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RESEARCH PRACTICE AND BELIEFS AMONG IN-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN MALAYSIA: A CURIOSITY-DRIVEN STUDY

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Abstract

Malaysian in-service teachers are familiar with concepts of “teacher practitioner” and “teacher researcher” but how do these permeate in their practice? A curiosity-driven study was planned to investigate how central research contributes to their continuous professional development. The study builds on this curiosity with the framing of crucial research questions and is followed by a bilingual online questionnaire which identified their research practices and beliefs. The findings were triangulated against current literature to illustrate the current research climate in the Malaysian education system. Findings show that positive school climate promotes classroom research among teachers, but heavy workload and lack of interest impede a research-driven practice in Malaysian schools. Teachers tend to conduct research alone, even when support from peers and superiors are present. Despite familiarity with various research paradigms, they produce little documented research output. Relevant suggestions and recommendations were highlighted towards cultivating better research climates to bring about positive impact and change to existing practices in Malaysian schools.

Keywords: Research Practice, Research Beliefs, Teacher Practitioner, Teacher Researcher, Curiosity-Driven Study.