

A Study on Reaction of Students of Universities of Odisha towards Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to investigate the reaction of students towards the different dimensions of three year integrated B.Ed-M.Ed course. The study was conducted through survey method with a self-developed questionnaire tool consisting of 35 items using online google form. The sample of the study comprises of 50 randomly selected students. The data collected were analysed using percentage and interpretation. The major findings reveal that most of the students possess positive opinions regarding the course design and different dimensions taken into consideration. However, students had expressed the scope of improvement in duration of internship and practicum. At the same time number of student intake capacity should be increased to 100 as opined by the students. Above all, majority of students were satisfied and found it worthy in terms of choosing a professional career as the National Education Policy 2020 is in place and very soon new curriculum is also going to take place in the country.

Keywords: Integrated B.Ed-M.Ed program, Trinee perception, Course design, Internship, Practicum, NEP 2020.

INTRODUCTION

Quality education has been a thrust area in recent days. Both the Right to Education Act-2009 and National Education Policy-2020 have laid great emphasis on this dimension. They have recommended for appointment of trained and competent teachers who are well equipped with content knowledge and pedagogical skills to ensure quality in teaching learning process. Therefore, traditional teacher preparation process is to be revisited and re-conceptualize as such to meet the need of the 21st century. Sahoo and Sharma (2011) conducted a study was to examine student teachers' perception toward the restructuring of teacher education programmes with a sample size of 20 students studying in different teacher education institutes and found that the respondents had positive opinion but they felt the need for reforms in teacher education programs introduced as per NCTE regulation, 2014. Gorain (2017) conducted a study on views of teacher educators towards Two yes B.Ed. programme of west Bengal and reported the existing B.Ed. programme needed to be modified. In 2014 TE and SCERT published a report on public opinion seeking references on teacher education in Odisha. In the study, respondents have expressed the need of well-trained professional for the Teacher Education Institutions. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) the apex body of teacher education programme in the country in its regulation-2014, have introduced this course. The broader idea is to provide a large workforce to address the shortage of trained

and qualified teachers and also to prepare teacher educators and other professionals in education. Thus, the three-year integrated B.Ed.M.Ed teacher education programme bears a lot of significance. Since then, different universities have started offering the course across the country at present in Odisha four universities namely Fakir Mohan University, Balasore, Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University, Baripada, Rajendra University, Bolangir, and Sambalpur University, Sambalpur are offering this course.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Teacher education is a cornerstone of any nation, as it not only shapes individuals but also contributes to the development of the nation as a whole. The adage "Teacher is the Nation-builder" underscores the pivotal role educators play in society. The NCTE has underscored the importance of the process dimension in curriculum areas to cultivate professionalism among student teachers across various stages of the school system. It advocates for longer program durations and a holistic approach to teacher education. Consequently, NCTE regulations have recommended integrated approaches in teacher preparation and guidelines have been established for the implementation of Integrated B.Ed., and M.Ed., with an emphasis on earning minimum credits for specific stages of teacher education. The curricular areas have been expanded, internship activities in schools near teacher education institutions have been prioritized, along with a balance between theoretical presentations and performance-based practices across different subjects aimed at enhancing language competencies and research skills through dissertation work. Observation, interaction, and expression skills are emphasized in all teacher education programs. Furthermore, there's an emphasis on recruiting teacher educators with academic backgrounds in these areas, in addition to pedagogy and educational perspectives. The focus is on elevating the status of teacher education in the country. In every reform comprehensive feedback system involving institutions, staff, faculty, and stakeholders is essential at every stage of program development and implementation. This ensures that programs are effectively meeting the needs of all involved parties and facilitates continuous improvement and adaptation to changing circumstances. So, the structural reforms in teacher education introduced by NCTE should be aligned with the needs and aspirations of student teachers, working teachers, and teacher educators. The reactions of students towards these reforms are deemed crucial in this regard.

Recent research conducted in India provides valuable insights into the impact of structural reform in teacher education curriculum. Sushma (2014) found no significant difference in the attitudes of government, aided, and unaided teacher educators towards the two-year B.Ed. program. Barua (2015) examined the quality of public and privately funded B.Ed. programs in the northern region, revealing favourable responses from students towards enhanced learning through the two-year program. Nataraja R. (2016) explored the attitudes of teacher trainees towards the two-year B.Ed. program and their future prospects, noting that while many trainees viewed the program unfavourably, they believed it would enhance their competencies and improve job prospects. Adhikary (2017) investigated the challenges in implementing the NCTE regulation of 2014 on teacher education programs in Assam, finding mixed perceptions among trainees, with dissatisfaction regarding curriculum distribution and complexity. Additionally, Sahoo and Sharma (2018) studied student teachers' perceptions towards curriculum reform in teacher education programs in Odisha, concluding that the reforms were generally appreciated. Thus The current study aims to investigate student teachers' perceptions regarding structural reforms within various program backgrounds.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this backdrop, the present study had objectives to explore the responsive behaviour of pupils to understand how far the different dimensions such as course design, admission procedure, faculty recruitment, curriculum, internship, assessment and outcome have been satisfied and what possibilities lies to improvise the course, so as to ensure the larger level issue of quality in education. It would also help the educational planners and policy framers to align the course and contribute to the process of creating new curriculum in 2022 as a part of the follow-up activity of the National Education Policy-2020. On the basis of objectives, this study was conducted with research questions as follows.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the reactions of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Course Design?
2. How the students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme react on their admission procedure?
3. What are the criteria to be a faculty in the Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme?
4. What is the reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to their Curriculum?
5. What are the reactions of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme upon their Internship?
6. What are the reactions of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme regarding their evaluation system?
7. How the students react upon the outcomes of the three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey method was used to conduct the study because it helps to get the present status of the research problem. To evaluate the reaction of students towards 3 years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme, self-constructed questionnaire was developed by the researcher to gather Information. There were 35 items in the questionnaire tool under 7 dimensions as shown in the table-1 below.

Table 1: Dimension-wise Distribution of Statements

DIMENSIONS	STATEMENTS
Course design	1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Admission	2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Teacher recruitment	3, 10, 17, 24
Curriculum	1, 11, 18, 25, 31
Internship	5, 12, 19, 26, 32
Assessment	6, 13, 20, 27, 33
Outcome	7, 14, 21, 28, 34, 35

The population of the present study consisted of the final year students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. of Universities of Odisha, batch 2018-2021. For the present study, a random sample of 50 students was chosen. One part of 25 samples from Rajendra University and another 25 sample from Sambalpur University was taken. The data was collected using online google form. After collection of data the sample distribution of respondent falls as shown in table-2.

Table 2: Sample Distributions

Name of the University	Number of Respond		Total
	Male	Female	
Rajendra University, Bolangir	10	15	25
Sambalpur University, Sambalpur	15	10	25
Total	25	25	50

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was done with the help of simple percentage analysis.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Responses to the statement}}{\text{Total Number of Respondent}} \times 100$$

Objective 1: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Course Design

Table 3: Responses regarding Course Design

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme is designed in such a way that it covers all components of separate B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes.	41	82	9	18
The duration of 3 Years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme is lengthy and wastage of time.	12	24	38	76
Number of working days (= 215 days) is not sufficient to complete the syllabus prescribed in each academic year.	37	74	13	26
A minimum attendance criterion is an additional burden on the prospective teacher educators creating unnecessary anxiety.	16	32	34	68
Preamble of this course is giving justice to the students as per their qualification and skills.	36	72	14	28

Table-3 reveals that majority of students (82%) students are agree with the statement that the Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme is designed in such a way that it covers all components of separate B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes. 74% students are think that the number of working days should be increase from 215 days to complete the syllabus prescribed in each academic year. 68% students are disagree with the statement that the minimum attendance criterion is an additional burden on the prospective teacher educators creating unnecessary anxiety.72% students are believes that the preamble of the three year integrated B.Ed.- M.Ed. programme is giving justice to the students as per their qualification and skills.

Objective 2: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Admission Procedure

Table 4: Responses Regarding Admission Procedure

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%

Instead of one unit (=50 student teachers) intake, it will be better if two unit intake will be there in each academic year.	31	62	19	38
Common entrance, interview and career marking should be the criteria for admission or selection of candidate into this course.	42	84	8	16
Not only master degree students, but also graduate students should be allowed to take admission into this course.	18	36	32	64
Due to 3 years long duration students are not interested to take admission into this programme.	33	66	17	34
No candidate shall be allowed to have interim exit from the course since it is an integrated course leading to B.Ed.-M.Ed.	39	78	11	22

Table-4 indicates that 68% students are of the opinion that instead of one unit (=50 student teachers) intake, it will be better if two-unit intake will be there in each academic year. 84% students are agreeing with the criteria of admission into the three-year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme that the Common entrance, interview and career marking should be the criteria for admission or selection of candidate into this course. 64% students think that a graduate students should not be allowed to take admission in the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme. 66% students are of the opinion that the three years long duration is wastage of time to take admission into this course. 78% students are agreeing with the statements that no candidate shall be allowed to have interim exit from the course since it is an integrated course leading to B.Ed.-M.Ed.

Objective 3: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Faculty Recruitment

Table 5: Responses Regarding Faculty Recruitment

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Demonstration should be basic criteria for faculty recruitment in addition to interview.	41	82	9	18
The NET qualified and experienced teacher educators must be recruited.	45	90	5	10
Interview should not be mandatory criteria for Faculty recruitment in this TEP.	6	12	44	88
For an intake of 50 students, faculty recruitment shall be in a ratio of 1:15.	37	74	13	26

Table-5 reveals that 82% students are agree with the statement that the demonstration should be basic criteria for faculty recruitment in addition to interview. 90% students are of the opinion that the NET qualified and experienced teacher educators must be recruited. 88% students are of the hope that interview should be mandatory criteria for faculty requirement in the three-year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme.74% students were agree with the statement that the for an intake of 50 students faculty recruitment shall be in a ratio of 1:15.

Objective 4: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Curriculum

Table 6: Responses Regarding Curriculum

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Prescribed syllabus is based on the recommendations of educational committees and commissions and national frameworks in education.	43	86	7	14
Curricular and co-curricular aspects are given importance as per their need in teacher education.	33	66	17	34
This course gives more priority to enhance leadership quality of the pupil teachers as compared to B.Ed. course.	40	80	10	20
Number papers taught in each semester/year are designed as per requirement.	36	72	14	28
Specialization theme area as based on teacher recruitment criteria.	24	48	26	52

Table-6 shows that the 86% agree with the statement that the prescribed syllabus is based on the recommendations of educational committees and commissions and national frameworks in education. 80% students believe that the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme gives more priority in enhancing the leadership quality of the pupil teachers as compare to the B.Ed. course running in several Govt. as well as private Teacher education institutes. 72% students are agreeing with the number of papers allotted to them in each semester/academic year which are designed as per their requirement. It is found that only 48% students with the statement that the specialization theme area as based on teacher recruitment criteria.

Objective 5: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Internship

Table 7: Responses Regarding Internship

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
The syllabus is able to fill the gap between theory and practice in this teacher education programme.	33	66	17	34
Assignments give stress on practical activities such as field work, internship, community interactions etc.	38	76	12	24
Duration of internship is sufficient for developing pedagogical skill and attitude towards teaching profession.	37	74	13	26
Student teachers get enough time for research works.	36	72	14	28
The student teachers of this course are getting more opportunities and cooperation for practice teaching rather than the student teachers of 2 years B.Ed. course.	40	80	10	20

Table-7 shows that the number and percentages of responses received from the respondents regarding internship. It is found that 66% students are satisfied with the present syllabus of three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme which is able to fill the gap between theory and practice in this teacher education

programme. 76% students agree with the statement that the assignments give stress on practical activities such as field work, internship, community interactions etc. According to their point of view the duration of the internship in the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme should be increase. Majority of students i.e. 72% students believe that they get enough time for research work. 80% students agree with that the pupil teachers of the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme are getting more opportunities and cooperation for their practice teaching in schools, colleges, DIETs and B.Ed. colleges than the pupil teachers of the two years B.Ed. course running under different Teacher Education Institutes.

Objective 6: To study Reaction of students of Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to Assessment

Table 8: Responses Regarding Assessment

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Both internal and external evaluation helps the students to get a good mark in this course.	41	82	9	18
An external panel should be there to evaluate the internship performance.	44	88	6	12
Instead of semester system, annual system should be implemented for this course.	12	24	38	76
Student’s performance in practical paper is given more importance than theory examinations.	28	56	22	44
Assessment process is very flexible in this course.	15	30	35	70

Table-8 reveals that the number and percentage of the responses regarding assessment. 82% students agree with the statement that both the internal and external evaluation helps the students to get a good mark in this course. 88% believe that an external panel should be there to evaluate the internship performance of the pupil teacher of the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme. Majority of students (76%) agree with the present semester system. 70% students of the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme disagree with the statement that the assessment process is very flexible.

Objective 7: To examine the suggestion of pupil teacher(students) towards the outcome of integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme

Table 9: Responses Regarding Outcome of Programme

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
The introduction of 3 Yrs. Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programmes will provide a satisfactory outcome as compare to separate 2 Yrs. B.Ed. and 2 Yrs. M.Ed. programme.	30	60	20	40
As it is a higher degree teacher education programme, after passing out students shall not be allowed for teaching in elementary section.	9	18	41	82
This course will enable the pupil teacher for a prestigious position in education system.	45	90	5	10

Teachers coming from this course will be pedagogically and professionally competent.	43	86	7	14
This course can eliminate mismatch between post-graduate teacher education curriculum and teacher education institution realities.	41	82	9	18
This course will enable teachers to provide quality education to the society.	44	88	6	12

Table-9 implies that the number and percentage of the responses regarding the outcome of the three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme. 60% students agree with the statements that the introduction of 3 Years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programmes will provide a satisfactory outcome as compare to separate 2 Years B.Ed. and 2 Years M.Ed. programme. Majority of the students i.e.90% students hope that three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme will give prestigious position than the other teacher education programme. 90% students agree with the statement that teachers coming from this course will be pedagogically and professionally competent. It indicates that by pursuing this course, students become pedagogically and professionally competent. 82% students are of the opinion that these three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme can able to eliminate mismatch between post-graduate teacher education curriculum and teacher education institution realities. 88% students believe that this course will enable teachers to provide quality education to the society.

FINDINGS

It is found from the research study that majority of the students are agree with the present three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme that it is designed in such a way that it covers all components of separate B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes. The students are also happy with the duration of this integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. programme. According to the majority of the responses, it is observed that the number of working days must be increase to cover the entire syllabus. A minimum attendance criterion is not an additional burden on the prospective teacher educators creating unnecessary anxiety based on the responses collected from the students. Majority of the students were believed that the preamble of the three-year integrated B.Ed. - M.Ed. programme is giving justice to the students as per their qualification and skills.

The responses regarding the admission procedure indicated that majority of the students said that it will be better if two-unit intake will be there in each academic year. That means by dividing the 50 students into two groups, the process of teaching learning will also be conducted smoothly. Maximum numbers of students are agreeing with the criteria of admission procedure that are Common entrance, interview and career marking. Also, a post graduate degree must be required for entering into these three years integrated B.Ed. - M.Ed. programme. The data showed that no candidate shall be allowed to have interim exit from the course since it is an integrated course leading to B.Ed.-M.Ed.

Responses regarding faculty requirements showed a positive direction. Maximum number of students is of the opinion that the demonstration should be included in the criteria of faculty requirements and NET qualification must be required to be a teacher educator. Maximum numbers of students are agreed with the 1:15 ratios of students and teacher educators respectively.

The data showed that there is positive responses regarding the curriculum of three years integrated B.Ed. – M.Ed. programme. Majority of students are agreed with the prescribed syllabus which is based on the recommendations of educational committees and commissions and national framework in education. Most

of the students accepted that both curricular and co-curricular aspects are given importance as per their need in teacher education.

Collected data showed that maximum responses are positive regarding the internship. The prescribed syllabus is able to fill the gap between theory and practical. Also, the duration of internship is sufficient to fill the gap between theory and practical. Maximum responses showed that the three years integrated B.Ed. – M.Ed. provides opportunities for research work. Also, in case of practice teaching, students are getting more opportunities in practice teaching rather than the other teacher education courses.

In view of the findings of the study the researcher inclined to give the following main points -

1. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme should be continued to develop proper teaching skills among students.
2. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme should be continued for maintaining the quality of education.
3. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme provides more time for internship than the two years B.Ed. programme.
4. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme have well-structured in providing quality of education.
5. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme provides more opportunities for the research works.
6. Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme is more effective one.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLIMENTATION OF THE STUDY

- Understanding the perception of trainees provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the integrated B.Ed-M.Ed program. It helps in evaluating whether the program meets the expectations of the trainees, fulfills its objectives, and adequately prepares them for their future roles as educators.
- Feedback from trainees can highlight areas of strength and weakness within the program.
- Trainee perceptions can inform curriculum development processes. Insights into what aspects of the curriculum are most beneficial or lacking can guide educators in refining course content, incorporating new teaching strategies, and integrating relevant practical experiences to better align with the needs and expectations of future educators.
- The perceptions of trainees offer valuable insights into their preparedness for the teaching profession. Understanding their confidence levels, skill development, and readiness to address the challenges of modern education can help in tailoring teacher preparation programs to better equip educators for their roles in diverse educational settings.
- Research on trainee perceptions can contribute to enhancing trainee satisfaction and retention rates within the integrated B.Ed-M.Ed program by addressing concerns and providing a supportive learning environment that aligns with trainee expectations.
- Findings from research on trainee perceptions can inform policy decisions related to teacher education. Insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the integrated B.Ed-M.Ed program can influence policy discussions regarding accreditation standards, funding allocations, and institutional support for teacher preparation initiatives.
- Understanding trainee perceptions can also guide ongoing professional development initiatives for teacher educators. By recognizing areas where additional training or support may be beneficial, institutions can provide opportunities for faculty members to enhance their teaching practices and better support the diverse needs of trainees.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study in which the researcher has conducted is confined to the reactions of students of three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. Programme in relation to various dimensions in two Universities of Odisha. Research is a continuous process and as such the following suggestions may be made for further research-

1. In this study the researcher has taken 50 students as sample for the study from the Rajendra University and Sambalpur University of Odisha.
2. In this connection for ensuring better sampling, more students can be taken from all others Universities of Odisha which provides this course.
3. The comparative study can be done by taking the different Universities of Odisha and other states.

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