

EDITORIAL

We are delighted to introduce the latest issue of the Journal of Strides in Education (JSE), featuring a rich array of scholarly works on innovative themes in contemporary education. This edition takes readers on a journey through diverse research in pedagogy, where the contributors explore the educational scenario and provide insights for policy makers and stakeholders to engage with the ideas, challenge assumptions and shape the future of learning.

The first article, *Building Leadership Skills in Diverse Classrooms: The Role of Inclusive Education*, examines how inclusive educational practices can foster essential leadership skills among secondary school students by recognizing learner diversity as a valuable resource. It highlights the role of inclusive classrooms in promoting student voice, collaboration, empathy, decision-making, and shared responsibility, thereby empowering diverse learners to assume leadership roles with confidence.

The second article on *Social Competence in Education: A Review of Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, and Social Skills Assessment* reviews the concept of social competence as a vital component of holistic student development, focusing on interpersonal, intrapersonal, and social skills. The article examines various assessment methods such as inventories, rating scales, and situational tests, and systematically presents the findings across the three major domains.

The third article, *Music and Academic Achievement: Exploring the Connection Between Musical Engagement and Learning Outcomes* explores the relationship between musical engagement and academic performance, highlighting music's role in enhancing cognitive processes such as attention, memory, language development, and

executive functioning. It examines theoretical perspectives and related research to show how music supports learning abilities, emotional regulation, and holistic development.

The fourth article discusses the Impact of Birth Order on Social Connectedness Among Secondary School Students examines how birth order influences social connectedness among adolescents, a key aspect of emotional and social development.

The fifth article Curriculum and Social Sensitivity: Strengthening Values of Equality and Respect, examines social sensitivity as a crucial dimension of contemporary education in culturally diverse and unequal societies. It discusses how curriculum can function as a powerful tool for nurturing values of equality, respect, empathy, and ethical behaviour through thoughtful content design, inclusive teaching strategies, and meaningful assessment practices.

The sixth article ITEP for the Future: Toward Sustainable, Inclusive, and Technology-Driven Teacher Education examines India's Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) as a transformative reform aligned with the National Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4.

The articles add useful tactics, extensive data and meticulous analysis to the evolving discourse on education. We are confident that the research presented in this issue will prove to be a valuable resource for educators, scholars, and policy makers striving to comprehend and improve the educational landscape.

We extend our gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and the editorial team for their dedication and hard work in bringing this issue to life. We hope that these studies inspire further research and dialogue in the quest for educational excellence.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Team

Journal of Strides in Education