QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH METHODS REPORTED IN DISSERTATIONS AT MASTER OF EDUCATION LEVEL IN

HIMACHAL PRADESH-BHARAT

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Abstract

The Master of Education level curriculum in India generally includes theory papers and writing a dissertation as an essential part in regular mode. Dissertation work is actually designed to understands basics of research and create a platform where students are trained in intricacies of research in education. The main objective of investigation was *'qualitative analysis of Research Methods selected in dissertations submitted by M.Ed. students of Teacher Training Colleges of Himachal Pradesh, in India.'* In Himachal Pradesh, India total 9 institutions are running Master of Education programme in all including the department of Education, Himachal Pradesh University Shimla. A total *246* dissertations were sampled from all the nine Institutions giving due weightage to the Research Supervisor and Year of submission and were analysed through *Content analysis* method. The data were rated on different parameters of reporting a research method in dissertations.

Analysis of data revealed that the selection and reporting of research methods in a dissertation is done in a very casual manner. The rating for reporting research methods in dissertations on different parameters is average and poor. The Poor quality of writing and reporting research methods in dissertations may attributed to appointment of supervisors, poor methodology of teaching and other factors listed and discussed.

Key Terms:

Quality criteria/parameters, M.Ed. Level dissertation, Teacher Training institutions, qualitative analysis, Research Method

1. Conceptual Framework

'Master of Education' is a postgraduate degree in Education awarded by Universities in a large number of countries by different names. It is supposed to develop a global and a national vision for education in the modern scenario. M.Ed. is the abbreviation used for Master of Education programme. M.Ed. may be a general degree programme meant for current teachers who want to

improve their instructional practices through reflection and focus on individualized goals or a specialized programme such as, M.Ed. in Educational Technology, M.Ed. in Guidance and Counselling, M.Ed. in Exceptional Children etc.

In India, Master of Education (M.Ed.) is a two year Programme generally done after Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree which is also a two-year teacher-training programme. The M.Ed. curriculum generally include a compulsory dissertation writing work.

The purpose of including a dissertation in M.Ed. curriculum is to train the student into the intricacies of research process so as to enable him/her to understand different issues confronting education and facilitating the student to find solutions using scientific approach in his/her future academic and professional career. We know that certain questions arise in our mind when we start thinking on a particular line. Basically new ideas are generated from the questions and curiosity about certain things or phenomenon and we start thinking whether the issue is researchable or not. One may lead in right direction only if an individual is able to visualize the study from selection of problem to analysis of data. All the steps of conducting a research study in social sciences and humanities are as important as selecting a problem for study. Selection of inappropriate design or methodology may lead nowhere. Research method selection is one of the vital component in methodology which has to be selected and used wisely. Quality of writing and reporting research method in dissertations is purely based on researcher's discernment and understanding of whole study. The research methods chosen and applied by M.Ed. students are critical to the validity and reliability of their findings. These methods not only reflect the students' understanding of research design but also their ability to critically engage with educational issues. However, it is difficult to recognize how these methods are selected, applied, and justified by students in Himachal Pradesh. This gap in knowledge raises important questions about the adequacy of research training and the alignment of methodological choices with the research questions posed.

It will be quite interesting to analyse quality of research methods selected by student investigators at their M.Ed. level dissertation in respect of certain quality parameters or criteria.

In this regard the views of different educationists presented as under;

Morris and Travers (1969) while observing the contemporary research designs said that these are confined to the discussion of statistical methods and statistical aspects. The result is that many doctoral dissertations and master's theses which emerge from the colleges use complicated statistical design but are very nice in terms of underline theory. Dissertations that uses complex

statistical designs provides the illusion of being a sophisticated study impact on a journal editor to have the study published. Moreover, mostly the writers of articles are trained in using sophisticated statistical techniques but with virtually no contact with theory in the behavioral sciences and exception to this is the area of counselling which has laid heavy emphasis on theory of behavior. Any student of counselling at even the master's degree level has knowledge of operant theory and theory and so forth. It is probably more important for the student to become familiar with the body of theory in the area in which he plans to work, then it is for him to become familiar with the problems of statistical design. Most important discovery in science have been made by people who never had course in statistics and long before invention of complex designs. Much of the best contemporary research in the behavioral sciences uses only the simplest designs of physical science or sophisticated in terms of modern behavior science.

Black 2002, while explaining research designs laid emphasis on the five major type of designs and discussed as-*Descriptive studies*-the studies intending to provide only descriptive data on either large or small (even key studies) groups. They will tell us something about the group and many identify the existence of variables and characteristics of the group.

Surveys-these usually involve random sample of single group. The intent is to determine whether relationships exist among specific variables measured by the survey instrument. These often result in measures of correlation or association between variables allowing predictions but do not determine causality. They are sometimes referred to as correlational studies because of the frequent use of core relations to show relationship among variables.

Ex-post-facto-studies are where you are to determine whether differences exist between groups with different characteristics or preferences. The groups are defined on the basis of life experience e.g. education, gender, social class. Here it is usually not possible to establish causality since the classification variables tend to encompass many components and life experiences.

Experimental-studies are those were the researchers have representative sample of a population and randomly assigned them to 2 or more groups. They have control over 1 or more of the variables and are able to compare the outcomes of treatment groups with each other or with a control group that receives no treatment. This model is used with evaluation of interventions in local environments as well as to test more global Hypotheses e.g. effect of classroom innovations, counselling techniques or nurse interventions.

Quasi-experimental-studies endeavor to achieve many of the same goals what have to use less representative, locally available groups.

They further added that such a classification scheme helps in checking on the continuity of design of a study and can assist in determining the intent when it is not clearly stated in a report or article.

Anderson (2002) in this regard say that one must remember that the method you choose will do some degree, dictate the questions you address and the approach you take. Whether or not you use all the various methods you should be familiar with them so that you can be a literate consumer of education research.

As one goes about choosing a research area one must also considered the general methods to follow. Often decisions are interrelated. He advised to choose a method which builds on your orientation and is supported by your training but you must also be sensitive to the relationship of the central research question to the method for addressing it.

He further added that different methods focus on different sorts of concerns obviously, historical research is concerned with the past, differentiating it from all other methods but every method has a particular focus and concern. If your research question suggests one of these concern, then they also suggest which method is appropriate for a pursuing them. Thus, if you want to predict, you need to use a correlational method, if you want to evaluate, then use a program evaluation model, and if you want to understand how people feel and gain insight into the underlying phenomena then a qualitative method would be best. Once you become familiar with this approach, you should be in position to identify how questions link logically to approaches. That these methods are not pure and researchers often combine approaches. For example, you might do historical or descriptive work to identify an issue or problem and then follow it up using predictive approaches. Success and prediction might suggest applications in the realm of educational policy to define and refine your particular research problem, you should consider it methodological implication.

Make sure that the problem you wish to pursue is suited to the method you intend to apply. Make sure also that you have the background and strength required in that method to be able to apply it successfully to your research problem.

It is the research method which researcher follow and shape the destiny of his project. A research method selected appropriately on the basis of suggested criteria and certainly help the researcher to produce precise and specific outcomes.

Selection of research method plays an important role in deciding the fate a study hence, research method is one of the pivotal parameter in doing research at masters' level. Masters' level research is foundation of Educational research. So, researcher is much interested in How? and Why? Of selection of research method in masters' level dissertation in educational research at colleges.

In present investigation the quality of reporting research method w.r.t. different parameters/criteria which include; naming or mentioning name of research method, justification & its adequacy, appropriateness and grammatical errors in reporting research method will be analysed.

By examining the reporting of research methods in terms of rationale behind their selection, the appropriateness of method and the linguistic correctness, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the research practices at the Master's level. Such an analysis is essential for identifying areas where students may require additional support and for informing curriculum development to enhance research training in educational programs.

This study is motivated by the need to explore the qualitative dimensions of research methods employed in M.Ed. dissertations within Himachal Pradesh. It aims to contribute to the broader discourse on educational research by offering insights into the current state of research practices and by suggesting pathways for improvement. The major research question can be stated as "what is the quality of research methods reported in dissertations at M.Ed. level in Himachal Pradesh in respect of; Naming research method selected, justification of selection & its adequacy, appropriateness of selected method and Linguistic correctness of reporting.

1.1 Objective of the study

The major objective of the present study is:

qualitative analysis of research methods reported in dissertations submitted by M.Ed. students of Teacher Training Colleges of Himachal Pradesh in respect of following:

    A. Mentioning selected research method.
    B. Justification of research method.
    C. Adequacy of the justification of selection research method.
    D. Appropriateness of selection of research method.
    G. Linguistic Correctness (Grammatical & Spelling) of reporting research method.

1.2 Delimitation of study: Present study was delimited to:

i) M.Ed. offering teacher education institutions of Himachal Pradesh affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University Shimla including the department of education.

ii) Only one parameter i.e. Quality of reporting research method in dissertations which are submitted & Evaluated was selected for research purpose

2. Methodology

2.1 Method

In view of main objective of the study researcher has to analyse the contents of reported research methods on listed quality criteria for all the sampled dissertations evaluated and submitted in all Institutions under study. Thus technique of *content analysis* was employed.

2.3 Sample

When the present study was conducted, there were nine institutions affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University running Master of Education course in regular mode. One of these institutions was a Himachal Pradesh University department and the rest eight were being run by private managements. All the nine institutions were included in the sample for the present study.

Further, classification of dissertations was done supervisor-wise and year wise so as to give equal representation to the all supervisors in a particular session in each institution. Hence the stratified sampling technique was employed and total 246 dissertations were selected as sample for present study.

2.4 The Instrument

In order to find answer to the Research question sated above it was proposed to content analyse the selected dissertations in respect of **selection of research method** in dissertations submitted by students in the discipline of education and then rate them with respect to selected quality criteria in a continuum.

In view of this a Rating Scale prepared by the investigator was used collecting relevant information. To serve this purpose first step was to define quality characteristics of Reporting and selecting & justifying selection of a research method in operational terms against which a dissertation could be rated.

For this the literature in the form of research methodology books, research journals encyclopaedias, dissertation abstracts, surveys of research in education in India as well as internet was scrutinized thoroughly. The material available from the above mentioned sources was studied scrutinized and listed under appropriate indicators or criteria of quality of selection and writing of research method in a dissertation. These quality criteria for the purpose of uniformity of scoring was partitioned into different rank names such as no, yes, nil, limited, tolerable, high, extremely poor, poor, adequate, moderate, highly unsatisfactory, satisfactory. All identified quality criteria along with their underline characteristics were considered as a measure of quality of selecting and reporting in a dissertation.

The tool was named as *rating scale for Selection and Reporting Research Method*. The preliminary draft of the rating scale was discussed with other faculty members and it was revised on the basis of their suggestions. Thereafter, three dissertations were evaluated for the quality of selection and writing of research method in a dissertation and rated using the rating scale. This exercise indicated some shortcomings in the scale. The rating scale was revised again by making modifications at some places. Some more criteria were added and wording of other was changed. This exercise was repeated three times and necessary modifications were made each time. Finally, the rating scale comprised of the six quality indicators or criteria (shown in table-1.1) for selection and writing of research method in educational research.

2.41 Validity of rating scale: the rating scale was shown to three teachers who were working in colleges of education, completed their doctoral degree and had more than five years of experience in teaching & guiding students in their dissertation work. They were requested to go through the rating scale and point out how far it was suitable to answer the research question of present study. All the three teachers were of the opinion that the rating scale was quite appropriate to serve the purpose indicating high degree of validity of rating scale

2.42 Reliability of rating scale:
The three investigators along with author separately analysed and rated the same five dissertations using the rating scale. The rating to each subcomponent given by all four persons was matched. The subcomponent/sub criterion where there was disparity in rating was discussed threadbare. Each of the four raters' gave reasons for giving a particular rating to the sub criterion. An effort was made to clarify the concept in each characteristic. This exercise was repeated three more times. It was found that the discrepancy in the rating of the three researchers decreased after each exercise and at the end of fourth attempt there was quite high consistency in the rating of the three raters'. The whole

exercise helped to establish consistency between the all investigators in use of rating scale & training of investigator as well on one hand and established reliability of the tool on other hand.

All the selected dissertations were rated/assessed college-wise using the following format:

Table-1.1 Rating scale for Selection and Reporting Research Method

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO		YES	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO		YES	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL	Limited	Tolerable	Satisfactory
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO		YES	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory	Very Low	Moderate	Satisfactory
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory	Very Low	Moderate	Satisfactory

3. Data Collection

Investigator visited each of the nine colleges personally, noted down the titles of all the M.Ed. dissertations submitted and evaluated in the college and arranged them session-wise and supervisor-wise. After this, selected 10 or 12 dissertations (as discussed under sample) per session randomly giving due representation to each supervisor. The investigator was permitted to take the selected dissertations home for evaluation. The investigator analyzed the dissertations as per the tool and noted the analysis results on the rating scale itself.

The rating scale used to analyse quality of research method reported in dissertations with various parameters or criteria listed under tool

The aggregate frequencies for Research method reported in the dissertations for each college as well as for all the sampled 246 dissertations are presented in Tables 1 to 10

Table-3.1   **COLLEGE 1**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 3 (10.00)		YES 27 (90.00)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 27 (90.00)		YES 3 (10.00)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 29(96.67)	Limited 1 (3.33)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 4 (13.33)		YES 26 (86.67)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (13.33)	Very Low 4 (13.33)	Moderate 20 (66.67)	Satisfactory 2 (6.67)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (13.33)	Very Low 4 (13.33)	Moderate 20 (66.67)	Satisfactory 2 (6.67)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 30

Table-3.2   **COLLEGE 2.**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 1 (3.33)		YES 29 (96.67)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 28 (93.33)		YES 2 (6.67)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 27 (90.00)	Limited 3 (10.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 1 (3.33)		YES 29 (96.67)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 1 (3.33)	Very Low 3 (10.00)	Moderate 26 (86.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 1 (3.33)	Very Low 3 (10.00)	Moderate 26 (86.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 30

Table-3.3   **COLLEGE 3**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 0 (0.00)		YES 30 (100.00)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 30 (100.00)		YES 0 (0.00)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 30 (100.00)	Limited 0 (0.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 2 (6.67)		YES 28 (93.33)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 0 (0.00)	Very Low 13 (43.33)	Moderate 17 (56.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 0 (0.00)	Very Low 13 (43.33)	Moderate 17 (56.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 30

Table-3.4   **COLLEGE 4**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 2 (6.67)		YES 28 (93.33)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 19(63.33)		YES 11 (36.67)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 24(80.00)	Limited 6 (20.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 0 (0.00)		YES 30 (100.00)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 0 (0.00)	Very Low 0 (0.00)	Moderate 29 (96.67)	Satisfactory 1 (3.33)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 0 (0.00)	Very Low 0 (0.00)	Moderate 29 (96.67)	Satisfactory 1 (3.33)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 30

Table-3.5   **COLLEGE 5**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 5 (16.67)		YES 25 (83.33)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 28 (93.33)		YES 2 (6.67)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 30 (100.00)	Limited 0 (0.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 3 (10.00)		YES 27 (90.00)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (13.67)	Very Low 11 (36.67)	Moderate 15 (50.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (13.67)	Very Low 11 (36.67)	Moderate 15 (50.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 30

Table-3.6   **COLLEGE 6**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 3 (12.50)		YES 21 (87.50)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 22 (91.67)		YES 2 (8.33)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 21 (87.50)	Limited 3 (12.50)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 4 (16.67)		YES 20 (83.33)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 6 (25.00)	Very Low 12 (50.00)	Moderate 5 (20.83)	Satisfactory 1 (4.17)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 6 (25.00)	Very Low 12 (50.00)	Moderate 5 (20.83)	Satisfactory 1 (4.17)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 24

Table-3.7 **COLLEGE 7**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 0 (0.00)		YES 24 (100.00)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 22 (91.67)		YES 2 (8.33)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 24 (100.00)	Limited 0 (0.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 0 (0.00)		YES 24 (100.00)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 1 (4.17)	Very Low 13 (54.17)	Moderate 10 (41.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 1 (4.17)	Very Low 13 (54.17)	Moderate 10 (41.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 24

Table-3.8 **COLLEGE 8**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 10 (41.67)		YES 14 (58.33)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 24 (100.00)		YES 0 (0.00)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 24 (100.00)	Limited 0 (0.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 10 (41.67)		YES 14 (58.33)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 10 (41.67)	Very Low 8 (33.33)	Moderate 6 (25.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 10 (41.67)	Very Low 8 (33.33)	Moderate 6 (25.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 24

Table-3.9 **COLLEGE 9**

S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 2 (8.33)		YES 22 (91.67)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 24 (100.00)		YES 0 (0.00)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 24 (100.00)	Limited 0 (0.00)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 2 (8.33)		YES 22 (91.67)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (16.67)	Very Low 10 (41.67)	Moderate 10 (41.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 4 (16.67)	Very Low 10 (41.67)	Moderate 10 (41.67)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)

Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 24

Table 3.10

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TOTAL COLLEGES = 10
TOTAL NUMBER OF DISSERTATIONS = 246

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S. NO.	EVALUATION CRITERION	FREQUENCIES			
A	Whether the research method used in the study named?	NO 26 (10.57)		YES 220 (89.43)	
B	Whether the selection of research method is justified?	NO 224 (91.10)		YES 22 (8.94)	
C	Adequacy of the justification of selection of research method.	NIL 233 (94.72)	Limited 13 (5.28)	Tolerable 0 (0.00)	Satisfactory 0 (0.00)
D	Whether the method selected is the appropriate one?	NO 26 (10.57)		YES 220 (89.43)	
E	Correctness of Language (Grammatical)	Highly Unsatisfactory 30 (12.20)	Very Low 74 (30.10)	Moderate 138 (56.10)	Satisfactory 4 (1.63)
F	Correctness of Language (Spellings)	Highly Unsatisfactory 30 (12.20)	Very Low 74 (30.10)	Moderate 138 (56.10)	Satisfactory 4 (1.63)

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Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages out of 246

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4. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis of data is represented for the stated objective criteria wise i.e. from criteria A to F for each college as well for all colleges together as under:

A.   Whether the Research Method used in the Study Named?

The name of research method used in the study was found to be:

a.   **yes** for maximum 100 per cent cases in two institutions and for minimum 58 per cent in two institutions.

b.   **no** for maximum 42 per cent cases in two institutions and minimum zero percent cases in two institutions.

yes, in 220 (90%) cases, and no in 26 (10%) cases when all the 246 dissertations were taken into account submitted in nine institutions.

B.   Whether the Selection of Research Method is justified?

Justification for selecting particular research method was found:

a.   **yes** for maximum 37 per cent cases in one institution and for minimum zero per cent in three institutions.

b.   **no** for maximum 100 per cent cases in three institutions and minimum 63 per cent cases in one institution.

yes, in 22 (9%) cases, and no in 224 (91%) cases when all the 246 dissertations were taken into account submitted in nine institutions.

C.   Adequacy of justification of Research Method

Adequacy of Justification of research method was found to be:

a.   **satisfactory** in none of dissertation submitted in any of the nine institutions.

b.   **tolerable** in none of dissertation submitted in any of the nine institutions.

c.   **limited** for maximum 20 per cent cases in one institution and minimum for zero per cent cases in five institutions.

d.   **nil** for maximum 100 per cent cases in five institutions and minimum for 80 per cent cases in one institution.

satisfactory in none, tolerable in none, limited in 13(5%) and nil in 233 (95%) cases when all the 246 dissertations were taken into account submitted in nine institutions.

D.   Whether the Method selected is Appropriate One?

The appropriateness of selection of Research method was found to be:

a.   **yes** for maximum 100 per cent cases in two institutions and for minimum 58 per cent in one institution.

b.   **no** for maximum 42 per cent cases in one institution and minimum zero per cent cases in one institution.

yes, in 220 (89%) cases, and no in 26 (11%) cases when all the 246 dissertations were taken into account submitted in nine institutions.

E.   Correctness of Language (Grammar and Spellings)

The correctness of language in research method was found to be:

a.   **satisfactory** for maximum 7 per cent dissertations in one institution and minimum zero per cent in six institutions.

b.   **moderate** for maximum 97 per cent cases in one institution and minimum for 21 per cent in one institution.

c.   **very low** for maximum 54 per cent cases in one institution and minimum for zero per cent cases in one institution.

d.   **highly unsatisfactory** for maximum 42 per cent in one institution and minimum zero per cent in two institutions.

satisfactory in 4 (2%), moderate in 138 (56%), very low in 74 (30%) cases and highly unsatisfactory in 30 (12%) cases when all the 246 dissertations were taken into account submitted in nine institutions.

5. Discussion of Results and Suggestions

The results indicate that quality of method of research in respect of almost all the above listed quality parameters/criteria is poor in almost all the institutions. The lack of justification and the poor quality of language are significant shortcomings. These issues suggest that more comprehensive training and support are needed in the areas of research design, critical analysis, and academic writing. Addressing these gaps could involve revising the curriculum to place greater emphasis on the importance of justification in research, offering workshops on research methodology, and

providing more robust editorial support to improve the quality of dissertations. Additionally, institutions might consider implementing more rigorous review processes for dissertations to ensure that students receive detailed feedback on their methodological choices and language use before submission.

This gap raises concerns about the rigor and thoughtfulness with which research methodologies are being selected and implemented. None of the dissertations were found to offer a satisfactory or tolerable justification. This infer a superficial approach to methodology in most dissertations, where even when justification is provided, it lacks clear understanding of basis of selection of research method.

One of the reasons for the tendency that researchers continue with an established style and are not innovative may be attributed to the lack of qualified and experienced staff in institutions running M.Ed. course. The unapproved (non approval by competent authorities), unqualified and totally inexperienced teachers have been noticed by the author working as research supervisors of M.Ed. students. One another countable and vital reason is students simply copy the previously submitted dissertations in some colleges either with the consent of supervisors or with support from supervisors (in some cases). There are instances where the candidates who just passed their M.Ed. examinations have been recruited by the colleges without interview and allotted them M.Ed. students for supervising research dissertations.

Majority of research supervisors, especially in privately managed colleges, lack theoretical orientation in research methodology themselves and have completed their own M.Ed. dissertations in a highly casual manner. In such a scenario, the teachers copy a simple technique from their own or some other dissertations and continue with the same year after year. In other cases, one of the teachers, who is or considered to be better, becomes a trend setter for others. It may seem awkward to say but is a fact that barring a few, majority of M.Ed. supervisors in private colleges do not have clear idea how to select a research method. It cannot be expected from them that they will guide their students in this regard.

The second important reason for continuation of such a trend is the casual approach used in the evaluation of dissertations. In fact, there is hardly any evaluation of dissertations. The examiners generally do not read the dissertations as noticed by investigator in discussion with many examiners. In most of the cases, the dissertations are handed over to examiner on the spot. He/ she completes the formality of viva-voce examination by asking a few questions and assign marks as desired by

the supervisor or head of the institution. Due to this supervisor never feels accountable for and becomes still more relaxed in the following years.

Thirdly, the instructional techniques used for teaching research methodology course are strictly theory oriented. The students are not encouraged simultaneously to perform practical, activities related to the taught concepts. In the end it remains only in teaching and not converted to learning.

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