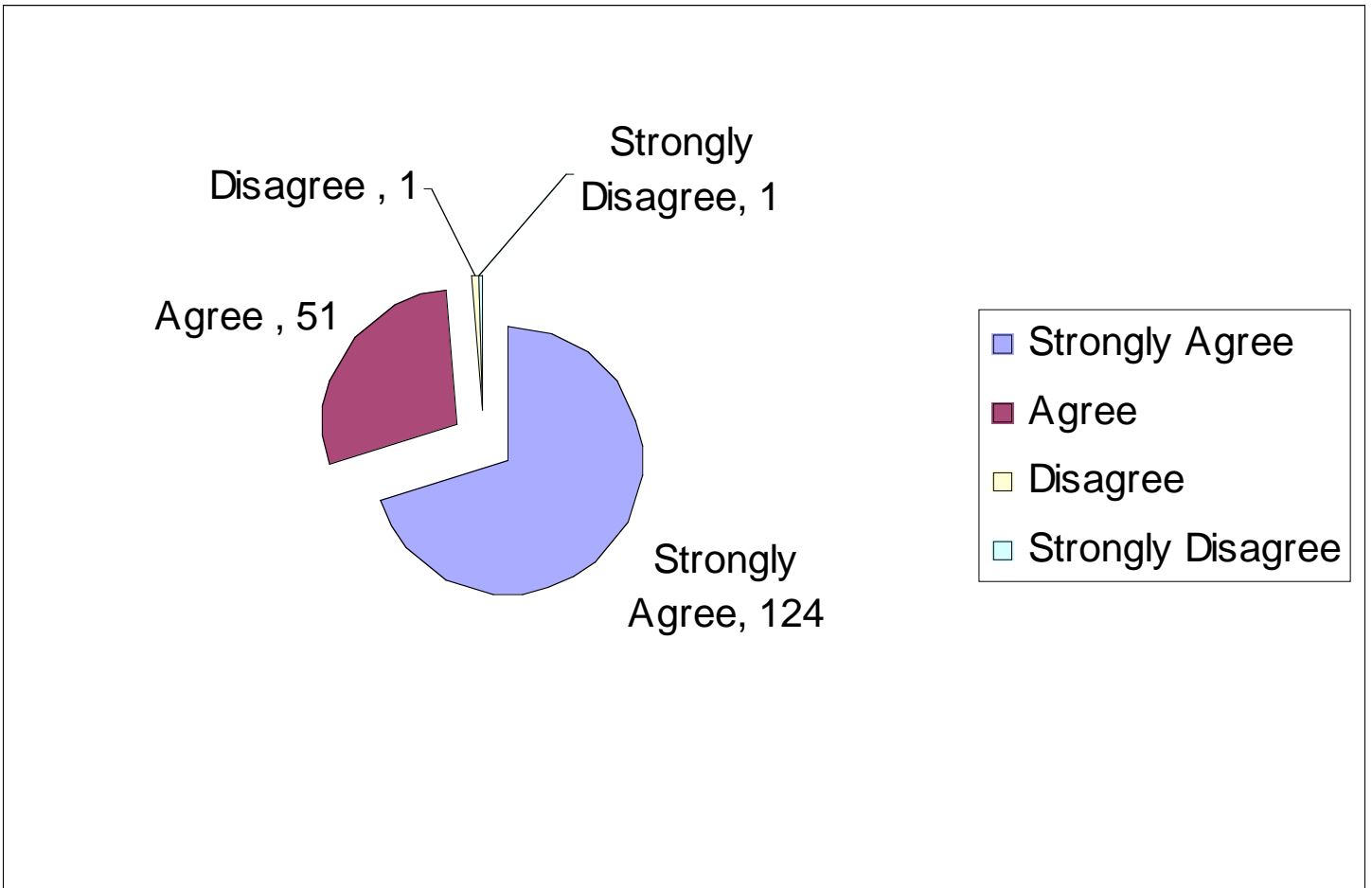
Q5. My school was supportive



Q6. My tutors were supportive and helped me develop as a teacher



Q7. The experience of keeping a reflective journal helped me gain insights into my teaching



WORLDWISE

Professional Development Workshops 2008/09

These three daytime workshops will: provide support and training for teachers involved in linking with partner schools from the global South; examine some of the key issues and challenges involved in linking; and look at how schools can work on development education issues in the context of a school partnership.

Open to all teachers involved or interested in development education and school partnership work

A series of three professional development workshops will be held between October and March in Dublin (at the National College of Ireland at IFSC) and Limerick (at The Clarion Hotel).

Each workshop will run from 9:30am until 4:00pm.

Up to two teachers per school may attend.

All travel expenses will be covered and lunch provided on the day.

Workshop 1: Introduction to School Linking

Dublin 10 October 2008; Limerick 17 October 2008

Workshop 2: Taking your Link Forward

Limerick 23 January 2009; Dublin 30 January 2009

Workshop 3: Exploring Development Issues through your Link

Limerick 06 March 2009; Dublin 20 March 2009

To register, or for more information, please contact Althea O'Sullivan at (01) 873 1411 or email worldwise@leargas.ie.

The deadline for registration for the first workshop is 03 October 2008.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Further information on our website: www.irishaid.gov.ie/worldwise/

