

## Chapter 9

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# Afterword: What is shared and learned

Jonathan Ryan

The present volume brings together seven studies of classroom-based research in Malaysian universities, yet it is likely to be of considerable interest to a much wider international readership. To begin with, arguably too little classroom-based research is conducted in a tertiary context. As Hasim and Barnard note in the introduction, university lecturers are usually expected to teach as well as engage in research and publication, but the two activities are generally divorced. A lecturer's academic contributions are often exclusively targeted towards advancing knowledge in their subject discipline and seldom to advancing tertiary-level pedagogy. The contributors to this volume, however, exhibit what Taber (2007) calls 'strong professionalism': not content to merely follow established practice, they actively evaluate their "own work, and to seek to improve it – using evidence" (p. 7). In so doing, they model the types of practitioner inquiry that promote continual professional development and processes of evaluation and enhancement. It is hoped that this collection will stimulate other academics in institutions of higher learning to undertake similar studies in their own contexts.

Also appealing to a wide readership will be a general interest in the context of tertiary education in Malaysia. Against a backdrop of post-colonialism and multiculturalism, recent decades have brought a number of radical policy

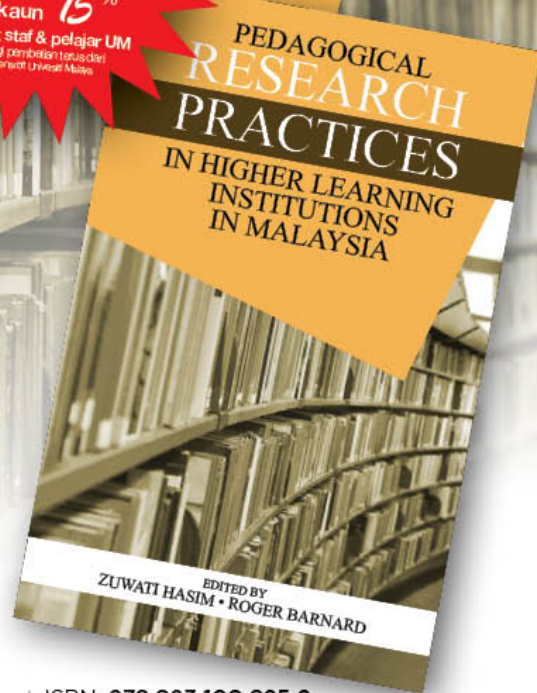
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Snip from galley proof (with my name spelt wrongly)

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**T**his book makes an important contribution to understanding teaching in institutions of higher learning. All academics are expected to research and publish within their disciplinary areas, but less attention has been paid to encouraging them to research their own pedagogic practices. The authors of the seven case studies in this volume are Malaysian academics who have published research in fields as diverse as Engineering, Business Studies, Educational Management and Academic English. They have also introduced innovations into their academic teaching, and have sought to systematically investigate the effects of these reforms on their students and their own practice through a range of action research projects. By doing so, they have provided a greater understanding of the complexity of teaching and learning in tertiary education. Their findings and research procedures have considerable implications for all academics wishing to investigate their teaching, not only in Malaysia but in comparable settings elsewhere.



ISBN: 978 983 100 895 9  
Extent: 166  
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