

An Assessment of Calicut University B.Ed. Curriculum Focusing on its Efficacy of Inclusive Practices

Anusree K P¹

M.Ed Student

Government College of Teacher Education Located at Town Hall Road Manachira,
Kozhikode- 673001, Kerala

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Abstract: Inclusive education is a beacon of hope, igniting a passion for learning, and nurturing an inclusive society that embraces diversity, equality and limitless potential of every individual. Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for all students, including those with special needs, in mainstream classrooms. The effectiveness of inclusive education relies heavily on the knowledge and skills of the teacher who implement it. However, there is a concern that the current B.Ed. curriculum of Calicut University may not adequately prepare teacher educators with the practical knowledge and skills to effectively teach in inclusive classrooms. Thus, the primary objective of this research is to evaluate the current B.Ed. curriculum of Calicut University, with specific emphasis on the insufficient practical knowledge related to effectively engaging in an inclusive education environment. This study aims to examine the present status of inclusive education training, pinpoint areas where practical application is insufficient, and suggest recommendations for improving the curriculum to better equip educators for future classrooms. To achieve this the study will employ mixed methods approach, involving interviews, analysis of lesson plans and examination of curriculum. The findings of this research will shed light on the gaps in practical application of inclusive education.

Keywords: B.Ed. Curriculum; Calicut University; Inclusive Practices; Curriculum Assessment; Teacher Education.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is a concept that has gained significant attention in recent years, as societies strive to create an educational system that caters to the needs of all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. The inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream classrooms has been recognized as a fundamental right, and educational institutions are now expected to provide equal opportunities for all learners. In this context, it becomes crucial to assess the efficacy of teacher education programs in preparing educators to effectively implement inclusive practices in their classrooms. The present study aims to assess the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum offered by Calicut University in promoting inclusive education. Calicut University is one of the leading universities in Kerala, India, known for its commitment to quality education and innovative teaching practices. The B.Ed. program offered by the university is designed to equip aspiring Teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet the diverse needs of students in inclusive classrooms. The study will focus on

various aspects of the B.Ed. curriculum, including the content, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods used to prepare teachers for inclusive education. It will also examine the effectiveness of the curriculum in fostering positive attitudes towards inclusion among pre-service teachers. Additionally, the study will explore the extent to which the curriculum addresses the specific needs of students with disabilities, as well as the challenges faced by teachers in implementing inclusive practices. The importance of inclusive education cannot be overstated. Research has consistently shown that inclusive classrooms benefit all students, not just those with disabilities. Inclusive education promotes diversity, empathy, and understanding among students, preparing them for the diverse world they will encounter outside of school. It also helps to reduce stigma and discrimination, as students with disabilities are included and valued as equal members of the classroom community. However, implementing inclusive education in practice can be challenging. Teachers need to have a deep understanding of diverse learning needs, as well as the ability to adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate these needs. They also require the necessary

skills to create an inclusive classroom environment that fosters collaboration, respect, and acceptance among all students. Therefore, it is essential to assess the efficacy of teacher education programs in preparing teachers for these challenges. The B.Ed. curriculum plays a crucial role in shaping the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of future teachers. It serves as the foundation for their professional development and provides them with the necessary tools to become effective educators. Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate the extent to which the B.Ed. curriculum at Calicut University addresses the principles and practices of inclusive education. The findings of this study will have significant implications for both the university and the broader field of teacher education. If the B.Ed. curriculum is found to be effective in promoting inclusive education, it can serve as a model for other teacher education programs in the region. On the other hand, if there are areas of improvement, the study will provide valuable insights for curriculum designers and policymakers to enhance the program's efficacy. Inclusive education is a fundamental right that all students deserve. Teacher education programs play a crucial role in preparing educators to effectively implement inclusive practices in their classrooms. The present study aims to assess the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum offered by Calicut University in promoting inclusive education. By examining various aspects of the curriculum, including content, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods, the study will provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The findings will contribute to the ongoing efforts to create an inclusive educational system that caters to the diverse needs of all learners.

II. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

The need for assessing the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum offered by Calicut University in promoting inclusive education arises from the increasing emphasis on creating inclusive educational environments. Inclusive education is based on the principle that all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, should have equal access to quality education. This concept is grounded in the belief that diversity should be celebrated and that every student has the right to be included and valued in the classroom community. However, the successful implementation of inclusive education requires well-prepared and knowledgeable teachers who possess the necessary skills and attitudes to meet the diverse needs of their students. Teacher education programs play a critical role in equipping educators with the tools and strategies to create inclusive classrooms. Therefore, it becomes imperative to assess the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum at Calicut University in preparing teachers for inclusive education. The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the improvement of teacher education programs and the promotion of inclusive education. By evaluating the B.Ed. curriculum, the study will provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the program, enabling curriculum designers and policymakers to make informed decisions regarding its enhancement. Furthermore, the findings of this study will have implications for the university and the broader field of teacher education. If the B.Ed. curriculum is found to be effective in promoting inclusive education, it can serve as a model for other teacher education programs in the region. This will not only benefit

future teachers but also the students they will teach, as they will be better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students and create inclusive learning environments. On the other hand, if there are areas of improvement identified in the curriculum, the study will provide valuable recommendations for enhancing its efficacy. This will enable the university to make necessary revisions to the curriculum, ensuring that future teachers receive the best possible preparation to implement inclusive practices in their classrooms.

Moreover, the study's findings will contribute to the ongoing efforts to create an inclusive educational system that caters to the diverse needs of all learners. By examining the content, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods used in the B.Ed. curriculum, the study will shed light on the extent to which the program addresses the principles and practices of inclusive education. This knowledge will be valuable for curriculum designers and policymakers in designing and implementing inclusive education policies and practices. In conclusion, the need to assess the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum at Calicut University in promoting inclusive education arises from the increasing emphasis on creating inclusive educational environments. The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the improvement of teacher education programs and the promotion of inclusive education. The findings will not only benefit the university but also the broader field of teacher education, as they will provide valuable insights for curriculum designers and policymakers. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the ongoing efforts to create an inclusive educational system that caters to the diverse needs of all learners.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

➤ *The Objectives of the Study are as Follows:*

- To assess the existing B.Ed. curriculum of Calicut University with regards to its coverage of practical knowledge in inclusive education.
- To identify the efficacy of practical knowledge imparted to pre-service teachers regarding inclusive education.
- To understand the perspectives of student trainees on the insufficiency of practical knowledge of inclusive education in B.Ed. curriculum of Calicut University.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study will employ a mixed-methods approach to assess the efficacy of the B.Ed. curriculum offered by Calicut University in promoting inclusive education. The mixed-methods design will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the experiences and perceptions of pre-service teachers and teacher educators.

➤ *Descriptive Survey*

The method used here is descriptive survey and the technique for data collection is interview. The interview was conducted in B.Ed. students. It was both in online and offline mode. Sixty students were taken as the sample from different B.Ed. colleges under Calicut University respectively.

A purposive sampling technique is used to select participants who have completed or are currently enrolled in the B.Ed. program. A diverse range of participants will be included to ensure representation of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. The teacher educators are also selected using purposive sampling technique.

➤ Interview

The interview will explore participants' experiences and perceptions of the B.Ed. curriculum, focusing on its effectiveness in preparing them for inclusive education.

The other techniques for data collection are curriculum analysis and lesson plan analysis.

➤ Curriculum Analysis

For curriculum analysis, the 2017 revised Calicut University curriculum was considered. And the document was analyzed.

➤ Lesson Plan Analysis

Lesson plans were collected from the B.Ed. college students that they used in their teaching practice under Calicut university to analyze the basic structure, activities, learning resources, methods etc.

V. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

➤ Interview

The interview was conducted to understand the opinion of the student on the practical knowledge of inclusive education.

Sixty students were selected from different B.Ed. colleges under Calicut University. According to the responses it can be analyzed that.

- 73.1% of the students feel there is a lack of practical knowledge about inclusive education in B.Ed. curriculum.
- 73% of the students says that the B.Ed. curriculum needs changes to create more efficient teachers for inclusive education environment.
- 65% of the students feel less confident in their ability to teach and support all students in an inclusive classroom setting based on what they have learned in their B.Ed. program.

➤ Lesson Plan Analysis

An inclusive education lesson plan should be designed to meet the diverse needs of the students, including those with special needs, different learning styles and cultural background.

After analyzing the lesson plans collected from the students of different colleges under Calicut university it was found that all the lesson plans almost shared the same structure. Most of the learning objectives were not found to be attainable for all students, taking into account their individual abilities and learning needs.

The activities were not found to be supporting the diversity of the classroom. Differentiated instructions were not found.

The assessment techniques were found to be inaccurate and timely for constructive feedback to support students' growth and progress.

Individualized support for students with specific learning needs were not found to be given.

The purpose of follow up activities in a lesson plan is to reinforce and extend students learning beyond the initial lesson. But in most of the lesson plan the follow up activity is found to be the exercise questions in the textbook.

➤ Curriculum Analysis

While analyzing the B.Ed. curriculum areas where change is needed was found. The idea of inclusive education is found to be given in the fourth semester whereas the teaching practice is being conducted in the third semester. The students are unable to understand the idea of inclusive education before their teaching practice. Many of the subjects in the elective courses can add knowledge and understanding for enhancing teaching practice but they are found to be in the fourth semester. The workshops being conducted are not compulsorily focusing on the improvement of inclusive education. They are found to be covering only the general aspects of the education.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

➤ The Analysis of the Study Led to the Findings Listed below:

- The Calicut University B.Ed. curriculum do not offer sufficient practical knowledge about inclusive education.
- The structure of the curriculum does not seem to have a potential to create efficient teachers for the inclusive environment.
- The lesson plan is not found to be product of inclusive education concepts.
- The B.Ed. students of Calicut university do their teaching practice without having sufficient knowledge about the inclusive education.
- The confidence level of the students decreases due to their insufficient knowledge about inclusive education.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study highlight the significant gap in the B.Ed. curriculum regarding inclusive education. The lack of practical knowledge, ineffective curriculum structure, non-inclusive lesson plans, and insufficient preparation for teaching practice all contribute to the inadequate understanding and implementation of inclusive education among B.Ed. students.

These findings underscore the need for comprehensive revisions of B.Ed. curriculum to address the shortcomings. The study reveals that B.Ed. students in the Calicut University lack sufficient knowledge about inclusive education when engaging in teaching practice. This is reflected in the lesson plans.

The study highlights the negative impact of insufficient knowledge about inclusive education on students' confidence levels.

VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study aimed to provide valuable insights into the deficiencies in the Calicut University B.Ed. curriculum regarding the inclusive education, it is important to acknowledge the following limitations.
- The study has been limited by time constraints, which may have affected the depth and breadth of the data collected.
- The data collected for this study exhibits a degree of bias, as there were variations in response between face-to-face interviews and other interview methods employed. This suggests a potential inclination for individuals to provide responses that may not align with their true sentiments. To ensure the authenticity and creditability of the data, personal face to face interviews were conducted as a means of mitigating these tendencies.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

- The B.Ed. should be revised to include more practical knowledge about inclusive education. This can be achieved by incorporating workshops, seminars and other programs that focus on inclusive teaching strategies and techniques.
- The structure of the curriculum should be redesigned to ensure that it effectively prepares teachers for inclusive education. The subjects that can add more benefit to the teaching practice should be introduced before third semester.
- It is important to ensure that lesson plans reflect the principles of inclusive education. The strategies such as differentiated instruction, universal design for learning and inclusive assessment practices should be emphasized.
- To address the decrease in confidence level among students due to insufficient knowledge about inclusive education, it is important to implement confidence building activities. This can include mentoring programs, reflective practices and peer support network.

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