PREFACE TO THE EDITION

It is a pleasure to present this issue of the **International Journal of Teacher Education Research Studies (IJTERS)**, featuring a collection of scholarly papers exploring current challenges, emerging practices, and future directions in foundation-level and higher education, with particular attention to the educational context of Oman. Together, the contributions examine how teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum design, technology, and student support can respond to changing academic expectations and the wider demands of a technology-driven society. The papers bring together a range of perspectives and approaches, offering readers opportunities to consider both practical classroom concerns and broader questions of educational development.

A major theme across the collection is the growing role of artificial intelligence and digital tools in education. The papers consider AI-supported language learning, vocabulary development, idea generation, automated writing assessment, and the use of AI in educational innovation. They also examine important questions concerning academic integrity, ethical use, critical thinking, and the difference between polished AI-assisted output and independently demonstrated learning. These discussions highlight the value of purposeful, transparent, and carefully guided technology integration rather than reliance on tools alone. They also point to the need for educators to help learners use digital resources responsibly while continuing to develop their own judgement, creativity, and independent skills.

Several contributions focus on English language learning and the development of essential academic communication skills. Research on reading comprehension, speaking, listening and note-taking, writing, teacher interaction, and inquiry-based learning explores both the barriers learners encounter and the approaches that may help them progress. Differentiated instruction, assessment embedded in learning, synchronized English and computing curricula, and innovative classroom strategies are presented as ways to support learner engagement, confidence, autonomy, and skill transfer. Taken together, these studies underline the importance of adapting teaching practices to different learner needs and creating opportunities for students to practise, receive feedback, and apply their skills in meaningful academic contexts.

The collection also gives substantial attention to foundation mathematics, STEM readiness, and the transition to university study. Studies investigate technology-supported trigonometry instruction, comparisons of active teaching approaches, mathematics anxiety, student preparedness, and curriculum alignment. Alongside these empirical investigations, conceptual and policy-oriented papers examine the General Foundation Programme, national learning outcomes, 21st-century competencies, and the potential use of digital-twin frameworks to support personalized development and national competitiveness. These contributions draw attention to the relationship between school preparation, foundation-level learning, and later academic progress, while highlighting the value of supportive learning environments and curricula that respond to evolving educational and workforce needs.

Beyond subject-specific learning, the papers recognize the importance of the wider educational experience. Contributions on teacher nonverbal immediacy and student motivation, handwriting and cognitive engagement, and art-based interventions for mental well-being draw attention to the human, emotional, cultural, and social dimensions of education. Collectively, they suggest that effective educational development requires attention not only to measurable academic outcomes but also to confidence, relationships, well-being, ethical responsibility, and lifelong learning. This wider perspective reinforces the idea that learners benefit when academic instruction is accompanied by encouragement, meaningful interaction, and attention to their personal and social development.

Taken as a whole, these papers offer a varied yet connected perspective on educational improvement. They combine classroom-based research, quantitative and qualitative investigations, literature reviews, conceptual frameworks, and curriculum analysis. Their findings and proposals can inform educators, researchers, institutional leaders, and policymakers seeking to strengthen foundation programmes and prepare learners for higher education, employment, and active participation in a changing world. Although the papers address different subjects and questions, they share an interest in improving learning experiences, responding to emerging challenges, and identifying approaches that can be considered, adapted, or examined further in different educational settings.

We sincerely thank the authors for sharing their research and perspectives, the reviewers for their time and constructive feedback, and all contributors who have helped make this collection possible. Their efforts support the continued exchange of ideas among researchers, educators, institutional leaders, and policymakers. We hope these papers encourage further research, constructive dialogue, and collaboration toward inclusive, evidence-informed, and future-ready education.

Dr. Premachandran P
Chief editor

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