

Review and Reconstruction of M.Ed. Curriculum in different Universities A Study

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ABSTRACT

The quality of teachers depends upon the quality of teacher-educators who are the product of the Master in Education (M.Ed.) programme of teacher education. The quality of teacher-educators depends on M.Ed. curriculum and its transaction. In this regard, the policy documents have also made several recommendations from time to time for improving the quality of curriculum, content and course structure of Master in Education (M.Ed.) programme. National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)–2009 suggested innovative curriculum and course of M.Ed. programme for its quality improvement. The present study examined the status of M.Ed. (General) and M.Ed. (Special Education) curricula run in twenty-eight Central and State Universities in terms of course structure, accrediting agencies, working days, practicum, research component, examination and evaluation, weightage assigned to core and optional theory papers etc. The extent to which the curricula of M.Ed. programme run in these universities are in consonance with NCFTE, 2009 and as per revised norms and standards of National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) Regulations–2014 have been discussed in this paper.

Introduction

The quality of school education depends upon the quality of teachers who are prepared through Master in Education (M.Ed.) programme of teacher education in the country. At present, M.Ed. programme is being run in 230 Universities and 1011 teacher education institutions including 124 government and 887 private

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institutions with total intake of 45075 students (NCTE, 2016). In the past, efforts were made to improve the quality of M.Ed. programme by setting up several Commissions and Committees by the Government of India. The *University Education Commission* (1948–49) stated that the teacher-educators must look at the whole course from a different angle; unintelligent following of rule-of-thumb methods should be discarded; not less than 50 per cent of the staff should have school teaching experience, and the theory courses must be flexible and adaptable to local circumstances. The *Secondary Education Commission* (1952–53) suggested for adopting new techniques of evaluation and voiced that more capable and intelligent persons should be attracted to the teaching profession. It further recommended minimum three years teaching experience after graduation in education for admission to M.Ed. programme. The *Review Committee on Education* (1960) of UGC recommended that the content of the M.Ed. course should lead to at least one specialisation and to a fair acquaintance with the methodology of educational research, besides promoting a desirable intellectual discipline. For admission to M.Ed. course, the candidate should generally have a good second class B.A./B.Sc. degree, preferably a good second class M.A./M.Sc. degree and a first or second class B.Ed. degree in both theory and practice. Teaching at the M.Ed. level should be supplemented by tutorial seminars. Dissertation as a part of the M.Ed. programme serves a useful purpose but at present it usually does not come up to a desirable standard. The Study Group on the Training of Elementary Teachers in India (1961) stated that it is desirable that universities provide specialised courses at the M.Ed. level to prepare teacher-educators for training institutions. It would also be a distinct advantage if persons taking such specialised courses become familiar with methods of infant teaching. The *Education Commission* (1966) recommended that quality of training institutions and of teacher education programmes should be improved.

In the light of recommendations made by different Commissions and Committees, the Government of India set up regulatory bodies like National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), University Grants Commission (UGC) and Rehabilitation Council of India to develop curriculum of M.Ed. programme. In 1998, the NCTE brought out *Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education* which provided guidelines for the organisation of curriculum for different stages of teacher education including M.Ed. programme and also suggested two years duration for M.Ed. programme. NCFTE (2009) suggested improving the design and imparting

greater rigour and professionalism to the M.Ed. programme and also recommended stage-specific specialisations for meeting the needs of different levels of schooling. Suggestions have been made for post-graduate courses in teacher education of two years with provision for specialised areas in the development of scholarship in education and applied fields, such as teacher education, curriculum planning, evaluation, counselling, sociology and philosophy of education.

The UGC also developed the Curriculum Framework and syllabus for M.Ed. programme during 1990 and 2001. The M.Ed. (special education) curriculum followed the guidelines of Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). During 2012, Justice Verma Commission (JVC) recommended that current M.Ed. programmes need specialisation at different levels of school education and the duration of M.Ed. course should be of two years. The recommendations of JVC were accepted by Government of India and NCTE revised the norms and standards of all the teacher education programmes including M.Ed. programme in 2014.

Though policy perspectives emphasised from time to time for improving the quality of M.Ed. programme, but it is known to be of generic in nature (Khameri & Mahapatra, 2013; Srivastava & Singh, 1976; Yadav, 2013). However, it may be pointed out here that systematic studies have not been conducted so far to study the M.Ed. curriculum and syllabi of various universities and institutions. The present study attempts to analyse the M.Ed. curricula being implemented by different universities in the country to identify the gaps and deficiencies in the preparation of quality teacher-educators. This assumes significance in the light of NCFTE 2009 and NCTE Regulations–2014.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study included the following.

- To study the status of M.Ed. Curriculum in terms of course structure, work days and hours, practicum, research component, examination and evaluation system in universities in the light of NCFTE–2009;
- To find out the weightage assigned to core theory and elective/ optional courses in terms of external and internal evaluation; and
- To suggest the direction for revising the M.Ed. curriculum based on the findings of the study with a view to producing quality teacher-educators.

Method

Sample

There are 230 universities which offer M.Ed. course in the country. All the universities were contacted to send their M.Ed. curriculum and syllabus. Information was received from 28 universities which were offering general and special education courses. The twenty-eight universities were classified based on regional representation (Northern region=14, Southern =3, Eastern=2, and Western=9). The details of the participating universities are given in subsequent paras).

- (i) *Northern Region:* Delhi University, New Delhi; Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; University of Jammu, Jammu; Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra; Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi; Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi; Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak; Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla; V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Jaunpur; Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer; Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar; and Amity University, Noida.
- (ii) *Southern Region:* University of Mysore, Mysuru; Osmania University, Hyderabad; and University of Calicut, Calicut.
- (iii) *Eastern Region:* Sikkim University, Gangtok; Gauhati University, Guwahati.
- (iv) *Western Region:* Guru Ghashidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur; University of Mumbai, Mumbai; Shivaji University, Kolhapur; Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore; Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati; University of Pune, Pune; Gujarat University, Ahmedabad; Barkatullah University, Bhopal; and S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai.

Procedure

Desk analysis was used for analysing the M.Ed. curricula procured from 28 universities. The analysis covered course structure of different M.Ed. curricula with regard to aspects such as foundation/core subjects, elective subjects, practicum, evaluation scheme and pedagogies used for transacting the curriculum. The analysis also covered other major components of curricula such as year of introducing the course (General and Special Education), nature of

examination—annual or semester system, admission procedure, teaching hours/credits earmarked for each course/paper, and the medium of instruction. Analysis sheets were designed for different components. Tables and graphs were prepared for organisation of the data from the analysis sheet. The methodology was analytic–descriptive and the available information on the concerned University website was also used.

Results

The analysis is based on comparison of the 28 curricula against the sample provided by the accrediting organisations such as University Grants Commission, National Council for Teacher Education, and Rehabilitation Council of India. It examined the extent to which the curriculum structure of different universities is aligned to the structure provided by the accrediting agency. The findings are divided into four sections: (i) A macro-view of the curricula, (ii) analysis of M.Ed. (General) curricula, (iii) M.Ed. (Special Education) curricula, and (iv) suggestions for reconstructing of M.Ed. courses in the light of NCFTE–2009 and NCTE Regulations–2014.

Section I: A Macro-view

In this section, a macro-view of 28 sampled universities in term of renewal of curriculum, type of course, examination, eligibility criteria for admission, teaching hours, medium of instruction and attendance have been discussed.

Renewal of Curriculum

Table 1 reveals the status of renewal of M.Ed. curriculum in different universities in the light of NCFTE–2009. It may be stated that data were available only for 20 universities.

Table 1
Renewal of Curriculum

S. No.	Year of Renewal	Name of the University	Number of the Universities (N=20)
1.	2000–2004	Gauhati University, Guwahati (2002); Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla (2004); Osmania University, Hyderabad (2003)	3
2.	2005–2009	Delhi University, New Delhi (2009); University of Jammu, Jammu(2009); Shivaji University, Kolhapur (2009); Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati(2006).	4

3.	2010–2015	Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (2010); Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (2013); Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra (2011); Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi (2012); Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak (2012); Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer (2010); University of Mumbai, Mumbai (2012); Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Indore (2012); University of Pune, Pune, (2010); Gujarat University, Ahmedabad (2011); Barkatullah University, Bhopal (2008); University of Mysore, Mysuru (2010); University of Calicut, Calicut; Sikkim University, Gangtok (2010).	13
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It is evident from the Table 1, that out of 20 universities, 13 had revised their M.Ed. curriculum in the light of NCFTE–2009 but revised it partially. The Gauhati University, Himachal University, and Osmania University revised the curriculum during 2002 to 2004 and Sant Gadga Baba University during 2006.

The Course Structure

The course structure is based on the pattern of examination. Table 2 provides information about the annual vs. semester systems followed in different universities.

Table 2
Annual Vs. Semester Systems Followed in Different Universities

S. No.	Category	Name of the Universities	Number
1.	Annual	Delhi University, Kurukshetra University, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Shivaji University, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, S.N.D.T. Women's University, Gauhati University	9
2.	Semester	Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh Muslim University, Sikkim University, Banaras Hindu University, University of Jammu, Guru Ghashidas Vishwavidyalaya, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, University of Mumbai, University of Mysore, Osmania University, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Maharshi Dayanand University, Himachal Pradesh University, University of Calicut, University of Pune, Gujarat University, Barkatullah University, Lovely Professional University, Amity University.	19

The annual system of examination was followed in nine universities. Other universities followed semester system which consisted of two semesters in one academic year. Both the semesters were of 15 to 18 weeks each. The University of Calicut specified that the two semesters should be of 105 days each. The University of Gujarat mentioned that the working days should not be less than 90 days comprising 450 teaching hours for each semester. There was a mandatory attendance of 75 per cent in most of the Universities. There was a trend to adopt the semester system. Only a quarter of the universities still follow the annual course modality.

Eligibility Criteria for Admission

Table 3 presents the eligibility criteria followed by sampled universities for admission in M.Ed. programme.

Table 3
Eligibility Criteria for Admission in M.Ed.

S.No.	Category	Name of the Universities	Number
1.	Merit Basis	Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Himachal Pradesh University, V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Lovely Professional University, Guru Ghashidas Vishwavidyalaya, University of Mumbai, Shivaji University, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, University of Pune, Gujarat University, Barkatullah University, S.N.D.T. Women's University, University of Mysore, Sikkim University, Gauhati University, and Amity University	20
2.	Both (Entrance and Merit)	Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi University, University of Jammu, Kurukshetra University, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Osmania University, Maharshi Dayanand University, and University of Calicut.	8

The NCFTE Syllabi/NCTE regulations have left the criteria for admission to M.Ed. for universities to decide. Out of 28 universities, 20 admitted students based on merit of B.Ed. examination and other 8 universities admitted based on merit as well as entrance test. The entry requirement for being eligible for admission into M.Ed. programme was B.Ed. degree with 50 per cent marks in most

of the universities. However, the university of Mumbai and Devi Ahilya Vishvidayalaya, Indore, University of Calicut, and Amity University required 55 per cent marks in B.Ed. as an eligibility criterion for admission into M.Ed. programme. V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Jaunpur (UP) considered graduation, LT or B.T. or equivalent of B.Ed. Apart from B.Ed., Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University Ajmer specified that Shiksha Shastri, B.T., LT or 2 year B.Ed. or B.Sc. B.Ed. could also apply for this course.

Medium of Instruction

Medium of instruction was generally English. In Pune University the medium of instruction was English and Marathi, whereas in Amravati University it was English, Hindi and Marathi. A few universities had specifically mentioned it in their curriculum document.

Section II: Analysis of M.Ed. Curricula (General)

For a post-graduate professional degree in education, universities had prescribed theory papers which were divided into parts. The first part covered core or foundation courses. The second part comprised optional or elective subjects. The number of core subjects was compulsory whereas the number of optional/elective subjects was more and varied from university to university. The students have to opt two or three out of the prescribed courses by the university.

Foundation/Core Course

The status of core/foundation courses prescribed by various universities is shown in Figure 1.

It appears from Figure 1 that philosophical and sociological foundation of education; psychological foundations of education and methodology of educational research were prescribed as core subjects in all the universities. Some of the universities prescribed more than three core subjects. In Jammu University, educational technology, teacher education, comparative education and curriculum evaluation were covered under foundation course in addition to three papers mentioned above. Further, comparative education and curriculum development in Kurukshetra University; curriculum evaluation in Guru Govind Sing Indraprastha University, New Delhi; curriculum development and economics of education in Osmania University; educational technology and teacher

Number of Universities Having Different Core Courses

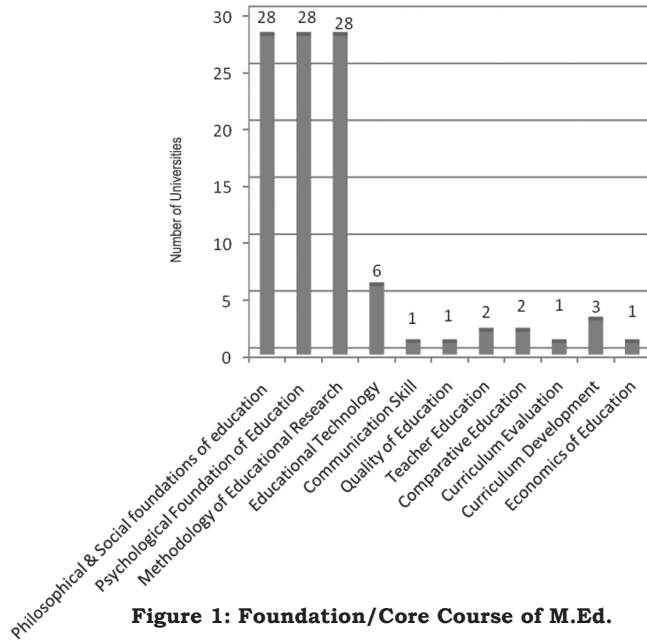


Figure 1: Foundation/Core Course of M.Ed.

education in Shivaji University and educational technology in Gauhati University were prescribed as core subjects under foundation courses. This above analysis shows that almost all universities followed the UGC model curriculum (2001).

Elective/Optional Course

The universities had followed different patterns of offering the optional/ elective papers. The UGC in 2001 had prescribed any 2 out of the 14 specified optional subjects to be offered to M.Ed. students. Some of the universities, namely Himachal Pradesh University (3 of the 7 options), Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University (2 of the 10 options), Delhi University (2 of the 23 options), Gauhati University (2 of the 7 options), University of Calicut (2 of the 10 options), MDS University, Ajmer (2 of the 6 options), Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi (2 of the 8 options), Jammu University (2 of the 7 options) and Pune University (3 of the 11 options) had offered the optional subjects. Table 4 provides the optional papers prescribed in sampled universities.

Table 4
Elective Subject of M.Ed. Course

S. No.	Optional Paper/ Elective Subject	Number of Universities	S. No.	Optional Paper/ Elective Subject	Number of Universities
1.	Guidance and Counselling	24	16.	Secondary and Higher Secondary Education	1
2.	Distance Education	7	17.	Inclusive Education	5
3.	Value and Human Rights	11	18.	Economics of Education	3
4.	Language Education	6	19.	Futuristic Education	1
5.	Comparative Education	10	20.	Educational Administration	13
6.	Teacher Education	18	21.	Mathematics Education	2
7.	Special Education	14	22.	Education for Mental Health	2
8.	Educational Technology	22	23.	Experimental Education	1
9.	Educational Measurement and Evaluation	18	24.	History and Problems of Indian Education	4
10.	Curriculum Development	16	25.	Social Science Education	3
11.	Management, Planning and Finance of Education	8	26.	Cognitive, Culture and Education	1
12.	Environmental Education	11	27.	Equality and Education	1
13.	Science Education	6	28.	Business Education	1
14.	Yoga Education	5	29.	Art Education	1
15.	Elementary Education	4	30.	Vocational Education	1

Most of the universities offered Guidance and Counselling, Teacher Education, Educational Technology, Educational Measurement and Evaluation, Curriculum Development, Educational Administration, Environmental Education, Values and Human Rights, Comparative Education and Special Education as optional/elective papers.

Practicum of M.Ed. Course

The component of practicum included supervision and evaluation of practice-teaching and other aspects of school experience of

B.Ed./D.Ed students, reflection and maintenance of journal, presentation/panel discussion in seminar, working with community/visit to an Institute, project work/action research and paper-wise sessional work in M.Ed. course. These are presented in Figure 2.

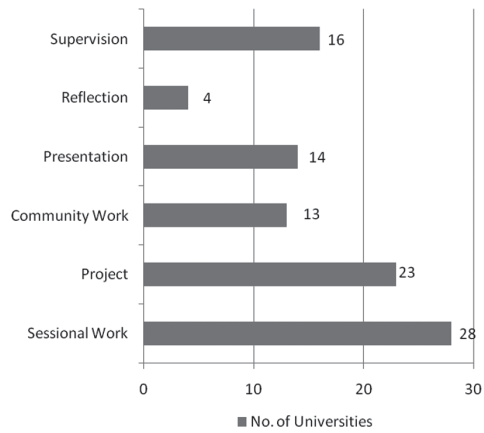


Figure 2: Practicum of M.Ed. Course

Figure 2 shows that sessional work for each theory paper was a compulsory component and was followed in all the universities. It was evaluated internally by the subject of practicum teacher or a committee. The classroom observation of B.Ed. trainees and supervision of their internship programme was made part of practical assignments. Sixteen universities had mentioned supervision of B.Ed. students' internship programme. These universities were: Sikkim University; Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University, University of Mysore, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi; Maharashtra Dayanand University, University of Pune, Gujarat University, Barkatullah University, Banaras Hindu University (10 Lessons), University of Jammu (8 Lessons), University of Mumbai (5 Lessons), Shivaji University (4 Lessons), and Himachal Pradesh University (20 Lessons). Reflection and maintenance of reflective journal was a feature in some universities like Sikkim University, Mysore University, and University of Pune. Presentation/Panel Discussion in Seminar was included in fourteen universities as part of practicum. Working with Community/Visit was included in practicum in thirteen universities. Twenty-three sampled universities had made project work /action research as an integral component of M.Ed. curriculum.

Evaluation Scheme of M.Ed. Course

Two patterns, marking and grading systems, were adopted by the universities for evaluating M.Ed. course. Marks in some universities were also converted into grades. Marking system was adopted in most of universities where as marking and grading system

were followed in Sikkim University, Banaras Hindu University, University of Jammu, GGSIPU, University of Mumbai, Shivaji University, University of Pune, and Gujarat University. Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya exclusively followed grading system in evaluation scheme. Most of the universities assigned 100 marks both for external and internal assessment for theory paper (70/80 for external and 30/20 for internal). In evaluation of dissertation as part of M.Ed. Programme, majority of universities followed allocation of marks for dissertation between external and internal assessment ranging marks from 200 to 70. In respect of viva voce in dissertation, some universities have clearly specified marks exclusively for it whereas others have mixed up with sessional and practical work.

Pedagogies Used during Teaching-learning Process

Majority of universities included seminar, lecture cum discussion, self-study, project/research, use of ICT, field visit, interview, demonstration, etc., as methodologies for curriculum transaction. ICT was introduced in all universities with focus on technologies and its prospects as separate paper in M.Ed. curriculum.

Section III: M.Ed. (Special Education)

The special education courses at graduation and post-graduation levels are accredited by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), which also provides guidelines for M.Ed. Special Education. The structure of the course suggested by the RCI covers three theory courses, two specialisations and optional/elective courses. Courses in theory carry 24 credits followed by 12 credits for practicum and 12 credits for dissertation. The SNDT Women University, Mumbai followed the RCI course structure. The other two universities, namely, Banaras Hindu University and Kurukshetra University had made modifications but, by and large, followed the RCI guidelines. The three core theory courses included Foundations of Special Education, Psychological Foundations of Special Education and Methodology of Educational Research. The course title in the three universities had small variations but the content was almost the same. In the case of Kurukshetra University, it gives significant milestones in the course on 'Developments in Special Education'. The core courses were followed by specialisation courses. These courses covered identification and assessment; and curriculum and intervention in Learning Disability (LD) in the SNDT University

for Women, Mumbai. The same type of course was available for specialisation in Mental Retardation (MR). A student could offer one out of the two specialisations – LD or MR. In Banaras Hindu University, specialisation was only in the education of Children with Visual Impairment. In Kurukshetra University the first course on specialisation was on Psycho-social and educational implications for Children With Visual Impairment (CWVI).

Elective Courses

The number of elective courses was highest in the SNTD Women's university, Mumbai. These were Management of Special Education, Educational Technology and Curriculum Development. Out of these, one elective course was to be selected by the M.Ed. (Special Education) students. The Banaras Hindu University offered two elective courses. While Kurkshetra University did not offer any elective course, RCI does mention elective courses in the suggested course structure.

Dissertation

Dissertation in M.Ed. (Special Education) was compulsory for students in all the three universities. It is labelled as 'Thesis' in SNTD University, Mumbai while in the other two universities it is termed as dissertation. In all the three universities, it required both a written document and a viva-voce. In Banaras Hindu University a candidate was also required to give a seminar based on the first three chapters.

Practicum

Action research and debate were two areas which were conspicuous by their absence in all the universities as well as in RCI programme. The provision of seminar was provided in Banaras Hindu University and systematic observation in SNTD University for Women and Kurukshetra University. Group and project works were provided in SNTD University. Assignments and practical work in psychology were provided in all the three universities. Very few activities were mentioned in M.Ed. (Special Education) courses in Banaras Hindu University and Kurukshetra University. Only SNTD University course mentioned course study, systematic observation in pre-service teacher, training classes, conducting parent-teacher meetings, etc.

Evaluation Scheme

Credit/Grades were used in the evaluation of M.Ed. (Special Education) in SNTD University and Banaras Hindu University. There was provision of both external and internal assessment in respect of theory papers, dissertation and practical work in all the three universities.

Section-IV: Reconstruction of M.Ed. Course

Keeping the above findings in view, there is a need to reconstruct M.Ed. curriculum as per the recommendation of NCFTE 2009 and NCTE Regulations, 2014. The M.Ed. course should be of two years for preparing professional teacher-educators and other educational professionals. M.Ed. degree need to be with specialisation either in elementary or in secondary education. There should be at least 200 working days each year, exclusive of the period of admission and inclusive of classroom transaction, practicum, field study and conduct of examination. The institution should work for a minimum of 36 hours in a week during which faculty and students should be available for interaction, dialogue, consultation and mentoring. The minimum attendance should be 80 per cent in theory courses and practicum, and 90 per cent in case of field attachment. The curriculum of the two-year M.Ed. programme should comprise the components of theory, practicum, internship, attachment and assessment.

Theory Course

The theory course should be divided into core courses and specialisation courses. The main core courses should comprise of perspective courses, tool courses, and teacher education courses. Critical reflection on gender, disability and marginalisation should cut across the courses in core and specialisations. Similarly, skills pertaining to ICT and educational technology should be integrated in various courses in the programme. Besides, yoga education shall form an integral part of the curriculum.

Practicum

Organisation of workshops and seminars to enhance professional skills and teaching modality of the various courses taught should be the part of practicum.

Internship

Field attachments/internship/immersions should be for a minimum period of four weeks. The aim should be to engage students with field-based situations and work in schools and to provide an opportunity for reflection and developing skills. Systematically planned field internship/attachment in a teacher education institution, and in the specialisation area chosen by the student should be organised during the programme. Close mentorship by faculty in relevant areas should be provided for in the programme in the form of tutorials, guided reading groups, field attachment, and guided research dissertation.

Assessment

For each theory course, at least 30 per cent weightage should be assigned for continuous internal assessment and 70 per cent for examination conducted by the examining body. The weightage for the internal and external assessment for theory and practicum courses should be such as prescribed by the affiliating university based on the above formulation. The internal assessment should be based upon individual/ group assignments, seminar presentations, field attachment appraisal reports, etc. One-fourth of the total marks/credits should be assigned to practicum, internship, field attachment and dissertation.

Conclusion

The analysis of M.Ed. curriculum indicates lack of coordination and linkages among different regulatory bodies (UGC, NCTE, RCI) which are responsible for preparing curriculum framework for teacher education. All universities are following the M.Ed. curriculum recommended by UGC Framework, 2001. No university has revised fully the M.Ed. (General) curriculum in the light of NCFTE, 2009. All the three universities running M.Ed.(Special Education), by and large, followed RCI guidelines. Action research and debate are not included in RCI programme. Credit/Grades are used in evaluation of M.Ed. (Special Education). Keeping the above findings related to M.Ed. curriculum in view, there is a need to reconstruct M.Ed. curriculum. There should be close collaboration between regulatory bodies (UGC, NCTE, and RCI) which are responsible for preparing curriculum framework for teacher education programmes. All the university should revise the M.Ed. curriculum in the light of NCFTE –2009 and NCTE regulation, 2014.

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