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Journal of Innovative Research in Teacher Education (**JIRTE**) aims to present the compilation of up-to-date and innovative research papers, reviews, and argumentative essays on education in general and teacher education in particular.

It is expected that the papers published in JIRTE will raise issues related to teacher education in various field areas; open up discussions related to those issues; suggest different methods of handling those issues or solving the related problems. It is also hoped that the studies published in JIRTE will provide the basis for timely discussions on the various areas of teacher education, and give direction to innovative research and practices. The paper accepted to JIRTE will be given DOI numbers and then published **free of charge**. JIRTE is an international peer-reviewed journal published three times a year in **March, September, and December**. In the reviewing processes, JIRTE uses the double-blind review method for all studies sends for publication. In this method the identities of the authors and reviewers are confidential. In order to ease this process, the authors are required to prepare and then check their manuscripts not disclosing any name or other identifying information. Authors can use MS Word's 'Document Reviewing' feature for this purpose.

Studies to be published in JIRTE need to be carried out in any areas of educational sciences, especially in teacher education.

- They can be carried out in any form of quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method research;
- Literature analyses, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis studies, and book reviews and opinion papers can be sent to JIRTE for reviewing and publication.
- JIRTE gives priority to research papers. Attention is paid to the issue that the number or quantity of review papers should not over-throw the number of research papers.
- JIRTE also gives priority to papers prepared in English (full text).**

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Dear Colleagues and Readers,

We are happy to introduce you to the third issue of Volume Four of the Journal of Innovative Research in Teacher Education (JIRTE). There are four papers presented in the current issue, each one is addressing different topics in the field of teacher education. The first one is "The realization and importance level of upper-level social studies attainment targets" by Nagihan Özyurt, and İsmail Acun. The first study aimed to shed some light on the teachers' opinions on the importance of upper-level attainment targets and the realization level of those attainment targets of the social studies curriculum. Different results were determined about the level of realization and importance of the attainment targets depending on the variable they were addressed. While the realization of the attainment targets was determined as "medium" level, the importance given by teachers to the attainment targets was determined as "high". The study entitled "Opinions of gifted and talented students about their digital game preferences and effects" was conducted by Simge Karakaş Mısır and Yavuz Yaman. In their study, the opinions of gifted and talented students about their digital game preferences and what they would like to do if they wanted to design a digital game themselves were included. It is seen that games involving skills such as exploring, strategizing, and thinking make students happy. When the games designed by the students are analysed, it is seen that they are inspired by the games they play. They arouse interest on a game basis, but they are also sensitive about being easily accessible and free.

In a study conducted with preschoolers, Melda Kılıç, Cansu Tutkun, and Fatma Tezel Şahin revealed the role of social skills as a mediator in the relationship between problem behaviours and academic self-esteem in preschoolers. As a result of this study, negative relationships were found between preschoolers' academic self-esteem, problem behaviours and social skills. As children's academic self-esteem and social skills increased, their problem behaviours decreased. Positive relationships were also found between children's social skills and academic self-esteem. Academic self-esteem was a major predictor of problem behaviours and social skills, and as academic self-esteem increased, so did children's social skills. In addition, social skills were shown to mediate the relationship between children's internalizing behaviour problems and academic self-esteem, however, these effects did not differ according to the presence or absence of externalizing behaviour problems. The aim of the study entitled "The effect of using games on students' cooperative learning skill in social studies course the effect of games on students" conducted by İmen Akbulut, and Önder Eryılmaz, with middle school students was to investigate the effect of using games on students' cooperative learning skills in social studies course. As a result of the research, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the groups in favour of the experimental group. In other words, it was concluded that the games implemented in the social studies course had a statistically positive and significant effect on the students' cooperative learning skills. Based on the results, it could be suggested that social studies teachers who want to improve their students' cooperative learning skills can benefit from games in their lessons.

In the last article of this issue, Merve Güler and Seda Kerimgil Çelik examined the views of primary school teachers on the blended learning model implemented in primary schools during the pandemic period. The results of the study show that blended learning has become more applicable after the first two grades at the primary school level. In the study, problems such as inequalities in access to technology due to socio-economic inequalities, inadequate socialization in online learning environments, difficulties encountered during the teaching process due to classroom management problems, and problems arising from students' home environments were pointed out. The research also revealed that teachers were largely self-educated in their implementation of blended learning environments. Despite the in-service training support for their weaknesses, teachers expressed that better results could be achieved if the right planning, necessary infrastructure and adequate financial conditions were provided.

It has been recorded that quality is gradually increasing, in the JIRTE. Therefore, I would like to thank all authors who considered JIRTE as the medium to publish their research studies. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Editorial Boards and those who served as peer reviewers for their contribution to the increasing quality of works to be published in JIRTE. We are looking forward to seeing you again in the first issue of the fifth volume.

Dr. Erkan DİNÇ
Chief Editor

Research

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The realization and importance level of upper-level social studies attainment targetS

DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.616.1

Nagihan Özyurt, and İsmail Acun

Research

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Opinions of gifted and talented students about their digital game preferences and effects

DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.616.2

Simge Karakaş Mısıır, and Yavuz Yaman

Research

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The mediating role of social skills in the relationship between preschool children's academic self-esteem and problem behaviors

DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.616.3

Melda Kılıç, Cansu Tutkun, and Fatma Tezel Şahin

Research

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The effect of using games on students' cooperative learning skills in social studies courses the effect of games on students

DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.616.4

İmen Akbulut & Önder Eryılmaz

Research

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Investigation into the views of primary school teachers on the blended learning model

DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.616.5

Merve Güler & Seda Kerimgil Çelik



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