What led you to do a Master of Education (Special Education) (MEd (SPE)) programme at NIE?

I took up the Master of Education (Special Education) (MEd (SPE)) programme at NIE because in my line of work, I work with teachers and educators in special needs. As an occupational therapist with involvement in school-based therapy, I would like to gain more perspectives from the education field and to have more communication with teachers as well as educators in the special education field.

What was most memorable about the programme?

The Masters dissertation was most memorable as it was the most intensive component and also one that gave much satisfaction upon completion. It was also memorable as it would not be completed without the help and support of many people, including the research participants and of course, my dissertation supervisor, Dr Nirmala Karuppiah.

In this programme, it was useful for students to have options of either doing a dissertation for those who want to study a topic at a deeper level, or to do two other courses to complete the entire coursework.

Tell us more about your dissertation topic.

My dissertation topic was on “Preparing K2 children for Primary 1 in Singapore: Perceptions and practices of parents, primary school teachers and preschool teachers”. The purpose of this study was to examine local transition practices, perception of these practices and children’s readiness skills for primary school perceived by preschool teachers, primary school teachers and parents with Kindergarten 2 children proceeding to Primary 1 the following year. It gave insight into the importance of quality preschool education, training of teachers and the strengthening of school readiness in a child for Primary 1 for the transition of Kindergarten 2 children to formal schooling. Key directions that emerged from this study include establishment of programme continuity between preschools and primary schools, collaboration among preschool teachers, primary school teachers and parents as well as the inclusion of transition programmes to aid the transition process. The research study is funded by the Early Childhood Research Fund (ECRF) of the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA), Singapore. Together with my dissertation supervisor Dr Nirmala Karuppiah, I am honored that the dissertation has been recently published in the journal “Early Child Development and Care”.

How has MEd (SPE) helped you in your career in KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital?

The programme has enhanced my understanding of educational theories and practices that value adds to my work as a therapist working with young children and their families.

It has also widened my circle of friends especially those who work in the education and special education field.

Who would you recommend to take up this programme?

I would recommend the MEd (SPE) programme to individuals in the special education field, allied health or educators who have interest and work with children with additional needs.

What advice would you give to the people who are interested in MEd (SPE)?

As in the case of other programmes, it will be helpful to look up information on the courses to see if they are relevant to one’s interest and job scope prior to application. Once enrolled into the programme, just enjoy it and the interaction with lecturers and classmates!

The MEd (SPE) programme will be open for application from 16 November 2015 to 15 January 2016 for the August 2016 intake. For more information on the programme, please visit **www.nie.edu.sg/med_se**. For information on other programmes available for the August 2016 intake, please visit **www.nie.edu.sg/aug2016**.