Experiencing a Re-entry: Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Experiencing a Re-entry: Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia

Abstract

In order to overcome the shortage of academics to teach business subjects, business schools turn to industry and recruit professional executives and managers as academics. These individuals are called second-career academics. However, their career transition from industry to academia is fraught with various challenges. This research looked into the experience of second-career academics in Malaysian business schools. Since it involves an inquiry into the lived experience of people, a combination of interpretive research paradigm and narrative inquiry has been adopted for this study. Thirty-one (31) second-career academics from various types of higher education institutions across Malaysia were interviewed. In addition, three focus group discussions were held with some of the participants. Additional data included artefacts (articles, documents, etc.) supplied by some of the participants. All these data were analysed thematically, leading to the emergence of five main themes: (a) self-efficacy, (b) calling, (c) accordance, (d) discordance, and (e) grievance. The research revealed that these second-career academics are motivated by self-efficacy, inspired by a sense of calling, delighted by accordance, but disenchanted by discordance, and alienated by grievance. The results represent the multi-faceted realities confronting second-career academics.

Theoretically, these results suggest the transferability of self-efficacy as demonstrated in career transition from industry to academia. This appears to contribute to the social cognitive theory of human action. Besides, the study also makes a number of detailed contributions to the study of career transition. The results also suggest several strands for future research in respect of career transition and career satisfaction.

The study has several practical implications for the higher education sector. Universities need to recognise second-career academics as a group of academics with special needs.
Using them merely to fill vacant teaching positions, without offering well-targeted support programs, would not be advantageous in the long run. Several things ought to change in the entire human resource management lifecycle in order to get the best contribution from second-career academics and minimise their discontent.

Universities need to review the career appraisal process while recruiting second-career academics in order to evaluate their work experience and offer suitable levels of appointment to them. The study indicates the need for a re-examination of academic performance management systems to take into account the particular value second-career academics add to student learning and research engagements. The study highlights the urgent need for an improved orientation process for second-career academics.

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Statement of Original Authorship

I confirm and certify that the work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted at this university or any other institution of higher education for any award. I also confirm that to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where reference is made.

Liap Teck ONG
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7 August 2015
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Preface

I joined as a lecturer in the Faculty of Business and Design, Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus in 2010. Prior to joining academia, I held various positions for 32 years in industry, working mostly in Malaysia. I worked in automobile retailing, civil construction, engineering consulting, and turnkey contracting for major infrastructure development. This career experience has had an impact on the choice of my research topic as well as the method I have adopted.

When I transitioned from industry to academia, I faced several challenges in adapting to the new culture. One immediate challenge was the language and style of the academic world. It seemed to be quite different from the usual professional discourse to which I was accustomed. For example, “peer review” did not exist in my entire professional career in industry. “In-text citations” looked strange to me. In industry, I was never required to be so particular about my oral or written communication, perhaps because the focus was less on communication but more on action. In academia, I realised that the balance is tilted more in favour of precise communication, which posed a challenge. Besides language and communication, I encountered important differences with regard to work culture, organisational structure, performance management, and so forth.

These challenges triggered my interest and I started observing my new work environment and reflecting on its nature quite intensely. By then I had realised the need to acquire a doctoral qualification in order to progress in my new career. In response to the challenges I was facing, I decided to study this present experience closely rather than ignoring it or reverting to my past. Therefore, I proposed to focus my doctoral research at Swinburne on career transition issues and how these affect the performance of the so-called “second-career academics,” that is, people who transition from industry to academia. The proposal was not only received well by the university, it was also financially supported.

Thus, for my doctoral research, I began to study a phenomenon which I was experiencing myself. Naturally, this led to various methodological questions. These questions related mainly to the issue of maintaining quality and credibility of the
research. This led me to a lengthy exploration of the philosophical and methodological literature of social science. It helped me recognise that there are research practices where the researcher being a part of the phenomenon being studied can be considered a strength, rather than a weakness. This type of “experience-near” research practice appealed to me immensely. While it privileges my own experience, prior knowledge, and “standpoint,” it also facilitates my interaction with the research participants.

My participants considered me to be “one of them.” This helped in the research process tremendously. I was acceptable to them as a reliable equal, to whom they could relate. It also helped me to engage with them on a platform of equality. This could have contributed to the fidelity and dependability of the data I collected from them.

At the analysis stage, the focus of the study shifted from “performance” to “experience” of the participants. This was an interesting and unexpected outcome, clearly enabled by the research approach I had adopted. In this way, the study focused on capturing the participants’ experience and its significance. The thesis title had to be changed to reflect this (Appendix D).

Finally, I would like to share a word about my linguistic background. My first language is Mandarin Chinese. I have used both Mandarin Chinese and Malaysian English during my professional career. In my current academic career, I have learnt to use international academic English, which I have tried to adopt in this thesis. Therefore, there is bound to be some linguistic shortcomings in my writing. I seek the reader’s kind understanding.

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7 August 2015
Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. Research Context

1.1.1. Business School Staffing

There are 15,731 business schools world-wide today, as per a recent report by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), a global agency for accrediting business schools worldwide (AACSB International, 2014a). Most of these business schools are situated within universities. Considering that there are about 18,000 universities worldwide (International Association of Universities, 2014), business schools exist in about 87% of universities. In Malaysia, there are 52 business schools (AACSB International, 2014a), one in each of the 52 Malaysian universities (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2014).

Given the staggering number of business schools, the demand for qualified academics to teach business subjects is large (Coates et al., 2009; Verhaegen, 2005). According to AACSB International, a majority of academics (around 80 per cent) who teach business are those who choose academics as their first and only career (Brown, 2012b, Figure 1). However, with the increase in demand for talent to teach business, there is a shortage of academics to teach business subjects (Bishop, Boyle, Clune, & Hermanson, 2011; Boyle, Carpenter, Hermanson, & Mensah, 2013, 2015; Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Coates & Goedegebuure, 2012; Ivory et al., 2006; Trapnell, Mero, Williams, & Krull, 2009). To address this shortage, business schools turn to industry as an alternative source of talent to teach business (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Ivory et al., 2006).

Accordingly, business schools have been recruiting business executives from industry to assume academic roles (AACSB International, 2014b; Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Ivory et al., 2006; Verhaegen, 2005). These business executives go through a career transition experience. In their new career in business schools, they bring their practical experience to bear on their new academic roles (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008).
Accreditation standards for business schools require the presence of such business executives among their faculty (AACSB International, 2015, Standard 15, p. 39ff).

Further, studies have shown that business schools need these business executives in order to remain relevant to the business community (Bandow, Minsky, & Voss, 2007; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Pfeffer, 2009; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002). However, business schools have to compete with industry to attract these talented business executives (Bishop et al., 2011; Boyle et al., 2011, 2013; Coates et al., 2009; Ivory et al., 2006; Plumlee & Reckers, 2014; Singh, 2008). Therefore attracting business executives to adopt an academic career and retaining them is a challenge for business schools globally as well as in Malaysia (Plumlee, Kachelmeier, Madeo, Pratt, & Krull, 2006; Wan, 2007). For example, in a survey conducted by AACSB International, it was reported: “Of the 507 schools that participated in this survey question, 94.7% reported the presence of part-time or adjunct faculty at their school” (Brown, 2012a).

1.1.2. Career Transition Studies

Career transition seems to be a prolific area of research (e.g., the search phrase “career transition” returned 32,000 results in Google Books and 9,270 results in Google Scholar, on 3 Aug 2015). These cover a wide range of career transition scenarios and issues, for example, demographic issues in career transition, retrenchment driven career transition, transition from military to civil careers, career transition of athletes, farmers, performing artists, and public servant.

However, there seems to be a paucity of studies on career transition from industry to business schools. The earliest reference to this type of transition appears to have been made in a pioneering essay by Herbert A. Simon (1967), focusing on business schools in the US. However, focused empirical studies on career transition from industry to business schools appear much later (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004; Macfarlane, 1997, 1998), focusing on business schools in the UK.

In the current decade, only two studies on career transition from industry to business schools can be traced to the work by Learmonth and Humphreys (2012) and Myers (2006), focusing on business schools in the UK and the US respectively. The most
recent career transition study which involved business executives transitioning into academia is the work by Wilson, Wood, Solomonides, Dixon, and Goos (2014), focused on business schools in Australia. There does not seem to be any research on career transition of business executives to business schools in Malaysia.

Based on the above, two observations can be made. Business schools worldwide are encountering the practical challenge of attracting and retaining business executives (as stated above in 1.1.1). But the scholarly literature addressing the career transition of business executives to business schools appears to be relatively underexplored, in comparison to various other types of career transition. These two observations constitute the background to my doctoral study.

1.2. Problem Statement

The phenomenon of business executives assuming the role of academics in business schools appears to hold both practical and scholarly interest. Practically speaking, business schools around the world are keen to attract, retain, develop, and benefit from business executives. However, based on the scant research literature, we know little about why and how business executives decide to become business academics. Nor do we know how they fare when they do become business academics. We do not know what their experience is like in their new career as the work culture in business schools can be quite different from that of the corporate world. Consequently, we are not sure about the sorts of support they may need to develop as educators and researchers in business schools. In short, we do not know much about the challenges and issues that business executives encounter when they transitioned into an academic career in business schools. This gap in knowledge exists globally as much as it does in Malaysia.

1.3. Impetus for the Research

As stated above, there is a discernible gap in knowledge concerning the phenomenon of business executives assuming the role of academics in business schools. This became a scholarly impetus for me to undertake my doctoral research.
This scholarly impetus was further reinforced by my own career experience. I transitioned into academia in 2010 after holding various managerial positions in automobile retailing, civil construction, engineering consulting, and turnkey contracting for major infrastructure development for 32 years. In my new career, I recognised an admirable level of collegiality which I had not encountered in industry. This was clearly an attractive feature of academia for me. However, I also experienced challenges in my new working environment. I realised, in order to progress in academia I had to deal with those challenges in an effective manner.

In many interactions with my academic colleagues, especially those with a background similar to mine, I realised that I am not alone in my predicament. Academics like me, who came from industry, appeared to experience a common set of challenges. For example, challenges in understanding and fulfilling institutional expectations, complying with operating standards of the university, and adapting to academic culture were often discussed.

It seemed that research on the phenomenon of business executives assuming the role of academics in business schools could have personal, institutional, local, and global implications. This realisation became the impetus for my research.

1.4. Clarification of the Thesis Title

The thesis is titled “Experiencing a Re-entry: Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia.” The words used in this title need some clarification:

Re-entry. The word re-entry is based on a metaphor of space exploration, where the “re-entry phase” is considered a challenging part of the space mission, involving high levels of uncertainty. Likewise, when business executives re-enter into academia, having graduated from it previously, they encounter similar uncertainties and challenges. This notion of re-entry has been used in the career transition literature (e.g., Louis, 1980, p. 332).
Second-Career Academic. The term second-career academic refers to individuals who transitioned from industry to academia (LaRocco & Bruns, 2006). My research focuses on such individuals. The term has been used in my thesis as an umbrella term to cover all business academics who have had a considerable career in industry. For some authors, second-career academics are designated as management academics (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004), executive professors (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008), practitioner-academics (Wilson et al., 2014), and pracacademics (Posner, 2009).

Business School. Although the label “business school” should be self-explanatory, some clarification is needed to avoid ambiguity. In this thesis, I have adopted the definition of business schools given by AACSB International (2014a, 2014b). It includes all higher education institutions that offer degrees in business-related fields at a bachelor’s or higher level. These schools are situated usually within a university setting. Academic degrees from these schools are typically in the following disciplines or fields:

- Accounting
- Behavioral Science/Organizational Behavior
- Business Communication
- Business Education
- Business Ethics
- Business Law/Legal Environment
- Computer Information Systems (CIS)/Management Information Systems (MIS)
- E-business (including e-commerce)
- Economics/Managerial Economics
- Entrepreneurship/Small Business Administration
- Finance (includes banking)
- General Business
- Health Services/Hospital Administration
- Hotel/Restaurant/Tourism
- Human Resource Management (includes personnel and industry/labor relations)
- Insurance
- International Business
- Management
- Marketing
- Operations Research
- Production/Operations Management
- Public Administration
- Quantitative Methods
- Real Estate
- Statistics
- Strategic Management
- Supply Chain Management
- Transportation/Logistics
- Taxation
- [and] Other


1.5. Expected Benefits

Two possible benefits are expected:

(a) The results would serve as a mirror to second-career academics in Malaysian business schools, providing an interpretation of their academic career. This may trigger
useful self-reflections and positive changes in their approach to their new role in academia. Ultimately, this may enhance their career performance.

(b) The results would also serve as reflective feedback for the institutions that employ second-career academics. It could make the institutions aware of the specific needs of this group of academics. Based on this awareness, institutions may initiate measures to harness the full potential of second-career academics.

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the phenomenon that has been studied and presented in this thesis. In this chapter, I state the problem that needs to be investigated. I also offer a clarification of the impetus for me to investigate the phenomenon.

Chapter 2 is my literature review covering current studies on business schools, academic career, and career theories globally as well as in Malaysia. The chapter concludes with the specific research questions emerging from the literature review.

Chapter 3 offers a justification of my research paradigm, approach, and methods of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4 comprises my data analysis and the derivation of the preliminary results of the study. It then presents a report on the further data collection, analysis, and synthesis carried out, leading to the final results of the study.

Chapter 5 contains a discussion on the theoretical significance and practical implications of the final results, in light of the original research questions. It also includes reflections on the limitations of the research and suggests some ideas for future research.
Chapter 2
Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the phenomenon of business executives assuming the role of academics in business schools is the initial trigger for my doctoral research. This phenomenon appears to involve multiple unknowns. However, initial explorations suggest that there are two broad sets of issues to consider: (a) issues concerning business schools (i.e., the institutional context where the phenomenon unfolds) and (b) issues concerning career, especially academic career (i.e., the personal and social experiences of the individuals involved in the phenomenon).

Accordingly, I have identified two groups of literature to review, before I can formulate of my research questions precisely. The two groups of literature are: (a) literature on institutions of higher education, especially business schools and (b) literature on career, especially academic career. The literature review is presented in two parts: Part A (i.e., Section 2.2) covers the literature on universities and business schools; Part B (i.e., Section 2.3) covers the literature on career theories and academic career.

Section 2.4 presents a synthesis of the literature reviewed, leading to a statement of the research focus. Specific research questions are then formulated in Section 2.5, based on the emerging research focus.

2.2. Part A: Literature on Universities and Business Schools

Part A of the review begins with a focus on the broader literature on the changing nature of universities. This is followed by a closer study of the literature relevant to the institutional context where the phenomenon of interest unfolds (i.e., business education worldwide and in Malaysia). The literature seems to be scattered across many journals, such as the following:
Academy of Management Learning & Education
Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal
American Journal of Business
Asia Pacific Education Review
Asia Pacific Journal of Education
British Educational Research Journal
British Journal of Management
Business & Society
Business and Professional Ethics Journal
Business Horizons
Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education
Education + Training
Educational Philosophy and Theory
Educational Research for Policy and Practice
Globalisation, Societies and Education
Harvard Business Review
Higher Education
Higher Education Management and Policy
Higher Education Policy
Higher Education Research & Development
Human Relations
International Journal for Academic Development
International Journal of Asian Social Science
International Journal of Educational Management
International Journal of Educational Reform
International Studies in Sociology of Education
Journal of Education for Business
Journal of Educational Administration
Journal of European Industrial Training
Journal of Further and Higher Education
Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management
Journal of Management
Journal of Management Development
Journal of Management Education
Journal of Management Studies
Journal of Marketing for Higher Education
Journal of Organizational Change Management
Journal of Studies in International Education
Kajian Malaysia
Long Range Planning
Management Decision
New Directions for Higher Education
Organization
Oxford Review of Education
Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education
Power and Education
Research in Higher Education
Research in Higher Education Journal
Science and Public Policy
Social Science Information
Additionally, topics related to academia and business education are also covered in a number of books, such as the following:

*Academic Tribes and Territories* (Becher & Trowler, 2001)
*Business Schools and Their Contribution to Society* (Morsing & Rovira, 2011)
*Changing Identities in Higher Education* (Barnett & Di Napoli, 2008)
*Enhancing Global Competence in Higher Education* (Sidhu & Kaur, 2011)
*How Foundations Think* (Khurana, Kimura, & Fourcade, 2011)
*The Future of Business Schools in the UK* (Ivory et al., 2006)
*The Meanings of Mass Higher Education* (Scott, 1995)
*The University in the Market* (Engwall & Weaire, 2008)
*Transnational Higher Education in Malaysia* (Sirat, 2005)
*Working Knowledge* (Symes & McIntyre, 2000)

I present a review of this literature on universities and business schools using the following structure:

(a) The changing nature of university (see 2.2.1)
(b) The development of business schools (see 2.2.2)
(c) Studies on higher education in Malaysia (see 2.2.3)
(d) Nobility of higher education in Malaysia (see 2.2.4)
(e) Business schools in Malaysia (see 2.2.5)

Finally, I offer a summary of Part A of the literature review at the end of Section 2.2 (see 2.2.6).

**2.2.1. The Changing Nature of University**

University is defined as a community of scholars that serves the noble idea of academic autonomy (Buckley & Hurley, 2001; Neave, 2010; Watson, 2012). Academic freedom, as a concept, is generally associated with the first university in the occidental world, the University of Bologna, which evolved in the Italian city of Bologna in the eleventh
century CE. (Although Nalanda Mahavihara, an ancient university that evolved in India in the fifth century CE, is said to be the oldest university in the world, my preliminary inquiries with historians did not yield a clear understanding of how academic freedom was understood or practised there.) The University of Bologna, however, adopted an “academic charter” (Constitutio Habita, in 1158 or 1155), which guaranteed the unhindered pursuit of education (Yang, 2013). The classic book, The Ideal of a University, puts forward the meaning of university training:

[University training] aims at raising the intellectual tones of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying the true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspirations, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political powers, and refining the intercourse of private life. (Newman, 1852/1947, p. 157, cited in Kavanagh, 2009, p. 580)

University is the institution of knowledge production, creation, assimilation, dissemination, application, and accumulation with noble values and integrity and, as such, is a complex entity (Antonelli, Cappiello, & Pedrini, 2013; Barnett, 2000, 2005; Engwall, 2007b; Lay, 2004). Several studies have focused on the nature of university and the evolution of its role and identity (Kavanagh, 2009; Kulasagaran, 2012; Neave, 2010; Watson, 2012; Webster, Gebhardt, Terra, & Etzkowitz, 2000). Their conclusion is that university has evolved into a highly complex institution and this change is brought about in part through its own organic growth as well as external influences (Bridgman, 2007; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Deem, 1998; Kavanagh, 2009; Patterson, 1999; Prichard, 2011; Sánchez & Mejía, 2014; Watson, 2012). These studies reveal that globalisation, advancement in information and communication technology (ICT), empowered consumers and societies, national agenda, as well as economic policies have shaped the identity and function of university. According to these studies, the university has gone beyond its original role (Collins, Sidhu, Lewis, & Yeoh, 2014; Cribb & Gewirtz, 2013; Hensley, Galilee-Belfer, & Lee, 2013). Further, these studies have put forward that universities need to learn about themselves, the new roles expected from them, and become learning organisations (Patterson, 1999; White & Weathersby, 2005). However some of the studies indicate that it is difficult for university to change (Bui & Baruch, 2010; White & Weathersby, 2005). Despite going through evolutionary
development, universities retained their primarily role as the citadels of knowledge (Kavanagh, 2009; Patterson, 1999; Prichard, 2011).

Another strand of looking at university is through its relationship with other entities in society, namely industry and government. There is close interplay among academia, industry, and government, as captured by the triple-helix model put forward by Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz (1996, 2001).

The changing nature of universities has also been discussed in terms of academic revolutions, leading to the emergence of entrepreneurial universities (Bui & Baruch, 2010; Deem, 1998; Engwall, 2007b, 2008; Kavanagh, 2009; Patterson, 1999; Quinn, 2012; Sánchez & Mejía, 2014; Watson, 2012). Moreover, there is also significant heterogeneity among universities (Kavanagh, 2009; Patterson, 1999; Watson, 2012). Besides private and public universities, there are other categories, such as research university, technological university, teaching university, hybrid university, management university, corporate university, and so forth, each offering a unique organisational context, management focus, and working environment (Boles & Diehm, 2013; Deem, 1998; Sánchez & Mejía, 2014; Sue, John, & Sandra, 2009; Winter, 2009).

University, as an institution of higher education had an obligation to serve the nation, sovereign, or government in power (Kavanagh, 2009; Neave, 2010) until the onset of the industrial revolution in England and later Europe, when university began to serve the professionals in addition to the nation. This was brought about by the needs of the society which was undergoing an industrial revolution. Due to the industrial revolution, the emergence of a professional class of society focusing on increase and advancement in production created a demand for knowledge and technology (Kavanagh, 2009; Martin & Etzkowitz, 2000; Neave, 2010). The professionals turned to university for sourcing knowledge and human resource. As these professionals were the elite and upper echelon of the society, university education, in a sense, was elitist. These professional elitists who led the industrialisation of the economy precipitated in the emergence of corporate and business community to whom the university turned their allegiance in the mid-nineteenth century in USA, England, and Europe (Buckley & Hurley, 2001).
Moving on to the twentieth century, notably in the 1960s and 1970s, there was the process of democratisation of higher education resulting in the onset of mass education (Buckley & Hurley, 2001; Neave, 2010, p. 18). That period is deemed to be the beginning era of university serving the society at large rather than the elite few. Further liberalisation of higher education and the impact of globalisation and ICT led to the current state of massification, internationalisation, and marketisation of higher education (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Scott, 1995, 2005).

By the mid-nineteenth century, industry became the prime locomotive of economic drive of the USA, England, and Europe with the emergence of huge conglomerates particularly in the USA (Khurana, Kimura, & Fourcade, 2011; Khurana & Penrice, 2011). Philanthropic arms of these conglomerates, such as Ford Foundation and Carnegie Foundation, began to be interested in higher education. This led to the intervention of these conglomerates in higher education (Cotton, McKenna, Van Auken, & Meuter, 2001). The explicit engagement of university with corporation was influenced by the industry (Kavanagh, 2009, p. 582). The engagement of university and industry led to the emergence of the concept of business schools, which started in Europe in the eighteenth century, before the concept was taken up in the USA in the late nineteenth century (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Engwall, 2007a). This is how university began to serve the business community by promoting business education through business schools.

2.2.2. The Development of Business Schools

2.2.2.1. The Beginning

The business school concept began with the institutionalisation and teaching of business knowledge, which started in France, Belgium, and Italy in the eighteenth century. The concept of business education was adopted in the USA about a century later, with the establishment of Wharton School, at the University of Pennsylvania in 1881, which can be credited as the pioneer of the modern version of business schools (Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Engwall, 2007a; Harrington & Kearney, 2011). About a century later, business schools became a global phenomenon due to globalisation, empowered consumers, advances made in ICT, and deregulation and
liberalisation of trade among nations (Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Cotton et al., 2001; Engwall, 2007a; Harrington & Kearney, 2011; Katz, 2003; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, 2003, 2004). All these factors contributed in making business schools an important component of higher education. With the increase in the importance of business schools, focus began to shift to how business subjects were being taught as well as who were the suitably qualified people to teach those subjects.

2.2.2.2. Teaching of Business

Initially business schools in the USA adopted a vocational mode of teaching and the business faculties were staffed by business practitioners with only a few academic staff members with a PhD qualification (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Cornuel, 2007; Cornuel & Hommel, 2012; Cotton et al., 2001; Ford et al., 2010; Grey, 2002). However, since the 1950s, with the publication of the report, Higher Education for Business (Gordon & Howell, 1959) and the book, The Education of American Businessmen (Pierson, 1959), there was a drastic institutional change in the nature of business education and staffing in business schools (Cotton et al., 2001). Business schools began to adhere to the call to adopt a more scientific model similar to the physical sciences and economics. The scientific model as advocated by the Gordon and Howell report resulted in the faculty members of business schools being staffed by people holding PhD qualifications beginning 1960, introducing a scholarly mode of teaching (Fourcade & Khurana, 2013; Grey, 2004; Khurana et al., 2011; Khurana & Spender, 2012; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, 2003, 2004; Starkey et al., 2004; Starkey & Tempest, 2005, 2009). This scholarly mode of teaching played a strong advocating role in favour of the legitimation of business schools within institutions of higher education. Nevertheless, there were concerns or even doubts about the legitimacy and relevance of business schools in the scholarly context of institutions of higher education. This led The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) to sponsor a study on business schools in the USA by Porter and McKibbin in 1988 (Boyle, 2004; Cotton et al., 2001; Zimmerman, 2001).

Porter and McKibbin’s study reviewed the role of business schools in the USA. It culminated in the publication of a report addressing key issues concerning business schools, such as the need for strategic planning, role of business schools, curriculum,
and development of faculty, accreditation of lifelong learning, and future collaboration among industry, AACSB, and business schools (Cotton et al., 2001; DeAngelo, DeAngelo, & Zimmerman, 2005; Engwall, 2007a). One of the issues that the study covered was the legitimacy of business schools within a university setting. Another issue was the content and curriculum of the business subjects taught in business schools in the USA. The nature and direction of research conducted in business schools was another issue covered in the Porter and McKibbin’s study. The current debate on the directions of business education includes the following related issues: (a) whether it should be based on knowledge “of business” or knowledge “for business,” (b) whether it should adopt a vocational or scholarly mode of teaching, and (c) whether it should be based on rigorous or relevant research (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Ford et al., 2010; Grey, 2002; Peng & Dess, 2010; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, 2003, 2004; Starkey et al., 2004; Starkey & Tempest, 2005; Zimmerman, 2001).

2.2.2.3. Golden Age of Business Schools

In the last decade, several interesting studies have been conducted on the status of business schools in the USA and Europe. In his 2010 presidential address, J. P. Walsh, the then President of the US-based Academy of Management, described the prevailing period as the “Golden Age” of business schools and management education. His optimistic view is based on the existence, then, of 12,000 business schools worldwide and the figure is on the rise (Walsh, 2011). The latest figure is 15,731 business schools as at February 2014 (AACSB International, 2014a). The increase in the membership of the Academy of Management also supports his view. Notwithstanding that, in the same address, he lamented that “all is not well” with business schools, citing Podolny (2009): “Fact is, so deep and widespread are the problems afflicting management education that some people have come to believe that business schools are harmful to society, fostering self-interested, unethical, and even illegal behavior among their graduates” (2009, p. 63). In the same article, Walsh also suggested a review of the current promotion and tenure practices in business education and evaluation system of faculty based on publication in ranked journals.
2.2.2.4. Curriculum in Business Schools

Recently, various scholars have suggested that the traditional element of the business curriculum, such as developing analytical capabilities and managerial skills, need to be balanced with developing an ethical character as well as appreciating corporate social responsibilities (Datar, Garvin, & Cullen, 2011; Ghoshal, 2005; Laud & Johnson, 2013; Schlegelmilch & Thomas, 2011; Teece, 2011). Other scholars such as Lorange (2005) took a different view in favour of executive education rather than an undergraduate, MBA, or PhD education. Beside appropriate changes in curriculum to include moral aspect of business, the importance of enhancing leadership capabilities of business graduates was suggested by other scholars (Sullivan, 2011; Thomas & Thomas, 2011). Looking beyond ranking and being innovative in charting new paths for business education is another suggestion (Noorda, 2011). There is also a perceived need to ensure the curriculum incorporates nurturing of the “souls” as well as “moral backbone” in the graduates exiting from business schools (Örtenblad, Koris, Farquharson, & Hsu, 2013).

2.2.2.5. Research Focus in Business Schools

Besides focusing on curriculum, research is another area of focus which can contribute to the growth of business schools (Ghoshal, 2005; Gulati, 2007; Vermeulen, 2005). Another scholar, Pettigrew (2011) suggests that research output from business schools should have impact on social science and management knowledge. Tushman and O’Reilly (2007) suggest that executive education in business schools can facilitate research relevant to industry’s need through development of relationship among faculty, researchers, and practitioners. His view is supported by Starkey, Hatchuel, and Tempest (2009) who opined that “relevance is a necessary condition for rigor” (p. 547). Collaborative research carried out in business schools between business academic and business practitioners is also envisaged by Bartunek (2007) for the establishment of relational scholarship of integration between academia and industry. On the issue of relational scholarship as envisaged by Bartunek, other scholars such as Hughes, Bence, Grisoni, O’Regan, and Wornham (2011) carried out a study culminating in the establishment of a framework for facilitating the development of a collaborative relationship between business school and industry. Their findings suggest that
encouragement and development of willing and able academic staff and training, support, and mentoring to less experienced academics are needed for the envisaged collaboration. They also reiterated that better understanding and identification of the segments of practitioners who are receptive to such collaboration is also vital for the success of collaboration between academia and industry. Given the current austerity drive that restricts and constrains research funding for business schools, O’Regan and Hughes (2011) claim that there is an urgent need for research conducted by business schools to be seen as socially valuable.

2.2.2.6. Role of Business Schools

Other than curriculum and research direction, another area of concern regarding business schools is the role of business schools. Focusing on the period since 2002, the role of business schools has been debated among scholars (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Clarke, 2008; Cornuel, 2005, 2007; Cornuel & Hommel, 2012; David, David, & David, 2011; Gosling & Mintzberg, 2006; Grey, 2002, 2004; Harrington & Kearney, 2011; Hawawini, 2005; Katz, 2003; Khurana & Spender, 2012; Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Muff, 2012; Peng & Dess, 2010; Pfeffer, 2005, 2007, 2009; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, 2003, 2004; Rayment & Smith, 2013; Starkey et al., 2004, 2009; Starkey & Tempest, 2005). The role is deemed to be complex and diverse. There are several expectations of society and industry from business schools worldwide, namely: (a) to provide insights and solutions relevant to the business world, (b) to generate rigorous business knowledge, (c) to deliver curriculum which is relevant to the industry, and (d) to produce employable business graduates who are both technically capable and morally responsible. There is no conclusive answer to the definitive role of business schools as yet.

2.2.2.7. Shortage of Faulty in Business Schools

There is a current shortage of qualified staff for business school in the USA, the UK, and Australia. For example, Clinebell and Clinebell (2008) assert that “executive professors” (i.e., second-career academics) are being recruited in business schools in the USA due to shortage of faculty, which also satisfies the accreditation requirements of AACSB International concurrently. The acute shortage of accounting faculty in the
USA led to several studies (Bishop, Boyle, Clune, & Hermanson, 2011; Boyle, Carpenter, & Hermanson, 2015; Boyle, Carpenter, Hermanson, & Mensah, 2013; Boyle, Hermanson, & Mensah, 2011; HassabElnaby, Dobrzykowski, & Tran, 2012; Plumlee, Kachelmeier, Madeo, Pratt, & Krull, 2006; Plumlee & Reckers, 2014; Trapnell, Mero, Williams, & Krull, 2009). Trapnell et al. have captured several issues identified in these studies and they have listed the following major reasons for the shortage of accounting doctorates in US business schools: (a) limited doctoral supervision capacity, (b) unclear financial benefits to business schools from doctoral programs, (c) national focus of research funding being on science and technology fields, (d) the long period of time required to complete the compulsory coursework requirement, and (e) unavailability of data beyond statutory financial reports (Trapnell, Mero, Williams, & Krull, 2009, pp. 428-429). Studies by Boyle et al. (2013) reveal that the requirement for faculty to have doctoral degree is one of the major hurdles while a lack of awareness about the many incentives and benefits of being an accounting professor is another reason for the shortage. Plumlee et al. (2006) reports on a proposal to create an informative website for potential doctoral students in accounting:

[A committee set up by the American Accounting Association recommended] that the AAA create an attractive, stimulating, and informative website for potential doctoral students, and that efforts be made to reduce the costs imposed on potential doctoral students—including personal costs such as stress—in order to make doctoral studies more feasible. (Plumlee et al., 2006, Abstract)

A 10-week International Accounting Post-Doctoral Program (IAPDP) was proposed as a possible solution (HassabElnaby et al., 2012). The shortage of accounting faculty was also noted by AACSB International, which has introduced the AACSB Bridge Program to facilitate career transition of accountants from industry to academia (AACSB International, n.d.).

In European business schools, the shortage of faculty is the focus of a study by Verhaegen (2005). According to Verhaegen, factors that affect faculty retention are gender, age, rank, and the level of job satisfaction. Besides, institutional factors such as the legal structure of the institution, its relative emphasis on research in comparison to teaching, the profile of students enrolled in it, and its accreditation status also affect
recruitment and retention of faculty. His findings are consistent with those from similar studies.

A report on business schools in the UK by Ivory et al. (2006) mentions that “a significant proportion of faculty, probably close to one-third, are recruited from practice, rather than from the education sector” (p. 14). More interestingly, the same report states:

Recent research has shown that faculty may be in serious short supply in the future. For the period 2003-2004, nearly 4000 academic staff were aged 50 or over, a figure which implies that in ten years’ time, around the same number will be retiring. At the same time, between 2001-2 there were only 244 new PhD qualifiers in business and management, many of them likely to work overseas. Even allowing for new business school faculty without PhDs there is a substantial gap between demand and supply. (Ivory et al., 2006, p. 14)

In Australia, the report by Coates et al. (2009) highlighted the importance of higher education to Australia’s economy and the emerging shortage of academics for higher education. This view is supported by a subsequent report by Coates and Goedegebuure (2012). These studies indicate the universality of shortage of faculty in higher education. The shortage of faculty is supported by another study by Larkin and Neumann (2008), which highlighted the shortage of faculty due to aging and retiring of academics, an issue that was highlighted in the two reports mentioned earlier. Another study laments that, to some extent, the efforts and changes made by Australian business schools in order to be accredited by AACSB may have some adverse effect “in particular on faculty transitioning into academic [sic] from practice, thus making academia a less attractive career option for such accountants” (Lightbody 2010, p. 13) due to the perceived increase in workload for compliance with the accreditation requirements of AACSB International. All these studies indicate that one of the challenges facing higher education in Australia is shortage of faculty.

In Malaysia, there has not been any study or report on shortage of faculty specifically for business schools at either public or private institutions of higher education. However, a study by Wan (2007) has revealed some degree of staff poaching and engagement of part-time staff at private institutions of higher education.
2.2.3. Studies on Higher Education in Malaysia

Higher education and business schools in Malaysia appear to be modelled after the academic structures and practices in the UK, Australia, and the US. Several academics in Malaysian academia received their tertiary education from institutions of higher education located in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. This reflects Malaysia’s colonial ties as well as the use of English in higher education. Some Malaysian scholars have written about this “Western bias”:

[We] need to develop a consciousness that Asian education is heavily one-sided and suffers from a Western bias. Our programmes of education, curricula, textbooks, and icons are all European and American. It is as if the whole of Asia and Africa is, and always was, an intellectual desert. In fact, the opposite is more true. (Faruqi, 2014c)

This Western bias appears to have grown following the liberalisation of higher education in Malaysia. Foreign institutions of higher education from the UK, Australia, and the USA have established operations in Malaysia. They operate either in collaboration with local institutions or set up their international branch campuses (IBCs). This has contributed to the diversity of the higher education sector in Malaysia, making it even more important for the government to structure and regulate the growth of higher education in Malaysia.

2.2.3.1. Regulated Growth of Higher Education in Malaysia

The first indigenous institution of higher education in Malaysia was the University of Malaya, set up in 1962. After the formation of Malaysia in 1963, and till 1969, the government is perceived to have very little influence on the governance of universities, and higher education was elitist in nature and autonomous in governance (Sirat, 2010, p. 465). After the racial riot incident in 1969 and the subsequent introduction of the New Economic Policy, the government’s influence in university governance began to increase, particularly with the introduction of the Universities and University Colleges Act in 1971. This act legitimatised the government’s role and intervention in universities in Malaysia. Some scholars interpreted the move by the government as a
step to ensure education quality as well as an indication of its own political and social agenda. By the 1990s, the impact of globalisation, massification, and marketisation of higher education had exerted similar pressures on institutions of higher education in Malaysia as it did in the USA, the UK, and Australia. The end result was the beginning of corporatisation and privatisation of institutions of higher education (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2008; Sirat, 2010; Sirat & Kaur, 2009). The passing of the Education Act 1996, Private Higher Education Act 1996, National Council on Higher Education Act 1996, National Accreditation Board Act 1996, and Universities and University Colleges (Amendments) Act 1996, all indicate the legislative support for reformation of higher education in Malaysia (Sirat, 2010, p. 467). The government established the Ministry of Higher Education in 2004 as a separate entity from the Ministry of Education, indicating its commitment to regulate and develop higher education. Later, in 2013, when the two ministries merged back to the original single entity of the Ministry of Education, the efforts by the Malaysian government for the advancement of higher education continued to be relentless. The more recent policies and strategic plans are the National Higher Education Strategic Plan: Beyond 2020 (launched in 2007) and Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015-2025. The regulated growth of has opened up new career opportunities in the Malaysian higher education sector.

2.2.3.2. Public and Private Universities in Malaysia

The universities in Malaysia can be broadly divided into two groups, the public universities collectively known as Public Institutions of Higher Education (PIHE or IPTA, the Malay language equivalent) and the private universities (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014). In Malaysia, as at 2014, there were 20 PIHEs, which can be categorised into three groups: (a) research universities (5 institutions), (b) focused universities (11 institutions focusing on technology, education, management, and defence studies), and (c) comprehensive universities (4 institutions). The setting up of these 20 PIHEs by the Malaysian government is in alignment with its higher education system and policy to ensure that the PIHEs “will have the capacity to develop a reputation which encompasses dynamism, competitiveness, ability to anticipate future challenges including acting effectively and keeping pace with globalization” (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). Private universities are privately funded institutions registered with the Ministry of Education as tertiary education institutions under the
Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996. Designated as Private Higher Educational Institutions (PHEI or IPTS, the Malay language equivalent), these PHEIs comprise local Malaysian institutions, transnational universities, international branch campuses, and online distance learning (ODL) institutions.

2.2.3.3. Challenges Faced by Universities in Malaysia

Malaysian universities face a myriad of issues, in particular, their sustainability in a globalised educational environment and their capacity to serve the national interest. Besides, there are also issues pertaining to the corporatisation and governance of institutions of higher education. All these challenges and issues impact on the academic careers embedded within these institutions.

Internationalisation of higher education appears to be led by institutions from the US, the UK, and Australia (Dunn & Wallace, 2006; Hou, 2012). Interestingly, some Malaysian private and public institutions are in partnership with institutions from these three countries, offering joint programs or setting up of international branch campuses (IBCs) in Malaysia. As postulated by Deem (2010) and Deem, Mok, and Lucas (2008), there are similarities as well as differences in the approaches and challenges faced by each country in their endeavours to survive and thrive in the globalised educational environment.

A study by Sirat (2010) concluded that despite efforts to grant and increase academic autonomy for public universities, the Malaysian government still has considerable influence over them, through financing mechanisms and academic audits. Sirat argues, the Malaysian institutions of higher education have not achieved autonomy despite the corporatisation exercise in the late 1990s followed by the revamping of university governance “to reflect efficiency, transparency, and accountability” (Sirat, 2010, p. 472).

In a related study, Mok maintained that the “corporatisation of public universities . . . is not only for management reasons but for meeting the pressing demands for higher education in the country” (Mok, 2010, p. 435). However, the government still plays a pivotal role in higher education in Malaysia in order to complement the market, rather
than allowing marketisation to dominate the arena of higher education. Another study finds: “The Malaysian state goes against the global trend by expanding its role in higher education by being the provider, regulator as well as the protector of higher education” (Lee, 2004, p. 45). According to Lee, the interventionist role of the Malaysian government in higher education is discernible in the “various national policies ranging from affirmative action to accreditation of programmes” (Lee, 2004, p. 45). It can be argued that the subsequent polices and strategies implemented by the Malaysian government such as the National Higher Education Strategic Plan: Beyond 2020 (launched in 2007) and the setting up of the new accreditation system in 2011 are two staunch evidences. In a subsequent study, Mok (2011) suggested that the clash of state centralism versus neo-liberalism is evident in the case of Malaysian universities. The privatisation and corporatisation of higher education in Malaysia and the Asian region required a new paradigm shift of academic leadership and governance (Lee, 2008; Mok, 2008; Tham & Kam, 2008). Besides, in their comparative study of transnational education in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Australia, McBurnie and Ziguras (2001) have argued for changes in academic leadership in response to the increasing internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia.

Another study on the enhancing of competiveness of higher education in Malaysia by Sidhu and Kaur (2011) suggested that enhancement of quality, especially in research, should be the focus in order for Malaysia to be competitive globally as a provider of higher education and a regional hub of educational excellence. An education hub is defined as “an education hub is a planned effort to build a critical mass of local and international actors strategically engaged in education, training, knowledge production, and innovation initiatives” (Knight, 2011, p. 233). Malaysia’s endeavour to be an education hub has achieved success in term of attracting international students for higher education (Knight, 2014; Knight & Morshidi, 2011).

As a reflection of Malaysia’s endeavour towards becoming an education hub, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan: Beyond 2020 (announced in 2007) emphasised on the importance of enhancing the quality of teaching, research, innovation, and lifelong learning. However, in view of the increase in the number of international students with diverse characteristics and needs in Malaysia, recent studies (Yee, 2014; Yee & Mokhtar, 2013) pointed out the need for Malaysian universities and
academics to develop capacities and capabilities to handle these international students. To this end, the then Ministry of Higher Education published an *Operational Framework for International Student Management* to assist and guide the institutions of higher education (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2013).

Focusing on Malaysian public universities, a study by Ahmad, Farley, and Naidoo (2012) suggested that Malaysian public universities are aware of the importance of their roles in improving the quality aspects of teaching, learning, and research. Further, their study indicates that the public universities benefited from the funding reform as highlighted by Sirat (2010), cited earlier in this discussion. However, a study by Marimuthu (2008) pointed out the divergence of higher education in Malaysia between the public sector and the private sector. According to Marimuthu (2008), public institutions of higher education are driven by national social and political considerations whereas the private institutions of higher education are market-driven. His view is consistent with the findings from other studies (Tham, 2013; Tham & Kam, 2008), which claim that there are differences in perception of the objectives, roles, and purposes between public and private institutions of higher education in Malaysia. Their comparative studies are based on four institutions of higher education, representing both public and private institutions currently operating in Malaysia. Both Marimuthu (2008) as well as Tham and Kam (2008) highlighted the need for both sectors to strengthen their interlinkages. This view was again pointed out in a recent study which highlighted the important roles institutions of higher education in both public and private sectors that drive the country’s international agenda (Aziz & Abdullah, 2014). While there may be differences in opinions about how to deal with the challenges faced by the higher education sector in Malaysia, a holistic effort is essential for achieving the country’s higher education strategic objectives.

### 2.2.4. Nobility of Higher Education in Malaysia

The nobility of higher education is now a growing concern among some academic leaders and scholars in Malaysia (Bajunid, 2014; Faruqi, 2011, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). This issue of the nobility of higher education is crucial currently as there is concern about the negative impact of liberalisation, internationalisation, and the “ranking game” affecting academia. Faruqi opines: “If the university can touch the lives of ordinary
people, that would be a true measure of [its] success” (Faruqi, 2011). He follows through with two other articles with a similar tone, expressing his concern about the status of higher education in Malaysia. Among other aspects, he questions whether higher education is about “knowledge or utility” (Faruqi, 2013), elsewhere “education or utility” (Faruqi, 2014a). His view is supported by Bajunid (2014) regarding the change brought about by globalisation: “If the change movement is led by impassioned enlightened champions, there may be the creation of refreshing change, a new paradigm of higher education and new hope for authentic scholarship” (Bajunid, 2014, p. 15). These two scholars are concerned about the continuity of the soul higher education. Harking back to the notion of a university as a “temple of learning,” Faruqi reminds us: “Traditionally, the university was regarded as a storehouse of the knowledge and wisdom of the past. It was a receptacle of art, culture, and science, and a mirror of humanity’s great heritage” (Faruqi, 2014a, p. 25). Faruqi (2014b) argues that beyond preparing students for a career, university curriculum should also incorporate subjects like literature and humanities. Faruqi’s insists that universities must think beyond employability.

It is entirely understandable that universities should link up with the professions, devise curricula that satisfy Qualifying Boards, and require students to do practical training, periods of attachment and apprenticeships.

At the same time, excessive orientation towards the professions distorts university education in many ways. A university’s role is far broader and richer than that of a profession. University curricula is [sic] supposed to build lives and characters and not just careers. (Faruqi, 2014b)

The voices of Malaysian academic leaders such as Shad Saleem Faruqi and Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid reflect a philosophy of education that centres on principles such as “touch[ing] the lives of ordinary people,” engaging in “authentic scholarship,” being a “mirror of humanity’s great heritage,” and “build[ing] lives and characters” (see quotes above). Taken together, these principles convey a historical understanding and cultural expectations regarding the nobility of higher education. This appears to have become a topic of current debate, especially in view of the ongoing marketisation and the related managerialism in higher education worldwide (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Scott, 1995, 2005).
2.2.5. Business Schools in Malaysia

Based on AACSB International’s report (2014a), there are 52 schools of business in Malaysia, which suggests that there is a school or faculty of business in each of the 52 Malaysian universities or institutions of higher education. It illustrates the pervasiveness of business education in Malaysia.

But, very few published studies could be found focusing on business schools in Malaysia. A survey by Masood, Omar, Zakaria, and Tih (2011) looks into the alignment between the human capital needs of Malaysian industry and the postgraduate programs offered by Malaysian business schools. A whopping 84 per cent of the respondents (consisting of junior, middle, and senior level executives) indicate that the postgraduate courses and executive development programs offered by Malaysian institutions were not really relevant to their organisations. In this study, 52 per cent of the respondents suggested that lecturers who conduct such programs should be professionally qualified and have industry experience.

According to some researchers (Ahmad & Sulaiman, 2013), the undergraduate business students in Malaysia seem to be more passive than their peers in the UK and the USA. They advocate the use of case studies in teaching accounting in business school in Malaysia. They claim that students exposed to the case-study approach are better prepared for a professional career in the accounting field.

Another study (Md-Sidin, Sambasivan, & Munaidy, 2010) investigates the performance of business educators in Malaysian public universities, with a focus on their psychological ownership of their academic career. The study reports a positive relationship between psychological ownership and performance, commitment, and satisfaction of business educators in Malaysian public universities. The study was based on a survey 329 business educators in Malaysian public universities (14 professors, 60 associate professors, 250 lecturers, and 5 others).

These three published research studies on business education in Malaysia touch upon three important issues: (a) alignment between business program offerings and industry
expectations in Malaysia, (b) effectiveness of teaching pedagogies in the Malaysian cultural context, and (c) role of psychological ownership in the performance and job satisfaction of Malaysian business educators. Of these three issues, the last one appears to be related to the broader issue of academic career, which is the subject matter of the next part of the literature review.

2.2.6. Emerging Issues From A: Literature on Universities and Business Schools

Interpreting the literature in Part A, I discern a broad range of issues and questions. In view of my research interest in the phenomenon of business executives working in business schools, the key issues and questions arising from this literature appear to be the following:

(a) What purpose will be served by universities in future?
(b) What type of business education would be relevant for Malaysia?
(c) What would be the impact of ICT on higher education (in pedagogy, research, institutional process, etc.)?
(d) To what extent are business schools concerned with knowledge “of business” or “for business”? This would have implications for the role of business schools and the nature of curriculum, research, and staffing.

These key issues and questions are reconsidered below, under Section 2.4, where these will be synthesised with Part B of the review.

2.3. Part B: Literature on Academic Career

Part B of the review begins with a focus on the broader literature on career studies. The literature seems scattered in many journals, such as the following:

*Academic Medicine*
*Academy of Management Journal*
*Academy of Management Perspectives* (formerly, *The Academy of Management Executive*)
*Academy of Management Review*
*Asia Pacific Journal of Education*
*British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*
*British Journal of Management*
*Career Choice and Development*
Additionally, topics related to career studies are also covered in a number of books, such as the following:

* Careers in and out of Organizations (Hall, 2002)
* Handbook of Career Theory (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989)
* The Boundaryless Career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996)
* Methodological Approaches to the Study of Career (Young & Borgen, 1990)
* Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Careers (Holland, 1973)
I use the following headings to structure my review of this literature on career in general and academic career in particular:

(a) Concepts and theories of career (see 2.3.1)
(b) Academic career and prior experience (see 2.3.2)
(c) Academic career and university management (see 2.3.3)
(d) Academic career and identity (see 2.3.4)
(e) Academic career and teaching (see 2.3.5)
(f) Academic career and research (see 2.3.6)
(g) Academic career and mentoring (see 2.3.7)
(h) Academic career and calling (see 2.3.8)
(i) Academic career and gender (see 2.3.9)
(j) Academic career and job stress and satisfaction (see 2.3.10)
(k) Academic career at early stage (see 2.3.11)

Finally, I present a summary of Part B of the literature review towards the end of Section 2.3 (see 2.3.12).

2.3.1. Concepts and Theories of Career

Career theory emerges from the study of individuals pursuing careers in organisations in personal and social contexts (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). There are many career concepts and theories emerging in the literature. These appear to draw upon various disciplinary backgrounds such as psychology (Holland, 1973), social psychology (Super, 1980), sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, history, and geography (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989, p. 10).

I would limit my review to the literature on career transition. Three career concepts appear to be relevant for this purpose: (a) “protean career” (Hall, 1976, 1996, 2002, 2004; Hall & Mirvis, 1995), (b) “boundaryless career” (Arthur, 1994; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), and (c) “social cognitive variables” affecting career outcomes (Lent & Brown, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2002; Lent & Hackett, 1987). I discuss these concepts below with a view to arriving at a set of key conceptual elements that may be relevant to study the phenomenon of my interest (i.e., phenomenon of business executives working in business schools).
Douglas T. Hall, one of the major contributors to this literature defines career as “the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors associated with work-related experiences and activities over the span of the person’s life” (Hall, 2002, p. 12). Elsewhere, career is also defined as “the evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time” (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989, p. 8).

Hall puts forward the concept of protean career, which refers to a career “in which the person, not the organization, is in charge, the core values are freedom and growth, and the main success criteria are subjective (psychological success) [as opposed to] objective (position, salary)” (Hall, 2004, p. 4, the idea was first introduced in Hall, 1976). The spirit of protean career is the alignment of one’s career with one’s “heart” in the sense that there is congruence in the values, competency, talent, and interest in one’s career and one’s perspective of life.

A related development is the concept of boundaryless career (Arthur, 1994), defined as a career that is characterised by its “independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangements” (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, p. 6). These authors describe several features of boundaryless careers: (a) such careers move across boundaries of separate employers, (b) draw validation form outside the present employer, (c) are sustained by external networks, do not follow traditional logic of organisational careers, and (d) follow one’s own personal agenda (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, p. 6). The authors suggest that academic career is an example of boundaryless career because “it draws validation—and marketability—from outside the present employer” (p. 6).

One needs to be both able and willing to venture across various boundaries (such as organisational, professional, regional, or cultural boundaries) in order to execute a boundaryless career (Sullivan, 1999; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). The label “boundary-crossing career” expresses this notion more directly (Inkson, 2004, 2006).

The literature offers a comparison between protean and boundaryless (or boundary-crossing) career concepts (Briscoe & Finkelstein, 2009; Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Both the concepts refer to career mobility and its independence from organisations. A study reveals that both protean and boundaryless career orientations are highly correlated with
career mobility (Briscoe & Finkelstein, 2009). When a protean career orientation leads to career mobility across organisational or other boundaries, then the two concepts converge (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

However, there are a few important differences between protean and boundaryless career concepts. One of the differences is the sense of “calling” that is present in the protean career concept: “One way of being protean . . . is pursuing one’s path with a heart with the intensity of a calling” (Hall, 2004, p. 9, italics in the original). Another difference is the focus on the evolving talent and identity of a person in the protean career concept. This requires continuous learning and it can take years to emerge and be recognised. Hence protean career orientation appears to surface at midlife and beyond (Hall & Mirvis, 1995).

Both protean and boundaryless career concepts appear to focus on the individual person. However, there is another development in the literature which takes into account the social dimension. This literature recognises the impact of gender, race, ethnicity, and social structure in career development (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002, p. 268). One specific focus of this literature is on the concept of “self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1986; Gecas, 1982, 1989; Lent & Brown, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2002; Lent & Hackett, 1987). It helps in discussing “career development within a changing societal context” (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002, p. 282).

Self-efficacy is said to be “a judgment of one’s capability to accomplish a certain level of performance” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391), based on the anticipated social response to that performance. Thus, it is a sense of capability reflected within an individual, which needs social affirmation. The generation of self-efficacy through career experience is the subject matter of “social cognitive career theory” (Lent & Brown, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2002; Lent & Hackett, 1987).

But social circumstances can change, for example, through the gradual process of social change or, more abruptly, when one crosses a social boundary. Under these circumstances, the sense of self-efficacy loses its social basis. It remains to be explored whether such a process is involved in cases of career transition from industry to academia, besides elements of identity, calling, and boundary-crossing.
2.3.2. Academic Career and Prior Experience

The earliest reference to business executives in business schools is probably in the pioneering essay by Herbert A. Simon, “The Business School: A Problem in Organizational Design” (Simon, 1967, a revised version of this essay also appears as “Commentary on Chapter XI,” in Simon, 1997). In this essay, Simon comments on the role of business executives as business educators. He suggests that executives with limited business world experience are unlikely to offer much value to business education. In order to make an effective contribution to a business school, the business executive ought to have sufficient management experience at a senior level:

Seeking faculty members with management experience has provided a number of outstanding success and innumerable failures and mediocre outcomes. The problem lies in attracting away from their business careers the kinds of managers who can perform well in these roles. A low-level manager with modest prospects for further rise in business is unlikely to shine more brightly in one environment than the other. What such managers bring to the business schools is ability, not business experience, for they have operated at too low levels for their experience to have much value in instruction. (Simon, 1997, p. 349)

In the decades since Simon, although business education has become more scholarly in nature, business experience is still considered important (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004). Consequently, there continues to be a need for business academics who had been business executives before (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004, p. 426).

The importance of prior business experience for academics teaching professional business subjects such as accounting is self-evident. Practical experience in industry is a requirement for acceptance into professional bodies in accounting such as American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, USA (AICPA), CPA Australia, and Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, UK (ACCA). Professional memberships in such bodies are considered valuable for accounting educators in business schools.
A review of about a dozen studies on career transition from industry to academia highlights various personal, institutional, and social factors involved in the career transition process (Bandow, Minsky, & Voss, 2007). The authors argue that, there is opportunity for new theoretical development in this area. The diverse circumstances associated with career transition give rise to multiple processes and outcomes, which need detailed empirical research.

In a study conducted by Boyle et al., 30 accounting practitioners ranked adequate practical experience along with a CPA license as comparable to a doctoral qualification (Boyle, Hermanson, & Mensah, 2011). Interestingly, in a subsequent study, 231 accounting practitioners (members of Institute of Management Accountant, USA) placed a higher value on practical experience than a doctoral qualification (Boyle et al., 2013). In Boyle’s study, the participants ranked “significant experience as practitioners (i.e. eight years in public, private, or government accounting) as the top accomplishment associated with excellence as an Accounting Professor” (Boyle et al., 2013, p. 8). Others also reach similar conclusions regarding the importance of practical experience in order to teach vocational subjects such as accounting (e.g., Amyot, 2007; Fischman, 2007).

There are some focused studies on practitioners who transitioned into academic careers. For example, Myers (2006) looks into how eight accounting professionals assess their new career as accounting professors. Some interesting findings emerge from this study. For example, it shatters the view that academia is a refuge for ex-accountants. Rather, as the study reveals, joining academia is akin to answering a calling. It also reveals the myth that remuneration in academia is not as competitive compared to industry. In fact, for some of the participants, being an accounting professor is both financially rewarding as well as intellectually stimulating (Myers, 2006, p. 32). At the same time, Myers’s study also reveals that academia has its own challenges, comparable to those in the professional world.

A study by LaRocco and Bruns (2006) examines nine individuals who undertook a career transition from industry to academia. In fact LaRocco and Bruns are the pioneering scholars who coined the term “second-career academic.” Only two of the participants in their study are from business while the rest are educational professionals.
Of the two business executive, one had 22 years of business experience while the other had only 3 years of business experience prior to joining academia. Their findings seem to suggest that preparation of these second-career academics is of crucial importance. The authors suggest that these second-career academics need to be trained for teaching, research, and administrative work expected of them in academia. Guidance and support are required from the institutions which host these second-career academics.

Another study which involves career transition from industry to academia is the autoethnographic study by Learmonth and Humphreys (2012). The study provides an account of how the authors reflect upon their own identity upon their entry into academia. The study is in the form of their own narratives of what they encountered in constructing their new academic identity. This, together with the work of Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004), raises the issue of identity formation as a key process in career transition.

Another study looks into early-career academics who were previously professionals (Gale, 2011). These professionals were recruited as academics “at a newer, teaching-oriented university with a strong vocational bias (often referred to in the UK as a ‘post-1992 institution’” (p. 220). Gale’s participants mentioned that they are “employed on the basis of their professional expertise” (Gale, 2011, p. 224). They perceived their role as more focused on teaching rather than pursuing other academic tasks such as research.

An Australian study by Wilson et al. examines the career transition process from various perspectives, including motivation, institutional support, and academic identity (Wilson, Wood, Solomonides, Dixon, & Goos, 2014). The participants are academics in three Australian universities. They come from a broad spectrum of disciplines including engineering, law, education, and business. The study reveals that the transition from industry to academia involves complex personal and social processes. The authors recommend institutional mechanisms to support the adjustment, socialisation, and mentoring of second-career academics. They anticipate greater dialogue and collaboration between industry and academia in order to facilitate ongoing career transitions in both directions.
2.3.3. Academic Career and University Management

The ongoing processes of massification, internationalisation, and marketisation of higher education (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Scott, 1995, 2005) exert an impact on academic careers. Universities take reactive and proactive actions in order to ensure their survival, which affect academic careers (Burnes, Wend, & By, 2013). While pursuing career advancement, academics have to be in sync with the university’s priorities in fulfilling its educational and social agenda. They have to recognise the changing priorities of the university due to the reducing budgetary support from the government and the challenge of financial sustainability of the university (Barnett, 2000, 2005; Buckley & Hurley, 2001; Engwall, 2007b, 2008; Martin & Etzkowitz, 2000; Neave, 2010; Watson, 2012).

Universities have to respond to their new operating environment characterised by the onset of liberalisation of higher education and the impact of globalisation and ICT. The specific management approach adopted by a university would have far-reaching implications for the academic careers hosted by it. A number of discernible patterns in university management have been reported in the literature. University management appears to have changed from collegialism to managerialism, with an increased focus on economy, efficiency, and effectiveness (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Burnes, Wend, & By, 2013). Academics are losing the so-called “golden era” of collegiality and collective decision-making (Lea & Stierer, 2011, p. 608; Tight, 2008, 2010).

Deem and Brehony’s (2005) study on university management in the UK suggests that the practice of “new managerialism,” as defined by Newman and Clarke (1994), permeates higher education. This practice legitimises the exercise of power and domination by university managers over their fellow academics (Deem & Brehony, 2005, p. 231). Although aimed at academic quality and accountability, the practice of new managerialism adds stress to the already overworked, under resourced, and demotivated academics (Milliken & Colohan, 2004). These processes appear to be rather global. Writing in the Australian context, Buchanan et al. describe it as a movement “from mentoring to monitoring” of fellow academics (Buchanan, Gordon, & Schuck, 2008).
The principle of new managerialism is said to arise from an ideology in public services, where management is seen as a cure for economic and social ills:

The main route to social progress now lies through the achievement of continuing increase in economically defined productivity. . . . ‘Management’ is a separate and distinct organisational function and one that plays the crucial role in planning, implementing and measuring the necessary improvements in productivity. . . . To perform this crucial role managers must be granted reasonable ‘room for manoeuvre’ (i.e., the ‘right to manage’). (Pollitt, cited in Newman & Clarke, 1994, p. 14)

While Newman and Clarke (1994) were referring to the managerialisation of public service in the UK, its ingress into higher education was brought up by Becher and Trowler (2001), Milliken and Colohan (2004), and Scott (1995, 2005). Becher and Trowler’s study traces the damaging impact of managerialism in academia to the 1990s, when collegiality began to be affected adversely, exacerbated further by the increased use of ICT in academia (Becher & Trowler, 2001, p. 12). Scott (1995, pp. 64-65) postulate that although the ingress of managerialism in higher education in the UK could be attributed to the Jarratt Report on university efficiency in 1985, it actually began in the 1970s. A decade later, Scott still laments about the absence of collegiality and shared decision making in academia:

We expect the great majority of our academic colleagues both to teach and to research. . . . And we structure our institutions in very similar ways (even if we tend to jumble up terms like faculties, schools and departments); we manage courses in almost the same ways; we have similar expectations of collegiality and shared decision-making. Now, all these things which we take for granted are largely absent in mass higher education in the US (and even in those European systems that have preserved a sharp distinction between ‘classical’ universities and higher professional education). (Scott, 2005, p. 70)

In another study, questioning the “new higher education” (NHE) discourse in the UK, Trowler concludes that “As academics, we need to adopt critical theoretical positions . . . and identify social inequalities . . . to do whatever we can to render challengeable any one way of seeing the world” (Trowler, 2001, p. 197).
Managerialism in academia has fractured academic identity into “academic manager” and “managed academic” (Winter, 2009). Winter argues that managerialism has introduced corporate and entrepreneurial culture into universities, leading to an emphasis on efficiency and profit-making. Studying academic career in Australia, Churchman and King (2009) suggest that academic management may have lost touch with academic staff. Dollery, Murray, and Crase (2006) suggest there is a crisis in Australian universities due to managerialism replacing collegiality in academic leadership. This has increased dissatisfaction and stress among academics, with Australian universities more resembling corporate entities rather than academia. These findings are also supported by other researchers (Coates et al., 2013).

In a study by Blenkinsopp and Stalker, the participants lament about undergoing the same type of managerialism they had experienced in industry. They understandably question the assumptions behind career transition from industry to academia, if the experience is the same but the remuneration lower (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004, p. 427).

Organisational commitment and job satisfaction of academic staff have been the focus of some research in Malaysia. In a study of departmental heads in Malaysian public universities, Tahir, Abdullah, Ali, and Daud (2014) find that transformational leadership by departmental heads enhances organisational commitment of academic staff. On this basis, they speak of the need for proper training for these departmental heads, so that they may build trust, encourage collaboration, enhance competencies of academic staff. This finding seems to corroborate the results of Safaria, Othman, and Wahab (2011), whose study of 124 academics in one Malaysian university suggests that authoritarian and suppressive types of leadership style result in stress among academic staff.

In another study, Amazt and Idris (2011) examine the effect of management and decision-making styles of university managers on job satisfaction of academic staff in a Malaysian university. They report that the university had adopted an analytical decision-making style and it has a positive effect on the job satisfaction of its academic staff.
All these studies suggest that the leadership style and the management approach at a university can affect academic careers. Given that university and government are closely linked (see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”), it implies that a study of academic careers needs to take into account the institutional context as well as the national context prevailing around it.

2.3.4. Academic Career and Identity

2.3.4.1. Academic Identity

The term “identity” refers to one’s sense of oneself, based on the various meanings attached to oneself by both self and others (Gecas, 1982, 1989). It is also linked to the role one is playing in the social context (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000). Specifically, academic identity is defined as a repertoire of qualities and commitments, with a focus on learning:

. . . as context-specific assemblages that draw on a shared but open repertoire of traits, beliefs, and allegiances—a creative commons for identity assemblage. This commons might include traits, such as rigour, scepticism, inquisitiveness, integrity, creativity, imagination, and discipline, associated with more traditional notions of academic work, with additions such as networking, laterality, hybridity, flexibility, multi-tasking and media capability . . . (Taylor, 2008, p. 38)

. . . as learning-focus identities, with disciplinary-specific traits, beliefs, and allegiances. . . . In particular it would acknowledge the central role of teaching to academic work, and the need for academics to both understand student learning and undertake their own learning through research. (Taylor, 2008, p. 39)

Taylor’s study indicates academic identity is beset seen as fluid in nature, forever “under construction (p. 30). He criticises researchers when they “paint a picture of academic identities fixated on a largely imagined past” (Taylor, 2008, p. 39).

Academic identities tend to be discipline-centric. Strathern states, “people’s identities are in part forged in the kind of knowledge practices that different disciplines engender” (Strathern, 2008, p. 11). Besides disciplinary affiliation, another factor relevant to academic identity is the degree of academic autonomy (Harris, 2005; Henkel, 2002,
Henkel claims that academic autonomy has been undermined in the UK due to the national agenda and social expectation from academia. Another study by Billot (2010) also concludes that the changes in the managerial style of institutions of higher education have an impact on the construction of academic identity. Billot’s study suggests that academics are struggling to come to terms with the now fluid academic identity due to institutional changes, referring to the change from collegialism to managerialism in higher education.

The themes of discipline, autonomy, and managerialism recur in other studies of academic identity. Lea and Stierer interview 30 academics across different disciplines and arrive at the following elements of their new academic identity: (a) research output (rather than teaching), (b) alliance to discipline, (c) pressure to be accountable and engage with marketised institutional practices, and (d) collective nostalgia about the loss of autonomy and collegiality (Lea & Stierer, 2011, p. 608).

The fluidity of academic identity is also the focus of a study on the lived experience of academics by Clegg (2008). Clegg mentions the role of certain demographic factors, such as class, gender, and family, in the construction of academic identity. The significance of these factors is also reported by others. For example, Archer (2008) argues that younger academics face particular challenges in fitting into their academic roles due to various reasons, including: (a) the prevailing notions of performance, (b) race, class, and gender, and (c) employment status.

Archer also highlights the tensions experienced by these younger academics due to the incongruence between their concept of “good academic” and their own personal values. Archer opines that the management style of the institutions has an impact on their academic identity. This is in sync with the claim by Trowler as well as Henkel that academic identity construction depends on institutional practices (Trowler, 2001, p. 197; Henkel, 2005, p. 148).

Within the context of the new institutional practices, academic staff may respond in multiple ways, which will influence their identity construction accordingly. An example is found in the work of Clarke, Knights, and Jarvis (2012). They study academic identity construction in a business school in the UK. The participants in the study
comply with managerialism without necessarily consenting to it. However, they also express their resistance through creative practices such as academic writing.

Thus, academic identity construction seems to depend as much on the institutional environment as it does on how individual academics choose to respond to that environment. This relates well to the work of Anthony Giddens on identity construction based on contextual influence, which provides the theoretical foundation to Blenkinsopp and Stalker’s (2004) study of identity construction by second-career academics.

2.3.4.2. Identity Construction by Second-Career Academics

A study by Boyd and Harris (2010) on career transition of school teachers into a university shows that these individuals still cling to their previous identities as school teachers despite having spent up to 4 years as university lecturers. They adjust to the demands of their new role so as to maintain their credibility as school teachers, rather than embracing a new identity as university academics. This process is facilitated by their work environment. These findings are consistent with those of Henkel, who highlights the role of institutional practices in the construction of academic identity (Henkel, 2005; see 2.3.4.1, “Academic Identity”).

Career transition from industry to business schools is a matter of identity disruption, as revealed by Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004). Their study suggests that business practitioners’ career transition involves “identity work.” The management of identity is a key issue in their study. Being informed by the work of Chappell, Farrell, Scheeres, and Solomon (2000), Blenkinsopp and Stalker highlight the continuously evolving context of higher education within which this identity work occurs. They also highlight the dilemma some second-career academics encounter in their identity work. The dilemma involves a choice between developing a manager identity versus developing an academic identity (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004, p. 427).

However, sometimes the perception that an academic identity may be a preferable one becomes a reason for career transition into academia. For example, in their autoethnographic study conducted in a business school in the UK, Learmonth and Humphreys conclude that, in their own career transition, they were motivated partly by
their wish to acquire a more preferable social identity (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012, p. 102). But once in academia, they found out that there are alternative academic identities: some more attuned to their previous experience as business executives, but some more attuned to their perception of what an academic should be (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012, p. 112).

Macfarlane (1997, 1998) also discusses academic identities in business schools in the UK. According to Macfarlane (1998), business lecturers particularly those from the industry now teaching in business schools prefer to be identified as economists, sociologists, and accountants rather than business lecturers. His findings are similar to those from other scholars, for example, those who recognise the role of disciplinary background and institutional practice in the process of academic identity construction (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Henkel, 2005, p. 148). As mentioned earlier, Strathern also highlights the linkage between academic identity and discipline (Strathern, 2008, p. 11; see 2.3.4.1, “Academic Identity”).

A study on career transition from being a nurse to a nursing educator in the UK reveals the concurrent existence of three identities: a nursing identity, an academic identity, and a hybrid identity. These identities are based on the roles the participants assumed in their new discourse community (Duffy, 2013, p. 623).

2.3.5. Academic Career and Teaching

Typically, second-career academics occupy teaching-focused roles when they begin their academic career. However, there is ample discussion in the literature on the career implications of this, especially on how staying in a teaching-focused role can hamper career progression in future. To illustrate:

[Research at a teaching-orientated university in the UK shows] that the focus of the early-career academic in the first five years is very much on the role of teaching in higher education and that not only is there no automatic progression to, or inclusion of, other roles . . . there is no foundation being laid for the inclusion of any future research role. (Gale, 2011, p. 223)
The participants in Gale’s research were early-career academics who viewed themselves as “holding a teaching job in university, employed on the basis of their professional expertise” (Gale, 2011, p. 223). Participants in Blenkinsopp and Stalker’s (2004) study also viewed themselves as “teachers” (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004, p. 423). This teaching-focused view may arise from multiple sources: (a) the fact that ex-practitioners are recruited by universities to augment teaching capabilities (see 2.2.2.7, “Shortage of Faculty in Business Schools”), (b) the visibility of the teaching role in a university, and (c) a “fear of research” by ex-practitioners who become academics (Saito, 2013, p. 191, Figure 1).

There is a diversity of views within higher education with respect to the importance of teaching. Some academics underplay their role as teachers; they identify themselves with their disciplines rather than with the role of teaching (e.g., Henkel, 2005; Malcolm & Zukas, 2009). Some academics also underplay the role of professional development in teaching. They seem to hold that possessing a doctoral qualification already qualifies them as teachers (Quinn, 2012). These views point to the broader discussion on academic career that compares becoming a teacher with becoming an academic (i.e., developing a broader range of competencies beyond teaching). That discussion is reviewed below.

Åkerlind looks into the processes of becoming university academics. In one study, she focuses on academics’ experience of becoming university teachers (Åkerlind, 2003). In a subsequent study involving the same sample of academics as above, she focuses on their experience of becoming university academics in general (Åkerlind, 2005). Based on these studies, she explores interrelationships between the experiences of developing as a teacher and developing as an academic (Åkerlind, 2011). She concludes that prioritising teaching over other competencies may not be the best approach to develop a well-rounded academic profile.

A comparable view emerges from the work of Adams (2002) who focuses on the expectations of US colleges and universities from doctoral graduates who join as new academics. Her study suggests that doctoral programs should expand their focus to prepare candidates for the wider range of responsibilities new academics are likely to undertake. Although teaching is one of the key responsibilities to be assigned to new
academics, the concept of teaching quality has been evolving: “well-structured lectures alone no longer meet the criteria for excellent teaching. Faculty are expected to utilize creative techniques that effectively engage students and support learning” (Adams, 2002, p. 4).

Professional development in teaching remains an important part of academic career. A study carried out by Camblin and Steger (2000) on faculty development indicates that institutions play a pivotal role for academic career development through professional development of academics. Their finding is consistent with a study by Boud and Brew (2013) who argue that continuous academic development is important in order to address greater diversity of students, marketisation of education, and various external pressures confronting universities.

Academics need to strive for teaching excellence by enhancing their practice on a regular basis. For this to happen, institutional support is required. A study by Thornton (2014) draws attention to the practice of professional development for university teachers. Such professional development can lead to qualifications such as postgraduate certificate in teaching, recognised under the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) developed by the Higher Education Academy, UK. Many institutions in the UK and Australia have made such qualifications compulsory for all early-career academics, including second-career academics.

In the context of Malaysia, a study by Hassan, Tymms, and Ismail (2008) on academic productivity reveals that teaching is deemed to be the most productive activity, and that females are more productive in teaching than males. The study also raises concern regarding the adverse impact of teaching load on research productivity.

2.3.6. Academic Career and Research

One of the main distinctions between an academic career at the tertiary level and a professional career in industry is the element of academic research. For academic career advancement, there is a need for knowledge creation through research in order to satisfy one of the core values of higher education. The literature on academic career and
research focuses on the following issues: national priorities, institutional agenda, and career progression.

Nowadays, academic research is being linked to national priorities in many ways. For example, the Malaysian government states its expectations from the higher education sector in various policy documents, such as *The National Higher Education Strategic Plan: Beyond 2020, The National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010*, and *The National Higher Education Action Plan: Phase 2 (2011-2015)* (Ahmad, Farley, & Naidoo, 2012; Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2007, 2011a, 2011b). In view of the Malaysian national agenda to become an “educational hub” for the region, research and innovation have been identified as key factors (Knight, 2014). Malaysian academics are challenged to be “generators of knowledge” rather than mere “consumers of knowledge” (Bajunid, 2008, p. 230).

University ranking and funding regimes put pressure on academics to produce research publications (Buchanan, Gordon, & Schuck, 2008; Cornuel, 2007; D’Alessio & Avolio, 2011; Dameron & Durand, 2013; Davies, Douglas, & Douglas, 2007). Research output has become an important criterion for appraising academic performance (Marginson & Sawir, 2005; Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007; also see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”). This leads to the oft-cited “publish or perish” principle in academia (De Rond & Miller, 2005; Miller, Taylor, & Bedeian, 2011).

For business and management studies, although the emphasis on research may not be as strong as in other fields, nevertheless research has gained importance in business schools (see 2.2.2.5, “Research Focus in Business Schools”). A study by Miller et al. (2011) in AACSB accredited research-oriented business schools in the US reveals that a high level of stress is experienced by academics who failed to publish at the level expected.

Business executives assuming academic roles lag behind first-career academics in research competencies. Second-career academics in business schools are generally: (a) unfamiliar with academic research, (b) unaware of the importance of research, (c) not interested in research, (d) lacking the necessary skills, and (e) un-supported in research endeavour (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004; Gale, 2011; Hemmings & Kay, 2010a, 2010b;
Williamson & Cable, 2003). In a commentary on being successful as an accounting academic in the US, Hermanson (2008) states, “Research is critically important throughout your career. Work to integrate your research, teaching, and service portfolios” (Hermanson, 2008, p. 64).

Some second-career academics may find academic research intellectually stimulating (Myers, 2006; Simon, 1997; also see 2.3.2, “Academic Career and Prior Experience”). Those second-career academics may be better placed to thrive in their academic careers. Some of them, who are better informed about the importance of research in academia, take the initiative to acquire their doctoral qualification prior to joining academia (Hermanson, 2008; Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012). However, not all business executives who transition into academic roles may be as enthusiastic about research (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004).

Research aptitude is an important issue for business practitioners who want to thrive as academics in business schools (Bishop et al., 2011). The requirement of a doctoral degree and the expectation of research outputs are listed as the top deterrents for practising accountants contemplating an academic career (Boyle et al., 2013). For this reason, in the US for example, some universities have specific programs to assess the research potential of candidates before accepting them as academics (HassabElnaby, Dobrzykowski, & Tran, 2012; Trapnell et al., 2009).

The link between academic career and academic research is quite close. However, research is typically not a forte for second-career academics. This raises a particular challenge for them.

2.3.7. Academic Career and Mentoring

There is considerable literature on the importance of mentoring in academia (Anderson, 1995; Angelique, Kyle, & Taylor, 2002; Busch, 1985; Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Crocitto, Sullivan, & Carraher, 2005; De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; De Janasz, Sullivan, & Whiting, 2003; Mathias, 2005; Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001; Woodd, 1997). Traditional mentoring suggests a dyadic relationship in which the more experienced mentor helps to guide the career of a younger colleague (i.e., the protégé), who learns to
find their way in their work (Granovetter, 1983; Krackhardt, 1992; Kram & Isabella, 1985).

Higgins and Kram (2001) build on Kram’s previous work to introduce the concept of “developmental network.” It is based on the recognition that individuals receive developmental support from several people, not just a single mentor. They define an individual’s developmental network as “the set of people a protégé names as taking an active interest in and action to advance the protégé’s career by providing developmental assistance” (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 268).

On mentoring in academia, a study by Baugh and Scandura (1999) shows that developing multiple mentoring relationships can have various benefits, although it may lead to role conflicts. Sorcinelli and Yun (2007) suggest that early-career academics establish their own network of mentors from various disciplines, receiving developmental inputs on a variety of matters, such as research, teaching, career progress, and work-life balance. The same researchers designed, implemented, and evaluated a faculty development initiative at a US university, based on the idea of “mutual mentoring,” whereby multiple bidirectional mentoring relationships are established around a single new academic. Early results of from this initiative appear to be encouraging (Yun & Sorcinelli, 2009).

A study by Lumpkin (2014) on the role of culture on academic career suggests that socialisation is a key ingredient for academic career development. The study concludes that mentoring is one of the important socialisation processes for early-career academics. In the Malaysian context, two studies on career advancement of women professors identify that mentoring and networking to be important contributors towards their career success (Ismail & Rasdi, 2006, 2007).

However, not all studies report positive influence of mentoring. For instance, participants in a study on academic career development in the tourism and hospitality discipline did not mention mentoring as an important career advancement tool (Weber & Ladkin, 2008, p. 15). Nevertheless, the authors caution that their finding may not be conclusive. They suggest that this finding could be due to mentoring being either absent or unnoticeable in this context.
2.3.8. Academic Career and Calling

The issue of calling has gained attention in the domain of career studies. For example, according to Duffy and Dik (2012, p. 239), since the year 2007, there has been an increased focus on calling in vocational psychology and related disciplines. Calling in as a dimension of career has many definitions. Nevertheless, the basic elements of calling are “guiding force, personal fit/eudemonic well-being, and altruism” (Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010, p. 181). Another definition of calling is quoted below:

A calling is a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation. (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 427)

In the career studies literature, discussions on calling relate to the following aspects: influence of calling on career (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2012; Duffy, Foley et al., 2012; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Hall, 2004; Hirschi, 2011; Hirschi & Herrmann, 2013), measurement of calling (Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy, 2012; Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011), healthy and unhealthy aspects of calling (Cardador & Caza, 2012), and source of calling (Duffy, Allan, Bott, & Dik, 2014). The role of calling in career transition from industry to academia is a focus of the following studies: Boyle et al. (2013), Myers (2006), Tunheim and Goldschmidt (2013), and Wilson et al. (2014).

Tunheim and Goldschmidt (2013) focus on the lived experience of 15 presidents of universities and colleges in the US. They find evidence of calling in the career experience of their participants. The themes that emerge from their study are: (a) sense of calling, (b) interpretation of calling, and (c) positive impact of calling. This study focuses on academic managers as opposed to managed academics (Winter, 2009, introduced in 2.3.3, “Academic Career and University Management”). There are also some studies focusing on managed academics, as discussed below.

Myers studies professional accountants who had been successful in their career transition into academia. The accountants seemed deeply passionate about their new
career in academia, hence the title of the article, “Teaching for the love of it” (Myers, 2006). In Myers’s study, one of the participants referred to his re-entry into academia as “more of a calling” (Myers, 2006, p. 32). This perception was echoed by two others in the same study who likened their career transition into academia as “missionary work” (p. 32) and another participant said, “I feel good that I’m able to give back some of what I was able to capitalize on in my career” (p. 37).

In a study by Boyle et al. the participants reveal that two of the top three factors that increased their interests in being academics were: (a) “satisfaction from helping students” (Boyle et al., 2013, p. 5) and (b) “developing the profession through educating young professionals” (ibid.). Their statement resonates with the notion of calling.

The element of calling is also discernible in the study conducted by Wilson et al. (2014) on career transition from industry to academia. Their participants reflected on the reasons why they chose to join an academic career. For one of their participants, “the decision to enter academia was motivated by a decision to give back to the university sector” (Wilson et al., 2014, p. 10). This resonates with the altruism aspect of calling.

On the other hand, some scholars indicate the darker side of calling in career. Cardador and Caza review the healthy and unhealthy aspects of calling in career. In their review, they discuss the some adverse effects of calling reported by other scholars (Hirschi, 2011; Porter, 1996; Scottl, Moore, & Miceli, 1997; Spence & Robbins, 1992). The adverse effects arise from exceedingly high expectations and standards of performance, leading to: (a) constant dissatisfaction with what is not being achieved, (b) lack of trust in colleagues, (c) unwillingness to delegate, and (d) poor relationship with co-workers (Cardador & Caza, 2012, p. 342).

**2.3.9. Academic Career and Gender**

Academia seems to be biased against the female gender (Knights & Richards, 2003; Krefting, 2003; Savigny, 2014; Scully, 2002; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012a, 2012b; Van den Brink, Benschop, & Jansen, 2010; Ward & Wolfë-Wendel, 2012). The gender bias seems to be aggravated by the following developments: (a) new managerialism in academia, (b) changing nature of higher education, and (c) new social
trends (Blackmore, 2014; Groeneveld, Tijdens, & Van Kleef, 2012; Morley, 2014; Misiaszek, 2015; Probert, 2005).

Knights and Richards (2003) argue that meritocracy in academia is masculine in nature. The current meritocracy system includes expectations of research output. A survey of research publications in social science shows that female academics published fewer articles (Bird, 2011). This type of finding exists in other disciplines too (e.g., in academic medicine in the US, a study by Holliday et al., 2014, demonstrates gender disparity in research output). It appears measuring academic career performance on the basis of research output tends to disadvantage female academics. The research output of female academics is affected by multiple factors, such as career interruptions due to motherhood and other feminine roles.

Moreover, the experience of female academics is further aggravated by broader social trends which exert ever new demands on them. To substantiate this, Probert cites social and demographic changes in Australia, which are causing increasing rates of marital separation, divorce, and single parenthood (Probert, 2005). Of course these affect both male and female academics, but the effect is more pronounced on female academics (Knights & Richards, 2003; Probert, 2005).

Academic career increasingly requires industry engagement. While this is especially true for science and technology disciplines, it is emerging as a requirement in several other disciplines too. According to some scholars, such an emphasis on industry engagement favours male academics more than female academics (Karataş-Özkan & Chell, 2015; Probert, 2005). These scholars argue that this disadvantages female academics due to “high demands for flexibility, mobility, and long hours of work” associated with industry-academia collaborations (Karataş-Özkan & Chell, 2015, p. 121). Moreover, given the relative shortage of successful role models and mentors, female academics find it challenging to make their mark in this aspect of academic work.

Additionally, the broader trends in higher education, driven by economic and regulatory imperatives, appear to have unfavourable consequences for female academic careers.
While globalisation of higher education brings abundant new opportunities for academic career, it also requires a high degree of mobility and flexibility. This goes against the place-boundedness and family duties associated with female roles (Blackmore, 2014, p. 95). Similarly, the new managerialism in academia, based on a specific system of meritocracy, encourages practices such as commercialisation of knowledge which appear to sideline female academics (Blackmore, 2014, p. 86; Misiaszek, 2015, p. 70).

The literature on gender inequality in academia also hints at a variety of other forms of inequality existing in academia, for instance, inequalities based on: (a) age (Granleese & Sayer, 2006), (b) sexual preference (Jackson, 2007), (c) race (Buzzanell, Long, Anderson, Kokini, & Batra, 2015; Monzó & SooHoo, 2014), and (d) cultural background (Johansson & Śliwa, 2014; Śliwa & Johansson, 2014, 2015). It remains to be explored whether these or any other forms of marginalisation are also experienced by second-career academics.

2.3.10. Academic Career and Job Satisfaction

There are studies that indicate the prevalence of stress and dissatisfaction in academia, leading to faculty members resigning from their jobs. A study by Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) indicates that high morale is crucial to the retention of faculty members; conversely, its absence is a primary factor in faculty members’ intention to leave academia. This is consistent with another study by Rosser, which looks into academics’ career satisfaction. The study suggests that perceived quality of work-life has an immense impact on academics’ career satisfaction; low perceived quality of work-life leads to resignation (Rosser, 2004). This is consistent with other studies by Johnsrud (2002) and Rosser (2005). However, both the authors admit that the knowledge of how academics’ decide to resign remains limited. They conclude that institutions of higher education need to address issues such as administrative and technical support, professional development, as well as community service work to reduce stress and increase job satisfaction.

In the Malaysian context, Huda et al. report on two studies looking into job satisfaction in two medical schools (Huda, Rusli, Naing, Tengku et al., 2004; Huda, Rusli, Naing,
Winn et al., 2004). Role overloading and job insecurity emerge as the main factors causing job stress. Opportunities to learn new skills, be creative on the job, and pursue one’s own area of interest are identified as contributing towards job satisfaction.

Awang et al. (2010), in another Malaysian study, examine the impact of job satisfaction of university lecturers on their organisational commitment. Data gathered from 320 lecturers of a Malaysian public university show that promotional opportunities, workload, and relationship with colleagues significantly affect job satisfaction, which, in turn, enhances their commitment to the organisation.

Studies on job satisfaction of second-career academics in Malaysia seem to be scarce. Likewise, studies on job satisfaction of academics in Malaysian business schools are even scarcer.

2.3.11. Academic Career at Novice Stage

A 5-year longitudinal study carried out by Trowler and Knight (2000) focusses on the experiences of early-career academics in Canadian and UK universities. The study focuses on the induction process of early-career academics. It concludes that their induction into the discourse and practice of the specific academic groups they have joined involves a process of socialisation.

Trowler and Knight (2000) explore the socialisation of new academics and interpret it in terms of social and professional learning. They clarify, “professional learning is social, provisional, situated, contingent, constructed and cultural in nature” (p. 37). They also suggest that “professional learning involves the negotiation of meaning and significance and that this is done in social settings” (p. 38). A key implication of their analysis is that while new academics are inducted into an institution, the process transforms both, that is, the new academics and the institution. In the process of acquiring a new academic identity, these novice academics also influence the institution.

Construction of an academic identity has a moral aspect too. Investigating into the process of identity formation of early-career academics, Fitzmaurice (2011) finds that the process is guided by “moral purposefulness” (p. 620). In other words, the personal
values and beliefs of new academics play an important role in their identity construction.

2.3.12. Emerging Issues From Part B: Literature on Academic Career

In Part B of the literature review, I discern another broad range of issues and questions. In view of my research interest concerning second-career academics in business schools, the key issues and questions in this literature appear to be the following:

(a) What personal and social processes occur when working executives transition into academic roles?
(b) How does the past experience of these working executives affect their role in academia?
(c) What is the role and identity of academics in the emerging higher education scenarios?
(d) How does the evolution of universities affect academic careers?
(e) What forms of mentoring is suitable for second-career academics?
(f) What insights could be derived on academic careers viewing it through the lens of calling?
(g) Whether second-career academics experience any inequality in academia?
(h) What influences the career satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) of second-career academics?
(i) Upon joining academia, how does the initial experience of second-career academics affect their development as academics?

In the next section, I synthesise the issues derived from both Part A and Part B of the literature review. This leads to the formulation of my research focus and the identification of specific research questions.

2.4. Choice of Research Focus

I would like to reiterate the research problem which prompted this literature review. As stated in Section 1.2, the research problem is concerned with the phenomenon of business executives assuming academic roles in business schools. The literature review has revealed a broad range of issues and questions relating to this phenomenon. Bringing together all the issues and questions identified in the literature review, I further classify the issues and questions into two broad categories: (a) those addressing the
macro-social environment and (b) those addressing individual experiences and choices. This is depicted in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Classification of Issues and Questions Identified in the Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Issues and Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues addressing the macro-social environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6 (a)</td>
<td>What purpose will be served by universities in future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6 (b)</td>
<td>What type of business education would be relevant for Malaysia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues addressing individual experiences and choices</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6 (c)</td>
<td>What would be the impact of ICT on higher education (in pedagogy, research, institutional process, etc.)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6 (d)</td>
<td>To what extent are business schools concerned with knowledge “of business” or “for business”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (a)</td>
<td>What personal and social processes occur when working executives transition into academic roles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (b)</td>
<td>How does the past experience of these working executives affect their role in academia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (c)</td>
<td>What is the role and identity of academics in the emerging higher education scenarios?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (d)</td>
<td>How does the evolution of universities affect academic careers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (e)</td>
<td>What forms of mentoring is suitable for second-career academics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (f)</td>
<td>What insights could be derived on academic careers viewing it through the lens of calling?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (g)</td>
<td>Whether second-career academics experience any inequality in academia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (h)</td>
<td>What influences the career satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) of second-career academics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.14 (i)</td>
<td>Upon joining academia, how does the initial experience of second-career academics affect their development as academics?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2.1, two issues, namely 2.2.6 (a) and 2.2.6 (b) appear to address the macro-social environment within which the phenomenon of interest is situated. The remaining 11 issues relate to the individual experiences and choices involved when business executives assume academic roles. At this point a choice appears before me as a researcher in order to determine my research focus, so as to keep the study manageable within a doctoral program framework.
I need to go back to the impetus for my doctoral study in order to choose either a macro-social or an experiential type of focus for my study. A key element of the impetus for my doctoral study is my own career experience. My intention is to acquire a more situated insight into my own experience as well as those of others who are in a similar situation. Such insight, I hope will be useful as a “mirror” to other second-career academics like me, showing them an interpretation of their own experience. This may trigger useful self-reflections and positive changes in their approach to their new role in academia.

*Research Focus and Scope.* Accordingly, I choose to address the phenomenon of interest from the standpoint of individual experiences and choices of second-career academics in business schools. For practical reasons, my research will be situated in Malaysia. Within this focus and scope, all the 11 issues addressing individual experiences and choices (as shown in Table 2.1) are used below to formulate my research questions.

**2.5. Research Questions**

The 11 issues addressing individual experiences and choices (as shown in Table 2.1) provide the necessary pointers to formulate my research questions. These issues need to be translated through the selected focus and scope, in order to arrive at the research questions. Since all the 11 issues have an experiential dimension, I formulate the first research question around the experiences of second-career academics:

*Research Question 1.* What are the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia?

The literature directs the research towards the following aspects of the experience of second-career academics: personal and social processes involved in career transition, roles played in academia, induction and mentoring, any inequality experienced, career satisfaction, use of technology, and coping with institutional demands.
The literature also draws attention to the process of adaptation, learning, and identity formation. This requires a second research question to be formulated:

**Research Question 2.** How do the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia affect their sense of who they are?

This question covers issues not covered under the first research question. These are issues concerning the cumulative result of the experience of second-career academics in Malaysian business schools. It includes their sense of calling, development as academics, and their influence on the business school. It directs the research towards how second-career academics construct their role and identity and what impact it has on them as well as on the institution.

The selection of a research approach to address these questions is taken up next, in Chapter 3.
3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research questions emerging from my literature review are:

*Research Question 1.* What are the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia?

*Research Question 2.* How do the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia affect their sense of who they are?

To answer these research questions, in this chapter, I describe and justify the research paradigm (Section 3.2), research approach (Section 3.3), data collection methods (Section 3.4), and the analytical process followed in my study (Section 3.5). The chapter concludes with Section 3.6, which presents the steps taken to ensure the quality of this study.

3.2. Research Paradigm

Literature suggests that the research paradigm must be congruent with the research questions (Lincoln, 1995; Van Manen, 1990). Denzin and Lincoln argue that ethics, ontology, epistemology, and methodology are the basic constituents of a research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 91). Ethics refers to the moral aspect of the research. Ontology refers to the nature of the reality under investigation. Epistemology refers to the nature and limits of human knowledge possible about that reality. Methodology refers to how knowledge is to be acquired.

In social research, some authors discuss three research paradigms: (a) empirico-analytical paradigm, (b) interpretive paradigm, and (c) critical paradigm (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002, p. 719). Assumptions regarding ontology,
epistemology, methodology, and ethics, relevant to my research questions need to be examined in order to select a suitable research paradigm.

As discussed in Section 1.2, “Problem Statement,” I seek to explore issues that arise as a result of one’s transition from industry to academia. Later in Section 2.4, “Choice of Research Focus,” I decide to focus on the experiences and choices of second-career academics in business schools. These experiences pertain to: (a) personal and social processes involved in career transition, (b) roles played in academia, (c) induction and mentoring, (d) any inequality experienced, (e) career satisfaction, (f) use of technology, (g) coping with institutional demands, and (h) the process of adaptation, learning, and identity formation.

Such experiences are part of an individual’s subjective reality. The realness of such experiences depends on the individual’s constructions based on their encounters with situations often involving other individuals. Accordingly, the subjective and intersubjective nature of the reality constitutes my ontological assumption.

Knowledge about the subjective and intersubjective reality ought to cohere with the meaning system of the participants. The aim of this knowledge would be to clarify how a meaning system is produced and sustained through lived experience. Such knowledge would be “situated” (Haraway, 1988) in time, place, role, and so forth. Accordingly, the experiential and situated nature of knowledge constitutes my epistemological assumption.

A subjective and intersubjective phenomenon cannot be studied through detached observation. Knowledge about such phenomena is to be gleaned through interpreting the actions, interactions, and expressions of individuals. This is to be done, not by invoking constitutive ideas from domains beyond a person’s lived experience, but by drawing upon the constitutive principles that give structure and coherence to one’s lived experience. Accordingly, an interpretation-based research process grounded in the lived experience of the participants constitutes my methodological assumption.

A study of human experience may involve diverse ethical assumptions. In my research, I would like to attach primacy to the voices of second-career academics. I would not
evaluate their thoughts or expressions using external standards. Nor would I like to transform their lives by intervening in it. Thus, adopting a non-evaluative stance, respecting the individuality of the participants, and treating myself as an interlocutor rather than a reformer would constitute my ethical assumptions.

These ontological, epistemological, methodological, and ethical assumptions align with the interpretive research paradigm (Fossey et al., 2002). This research paradigm appears to be a suitable candidate for addressing my research questions. But before closing the paradigm selection issue, it is worth considering the other two research paradigms (i.e., empirico-analytical and critical paradigms) briefly.

Subjective and intersubjective experiences are difficult to observe and quantify. What is observed is only the tip of the iceberg—large parts of the experience, meanings, attitudes, and beliefs remain hidden from view. This creates a mismatch with the empirico-analytical paradigm. Besides, in my research, I am investigating what the experiences of second-career academics are like and how these experiences influence their sense of who they are. I do not search for the degree or magnitude of experience but the “whatness” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 33) of the experience. The ontological and epistemological assumptions pertaining to the research questions are therefore not congruent with the empirico-analytical paradigm.

There is also a mismatch between my research questions and the critical paradigm. The critical paradigm aims at liberating and empowering the participants of a study. However, I only aim to uncover the experiences of second-career academics and how these experiences affect their sense of who they are. Consequently, the interaction between the researcher and the participants are not expected to liberate and empower the participants directly.

Accordingly, I adopt the interpretive paradigm for my study. In the following section, I consider the possible research approaches it opens up.
3.3. Research Approach

Within the interpretive paradigm, several approaches are available for researching the lived experience of individuals. The major alternative approaches are narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and ethnography (Creswell, 2009, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002). All these approaches involve collection and interpretation of the participants’ accounts of their experience. The task in this section is to select and justify a suitable research approach for my study.

3.3.1. Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry refers to the research approach that typically focuses on narrative forms and content, which reflect the personal and shared meanings of individuals (Bamberg, 2012; Striano, 2012). The strength of narrative inquiry lies in its ability to provide a diverse and rich description of human experience from the perspective of the person experiencing it (Georgakopoulou, 2006; Kraus, 2006; Riessman, 2003). Narrative of a phenomenon in a specific situation calls for a selection and description of events deemed significant to the persons involved (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006; Fraser, 2004; Riessman & Quinney, 2005; Striano, 2012). Through narratives, the participants are able to express their inner feelings and reaction to an experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Van Manen, 1990). In narrative inquiry, anonymity of a participant facilitates the divulgence of insightful and sometimes personal perspectives.

Narrative inquiry is one of the approaches to reveal multiple realities associated with human experience (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002). It is one of the approaches available for investigating experiences which are exceptional or deeply personal: for example, experience of a major illness, experience of a personal crisis, and life-changing experiences (Charon, 2006; Koch, 1995, 1996, 1998).

My research focuses on the experience of second-career academics and its meaning for them. Thus narrative inquiry could be a suitable approach. The narratives can be obtained through methods such as interview, focus group discussion, and written text.
The narrative inquiry approach permits the use of various analytical methods. For instance, when there are multiple research participants, narratives from each participant can be used to put together a case study on each individual, so that the overall study could resemble a multiple case study. If I follow this approach, my analysis can be considered as grounded in multiple-source evidence (Yin, 2003). Literature on research suggests that such an approach enhances the quality of the results in an interpretive study (Merriam, 2002; Moustakas, 1994; Yin, 2003).

Narratives are also involved in other approaches to interpretive research, such as phenomenology and ethnography. These two approaches are discussed next, so as to determine the approach of my study.

3.3.2. Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophy (Glendinning, 2007; Heidegger, 1962/1927; Merleau-Ponty, 1962/1945) as well as a research approach that can be adopted for the study of lived experience (Giorgi, 2006a, 2006b; Lindseth & Norberg, 2004; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology differentiates its approach from other research approaches through its focus on meaning (Van Manen, 1990). Van Manen (1990) argues that phenomenology “does not aim to explicate meanings specific to particular culture (ethnography), to certain social groups (sociology), to historical period (history), to mental types (psychology), or to an individual’s personal life history (biography)” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 11). Central to phenomenology is the consciousness of what our experience means in relation to the world in which we live. The essence of that meaning can be gleaned through narratives of past experiences. This appears congruent with my research focus, especially the second research question, “How do the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia affect their sense of who they are?”

Within phenomenology, interpretation of narratives of the participants involved with the phenomenon is one of the several approaches available. As aptly argued by Heidegger, “The fundamental way of the Dasein [existence] of world, namely, having world there with one another, is speaking” (Heidegger, 1992/1924, p. 8E, italics in the original). In
essence, Heidegger argues for understanding of the phenomenon by letting those involved speak.

In my research, I could be concerned with the narratives of second-career academics pertaining to their lived experience. In this respect, indeed the phenomenological approach is congruent with my research focus.

Further, in Heideggrian phenomenology, which is one of the many diverse strands of phenomenology, prior knowledge of the phenomenon is required. This means that to understand what being in the world means, one should have some experience of the phenomenon. Given that I am also a second-career academic, I do have first-hand experience of what I am trying to study.

However, in direct contrast to Heideggerian phenomenology is Husserlian phenomenology, which requires the researcher to be “bracketed” from the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2002; Moustakas, 1994). Bracketing means suspending one’s personal viewpoints when interpreting a phenomenon. In other words, having similar background and experience as the participants is not an asset but a possible hindrance to research. Given my status as a second-career academic, this could be an obstacle.

3.3.3. Ethnography

Fetterman defines ethnography: “Ethnography is about telling a credible, rigorous, and authentic story. Ethnography gives voice to people in their own local context, typically relying on verbatim quotations and a ‘thick’ description of events” (Fetterman, 2010, p. 1). Another scholar defines ethnography as a research approach that “aim[s] to explicate meanings specific to particular cultures” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 11). Thus, the ethnographic approach is suitable for exploration of meanings internal to a specific community through the interpretation of the stories told by its members.

Ethnography calls for researchers to be immersed in the daily routine of the participants for a considerable period (Creswell, 2009, 2013; Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The story of the participants is central to ethnography. The stories are
to be interpreted, based on evidence, to derive the meanings shared within the community that is being studied (Walford, 2009).

The aspect of ethnography which gives voices to the people is congruent with my research questions since the experiences of second-career academics can be described based on their own narratives and perspectives. The other aspect of ethnography pertaining to explicating meaning from the narrative is also congruent with my research question. This is because the meaning thus explicated would be related to their sense of who they are.

However, the aspect of ethnography which calls for immersion in the community and participatory observation may not be practical for my study. This is because the interaction between second-career academics and their students, colleagues, and management is likely to be confidential in nature and not open to participatory observation. For my study, it would be more feasible for me to seek their recollections of their interaction with students, colleagues, and university management.

Therefore, the two aspects of ethnography are congruent with my research questions; these aspects are: (a) listening to the narratives of their experiences based on their perspectives and (b) explicate meanings specific to their narratives.

3.3.4. Selection and Justification of the Approach

As my research focuses on the experiences of second-career academics, all the above three approaches (i.e., narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and ethnography) are relevant as these approaches focus on human experience. However, they seem to have some aspects which may not be congruent with my research questions. Therefore, I need to be selective in deciding which elements of these three approaches may be usefully brought together to serve as my research approach. Towards that end, I consider each of the three approaches below.

In ethnography, the emphasis on looking at the experiences through a cultural dimension may not fit the purpose of my study. While culture could be a dimension of the experience of second-career academics, it would require participatory observation
within institutional settings. This appears to be a practical hurdle. Nevertheless, the ethnographic intention of giving voices to people in their own context (Fetterman, 2010, p. 1) is congruent with my research focus. In this respect, my study is likely to be informed by ethnography.

In phenomenology, the expected outcome is the discovery of the essence of an experience. This appears to be congruent with my research questions. However, the need for the researcher to be “bracketed” from the phenomenon under investigation raises some concerns. In my study, I am also a second-career academic, thus possibly an insider to the phenomenon that I want to study. Of course, insiders are not strictly forbidden from undertaking phenomenological research. The Heideggerian strand of phenomenological research appears to treat any prior understanding of the researcher as a potentially useful resource. In this respect, the Heideggerian phenomenological approach resonates with my insider position in this research.

In narrative inquiry, the focus is on the descriptive narratives of the participants and interpretation of those narratives. To the extent descriptive narratives by second-career academics can be taken to reflect their experiences, collection and study of such narratives can be an approach to answer my research questions. This would meet the ethnographic expectation of giving voice to people in their own local context. Being a second-career academic myself, I would have an insider position vis-à-vis those narratives, a fact that I can expect to turn to the advantage of my research, following the lead of Heideggerian phenomenology. Accordingly, I select narrative inquiry as the principal approach for my study, supported by elements of ethnographic and phenomenological approaches. I now present my justification in a more structured way:

(a) Using Narratives to Study Experience. Given that narrative inquiry focuses on narratives as meaning making dimensions of individual and social life, including career (Bamberg, 2012; Striano, 2012), the approach is congruent with my research focus on the experiences of second-career academics. Indeed, I aim to answer my research questions by interpreting the participants’ narratives.

(b) Being Less Restricted Than Ethnography. Narrative inquiry involves interpretation of the descriptive narratives of the research participants. Data collection can be similar
to what is done in ethnography, through interview, focus group discussion, and gathering of relevant artefacts. However, an advantage of adopting a narrative inquiry approach is that I do not have to restrict my interpretation in ethnographic terms.

(c) Acknowledging Insider Position. In narrative inquiry, I do not have to be concerned about the requirement of “bracketing,” as stipulated in the Husserlian strand of phenomenological approach. Given that I am a second-career academic myself, I am keen to treat my insider position as a strength in this research, rather than a weakness. I acknowledge that my interpretations could be affected by my own career experience.

(d) Gaining Flexibility in Analysis. Narrative inquiry also affords flexibility to make use of various analytical methods. For instance, I could treat each participant as an individual case so that interpreting narratives from multiple participants would amount to a multiple case study. In other words, my interpretations can be considered as grounded in multiple-source evidence, thus enhancing the quality of the results (Yin, 2003).

(e) Ensuring Practical Feasibility. There are practical hurdles in approaching the study through a purely ethnographic approach. The academic contexts where my potential participants pursue their second-career are not likely to be open for participant observation. Besides, the time and resource limitations of my doctoral research rules out any prolonged study of these contexts with a nation-wide scope. Under such constraints, narrative inquiry offers a more feasible approach to study the experience of participants across Malaysia.

Synthesising the features of the three main approaches, I conclude that my approach would be a hybrid of narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and ethnography, with narrative inquiry being the leading approach. In other words, my research will be essentially a narrative inquiry, informed by both ethnographic and phenomenological approaches.
3.4. Data Collection Methods

In this section, I elaborate on the methods of data collection in my research endeavour. This is elaborated in the following sequence:

(a) Recruitment of participants (see 3.4.1)
(b) Interview process (see 3.4.2)
(c) Post-interview process (see 3.4.3)
(d) Focus group discussion (see 3.4.4)
(e) Artefacts from participants (see 3.4.5)
(f) Limitations of the data collection methods (see 3.4.6)

3.4.1. Recruitment of Participants

*Purposeful Sampling*

I adopted a purposeful sampling procedure. This was because I was investigating a phenomenon concerning a specific group of people—second-career academics situated at business schools in Malaysia. I had no prior knowledge about the population characteristics relevant for this study. Only the following two criteria were important in recruiting participants:

(a) At least 5 years of prior business experience as professionals or entrepreneurs (this was to ensure a wide range of second-career academics with varying lengths of business experience)
(b) A postgraduate qualification, in order to be consistent with the definition of Scholarly Practitioners (SP) and Instructional Practitioners (IP), as per AACSB International (2015, Standard 15, p. 39ff)

*Approaching and Enrolling Participants*

Potential participants meeting the above two criteria were to be found in my host university as well as in other universities in Malaysia. However, based on my professional experience and cultural understanding, I was aware that it may not be effective to approach potential participants directly, unless we have been acquainted before. Therefore, although I could identify potential participants from the staff profiles
appearing in their university websites, I decided to approach them directly only within my host university. In order to locate potential participants in other universities, I used other culturally appropriate means, such as approaching them either through my personal academic network or by directly approaching senior academic leaders in selected universities.

An opportunity presented itself when I attended the 3rd Global Higher Education Forum (GHEF, Putrajaya, Malaysia, December 4-6, 2013), where senior delegates from both Malaysian and foreign universities were present. At the forum, I identified myself to the academic leaders of Malaysian universities and introduced my research interest in second-career academics in business schools. I then followed up with them through e-mails. Many of them connected me with potential participants in their respective universities. I also found some potential participants later in the process, when some of my confirmed participants referred me to other potential participants.

In this way, I found potential participants from 9 universities in Malaysia. These covered all major types of university offering business education, namely: 2 public universities, 4 private universities, 1 distance learning university, and 2 international branch campus universities.

I approached the potential participants with an invitation letter, enclosing the following documents: (a) brief statement of my research topic, (b) Consent Information Statement (see Appendix B), and (c) Informed Consent Form (see Appendix C). A sample letter of invitation is attached under Appendix E. I sent invitations to 35 potential participants. Out of them, 33 individuals consented to participate in the study. Subsequently, 2 of them had to be discarded from my sample (one moved out of the business school and another withdrew citing health reasons). Thus I was left with 31 participants who constituted my sample for this study.
3.4.2. Interview Process

Initial Interviews Conducted at My Host University

As a novice researcher, I thought the initial batch of interviews is best done within a familiar territory. Accordingly, I carried out my initial interviews with 7 participants from my host campus. The interviews were held within working hours, using either academic or discussion spaces within the campus. These venues provided quiet and environments familiar to the participants. The interviews lasted from 1 to 1.5 hours. I used two audio recorders to avoid any technical problems while recording. But, prior to switching on the recorders, I would introduce myself and explain the purpose of the interview. This also served as an ice-breaker and created an ambience for conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews. These initial interviews revolved around the following probes:

(a) experience prior to joining academia
(b) experience of academic life
(c) changing concept of self

The interviews were guided by the participant’s comments as much as by my own interest in their experience. After the interview, I sent out letters of appreciation to each participant and invited them to join a focus group discussion to be conducted at a later date. I also requested them for any artefacts relating to their current work (such as their academic outputs, teaching materials, articles or notes written by them, etc.), provided they were willing to share such material with me.

Lessons Learned From the Initial Interviews

Conducting the initial interviews turned out to be a learning experience. I gained a clearer grasp of the interview process by listening to the audio recordings, transcribing the interviews, and reading the transcripts. It appeared that some of these interviews drifted a bit, either because my questions were too broad or I was not sure when and how to intervene to draw the conversation back on track. Carrying out a preliminary
thematic analysis on these interviews helped me reformulate my probes. I decided to break down my earlier probes into the following elements:

(a) career experience prior to joining academia  
(b) first experience as a teacher  
(c) interaction with students and colleagues  
(d) experience of doing research, if any  
(e) interaction with university management  
(f) overall experience of being an academic

Additionally, the initial interviews also taught me the following lessons:

(a) *Need to Put Participants in a Relaxed State.* I find this is achievable if I brief the participant even though they may be aware of the purpose of my research. I assured them that the interview and recording would only start when both of us were ready and comfortable. I also informed them that they could request for a pause if necessary during the interview.

(b) *Need to Maintain a Conversational Climate.* Initially, the interview process was somewhat rigid. Also, I was over-dependent on my script. This appeared to interrupt the flow of the interview. With this lesson, I felt better prepared for conducting semi-structured interviews in a conversational manner.

(c) *Need to Use Probes to Manage the Drift.* Instead of depending too much on the specific questions in my script, I found it more effective to be guided by the probes. When participants seemed to drift away from the topics of my interest, I could fall back on the probes to bring the interview back on track.

(d) *Need to Ignore the Recording Device.* I was beset by fears that the recording would go awry and this affected the interview process. Whenever I shifted my attention momentarily to check on the audio recorder, it seemed as if I was unsure and had to refer to my script. However, my fears were unfounded as the two recorders recorded the seven interviews entirely, without any trouble.
Subsequent Interview Process

All the interviews were conducted in the offices of the participants or meeting/discussion rooms, except one. In the exceptional case, I conducted the interview in a restaurant in Kuala Lumpur, as the participant suggested this as the preferred venue.

I began my interview by thanking the participants for their participation in my research. I then introduced myself and the purpose of my study, and asked the participants whether they required any further clarification from me. I commenced the interview by informing them that they had the right to refuse to answer any of my questions without citing any reason, if they deemed a question too sensitive. I also informed them that if they needed a break during the interview, they could say so and I would stop the interview temporarily until they were ready to resume. Here is a sample of interview questions, although the exact phrasing and order would depend on the context:

(a) Could you elaborate on your experience in teaching?
(b) Could you tell me how your experience in research is?
(c) What is your experience in carrying out industry outreach?
(d) Would you like to share with me your interaction with students?
(e) How is your interaction with colleagues?
(f) What about your interaction with university management?
(g) From your perspective, what is the meaning of being an academic?
(h) How do you feel about being a teacher (or researcher) in a university?
(i) How would you describe your activities as academic?
(j) What is your experience like working in academia?
(k) Is there any other experience that you would like to share with me?

After the interview, I also requested the participants for a sample of their various academic outputs (e.g., teaching materials prepared by them, any other academic documents, or articles written by them). I informed them that it was up to them whether to fulfil this request. I did receive some artefacts, which became part of my data after I removed all identifying details from such material. After the interview, I invited all participants to join a focus group discussion with a few other second-career academics participating in this research. The topic for the focus group discussion was “The Role of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools.” The focus group discussion was also recorded using an audio recorder.
3.4.3. Post-interview Process

Transcription of Interviews

Following the interviews, I transcribed each interview myself in order to develop familiarity with the data and begin to reflect on the meanings embedded in the narratives. The transcription was done verbatim. As soon as a transcript was ready, I sent a copy to the respective participant by e-mail, with a cover letter (for a sample of the cover letter requesting the participant to check the interview transcript, see Appendix F).

Interaction With Participants After the Interview

Participants took varied lengths of time to respond to my request letter. The speed of response varied from 2 days to 2 months, as some of the participants seemed to be rather meticulous in reviewing the content of the transcripts. Some even attempted to correct grammatical errors despite my advice to ignore it. One participant requested me for the original audio record, which I sent as an audio file attachment. This participant confirmed the transcript a few days later. One participant has not replied even at the time of thesis writing, despite several reminders via e-mails, telephone calls, and messages. Still I have included this participant (as P31) as there was nothing unusual during the interview and the individual has not explicitly withdrawn from the research.

In my e-mail, I informed the participants that they were at liberty to add additional text to the transcripts if they thought that it would express their views better. I requested them to indicate such additional remarks in italics. None of the participants added any further remarks. Here are some sample replies from participants:

P6: Thank you. It is fine with me.

P20: My utmost apologies for the delay in responding to your email. . . . I have gone through the transcript (and I can imagine the amount of work that has gone into preparing this and other transcripts), and I do not feel that there is a need to make any change to the document.
3.4.4. Focus Group Discussions

I have conducted three focus group discussions in this study. Two of these were conducted at my host university while one was held at another university. The participants in all the focus group discussions participated in the one-to-one interviews held prior to the focus group discussion. The participants were informed of the focus group discussion during the interview. The focus group discussion was also mentioned in the Consent Information Statement (see Appendix B). The topic for focus group discussion was “The Role of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools.”

All of the focus group discussions were moderated by me. I used two audio recorders for recording the proceedings. After I introduced myself and the topic, no further clarification was required from me in any of the three focus group discussions. During the discussions, I avoided making any reference to sensitive topics such as differences in designation and remuneration and aspects of individual performance.

I transcribed all the focus group discussions. Thereafter, I sent to each participant the transcript of the focus group discussion in which they participated. For all three focus group discussions, I have received confirmation of the transcripts from every participant without any amendments.

3.4.5. Artefacts From Participants

In this study, I have also included certain artefacts collected from some of the participants as a source of data. These consist of written text not explicitly created for
my research. Among the artefacts were reflection notes created as written assignments in conjunction with the participants’ engagement in the teaching qualifications offered by their universities. These notes provided a glimpse into their experience as second-career academics in business schools. I have treated these as data for my research.

3.4.6. Limitations of the Data Collection Methods

(a) Novice Interviewer. I am a novice researcher and also a novice interviewer. I do admit to being somewhat nervous especially during the initial interviews. I was quite unsure of the appropriateness of my verbal and nonverbal communication in the first few interviews. However, as I continued with interviewing, transcribing, and analysing the data, I gained confidence as an interviewer. I felt more at ease in the subsequent interviews.

(b) Time Constraint. A majority of the participants (21 out of 31) were from universities other than my host university, located in cities across Malaysia. I had to make an attempt to be familiarised with the physical environment and, more crucially, I needed to establish rapport with the participants whom I had only known through e-mail. In most cases, the interview was the first face-to-face encounter I had with them. Given the practical limitations of time, I did not have enough time to establish rapport with them. I limited the number of interviews to not more than two per day. In some cases, I made multiple visits to the same campus so that there would be time for building up rapport with participant. Another measure to overcome the shortage of time was to attach as much information on my research as possible in my letters of invitation to potential participants. I also enclosed my career profile to indicate that I was also a second-career academic myself. Furthermore, I let the participants decide the time and location of the interview so that they would be at ease during the interview. I made an attempt to arrive at the city where the participants were located one day prior to the interview, so as to avoid travel anxiety.
3.5. Analytical Process

In this section, I present the analytical process which I adopted in order to be consistent with the research paradigm and the research approach selected for this study. In following the hermeneutic interpretive paradigm, I am informed to a certain extent by the thematic analysis process discussed by Van Manen (1990). Introducing the nature and role of themes in narratives, Van Manen writes, “themes may be understood as the *structures of experience*” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 79, italics in the original). He elaborates, “In other words, we try to unearth something ‘telling,’ something ‘meaningful,’ something ‘thematic’ in the various experiential accounts—we work at mining meaning from them” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 86).

Other authors, Braun and Clarke (2006), Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2008), Aronson (1994), and Patton (2002) emphasise on the importance of a cyclic reading of the transcripts to arrive at an insight regarding the meanings of the text. This implies that the interpretation of narrative text would be a multistage process. Such a multistage process would also be consistent with the requirement of coherence between data and research results, as put forward by Fossey et al. (2002).

Another aspect of this multistage process is indicated by the concept of hermeneutic circle. It refers to a cyclic process of continuous refinement of meaning while interpreting text (Debesay, Nåden, & Slettebø, 2008; Dowling, 2004). The concept of hermeneutic circle is associated with the work by Heidegger (1962) and it is described as “the analytical movement between the whole and the part, in which each gives the other meaning” (Whitehead, 2004, p. 513). Some scholars describe the concept as referring to an inductive process (Paterson & Higgs, 2005).

In accordance with the concept of hermeneutic circle, the analytical process begins with the first availability of data (Kezar, 2000), such as the initial transcripts in my study. It then requires repeated reading of the transcripts concurrently with the construction and deconstruction of meanings progressively, informed by the research literature and my own situated knowledge, until the final themes emerge (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). This is the process I adopted, as depicted in Figure 3.1.
In Chapter 4, I present the results of this analytical process, demonstrating how I have interpreted the data and refined the interpretation gradually, in a cyclic process.

![Figure 3.1. Hermeneutic circle in the analytical process.](image)

> **Note.** The two concentric circles at the core of the figure indicate the data collected in two stages. The cyclic arrows symbolise the process of thematic analysis, exemplifying the hermeneutic circle. The broken lines represent the interconnections between the data and the successive stages of data analysis, ensuring that the results at each stage remain grounded in the data.

### 3.6. Steps Taken to Ensure Quality

I have taken several steps to ensure research quality. The steps are elaborated below, in the following sequence:

- (a) Obtaining clearance from Ethics Committee (see 3.6.1)
- (b) Using relevant data collection methods (see 3.6.2)
- (c) Recognising my position as researcher (see 3.6.3)
- (d) Recognising participants as co-researchers (see 3.6.4)
- (e) Ensuring diversity among participants (see 3.6.5)
- (h) Using computer-aided data analysis (see 3.6.6)
3.6.1. Obtaining Clearance From Ethics Committee

There is a well-established process at my university (Swinburne) to review all research involving human participants. Being an Australian university, Swinburne adopts the Australian national guidelines in vetting all applications for ethics approval. The two major guidelines are the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. Adopting these guidelines ensures that a proposed research has scholarly merit and it treats human participants in an ethically responsible manner.

I received ethical clearance for my research from the Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee in August 2013 (see Appendix A). My data collection started only after receiving the ethical clearance.

3.6.2. Using Relevant Data Collection Methods

Data Collection in Two Stages. In this study, I deployed a two-stage data collection strategy. The initial stage of data collection was akin to a pilot study. Scholarly opinions vary as to the main contribution of pilot studies in interpretive research. Some scholars suggest that pilot studies “generate an understanding of the concepts and theories held by the people you are studying” (Maxwell, 1998, p. 227). Other scholars suggest that the contribution of a pilot study “is to refine data collection strategies rather than to formulate an analytic scheme or develop theory” (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2008, p. 20; also Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). Given the paucity of studies on my research topic and the exploratory nature of my study, the initial stage of data collection brought me closer to the phenomenon I was investigating. I initiated the hermeneutic circle as soon as the first transcripts from the initial stage of data collection became available (Kezar, 2000).

I went for a second stage of data collection after carrying out some analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the first stage. This made data collection and analysis concurrent within this research project. This had a positive influence on the quality of my study as it enhanced my confidence in the data and provided opportunity
for engaging in cycles of construction and deconstruction of meanings in a gradual manner.

Interview Method. Interview is a common method of data collection in narrative inquiry. Interviews provide a channel for the participants to narrate their views about the phenomenon being investigated (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2008; Tanggaard, 2009; White & Drew, 2011). It involves a number of components: (a) the researcher as the interviewer, (b) the interviewee as the participant (or co-researchers), (c) the context, in terms of the interview questions deployed during the interview, (d) the venue, where the interview takes place, (e) the recording and transcription of the data, (f) the treatment and analysis of the data, and (g) the reporting of the results of the analysis (Kvale, 2006; Roulston, 2011; Travers, 2009; White & Drew, 2011). All these components affect the quality of the interview and hence the quality of the study. Accordingly I made an attempt to ensure quality in all these components. This is further discussed in the following paragraphs (from 3.6.3 to 3.6.6).

There are three main types of interview: (a) unstructured interview, (b) semi-structured interview, and (c) structured interview. I adopted the semi-structured format. Neither a totally unstructured interview nor a fully structured one is likely to address the issues that I am interested in investigating. Through semi-structured interviews, I ensured that the narratives remains focused on my research interest while allowing the participants flexibility to express their views.

Focus Group Discussions. Focus group discussion is another common method of data collection in interpretive research as it facilitates expression of people’s experiences and perspectives (Duggleby, 2005; Fossey et al., 2002; Freeman, 2006; Madriz, 2000; Vogt, King, & King, 2004). It involves conducting discussion in a group setting, addressing specific issues or experiences (Kitzinger, 1994, 1995). There is a debate in the methodological literature as to the appropriateness of focus group discussion in research informed by phenomenology. For example, it has been argued that the use of focus group discussion may negate crucial personal perspectives considered so essential in phenomenologically informed research (Webb & Kevern, 2001). But the method also has its proponents. For example, Bradbury-Jones, Sambrook, and Irvine (2009) speak of
a “phenomenological focus group,” but also caution against the pitfalls highlighted by other scholars.

After deliberating on the merits and demerits of focus group discussion, I decided to include it as a method of data collection in my study. The decision was based on the following considerations: (a) focus group discussion is a suitable method of data collection in exploratory studies (McLafferty, 2004; Tracy, 2010; Yin, 2003, pp. 5, 97), (b) focus group discussion can provide additional data to complement interviews (Vogt, King, & King, 2004), and (c) although the phenomenon I was investigating relates to the personal experiences of second-career academics, it has a shared or social angle too, which is likely to be better captured in a group setting.

I conducted two focus group discussions at my host university campus, but only one at an external university. Informed by the argument of McLafferty (2004) on the importance of keeping the group size small, I took steps to ensure that the number of participants in these focus group discussions did not exceed five, including me as the moderator. The questions I deployed in the focus group discussions were similar to those I used in the interviews, allowing the participants to express themselves freely (Vogt, King, & King, 2004). The focus group discussions were audio-recorded, transcribed, and interpreted in a cyclic process. This indeed complemented the thematic analysis of the interview data, as anticipated while selecting the focus group discussion method.

3.6.3. Recognising My Position as Researcher

In the interpretive research, “the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis” (Merriam, 2002, p. 5). Therefore, how I conduct myself as the researcher influences the quality of this research. One of the decisions I had to make was how long I should remain in the field while collecting data. Creswell and Miller argue, “researchers determine how long to remain in the field, whether the data are saturated to establish good themes or categories, and how the analysis of the data evolves into a persuasive narrative” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 125). In this study, I adopted the approach of collecting and analysing data concurrently, hence the duration
of my data collection depended on detecting data saturation (Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2003; Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

The researcher being the main instrument of data collection and analysis, there are questions about subjectivity in interpretive research (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002). In response, Morse et al. argue that the researcher is responsible for the quality of the study by deploying various quality assurance measures throughout the study (Morse et al., 2008). Such measures include: (a) presenting both confirming and disconfirming evidence and results, (b) prolonging engagement in the field, (c) providing thick and rich description, (d) ensuring interpretive rigour in terms of authenticity, coherence, reciprocity, typicality, and permeability of the researcher’s intentions, engagement, and interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Fossey et al., 2002).

In this research, an important quality required of me was the ability to appreciate the phenomenon from as many angles as possible. This is called the “phenomenological attitude” (Giorgi, 1997, 2000, 2006b; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Adopting this attitude, “the investigator remains open, uses sensitivity, creativity, and insight” for attaining validity of the study (Morse et al., 2008, p. 18). An evidence of my phenomenological attitude can be found in the questions I deployed during the interview (see 3.4.2 for the probes used during interviews). The questions were open-ended and I avoided interfering as much as possible while the participants were expressing their views. This supported my effort to ensure that the voice of the participants is heard.

I also maintained a phenomenological attitude during the process of analysis, which happened concurrent with data collection. I went about analysing and synthesising the participants’ narratives without subscribing to any single dominant perspective. Adopting a cyclic process of interpretation (as implied by the methodological idea of hermeneutic circle, depicted in Figure 3.1) facilitated this. My interpretations are grounded in the data as well as the literature I have reviewed for this study.

As discussed earlier (in 3.3.4, “Selection and Justification of the Approach”), the Heideggerian phenomenological approach resonates with my insider position in this
research. Being a second-career academic myself, I have the necessary prior knowledge that Heidegger expresses through the notion of “being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1992/1924, pp. 7-10). This also agrees with the idea of Peshkin, who finds value in the subjectivity of the researcher, which “can be seen as virtuous, for it is the basis of researchers making a distinctive contribution, one that results from the unique configuration of their personal qualities joined to the data they have collected” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18). Given my status as a second-career academic, I treated my insider position as a strength, rather than a weakness. Of course, as a result, I ought to acknowledge that my interpretations are, at least partly, a product of my own career experience.

Another aspect of my position as researcher is my place in the power relationship with the participants (Kvale, 2006; Vähäsantanen & Saarinen, 2013). I made an effort to reduce the negative impact of any such power dynamics by building rapport with the participants (Bell, 2011; Conroy, 2008) and by adopting an open-ended interview protocol where the interviewee may have more control over the direction of the interview (Corbin & Morse, 2003). An example of building rapport with the participants can be seen in my letter of invitation to them. In the invitation, I listed the purpose of my research. More importantly I hinted that I was one of them, being a second-career academic myself:

I am a PhD candidate with Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus where I have also been lecturing in International Business area since 2010. I am a second-career academic (i.e., a business educator who entered into academia after substantial industry experience) . . . (Appendix E, Sample Invitation Letter to Potential Participant, September 2013)

3.6.4. Recognising Participants as Co-researchers

To avoid the research becoming a unilateral construction by the researcher, an open and explicit partnership is needed with the participants (Bell, 2011). Member-checking is a commonly discussed process to build such partnership with the participants in interpretive research. Creswell and Miller (2000) define member-checking as “taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the
credibility of the information and narrative account” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127, also Carlson, 2010; Merriam, 2002).

Scholarly opinion seems divided on the desirability of member-checking. Some scholars argue that the researcher is in a better position to interpret the results of a study. For example, Giorgi (2006a, 2006b) argues that the researcher has gone through the literature and has spent considerable effort on the topic, becoming reasonably knowledgeable in the field of study. Moreover, the researcher would have access to the data from all the participants, upon which the results are based. Therefore, the researcher should be in a better position to confirm the quality of the results (Giorgi, 1997, 2000, 2006a, 2006b; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008).

Some scholars even argue that relying on member-checking could be an indication of poorly conducted interviews (McConnell-Henry, Chapman, & Francis, 2011). These authors suggest that several measures such as attentive listening, establishment of rapport, and allocation of sufficient time for the interviews would yield quality results from the interview rather than relying on member-checking. Supporting the view that member-checking is not necessarily the only way or the best way to validate the result of narrative research, Sandelowski stipulates that “members are not always the best judge of what a valid account is” (Sandelowski, 2002, p. 108). Her argument is based on the rationale that participants may “forget what they have said, regret what they have said, feel compelled to agree with researchers . . . or present themselves in different ways at different times” (Sandelowski, 2002, p. 108). Her view is consistent with that of Morse et al. (2008) who argue that the “study results have been synthesized, decontextualized, and abstracted from (and across) individual participants . . . Member checks may actually invalidate the work of the researcher” (Morse et al., 2008, p. 16). Creswell and Miller also echo such a view as they perceive member checking as shifting the responsibility of quality assurance to the participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127).

In consideration of the above arguments, I did not convey my findings to the participants. However, I did deploy an alternative method of getting feedback from the participants: through my participation in a Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition. I participated in a 3MT competition at my host university campus and some of the
participants of the study were among the audience. I presented my key results in this. None of the participants raised any objection to the salient points I mentioned in my oral presentation. In fact one of the participants wrote to me indicating their concurrence with my results:

\[ \textit{I concur with you concerning the needs to have better policies and practices for practitioners who turned academicians better settled in the academia. Somehow, I feel, this is very lacking in many institutions of higher learning, both local and abroad. I look forward to more of your sharing and all the best in your research.} \text{(Participant P10)} \]

Furthermore, I also published a newspaper article which presented a brief account of my research. As the article was also posted on the website of my host university, the participants would have access to it, and therefore are likely to have noticed or read it. In fact, one of the participants wrote to me, confirming the perspective I presented in the article.

\[ \textit{One of the things that LT wrote which resonates with me is that we, second career academics are not recognised for our contributions. . . . I will write further on this when I am really in the mood.} \text{(Participant P18)} \]

### 3.6.5. Ensuring Diversity Among Participants

Recruitment of participants plays an important role in determining the quality of a study (Reybold, Lammert, & Stribling, 2013). Due to the purposeful sampling adopted in my study, all the participants were second-career academics in business school and all had at least a Master-level qualification. Still heterogeneity existed amongst them in terms of their professional background, age, race, ethnicity, religious affiliations, and geographic location. This heterogeneity provided a wide range of perspectives in the data. This is an element of research quality in interpretive research (Vähäsantanen & Saarinen, 2013).

Some scholars advocate maximum variation within purposive samples in order to capture a variety of descriptions of a phenomenon (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008, p. 391). For this reason, I recruited the participants from various types of university across Malaysia, covering both public and private universities. The public universities included
both teaching- and research-focused universities. The private universities included local institutions, collaborative institutions, and international branch campus universities (of UK and Australian origin). I also manage to include a distance learning university in my study. These covered all major types of university offering business education in Malaysia. Also, my participants came from institutions located across the country, covering both Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia. Table 3.1 presents a snapshot of the participants’ profile, in terms of their years of experience prior to joining academia and the professional field in which they acquired that experience.

Table 3.1. Participants’ Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Years in Industry</th>
<th>Field of Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>International Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Manufacturing (Quality Assurance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Commercial Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>International Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Information Technology Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.6. Using Computer-Aided Data Analysis

In view of the vast amount of data to be analysed in this study, I used ATLAS.ti, a computer software for coding and analysis of textual data. I attended a training course conducted by the software provider. The use of this software helped me in sorting and coding the voluminous data. The whole dataset covers 31 interview transcripts, 3 focus group discussions, and 13 artefacts, amounting to more than 400,000 words of text. The software has provision for tracking the codes which the user assigns to the text. It also enables the user to link the codes to various levels of thematic grouping. These features contributed towards meticulousness and efficiency in my data analysis. More specifically, it facilitated repeated reading, review of the interim themes, and cyclic revision of the results culminating in the final subthemes, category themes, and main themes.

Chapter Closing Remark. As the researcher, I have taken these steps to ensure quality in my research. But, in interpretive research, quality may also depend on the reader, their experiences and expectations (Merriam, 2001). Therefore, the real test of quality will be if you, the reader, find it in my analysis and results, presented next in Chapter 4.
Chapter 4
Thematic Analysis

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the process and product of data analysis conducted in this study. As mentioned earlier, data analysis has been concurrent with data collection. Since data collection has been a two-stage process (see Section 3.4, “Data Collection Methods”), data analysis also occurred in two stages. The first stage of data analysis covered the data obtained from the initial batch of 7 participants. This helped me form a preliminary impression about the experiences of the second-career academics.

This preliminary impression prepared me for the next stage of data analysis, following a hermeneutic circle of interpretation, where I had to go back and forth between the preliminary results (based on the initial batch of 7 participants) and the results derived from the growing dataset (based on the new participants joining the study). During this process, I detected the point of saturation, where I can no longer discern any new themes from the data. That is where I chose to end my data collection and conclude my analysis. The entire process and product of data analysis is depicted schematically in Figure 4.1.

This was a typical thematic analysis, which proceeded from units of meaning (i.e., quotations), to first-level codes, to interim subthemes, subthemes, category themes, and finally, main themes, in a cyclic process of conceptualisation and re-conceptualisation. While discussing the analytical process in this chapter, I will present the basic units of meaning (i.e., verbatim extracts from the data) showing how the data contribute to the emergence of themes. I hope this will ensure transparency and keep the reader grounded in the context.
Figure 4.1. Process and product of data analysis.

Note. The two concentric circles at the core of the figure indicate the data collected in two stages. The cyclic arrows symbolise the process of thematic analysis, exemplifying the hermeneutic circle. The broken lines represent the interconnections between the data and the successive stages of data analysis, ensuring that the results at each stage remain grounded in the data.

The overall dataset include the following elements: (a) 31 interview transcripts, (b) 3 focus-group-discussion transcripts, and (c) 13 artefacts (i.e., written documents). This forms the bulk of the data being analysed in this chapter. The interview transcripts ranged from 9,000 to 15,000 words. The focus-group-discussion transcripts ranged from 8,000 to 10,000 words. The artefacts were mainly self-reflective journals written by the participants, each in about 1,000 words. Thus, the dataset consisted of more than 400,000 words. From this voluminous dataset, units of meaning were coded in order to construct 87 subthemes, using the ATLAS.ti software. These subthemes gave rise to the 17 category themes and, eventually, the five main themes. (Table 4.5 presents the subthemes and Table 4.6 presents the category themes and main themes.)
4.2. Conceptualising First-Level Codes

For this thematic analysis, I relied on repeated reading of the transcripts, detection of key words from the narratives, my prior knowledge and intuition, and knowledge from the relevant literature (Aronson, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). The purpose was to attain coherence between data and initial level of coding (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002).

To initiate the analytical process, I selected phrases from the interview transcripts from the initial batch of 7 participants (i.e., P3, P7, P9, P10, P13, P14, and P18) as the initial set of units of meaning. I then grouped together units of meaning which seemed to have similar or overlapping meanings. After repeated reading and reflection, I assigned first-level codes to groups of units of meaning. This process of condensing the units of meaning culminated in the 35 first-level codes. These first-level codes provide an initial glimpse into the experience of the participants. The relationship between first-level codes and the units of meaning is shown in Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Unit of Meaning</th>
<th>First-Level Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Student that are talking to themselves at the back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Teaching I find that its sometimes not that satisfying especially when the students are not really responding to you . . . when the students are not really appreciating what you teach them, it makes you feel bad sometimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>I have some difficulty to cope up with this job because I am new, totally new so of course I face certain difficulties as well but overall I think it’s a very pleasant experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I think the main task is still with knowing what students are interested in and how to trigger their motivation because different groups of students have different motivation factors.</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>As a practitioner we are talking to some people who have some knowledge or need to talk to people from different profession so I can use a lot of technical terms and the other party will understand but when we talk to students we really have to reduce the amount of technical jargons that we use and have to use simple terms to tell them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>The worst experience that I have is actually when a student requested for one additional mark and then saying that, what I call that, saying that we didn’t give them proper guidance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Unit of Meaning</td>
<td>First-Level Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>I am talking about the method, teaching methods, you know, how to learn all the new techniques. Now is already withdrawn because of the Y side, they don’t give it and we don’t have qualified staff reside here to guide us. Last time we still have HH. This is one thing I want to point out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>The experience in the classroom. Of course there is challenges here and there because student may not be prepared for the topic or they themselves find the topic challenging, that is when I always give time to the student to come and see me, like I do at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>I am not computer literate.</td>
<td>Technological barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I am an immigrant, not a native, an IT native</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>We are not being briefed prior to the implementation of some policy</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>I find that university is not good in communicating out its priorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>The experience that I gain from the industry so much helping me in improving my teaching and student understanding</td>
<td>Experience in industry is an asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>You need to have that particular skill, communication skill, confidence level is important, your self-esteem is very important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>The thing that I like about teaching in a formal setting is, ahh, well can I say that the student are more obedient whereas the adult that you are teaching in the industry</td>
<td>Difference in work culture between industry and academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>So I find that teaching is, in a university is so much easier although I try to, what do you call that, try not to think that, eh this student know nothing, no, I always make an assumption that they do know something and that’s how I teach.</td>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Nice experience is when they willing to share their experience in the research and the teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>My colleagues here, they are very supportive</td>
<td>Supportive colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Colleagues. So far I am very happy with my relationship with the colleagues here, you know, I think academics, I have to say, academics normally are more cheerful for my experience because maybe the work environment is not as stressful as the outside world, you know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>I think, I learn from my colleagues who are very helpful to me, both industry and academic. And academic I find that people are very helpful and they are not judgmental in the sense that you need help to do this, they come to do it with you and I like that atmosphere actually.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Sharing experience, sharing knowledge, is wonderful</td>
<td>Knowledge sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Rewarding experience is I think the same that you develop your, in research I think mostly. When you develop new ideas, you share new ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Clerical part is a bit problem</td>
<td>Dislike the need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Unit of Meaning</td>
<td>Table 4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>The negative thing is that there are too many things going on like at the same time, research, teaching, this that, you know, administrative work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>You have your own time; you pursue your own interests. That’s rewarding and those interest develop further and you publish.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Here in academic I think you just need to compete with yourself because you have different specialisation, you teaching different unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I think in academia it does give an opportunity for creativity . . . I think the academia environment has actually allowed that flexibility and the time to be creative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Yea, because you are doing your own teaching, you can design your course in the way you like so it will affect your personality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Rewarding or you teach and when students are happy, they, the best thing is when they respond to you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Then you feel uplifted because the students they feel that they are, they learn a lot from the teaching and they appreciate it in their feedback then you feel very encouraged because you feel that what you are doing, you got the rewards, you got recognition from the students. I think that’s the best motivation you can have.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>As mentor and also as friend(of the students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>The reason why I went into teaching is I am sort of giving back, you know, using my experience to give back all the good thing that happen to me in the industry . . . I felt so respected as a lecturer . . . It is a very respected job I think . . . So I felt very proud as a lecturer. . . . I used to earn about 3 times what I am earning now but the respect is there and if there is a message that I would like to convey to other lecturers is be proud of what you are doing and don’t use it as a way to earn a living because it is a very respected occupation if you can call it that, profession I think. . . . I mean the perception of the general public is lecturer is a highly respected job and hopefully, this is my wish that I won’t let lecturing down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>I believe in scholarship, I believe in knowledge creation, I believe in philosophical engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>The good thing is that you can, because it’s less hierarchical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Everything is written very systematic and very routine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When we came into the industry, the first thing they do is to orientate us which means that, this is the culture we would like to have, this is how people behaviour should be. In the university, I find that there is a lacking of engagement and connection. Because I used to be in a corporate office at work, whatever the operators need, out there in the jungle or whatever, we support. That is our job. So these people, whether they are in admin, in finance or anything, they must know their job is to support us to deliver, not our bosses. They seem to have the message wrong.

The positive support is again obviously the time they give us to do research... research experience is by large good

Focus and do research because practically during semester break... you are quite free. Then in this case, I think you can make use of this period of time to work on the research without any interference.

Research... But I would say it's quite challenging because in terms of the teachings hours is quite high... So in this case I would say lack of a time to do research

You must be able to create in term of the body of knowledge of the field, so that's why you can't stop doing research

Because I was like thinking that I will be able to do research, you know what I mean, something like that. So, But then until now, I guess I don't have that opportunity or probably I am not very sure in terms of time management but I believe that there is, whenever I want to do, my mind is still thinking of how I want to do the units better, the one that I have.

The support from the university and colleague are tremendous... the university, they offer us the teaching and learning course

I can actually see that the university supported us through the professional development. Ok professional development where if assuming that I want to know what is research methodology for example,... When it comes to joining this particular university where they actually guide us with the curriculum design,... What I mean is student, the student is our customer now.

In terms of research, I think they also have some expectation but because of the, in terms of the limitation of the resources also, I don't think I meet the expectation so far but I am trying to be there because that's why I take the first move of applying for the research fellowship... And research wise because I still not very researching intensive, some staff still don't do research so it's not easy to do, to find collaboration, maybe some people they collaboration, they have their own gang, sometimes it's easy. So but maybe I still need to find more people to partner to do research because I think it's very hard to do research all by yourself but sometimes also feel like maybe also hard to collaborate because different people different interest also even though I do collaboration last time with my friends in KL

Actually now I am going to do research
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Unit of Meaning</th>
<th>First-Level Code</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>The freedom that they give us to do things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I used to work in private companies so in terms of the pressure is different because a lot of deadlines especially in the finance department</td>
<td>Better work-life balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Again here we also have the due date but I think it is not as critical as the industry that I worked with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>So when work in academia, you have more flexibility, of course you have to mark at home also but I feel that it's still better than office life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>I have been able to use my practical experience to do research... when I collaborate with others, the other academics, those who are purely academics, they like the fact that I have brought in some practical knowledge.</td>
<td>Practical experience assists in research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>My own experience can be utilised in that sense. So I have never heard of any opportunity for such engagement, organisation turn around or some organisation may want to have cost management, how they can manage the cost more effectively, how they can reduce cost. So these are all the possible engagement that I am willing to contribute because I have done those task before actually when I was in the industry.</td>
<td>Experience in industry is an asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Some students might find my teaching method is a bit different from others lecturer because I more emphasise on the application. I like to relate my experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>When I was an accountant, I need to coach the juniors; I need to impart my knowledge to the juniors. So I have been involved in, whether it’s direct or indirectly, teaching other people, being able to use simple language or words to tell them the standards and the practices. So I think this has helped me a lot when I moved on to the academia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I think the industrial experience of a practitioner can be a great asset in the academic if we can utilise it creatively... you can enjoy the academic as a profession is where you can utilise your previous experience in your academic field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>I feel that people who don’t have working experience right, they are not so flexible because they are, they have limited experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>I have not committed myself in the long run to academia</td>
<td>Reversibility of career move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>I think I did better in my previous job in the corporate world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Of course I am not expecting that myself to be lecturer for 10 years or only lecturer for the, you know what I mean, like only for 15 years become lecturer, like that. But again for me, like what you mentioned just now, it all about satisfaction, whether I am satisfied with my current job or not. At this point of time yes, I am quite comfortable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>We have to... very particular on our language and our writing</td>
<td>Encountering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Unit of Meaning</td>
<td>Table 4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>We are focusing on getting the message across and getting things done without much of emphasis in terms of choice of words as long as the recipient understand what we are trying to say. . . . we are focusing on getting the message across and getting things done without much of emphasis in terms of choice of words as long as the recipient understand what we are trying to say</td>
<td>challenges in academic writing and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>They use a lot of academic words which we don’t use. . . . It’s like when I came here, it’s like going into a foreign country and not knowing the language, you know? Spoken language. People have a tendency to speak in fonts and without explaining it and I do find that when I mark student assignment, they tend to do that...You know, it’s a language thing which I find is a barrier to communication. When you receive email, they also use all this short form, acronym or whatever you call it, right? So it takes me awhile to understand what do they want, you know, what do they expect out of me. So I find communication in the academic, academia or university, there is a lot of shortcoming that should be improved, you see . . . So I find that it is a language, it is a different form of words or language, like I say, like going into a foreign country and trying to understand what people are talk about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>What I find so strange about amongst the academics, during such meeting, I think is because great numbers of people are called to the meeting, like the whole faculty called for the meeting. Then you find 2 regular people or 3 regular people or even 1 person question, yea. The bad experience was when I first came, somebody, 2 people were questioning the person who conduct the meeting and they were like somewhat bullied in an email after that.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>You see like I said earlier on about accepting diversity of thoughts, diversity of opinions, to me when a person speak up, at a meeting, they must be thinking very hard about it. They are not trouble makers but the way I see it, when somebody express their opinions, they are seen to be trouble makers which should not be, you know? That’s the difference I find in the industry and in the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>I would say the performance objective is not very, not very straightforward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>But when it comes to appraisal, it is not satisfying. So but again I believe that there are gaps between this, you know what I mean? Probably we are not being, how to say, mentioned well on how should we actually, how to say, achieve certain particular goals that given to us. Ok because again when you are giving somebody with a very general expectation or general requirement, the problem later on probably will be, what means at the end of the day, you are not achieving this because you are not doing like this though we are actually, did what is per mentioned in the general requirement.</td>
<td>Uncomfortable with academic appraisal system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Unit of Meaning</td>
<td>First-Level Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Management wise so far I am still ok with them because I think my direct superior, immediate superior is consider to be the Dean, right? Because program coordinator is not actually a supervising so our direct superior is dean. But sometimes I understand why they do things because they have to report to the higher management but I cannot, it’s not honest that if I say always happy, this is not true as well. Sometimes I may be unhappy because you have appraisal of us. During appraisal, I think this is always during appraisal because you are appraised you feel that you deserve to get certain mark but when come to appraisal they will cut your mark. So I feel like, sometimes it’s subjective also, so when they cut your mark, of course sometime they can explain where you are measured, sometime they cannot explain where and you feel like the cut down of the mark is not justifiable</td>
<td>Unhappiness and confused by QA system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>So if you lack of competency, then you have no choice, you have to adapt; you have to learn</td>
<td>Need to learn new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>What I try to stress here is the individual level, ok? Maybe we have consider to get certain consultancy job in the corporate. So do some applied research project. . . . I think that is an engagement because I need to know what’s going on in the field so therefore I need to join the dialogue or seminars or conversations with a professional body.</td>
<td>Keenness to engage in industry outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Actually I know that it’s very important that you keep in touch with your industry so what I do is every semester I actually engage speakers from accounting firm to give a talk</td>
<td>Keenness to engage in industry outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>The difference is in my previous role is more in the application where now the knowledge that I get is more of imparting and teaching the students</td>
<td>Difference in role as an academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I think most of my time spent is in the area of teaching with only a small portion in research</td>
<td>Teaching is the priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>I find that my workload is a bit packed so because again I must say that before I come here, before I join here, I thought that I will have certain particular period of time to be allocated for research hour. But it seems that from the moment I come here, I see that instead of being like that, so most of the time is actually spent on teaching</td>
<td>Teaching is the priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>When it comes to industry, the one that I worked with, we have to be, how to say, we have to understand each other because why, every department is actually interrelated so we cannot ignore anybody but I don’t know, but I can actually feel that here, as long as I am within my faculty, what I mean is my own field which is finance, I manage it well then I don’t think I have to, you know, bother about other</td>
<td>Encountering silo nature of working culture in academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>But I feel like there is another thing that I am not, I mean unhappy experience is they keep on changing the policies, you know? When I started my career here until now, the QA policy keep on changing and I have to say it’s quite confusing. Even though I am very particular person but I still feel it’s confusing, keep on changing every semester. So sometimes also get confused.</td>
<td>Unhappiness and confused by QA system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Unit of Meaning</td>
<td>First-Level Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>So I am a little bit disappointed actually, it actually affect my feeling when I do teaching this semester because I keep on waiting because they told me approve already so they are looking for people to replace me until now, until last week they told me it’s not working, so I keep on waiting waiting, and it’s no result coming out. This is the thing that I feel disappointed lah because in terms of support of research, we still don’t have so much support here, you know.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>I have to say I enjoy it. I really enjoy working there</td>
<td>Keenness to be an academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Ok in terms of teaching, actually I quite passionate about teaching. I love teaching because my father is a teacher. . . . Actually I always love to do teaching. . . . Also your passion,</td>
<td>Passion to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>When I think I look back on my career which is, which span for over 30 years, I find that teaching is something I love to do. . . . I always enjoy going into a classroom. . . . I really enjoy teaching. . . . I have no problem with teaching because it’s something, now I truly believe that, do the thing you love, no matter how much you are paid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>So I feel that if your objective is aligned with university then you can do well like what I say because my objective is slightly a bit misaligned at the moment because I thought teaching, because I prefer teaching than research ma, so my research is not very outstanding, so my teaching, I emphasise a little bit more on teaching but university in fact they also emphasise on teaching but when they promote you, promote based on research, right? You know right? They promote you mostly based on research.</td>
<td>Realisation that university emphasises more on research rather than teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I am more on giving ideas and suggestions to others rather than perhaps benefiting from the sharing from others where I can use it in my teaching</td>
<td>Ability to contribute to academia due to industry experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These first-level codes arise from grouping the units of meaning together. What these codes represent is not easy to grasp without further analysis and conceptualisation. However, for the sake of record, I capture the 35 first-level codes in Table 4.2:

**Table 4.2. First-Level Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>First-Level Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Technological barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experience in industry is an asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Difference in work culture between industry and academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reversibility of career move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>First-Level Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Supportive colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Knowledge sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dislike the need to do their own clerical work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Opportunity to pursue one's own interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Rewarded by appreciation from students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>As mentor and friend to the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Give back to society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Scholarly nature of academic career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Egalitarian nature of academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Reminiscent of previous work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Research challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Institutional support in research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Interest in research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Better work-life balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Practical experience assists in research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Encountering challenges in academic writing and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Uncomfortable with academic appraisal system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Need to learn new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Need to learn new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Difference in role as an academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Teaching as the priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Encountering silo nature of working culture in academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Unhappiness and confused by QA system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Not supported to do research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Keenness to be an academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Passion to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Realisation that university emphasises more on research rather than teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Ability to contribute to academia due to industry experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After repeatedly reading the transcripts to identify common themes emerging from the narratives, I proceeded to interpret the data and reconceptualise the first-level codes. I managed to condense the first-level codes into a more comprehensive list of 28 interim subthemes to capture the experiences of the initial 7 participants.
4.3. Conceptualising Interim Subthemes

The first-level codes helped me to organise segments of related text from the transcripts to provide an appreciation of the scope and contents of the narratives. In order to develop the thematic analysis further, I read the contents of the first-level codes cyclically, to have an in-depth understanding of the meaning behind the stories told by the participants. I expressed this in terms of interim subthemes. With successive interviews, I compared my understanding of the new transcript with the categories and themes derived from the existing transcripts. I also refined the set of interim subthemes by referring back to the transcripts in a cyclic process. I carried out repeated reading, continuous critical reflection, and cyclic analysis and synthesis of the transcripts in order to make sense of the experiences expressed in the narratives of the participants.

My analysis was informed by Van Manen’s comment on human inquiry: “the critical moments of inquiry are ultimately elusive to systematic explication. Such moments may depend more on the interpretive sensitivity, inventive thoughtfulness, scholarly tact, and writing talent of the human science researcher” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 34). I also adopted a phenomenological attitude (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004, p. 146) in an attempt to grasp the important themes and the essential characteristics of the expressed meaning. Table 4.3 lists the 28 interim subthemes I conceptualised based on the first-stage of my analysis. I support this conceptualisation by illustrating how I derived these interim subthemes based on the data available at this stage:

Table 4.3. *Interim Subthemes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Interim Subtheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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### Interim Subtheme

**Interim Subtheme #1**

**Experiencing inadequacy due to less-developed teaching skills**

I detect a sense of inadequacy among the second-career academics I interviewed. The sense of inadequacy appears to originate from encountering difficulties in carrying out their academic tasks. This seems consistent with several studies on the challenges faced by second-career academics (see 2.3.2, “Academic Career and Prior Experience”). Here is a sample of the units of meaning, taken verbatim from the transcripts, supporting this interim subtheme:

P7: I don’t know, I think it’s um, being an academic is a tough job, I didn’t realise this thing; it’s not the way it appears. Again I will go back to the issue of goal confusions, multiple activities, contradiction of between making money or being scholarly, what kind of research to do, what is outcome of that research, what are you trying to get out of teaching, how effective is teaching, how much time to give to teaching, you know? Um, all of these things are really really not easy to handle,
not easy to handle. . . But I think overall, frankly speaking, I think overall my teaching experience has not been really positive. As far as undergraduates . . . Mostly is undergraduates, yea . . . How do I sustain my . . . I don’t know, I sustain it by trying to make, you know, I try to communicate well with the students and trying to bring out, trying to show that I tailor the message according to their needs. I don’t know, I can’t really answer this question because I think I am struggling, I am not able to really . . . I am struggling, yea, I haven’t found a way of making myself, you know . . . Yes yes, undergrads, they are a bit of an issue with me, yea . . .

P9: I think I did better in my previous job in the corporate world but here because I am new, I am still pretty much trying how to cope with the job; I am still learning. . . . I cannot deny that I have some difficulties to perform certain task.

P14: I also have bad experience when I have don’t have good feedback then I will feel very downhearted, especially the first time you taught the subject. To my experience, normally first time teaching, normally, especially a new subject right, you will, normally your feedback will not be so good because technically wise you are not so confident so students sometimes they will pinpoint that things . . . But I still try to do good in my teaching because you feel very bad if you don’t teach well.

This interim subtheme is also supported in the first focus group discussion (FGD 1):

Participant in FGD 1: But actually of course we have to admit, we also have our limitations like because, like for example, we never been trained properly to be a teacher, isn’t it? So of course when I first joined, first take up this position, I have my challenges to overcome also, how to prepare the notes, how to organise the lecture, all this kind of things.

Interim Subtheme #2

Experiencing frustration due to technological challenge

From the following units of meanings, I have conceptualised that there is a sense of frustration. The frustration appears to originate from encountering difficulties in dealing with the information and communication technology (ICT) used in higher education. Their experience seems consistent with the studies on the challenges faced by academics due to the impact of ICT on higher education (see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”).
P3: So because of my background, I am not computer literate.

P10: but to really know the youngsters nowadays, those 18, 19, 20 fresh from schools, I have to know what sort of language they use, what sort of computer programs they are using, what sort of computer games they like to play and what sort of social media they are involved, so that I am able to quote those context to trigger their interest to learn. So I think that is the main challenge and I have to say I am not a really IT savvy person. I am an immigrant not a native, an IT native. There are things that I need to pick up so I think that is my challenge in the academia.

P18: I have real challenges when it come to do things on the computer, you must know that I am in the baby boomer group, we are not very hands on and very good in using computer, it come much later in my career, ok? So I find that very challenging.

Interim Subtheme #3
Experiencing frustration with academic communication style

I have conceptualised another sense of frustration, originating from the academic communication style some of the participants have experienced. They cite issues relating to compliance with quality assurance and accreditation processes. These processes are new to second-career academics. The following units of meaning are associated with this interim subtheme:

P13: Probably what I mean by the policy, of course we cannot expect all of the policy need to be mentioned, right? But what I mean is supposed to be like something that is quite relevant to us, you know what I mean, especially for example, um, when it comes to, I am not very sure but this is what I feel before, when I just started, when I didn’t know what is actually, what does it mean by high failure rate, you know what I mean? Uh what percentage that I need to maintain and then how to, how to say, how to differentiate the references between the, what is that, the, your marking together with the cross marker for example, why is it that particular percentage is very important, like 10%, 5%, why is it10%, 5%, why don’t it 15%, 20% but I only knew this thing when it comes to filling in the template on the, for me it’s a bit too late, you know what I mean? So this one should be like mentioned earlier so that we are very clear that we have to be aware of this kind... That is what I meant.

P14: So sometimes also get confused. This semester which one I am going to follow? Intensive? Do I have to send all my assessment to be moderate or not? And then also they keep on changing the form template. I have to keep on changing my template every semester also because when I am set to use one template, I feel that I am going to use this one, I am going to change for the template. Every semester, I have to keep on comparing it and then I have transfer my former whatever so I
feel stressful when I come to this part, the template and the policies. . . .
But when it comes to administrative part, I think there is a lot to improve
for management because of a lot of changing all the time, it’s very hard
for people to cope sometimes but I still can try my best to do it.

**Interim Subtheme #4**

*Experiencing confidence due to industry experience*

Sometimes, the participants seem to present their industry experience as their asset. This
perception by the participants is consistent with the findings of earlier studies on
accounting professionals becoming accounting educators in the USA (e.g., Boyle,
Carpenter, Hermanson, & Mensah, 2013; for a more detailed discussion, see 2.3.2,
“Academic Career and Prior Experience”). A number of key phrases in the participants’
narratives cued me onto this interim subtheme:

**Key Phrases (Interim Subtheme #4)**

*competitive edge*
*huge advantage*
*importance*
*better*
*applicable*
*confidence*
*useful*

The related units of meaning are:

**P3:** Yes, to me I feel that industrial experience is one of the most
important factors that contribute to the performance of whether the
lecturer itself or the student. . . . So these are the thing that the lecturer
that have the industrial experience, having something like a competitive
dge as compared to those who are purely academic.

**P7:** They have because of their work experience especially in the
business school. . . . it is a huge, I think, advantage for them because they
bring in practical understand of the world.

**P13:** Experience is also important because the moment you have
knowledge, as well as the experience, it will be better for you to, what I
mean in applying whatever that you will be doing.

**P10:** Cost management would be a very interesting consultancy job . . . .
That is where the, my own experience can be utilised in that sense. . . . So
that actually has gained me a lot of positive feedback from the students
because they see the relevance of what they learn.
P18: I believe, I am confident that I have practitioner experience in order to guide this program, this project.

Participant in FGD 1: The experience I want to add on some on the experience is about applications.

Participant in FGD 1: I think most of us we like to share experience that’s why we are lecturers.

Participant in FGD 1: I think some of [the students], they want you to be experienced as well.

**Interim Subtheme #5**

*Experiencing confidence due to previous work as trainers*

For some of the participants, their previous careers in industry did involve training their subordinates. Their narratives seem to contain the confidence that their experience of conducting training may have prepared them for teaching roles.

P9: Ok for teaching, because teaching is totally new for me but I do have some training experience, you know, I train before, my junior staff, ok, I train my dealers’ staff, my product sometimes some of the system you know. So I do have some teaching experience, in, not exactly teaching, is training. Ok but I think to certain extent the meaning is the same, training and teaching.

P10: Hmm . . . I think when I was an accountant, I need to coach the juniors, I need to impart my knowledge to the juniors. So I have been involved in, whether it’s direct or indirectly, teaching other people, being able to use simple language or words to tell them the standards and the practices. So I think this has helped me a lot when I moved on to the academia.

P18: I like teaching very much because I am a human resource practitioner which we also undertake training which means that we train new managers, people who have been promoted.

**Interim Subtheme #6**

*Experiencing confidence in teaching due to industry experience*

Some of the participants said that their previous experience in industry is helpful in teaching some business subjects. This interim subtheme is consistent with the findings of Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004). Some of the participants even indicate a sense of being more suited to teach certain subjects than first-career academics. Accordingly, I
have conceptualised the interim subtheme of experiencing confidence in teaching due to previous industry experience.

P9: But some units like sales and marketing is contextual based, you need someone like me and you, you know, to teach them because we can relate the theory and concept into a lot of example, the real life example. So then in this case, they can, you know, it’s much more easy for them to understand and to apply whatever they learn you know from the textbook.

P14: I feel that people who don’t have working experience right, they are not so flexible because they are, they have limited experience, so they are not able to teach all subject because if you have limited experience, you don’t have so much confidence in teaching all kind of subject because in accounting subject, you have so many areas, you are auditing, taxation, financial accounting, management accounting, so I can see people who lack of experience, who never work before, work in industry before right, they are, they dare not to take up the challenge of taking the subject they don’t, they are not familiar.

Participant in FGD 1: And you must, you see how valuable their experience is to the teaching of the subject that they are teaching.

Interim Subtheme #7
Experiencing acceptance through support from colleagues and the university

Some of the participants reported experiencing fellowship, collegiality, and camaraderie in their interactions with their academic colleagues. Their narratives convey the cooperation and support they have received from their colleagues and respective institutions.

P9: I think I cope up quite well because of, with support from the university and colleagues.

P10: I think the other aspect that benefitted me is the sharing of research work by other colleagues, especially like those who are doing their PhDs and those that are doing some research. . . . I think I benefitted.

P14: I feel that some of them are very nice and not nasty one, you know? Even nasty I think is still acceptable, is still better than people from outside, which is my perception, you know, ok?

P18: And academic I find that people are very helpful and they are not judgmental in the sense that you need help to do this, they come to do it with you and I like that atmosphere actually.
**Interim Subtheme #8**

*Experiencing satisfaction in sharing practical knowledge with colleagues*

Some of the participants express positive feelings about being able to share their practical knowledge and expertise with their colleagues who are first-career academics.

P7: *My previous experience is an asset in terms of allowing me to collaborate with more senior and more accomplished academics because they don’t have practical experience, they need an empirical area but they have got a theoretical knowledge. So it’s easier for me, it has been easier for me, to make myself useful to them and to successfully achieve collaborations.*

P10: *I see that as an opportunity that I can share with them my industrial experience. So I am glad that I can actually share with them to enrich their teaching experience as well, especially those that are fresh from the academia and then they graduated and just teach. So I feel that there is a contribution that I can give to help my colleagues who didn’t have much of a practitioner experience. . . . I am happy to share and I feel the satisfaction especially when they give me feedback that things that I shared had actually helped them. So obviously there is a satisfaction. . . . I am more on giving ideas and suggestions to others rather than perhaps benefitting from the sharing from others where I can use it in my teaching. That’s what happening actually. I give ideas, I give suggestions, I share with others and then others benefitted from what I shared. . . . That’s why I said that I am more on contributing rather than receiving through those discussions.*

**Interim Subtheme #9**

*Experiencing alienation due to the need to perform administrative duties*

From the following units of meanings, I have conceptualised that there is a sense of frustration originating from the administrative duties or clerical work such as typing documents, filling forms, and filing records. Apparently in their previous careers, clerical work was taken care of by a pool of secretarial staff. Some of them admit their lack of skills in this type of work. Given that some of the clerical work involves the use of ICT, this interim subtheme is related to Interim Subtheme #2.

P18: *When you go out in the industry, you know, you do have people doing all the administrative work for you. I have real challenges when it come to do things on the computer, you must know that I am in the baby*
boomer group, we are not very hands on and very good in using computer, it come much later in my career.

P3: Clerical part mean to say that something you have to meet to, meeting the deadline, for example, and some clerical part, for example, you have to key in some data and produce a report which previously is done by your managers or your secretary do all the typing and report for you, doing the checking.

**Interim Subtheme #10**

**Experiencing freedom due to opportunities in academia**

For some of the participants, academia opened up opportunities to carry out activities previously not available to them. There are more avenues for them to pursue self-actualisation, such as being more creative in their work and studying topics of their own interest.

P7: Positive ones are the freedom that we have to do our own thing, the lack of hierarchy, to some extent and it permits you to do your own research.

P10: I think in academia it does give an opportunity for creativity. . . . In practice basically, we don’t have time for creativity. What we have is the time to get to know the latest accounting standards and the latest company law changes and to implement and there’s no space for creativity but in academic setting, we have time to explore all possibilities. We have time to look at other materials on the internet. . . . So I think the academia environment has actually allowed that flexibility and the time to be creative.

**Interim Subtheme #11**

**Experiencing motivation from appreciation by students**

Some participants experience good feedback and gratitude from their students. This, in turn, motivates them in their academic career.

P7: The best thing is when they respond to you, they say you are a really good teacher. That’s rewarding yea. So . . . Good student feedback is the, is very rewarding, is immediately rewarding.

P13: The best experience is actually when the student say that, thankful to me for sharing whatever that I have, what I mean is, whatever that I
experienced in my industry in their lecture and then they say that it is actually very useful when they actually go outside.

P14: I think the best experience is when you receive good feedback from the students.

**Interim Subtheme #12**

*Experiencing inspiration in the opportunity to give back to society*

For some of the participants, pursuing an academic career is like giving back to society. They derive satisfaction from nurturing students, preparing them for the business world. To them, this is a form of giving back to society.

P10: I think the satisfaction, my own satisfaction, my own view on the satisfaction I get here can’t be obtained from the industry because I am shaping the future of many many students which in turn they would use those knowledge to shape the future of, if they work in industry, the companies they are working for which I think their impact is exponential when compared to when I was in industry. I moved one single company. I am only shaping the future of that particular company. So that’s my satisfaction as an academia. I see shaping the future of the students as a very great satisfaction if you are talking about teaching.

P18: Yea, the reason why I went into teaching is I am sort of giving back, you know, using my experience to give back all the good thing that happen to me in the industry. . . . Now even I go to a coffee shop and people ask me what do you do, I said lecturer, wow, you know. It is a very respected job I think, I think because going back to our, the culture, the people. That’s why I told D, teaching is a vocation, it’s like wanting to be a priest, you know, rather than a career to support your lifestyle.

Participant in FGD 1: Because I am preparing them in advance for the real, for the reality when they go. . . . So I think that is very satisfying as far as I am concerned. . . . I think he like to share with people his experience. I think most of us we like to share experience that’s why we are lecturers. . . . My teaching approach, I always share my experience with the student and all this experience is very valuable for my student because this thing is real, realism you know.

**Interim Subtheme #13**

*Experiencing nobility of being an academic*

The scholarly aspect of an academic career seems to appeal to some of the participants. This appears to match with their values and beliefs regarding academia. This is
consistent with the autoethnographical study by Learmonth and Humphreys (2012; discussed in 2.3.4, “Academic Career and Identity”).

P7: I believe in scholarship, I believe in knowledge creation, I believe in philosophical engagement with, in philosophical engagement you know.

P10: It is more of a scholarly work in contributing to the field in terms of empirical contribution, the other contribution or methodological contribution which many not bring any financial results immediately.

**Interim Subtheme #14**

*Experiencing comfort with the egalitarian culture of academia*

Some participants experience the academic culture as less hierarchical than industry. They perceive the academic setting to be more friendly, pleasant, and egalitarian than the industrial settings they came from.

P3: Oh yes, they are very friendly. For example, if I want to ask something that I don’t know, then the colleagues are willing to help me. I feel very happy for the support. . . . So this is where friends, colleagues come in and help, in terms of how to complete the report. Of course I am not going to ask him or her to do the whole way, they will teach me.

P9: I think I cope up quite well because of, with support from the university and colleagues.

P10: So basically all the colleagues actually click well with each other irrespective of the industrial experience. This is what I have experienced.

**Interim Subtheme #15**

*Experiencing confidence in using past frames of reference*

From the following units of meanings, I detect a sense of confidence among some participants arising from their past careers in industry. This confidence finds expression in their ability to evaluate academic practices using the frames of reference cultivated in their previous career in industry. Some indications of this can be discerned from the following key phrases:

**Key Phrases (Interim Subtheme #15)**

*When you were in the industry*
comparing this with my previous work experience
I did better in my previous job in the corporate world
when it comes to industry

P3: When you were in the industry, when we want to start with new policy, when we start with new policy then we have to call all the staff. Of course it must be approved by the meeting first, the board meeting before we want implement it then we have to call all the staff, whether they agree or not. If all of them agree, don’t agree, if all of them agree, then we go back to the board of director and give them some feedback. And then the board will say that ok this, we have to start this at certain date, certain time. So it’s not always the case that where we just simply impose some policy which the staff or the workers are not aware with. So they, if we do this, there is some resistance from the staff. So I find out that to some extent, in the academic, we are not being briefed prior to the implementation of some policy. That I feel a bit different from what we practised in the industry.

P7: I am comparing this with my previous work experience, right? And I am realising more and more that my previous work, that what I learn in my previous experience, it’s very hard, it almost impossible to learn within the walls of university.

P9: I think I did better in my previous job in the corporate world but here because I am new, I am still pretty much trying how to cope with the job, I am still learning.

P10: As a practitioner we are talking to some people who have some knowledge or need to talk to people from different profession

P13: Again when it comes to industry, the one that I worked with, we have to be, how to say, we have to understand each other because why, every department is actually interrelated so we cannot ignore anybody but I don’t know, but I can actually feel that here, as long as I am within my faculty, what I mean is my own field which is finance, I manage it well then I don’t think I have to, you know, bother about other . . . Again when it comes to my previous job, the expectation is different. Everything we have a due date that we can’t compromise, what I mean that if you are mentioning tomorrow, then it must be tomorrow. There will be no an extension of like another 2 days, another 3 days or this thing will be postponed to the next day because the previous work that I did is actually profit organisation. But I am not saying that this university is actually non-profit organisation.

P18 [commenting on research]: In the industry, we call it survey. . . . So we are always doing that in the industry. . . . Like I do at work.
**Interim Subtheme #16**

*Experiencing challenge due to the requirement of academic research*

I detect another sense of frustration when the participants speak about the requirement of academic research. The frustration appears to originate from encountering difficulties in carrying out academic research due to unfamiliarity with academic research. This lack of experience of second-career academics in academic research has been identified by several studies (e.g., Gale, 2011; LaRocco & Bruns, 2006; see 2.3.6, “Academic Career and Research”).

P7: *They want us to become researchers, to create knowledge but knowledge creation itself is very vague. What kind of knowledge do you want? . . . Then also the issue of publication, academic publications, is highly uncertain. It’s very hard to publish in good journals, right? . . . If you go for good journals, you can’t publish, you can’t publish quickly, you have to, it will take time to develop ideas, develop in a way normal ideas. So this is one thing, it’s a mess, it is not good for a business person to, a business person who come from the corporate world will find it very frustrating I think. . . . So that has been very hard for me, the research part. . . . Because you are a second career, you are starting out, you are new in that, so that pressure, that pressure builds up, creates a lot of emotional stress, physiological stress because you knew right? And that you don’t have much time to establish yourself in a new career, right? So that’s why you need to quickly do things but the problem is you can’t do quickly because it takes time to publish, it takes time to do research.*

P10: *I would say it involve a lot of reading, thinking, writing, and rewriting before the actual research can be carried out because we have to think about it in a very holistic way of, about our research work or our planned research work because I haven’t really carried out the research yet. . . . So it’s a very challenging yet I think it’s very enriching because it does open up my mind and become more receptive to different things or opinions or knowledge because I see that there is a vast possibilities out there. . . . Because I have been a practitioner. So practitioner has a practical way of writing things and expressing ourselves but when come to academia there are certain ways to express ourselves especially in a context of research.*

P14: *in terms of research, my experience is not so good, also not very a lot because I do not put so much time in research but I try to do a little bit of collaboration with my friends in other universities. . . . Because in fact I don’t really like research, you know? But I feel like but I already joined, you know, it’s not easy to say quit already so ok la, no choice, have to continue. . . . Research actually is more important than teaching, you must know about this. . . . So in terms of research, I think I am still*
under expectation, I am still, I try my best to be there so maybe that’s why I take the first move to try to be the research fellow.

**Interim Subtheme #17**

*Experiencing alienation with the prevailing appraisal system in academia*

I detect yet another source of frustration in the experience of academic performance appraisal practices. It gives rise of unhappiness for some participants:

P14: It’s not honest that if I say always happy, this is not true as well. Sometimes I may be unhappy because you have appraisal of us. During appraisal, I think this is always during appraisal because you are appraised you feel that you deserve to get certain mark but when come to appraisal they will cut your mark. So I feel like, sometimes it’s subjective also, so when they cut your mark, of course sometime they can explain where you are measured, sometime they cannot explain where and you feel like the cut down of the mark is not justifiable so I have that kind of feelings sometimes. But of course this is, the part I think when come to appraisal, I think is some, sometimes there’s some unhappiness also.

**Interim Subtheme #18**

*Experiencing challenge in following various conventions of academic work*

Some participants also report a sense of frustration due to the difference in work culture between industry and academia. They have encountered difficulties in understanding the expectations of university management, conventions of academic writing, and academic perspectives on issues:

P9: *I would say the expectation from the management is not very clearly defined because too much area you have to cover, isn’t it? . . . It’s different from, the working culture is very much different from the corporate world.*

P10: *But I think in academia the quality of writing is important because we are academics so the choice of words, the tone of the sentence that we write must reflect our standard to meet. So that is perhaps I think the difference here between the practitioner and the academia. . . . When we talk to students we have to bear in mind that hey, they haven’t gone through the accounting professional exams yet so they perhaps don’t understand what I am taking about. So I think in terms of the choice of words I used is definitely different in these two aspects, in these two fields.*
P13: But probably because when you see that the culture again, how to say like that so you have to be one of them though you, you know what I mean, though you, because you can’t act something different otherwise you will be looked differently.

**Interim Subtheme #19**

Experiencing alienation due to the cultural difference

From the following units of meanings, it appears that the difference in culture between industry and academia results in a degree of alienation for some participants. The alienation appears to come from encountering difficulties in appreciating academic expectations.

P7: It’s been hard because academics is probably, you know, have two different worlds. The academic world, the success in academic world is defined and structurally different than the success in the business world because in academic world it’s about research, right? . . . It’s hard to really keep focus in academia and it’s hard to really do so many things at the same time which are really vague like teaching, research, this and that, so, in business we do the same thing, in business we have different goals but those goals have the same fundamental objective of profitability or organisational sustainability, you know? So they have a central theme but not in academia.

P13: Ah talking about task, task also of course is different because here we are looking at the customer, what I mean is the customer, probably the student, the parents. Ok we are limited to parents and student. But when it comes to talking about industry, our customer will be different level of customer where we categorise our customer based on the high net worth, low income group, medium income group. That is normally our expectation. . . Because again like I mentioned just now, my direction so I don’t have that words of regretting. But I can actually say that I am very comfortable at this point of time but probably of course in individual, they are expecting for career development, what I mean is, of course I am not expecting that myself to be lecturer for 10 years . . .

P18: I find that university is not good in communicating out its priorities and I think that different organisation, like differences in culture, language, I think it’s a language. . . . We have no experience with communication with the management of the university because they seem to be such a distance, you know?
**Interim Subtheme #20**

*Experiencing gratitude due to institutional support in teaching and research*

Some participants experience institutional support in teaching and research. They mention various forms of support, such as information, workshops, and courses.

P3: *I find that the university in terms of resource, ok, resource, the book and journals is easily available and in terms of research, they do have grant, they do have supervisory ship, supervisor who are willing to help you in pursuing into your research and ah in terms of career development, they do have some budget for seminar and workshop to attend.*

P9: *I think I cope up quite well because of, with support from the university and colleagues. . . . In terms of teaching . . . I attended all the, all these kind of seminar or courses.*

P10: *So I benefitted a lot from the academic writing seminars. Yea that’s one aspect.*

P13: *Supported in terms of research. . . . Learn through this particular professional development program that is actually sponsored by the university. So that is how, I guess, way of their support. . . . So again in this particular university, where I can actually see that we are being guided in a correct manner especially when it comes to joining this particular university where they actually guide us with the curriculum design, how do we actually handle customer, what I mean is student, the student is our customer now.*

Participant in FGD 1: *I think the university are very supportive, the university and the colleagues, they are very supportive. They can, anytime if you just raise your doubts, raise your questions, they will answer you, they will give you some kind of support, like the faculty also, they even send us to the teaching and learning kind of training. I think that is very good, yea.*

**Interim Subtheme #21**

*Experiencing relief with better work-life balance*

Some participants appreciate the slower pace of working in academia compared to industry. In the flexibility of working hours in academia, they perceive a chance for better work-life balance.

P9: *Ok, so you can plan your personal life and your job very well, very balanced, you can manage very well.*
P10: I think, in terms of the pace of the work is so much faster and more pressurised as compared to academia because of the deadlines. Whereas in academia, the deadlines is not going to cram everything into a week or two. So I think when I switching from a practitioner to academia, I don’t think this is an issue I faced.

P13: For me myself, I have been actually working with a very, how to say, demanding industry where we need to fulfil certain particular target for example, meet a lot of requirement, deadline. So when it comes to, how to say, moving to this particular, how to say, education, I can actually, how to say, suit myself in this particular environment.

P14: Academia? Ok I have to say I enjoy it. I really enjoy working there. Briefly I tell you that because of the nature of the job, people mostly, you control your own subject. I have freedom of my own subject so I feel I have full control of what I am doing so I like that kind of freedom and most of the time, because of the flexibility of the working hours, I like it. If you work in an office, you know 9 to 5, auditor is 8 to 5 which I feel like oh restriction in the office. . . . Because you are doing your own teaching, you can design your course in the way you like so it will affect your personality. So normally you will be more, you will not be stressful, you will be happier also, so there are less restriction. So I feel that because of that kind of working environment so I manage to have a better relationship with the colleague.

P18: When you talk about industry, the, when you are manager, you tend to do things in spurts, 10 minutes this, 10 minutes that, you know, in spurts. We don’t think, we are solving problem, the problem come to us, we solve it, ok, we never reflect. Academic we reflect. . . . Yes. We reflect back. . . . But in the industry, we don’t have time to do that.

**Interim Subtheme #22**

Experiencing alienation as immigrants in academia

Some second-career academics perceive themselves as immigrants in academia. This is consistent with the findings of Wilson et al. (Wilson, Wood, Solomonides, Dixon, & Goos, 2014, pp. 7-8), where a career transition from industry to academia is akin to an international migration process.

P18: It’s like when I came here, it’s like going into a foreign country. . . . So I find that it is a language, it is a different form of words or language, like I say, like going into a foreign country and trying to understand what people are talk about.
Interim Subtheme #23

Experiencing frustration in the non-recognition of industry experience

Some participants express their frustration about the perceived unfairness of their employment terms. While the appointment takes into account their academic qualifications, it does not do justice to their years of industry experience.

P3: Now my question is that, is it fair to compare those lecturer with industrial experience with those who are academic, fully academic qualification or experience? In terms of pay, are these people with academic experience, lecturer with academic experience, should fall under the same salary scale or they should have their own salary scale? . . . But of course I feel that I should be paid more than what I what should be getting due to the 20 over years’ experience, at least they can count something that, 20 over years might be, maybe the factor could be 5 years industrial experience equivalent to one year academic, at least. Maybe there is some method of calculating.

P18: Because when I was in the industry, I was earning many times over, you know, in terms of salaries and benefit and thing. . . . I used to earn about 3 times what I am earning now.

Participant in FGD 1: Like for example, when we, our remuneration, just because we don’t do research, it doesn’t mean that we are less valuable, you know. So when you compare the remuneration, we seem to be more of a second class but they never take into account the experience.

Interim Subtheme #24

Experiencing encouragement upon being respected by society

One participant reflected on the public perception of academia as a respected occupation. This resonates with the nobility of academic career discussed in the Malaysian context (see 2.2.4, “Nobility of Higher Education in Malaysia”).

P18: I mean the perception of the general public is lecturer is a highly respected job. . . . So I felt very proud as a lecturer, you know? Is, the public seem to have this perception that, you know, you are very knowledgeable. So this is a time I felt most proud of all of the thing that I have done. I mean it is, it makes me want to do better and to be a respected lecturer. . . . Because it is a very respected occupation if you can call it that, profession I think. . . . I felt so respected as a lecturer . . . I mean the perception of the general public is lecturer is a highly
respected job and hopefully, this is my wish that I won't let lecturing
down or you know, like I mean I will not let it down by, because of that I
strive to be, to do a good job as a lecturer.

Interim Subtheme #25
Experiencing challenge in adapting to academic culture

The importance of unlearning and relearning in their new careers as academics appeared in some participant narratives.

P3: Of course I am still at the infant stage. . . . Now I am still learning, I
am still learning.

P18: The difference is when you are ‘teaching’ to the people at work, you
must know that they are adults. . . . You see, the difference is they are
adults and at university, this people have either don’t have any working
experience or they just, they do it to get a degree for themselves, ok, so
there is a difference there.

Interim Subtheme #26
Experiencing discomfort due to the silo mentality encountered in academia

Some participant narratives refer to the experience of separation and isolation in academic work. The following key phrases are worth noting:

Key Phrases (Interim Subtheme #26)
I don’t think I have to, you know, bother about others
basically work alone
people do work in silo

P18: I find that people do work in silo. They do work by themselves as opposed to organisation, you can’t do that, you have to be engaged with people.

Extract from written journal of a participant: For the first few months of my second career as a university academic, I felt a deep sense of isolation. In the workplace or industry, there are intense interactions that go on every day. The environment is always dynamic, and sometimes volatile. Coordination of tasks requires one to work with colleagues at all times, which means frequent meetings and discussions. . . . You basically work alone and within the confines of the subjects you are teaching. It is as if you are a writer working in solitude.
Interim Subtheme #27

Experiencing passion in teaching

Passion to teach finds mention in several participant narratives. It gets linked to previous experience in teaching, for example, in school (P3) or in a previous career (P9). This resonates with Myers’s “Teaching for the love of it” (Myers, 2006; also discussed in 2.3.8, “Academic Career and Calling”).

P3: I love teaching even during the school time, I like to teach or to give something like a peer, a teaching among our group, ok, so sharing of information, sharing of what I have learnt from the chapter and so on.

P9: My experience working as a teacher, I think, I would put it this way, very, I think it’s a very pleasant experience.

P14: So I think I still prefer to do teaching, it suit to my character and also you have more freedom on how you want to handle in this line of course. So I think all of this factor actually help to contribute to this different working environment and it helps to shape to your character also so because of that, my colleague.

P18: Yea, I have no problem with teaching because it’s something, now I truly believe that, do the thing you love, no matter how much you are paid.

Participant in FGD 1: It’s always I think the heart factor; I will say the heart factor is always the monetary terms, you know, compared practitioner and academics. If you want to promote academic as a career for the practitioners, I think it’s only those who have the keen interest to impart knowledge that are willing to really have a look or interested to find out more.

Interim Subtheme #28

Experiencing marginalisation due to the prestige attached to research

The experience of marginalisation arises for some participants as they find academic promotions are based on research output. This leads to a sense of frustration when they view this as a neglect of their capability and contribution in teaching.

P7: Success in academic world is defined and structurally different than the success in the business world because in academic world it’s about research, right? . . . Academia is really vague, it’s, sometimes the goals
are not compatible, research and teaching for example, you know? . . .
Mostly you teach, you are paid for teaching actually but you are assessed on research. That’s a very interesting situation here.

P14: university in fact they also emphasise on teaching but when they promote you, promote based on research, right? You know right? They promote you mostly based on research. . . . From what I see, from the criteria, they promote it based on research. So I feel like it’s not aligned so unless I align myself, I focus more on research then teaching is my second one then I can do better in my performance in teaching, in this second career. So I think maybe the most important factor is the alignment of the objective with the organisation that you join.

4.4. Preliminary Results: First Stage of Data Analysis

Moving forward with the first stage of data analysis, I tried to focus on the internal pattern within the 28 interim subthemes. At an abstract level, the interim subthemes capture the experiences of second-career academics who find themselves in a new context of work, that is, academia. This new context of work offers both positive and negative experiences to them, for which they seem to have different degrees of reediness. This type of abstraction hints at the possibility of two somewhat independent dimensions along which the interim subthemes may be categorised: (a) one dimension would be the degree of fit with the academic context and (b) another dimension would be the degree of readiness one brings into the context. Thinking along these lines, I visualised a two-by-two classification scheme (high/low readiness vs. high/low fit), implying four categories of experience (Figure 4.2).
Figure 4.2. Categorising interim subthemes along two dimensions.

This categorisation scheme is used to group the 28 interim subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Grouping Interim Subthemes Under Interim Category Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Interim Subtheme</th>
<th>Interim Category Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Experiencing inadequacy due to less-developed teaching skills</td>
<td>#1. Frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration due to technological challenge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration with academic communication style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Experiencing alienation due to the need to perform administrative duties</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Experiencing challenge due to the requirement of academic research</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Experiencing alienation with the prevailing appraisal system in academia</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Experiencing challenge in following various conventions of academic work</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration in the non-recognition of industry experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Experiencing discomfort due to the silo mentality encountered in academia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Experiencing marginalisation due to the prestige attached to research</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Interim Subtheme</td>
<td>Interim Category Theme</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Experiencing acceptance through support from colleagues and the university</td>
<td>#2. Congruence</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Experiencing satisfaction in sharing practical knowledge with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Experiencing freedom due to opportunities in academia</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Experiencing motivation from appreciation by students</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Experiencing inspiration in the opportunity to give back to society</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Experiencing nobility of being an academic</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Experiencing comfort with the egalitarian culture of academia</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Experiencing gratitude due to institutional support in teaching and research</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Experiencing relief with better work-life balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Experiencing encouragement upon being respected by society</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Experiencing passion in teaching</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence due to industry experience</td>
<td>#3. Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence due to previous work as trainers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence in teaching due to industry experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence in using past frames of reference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Experiencing acceptance through support from colleagues and the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Experiencing alienation due to the cultural difference</td>
<td>#4. Alienation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Experiencing alienation as immigrants in academia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Experiencing challenge in adapting to academic culture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Experiencing discomfort due to the silo mentality encountered in academia</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.1. Interim Category Theme #1: Frustration

There is a sense of frustration among second-career academics. This has multiple roots, which could indicate a lack of fit with the academic context and a lack of readiness for an academic career. A list of such roots would include: (a) inadequately developed teaching skills, (b) technological challenge, (c) academic conventions, (d)
administrative tasks, (e) challenge of research, (f) silo mentality encountered in academia, and (g) perceived unfairness in appointment and promotion practices.

4.4.2. Interim Category Theme #2: Congruence

Second-career academics do encounter favourable experiences which reflect their congruence with academia. This arises from a number of sources: (a) support and camaraderie, (b) passion in teaching, (c) satisfaction in sharing practical knowledge, (d) appreciation by students, (e) opportunity to give back to society, (f) egalitarian culture of academia, and (g) better work-life balance.

4.4.3. Interim Category Theme #3: Confidence

The experience of congruence can transform to confidence if supported by a high degree of readiness for an academic career. There seems to be indeed a theme of confidence among second-career academics. It arises from the following elements: (a) practical knowledge based on industry experience, (b) previous work as trainer, (c) confidence in teaching business subjects, and (d) ability to rely on previously developed frames of reference. As Table 4.4 reveals, there is an overlap between the themes of confidence and congruence. Aspects such as acceptance and support from colleagues and the institution, and the ability to pursue self-actualisation, although categorised under congruence, also sustain the theme of confidence.

4.4.4. Interim Category Theme #4: Alienation

A reasonably high degree of readiness but a low degree of fit with the academic context gives rise to the alienation theme. Under these circumstances, second-career academics perceive their career transition into academia to be like a migration from one country to another. This perception arises from the following experiences: (a) alienation due to cultural differences between industry and academia and (b) difficulties experienced in adapting to the academic culture. This sense of being an outsider is also buttressed due to the confidence in the well-developed frames of reference acquired through the previous career.
4.4.5. Need to Collect More Data

The interim category themes represent the result of the first stage of data analysis. However, I am not convinced that these four category themes can capture the overall experience of second-career academics in Malaysian business schools. There is a need to collect more data due to the following reasons:

(a) All the 7 participants at this stage are from my host university, which provides a particular kind of institutional context. However, second-career academics in Malaysia work in a variety of other institutional contexts too. This is not yet reflected in my data.

(b) Conducting the initial interviews was a new research experience for me, leading to a number of insights on interviewing. I would like to conduct several more interviews by using these insights. Through this, I expect to capture the experience of second-career academics more effectively.

(c) I need to collect more data and conduct further analysis in order to arrive at theoretical saturation.

Accordingly, I then proceed with the second stage of data collection and data analysis. In the second stage, I interviewed 26 more participants. But, at a later stage, 2 of them had to be removed from my sample (as described in Chapter 3, see 3.4.2, “Interview Process”). Thus, at the end of the second stage of data collection, I had (7 + 24 =) 31 participants, who constituted the source of my entire dataset for this study.

4.5. Second Stage of Data Analysis: 87 Subthemes

During the second stage of data collection process, I also carried out data analysis concurrently. In this way, the 28 interim subthemes conceptualised in the first stage of data collection and analysis are subjected to frequent re-examination and amendment. In the process, I also conceptualised several new subthemes. By the end of the data collection process, I had a total list of 87 subthemes (listed in Table 4.5).
Table 4.5. *Subthemes Developed From the Entire Dataset*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Experiencing enhancement due to availability of opportunities to carry out activities not</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>possible in the industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to research</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to industry outreach</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Experiencing collegiality such as pleasant and positive fellowships that facilitate their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feeling more competent in teaching compared with colleagues without practical industry experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feeling that previous industry experience is an asset in teaching and interacting with students</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Experiencing keenness to carry out industry engagement or outreach</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Feeling that industry experience prepared them well for academic tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Experiencing respect from colleagues who have a high regard for their industry experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Experiencing positive feelings in using their industry experience to contribute to teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Experiencing positive feedback from students</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Perceiving the academic profession as a noble calling especially teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Experiencing divine inspiration in the academic profession especially in teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence in sharing practical knowledge with colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Feeling nostalgic about the good old days</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Experiencing an egalitarian atmosphere in academia</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Experiencing great satisfaction upon gaining higher academic qualifications</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Experiencing a better work-life balance due to the flexitime policy in academia</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Feeling they have a purpose in academia by contributing towards national or educational</td>
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<td></td>
<td>development in teaching business subjects</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Feeling appreciated by students in terms of industry experience</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Feeling motivated in being able to transform students in terms of industry experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Experiencing the need to relearn or unlearn particular cultural practices due to new role in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>academia</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Experiencing difficulties in adhering to the conventions of academic writing particularly in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>research</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration due to needing to do their own administrative work</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration due to differences in the mode of communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Experiencing lack of appreciation and recognition for professional and practical knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Experiencing unpleasant feelings when dealing with service departments such as human</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resource, accounting, and finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Experiencing challenges in teaching due to lack of pedagogical knowledge and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Experiencing challenges in using computer technology in a university setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Experiencing challenges in teaching in a university setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Experiencing difficulties in carrying out academic research and getting published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Experiencing difficulties in setting and meeting performance objectives as per university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Experiencing frustration due to differences between industrial and academic cultural practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Experiencing insufficient time to do research or outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Subtheme</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Feeling the need for more time to familiarise themselves with academia as a new discourse community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Experiencing shock/surprise at the low levels of contact with university management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Experiencing surprise at the perceived silo mentality exhibited by pure academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Feeling marginalised due to comparatively lower remunerations and entry level positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Feeling restricted by the quality assurance requirements imposed by the national education policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Experiencing shock due to a generation gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Recollection of past bad experience in learning to improve current teaching task or pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Experiencing opportunity for self-reflection in teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Experiencing boredom in teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Experiencing more integrity in academic management than corporate management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Experiencing and noticing more reserve and less vocal behaviour from pure academic colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Experiencing and feeling that they can and have the option to go back to industry if the situation warrants it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Experiencing and feeling that they can contribute to education by virtue of their industry experience particularly in teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Experiencing academic leadership’s impact on their performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Experiencing and feeling that their industry experience prepares them well for academic career in terms of ability to withstand stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Experiencing the retention of the vocal nature they inherited from industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Experiencing passion to teach</td>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Experiencing confidence that they can overcome the generation gap</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Experiencing ease with teaching due to their previous role as a trainer/coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Experiencing the need to do research as a professional researcher in academia as opposed to being a researching professional in industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Experiencing being more keen to do teaching rather than research</td>
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<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Experiencing the importance of pedagogical knowledge and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Experiencing fear of public speaking as in addressing large cohort of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Experiencing good feeling in receiving assistance from academic colleagues in teaching and/or research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Experiencing emphasis on research rather than teaching by the university management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Experiencing unpleasant experience with academic colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Experiencing slower pace decision making by university management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Experiencing discrimination due to the university’s emphasis on specific research areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Experiencing challenge in developing course material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Experiencing confusion and threat because of perception that the world and the university are changing beyond their comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Experiencing the need to portray new academic image rather than the professional image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Experiencing being seen as pressuring the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Experiencing being different from pure academics in assessing the purpose of research endeavour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Experiencing academia being a confused culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Experiencing their research topic and direction influenced by their previous career in industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Experiencing of having to go down to the level of the undergraduate in teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These 87 subthemes arise from the entire dataset (i.e., not only from the 31 interviews, but also from the three focus group discussions and the 13 artefacts supplied by the participants). I have included representative units of meaning under each of these 87 subthemes while discussing the result of my analysis in Sections 4.7 to 4.11.

In the second stage of data analysis, I tried to categorise the 87 subthemes, looking for interconnections and similarities among them. This resulted in 17 category themes. Going one step further in the conceptualisation and abstraction process, I managed to condense the 17 category themes into five main themes, as discussed below.

### 4.6. Further Categorisation and Conceptualisation

The category themes are conceptualised by grouping together similar subthemes (Patton, 2002; Saldaña, 2012). For example, I have condensed several subthemes reflecting the participants’ perception of their competency in teaching into Category
Theme #1, “competency to teach.” Sometimes, a single subtheme appears important and unique enough to have its own category themes. For example, I have conceptualised Subtheme #47, “Experiencing and feeling that they can and have the option to go back to industry if the situation warrants it,” as Category Theme #2, “Expatriate mentality.” Upon categorising and conceptualising all the subthemes in this manner, I came up with 17 category themes. I repeated the same process, trying to further categorise and conceptualise the 17 category themes. This led me to five broader and more abstract themes. I termed these as “main themes.” These five main themes constitute the main result of my study. The main themes are: (a) **SELF-EFFICACY**, (b) **CALLING**, (c) **ACCORDANCE**, (d) **DISCORDANCE**, and (e) **GRIEVANCE**. Table 4.6 shows the category themes and the main themes.

**Table 4.6. Category Themes and Main Themes**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Category Theme</th>
<th>Main Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Competency to teach</td>
<td>#1. <strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Expatriate mentality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Congruity with family tradition</td>
<td>#2. <strong>CALLING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Divinity inspiration</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Nobility of academic career</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Better work-life balance</td>
<td>#3. <strong>ACCORDANCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Congruity with academic values</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Supportive environment in academia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Disharmony with academic culture</td>
<td>#4. <strong>DISCORDANCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Encountering academic practice challenges</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Inconsonance with university management</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Unpleasant parts of teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Marginalisation by academic appraisal system</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Non-recognition of industry experience</td>
<td>#5. <strong>GRIEVANCE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Relegation to worker status</td>
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Figure 4.3 depicts the stages of abstraction and conceptualisation involved in this study, starting from units of meaning, leading to subthemes and category themes, eventually arriving at main themes.
Figure 4.3. Stages of abstraction and conceptualisation in arriving at main themes.

I have attempted a more comprehensive presentation of the conceptualisation process in Table 4.7. The table lists all the 87 subthemes, grouping the related ones together, in accordance with the respective category themes and main themes. Additionally, the table also indicates the specific participants from whom the underlying units of meaning arise.
Table 4.7. Thematic Analysis Master Tabulation

Note. Similar category themes have been grouped together. These have been color-coded to correspond to the main themes:

### SELF-EFFICACY
### CALLING
### ACCORDANCE
### DISCORDANCE
### GRIEVANCE

*Note. A more readable version is presented separately under Appendix G.*
The five main themes bear resemblance to the interim category themes captured at the first stage of data collection and analysis (see Section 4.4, “Preliminary Results: First Stage of Data Analysis,” where the four interim category themes are presented: Frustration, Congruence, Confidence, and Alienation). The main themes are however more abstract and capture a wider range of experiences, as discussed below.

4.6.1. Comparing Main Themes With Preliminary Results

**SELF-EFFICACY, Confidence, and Alienation.** From the integrated analysis of the entire dataset, I can discern a wider array of themes of confidence. These include the participants’ perception that they have the capability to perform and excel over their colleagues, due to their prior professional and industry experience. Upon further reflection, I began to discern an element of confidence located also within the interim category theme of alienation. I can detect that the participants experience alienation from academia as they compare their experience in academia with their prior experience in industry. I began to interpret this as a form of confidence. Further, from the narratives of the participants at subsequent stages of data collection, I came across cases where participants perceived that they can return to their professional career if their transition to academia was not satisfactory. I am also informed by the literature on career theories and academic career (discussed in 2.3.1, “Concepts and Theories of Career” and 2.3.2, “Academic Career and Prior Experience”). Therefore I bring together all strands of confidence (including those located originally under the interim category theme of alienation) and group it under the broader and more inclusive main theme of SELF-EFFICACY.

**CALLING, ACCORDANCE, and Congruence.** As my data collection and analysis progressed beyond the first stage, the interim category theme of congruence needed to be divided and assigned to two main themes: CALLING and ACCORDANCE. The additional data relating to the congruence theme precipitated into several new subthemes and category themes. Upon further reflection, I began to recognise the spiritual dimension of work. Although this has elements of congruence in so far as it resonates with an individual’s values and beliefs, there are various new strands reflecting altruism, family tradition, divinity inspiration, and nobility of academic career. I am also informed by the literature on calling in academic career (see 2.3.8, “Academic Career and Calling”). I compared
the interim category theme of congruence with the new related category themes emerging, such as better work-life balance, congruity with academic values, and supportive environment in academia. Thus I unpacked the theme of congruence into two main themes, CALLING and ACCORDANCE. While ACCORDANCE captures the experience of resonance, congruence, and being in harmony with the environment, CALLING captures the uniquely inspirational aspect.

**DISCORDANCE, GRIEVANCE, Frustration and Alienation.** It turned out that the interim category themes of frustration and alienation were only the tip of the iceberg as far as negative experiences are concerned. Upon analysing the entire dataset, I recognised various new strands of disagreeable experience. I have grouped these under category themes such as disharmony with academic culture, encountering academic practice challenges, inconsonance with university management, unpleasant part of teaching, marginalisation by academic appraisal system, non-recognition of industry experience, and relegation to worker status. With such an array of category themes indicating discomfort, irritation, predicament, dismay, displeasure, disillusion, dejection, distress, sense of being neglected, and sense of oppression detectable in the entire dataset, I concluded that broader categories and terms are required, than the interim category themes of frustration and alienation. Further reflection led me to the two main themes, DISCORDANCE and GRIEVANCE. The main theme of DISCORDANCE captures the elements of discomfort, irritation, predicament, dismay, displeasure, and disillusion. GRIEVANCE captures the experience of injustice and the sense of oppression experienced by the participants in my study.

**4.6.2. Theoretical Saturation**

The thematic analysis was concurrent with the data collection process. As the categories and themes were forming in my analysis, through repeated reading, reflection, and conceptualisation of the data, a point came around the 27th interview, beyond which additional data did not seem to change my interpretations. This signalled a possible saturation point. However, I still continued with some more interviews and focus group discussions, but the concepts and categories did not change appreciably. This was a clear indication for me to terminate the data collection and data analysis process.
In the remaining part of this chapter, I take up each main theme in turn and present its meaning and its empirical basis. I illustrate this by listing the constituent category themes and subthemes. I also cite indicative units of meaning supporting the conceptualisation.

4.7. Main Theme #1: SELF-EFFICACY

In the literature, self-efficacy is defined as “a judgment of one’s capability to accomplish a certain level of performance” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391, discussed in 2.3.1, “Concepts and Theories of Career”). It is a judgment that is sustained and reinforced through social affirmation. A similar judgement is discernible from the narratives of the second-career academics who participated in this study. The SELF-EFFICACY of the participants seems to derive from having practical experience, as well as the academic and professional qualifications. This manifests in a confidence not only in teaching business subjects, but also in other academic tasks beyond teaching, such as research, industry outreach, and professional service.

Another dimension of this SELF-EFFICACY is what I have labelled expatriate mentality. Several participants seem to view their career transition into academia as reversible. I have attributed this to their SELF-EFFICACY to thrive in any environment as long as they can lean on their industry experience. In a way, they are like expatriates who can function both in their host or home territories, due to their talent or capabilities. The main theme is supported by the following three category themes:

(a) Category Theme #1: Competency to teach
(b) Category Theme #2: Expatriate mentality
(c) Category Theme #3: Proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching
4.7.1. Category Theme #1

*Competency to teach*

From the narratives, I detect nine subthemes which support this category theme. In essence, the participants feel that their experience in the corporate world aids them in introducing practical knowledge into the classroom. To them, this improves the relevance of the education student receive. They seemed to hold that theoretical knowledge is not sufficient; it needs to be complemented with practical knowledge for business education to be holistic. The participants perceived that their industry experience gives them an edge over first-career academics in the context of business education. Their judgement seems to be reinforced by the positive feedback from students. This category theme is supported by nine subthemes, which are listed below as well as exemplified with indicative units of meaning extracted from the data:

- Subtheme #6: Feeling more competent in teaching compared with colleagues without practical industry experience
- Subtheme #7: Feeling that previous industry experience is an asset in teaching and interacting with students
- Subtheme #9: Feeling that industry experience prepared them well for academic tasks
- Subtheme #10: Experiencing respect from colleagues who have a high regard for their industry experience
- Subtheme #15: Experiencing confidence in sharing practical knowledge with colleagues
- Subtheme #21: Feeling appreciated by students in terms of industry experience
- Subtheme #42: Recollection of past bad experience in learning to improve current teaching task or pedagogy
- Subtheme #53: Experiencing they can overcome the generation gap because of their experience
- Subtheme #54: Experiencing that their previous industry experience as a trainer assisted them in getting acclimatised to academia
Subtheme #78: Experiencing being second-career benefitted from their experience in first career in industry

I shall substantiate each of these subthemes by citing the relevant units of meaning extracted from the dataset.

Subtheme #6: Feeling more competent in teaching compared with colleagues without practical industry experience. The following units of meaning illustrate this subtheme:

P1: *When I go into class to teach, the student has a different experience. And is able to share stories from what has happened.*

P3: *Yes, to me I feel that industrial experience is one of the most important factors that contribute to the performance of whether the lecturer itself or the student. . . . So these are the thing that the lecturer that have the industrial experience, having something like a competitive edge as compared to those who are purely academic.*

P6: *So in a way when we go into a classroom when we have working experience and theoretical knowledge they respect us more rather than a fresh graduate.*

From the above units of meaning, I note participant P3’s and P6’s view on first-career academics. Synthesising these comments with the comments from P1, P3, and P6 led to my conceptualisation of the Subtheme #6. This subtheme reflects that participants perceived themselves as being more competent in teaching compared to colleagues without industry experience.

Subtheme #7: Feeling that previous industry experience is an asset in teaching and interacting with students. I discern that there some participants take their industry experience as an asset in interacting with students. They seem to take it that they were recruited based on their industry experience. They perceive that business subjects are best taught by people with relevant industry experience. This perception is held by participants from human resource management (P4), accounting (P5), and marketing (P9) backgrounds:

P4: *And because of my HR experience and so on so forth, I was able to be a bit more confident and go for classes without much preparation.*
P5: Yes, when and during my lecture I, every time I will relate with my past experience and the students seem to appreciate that, they seem to appreciate.

P9: Some students might find my teaching method is a bit different from others lecturer because I more emphasise on the application. I like to relate my experience.

Subtheme #9: Feeling that industry experience prepared them well for academic tasks. Some participants narrated that their industry experience prepared them well for academic tasks. According to the participants, their industry experience was of paramount importance. Their practical experience is even more important for teaching postgraduate students with industry experience. It helps establish credibility and rapport with students with practical experience.

P6: But then if you see that our students are mostly working adults, so what we can actually, actually it’s an advantage, I meant to have this working experience because from there I could actually give them examples how when you work right, how did these theories like can applied, you know in their business world.

Subtheme #10: Experiencing respect from colleagues who have a high regard for their industry experience. Apparently, first-career academics, who have no industry experience, have a high regard for their colleagues who have industry experience. It appears that industry experience is desired by the first-career academics. The affirmative response from colleagues sustains the judgement of second-career academics with regard to their own capability.

P10: I am more on giving ideas and suggestions to others rather than perhaps benefiting from the sharing from others where I can use it in my teaching. That’s what happening actually. I give ideas, I give suggestions, I share with others and then others benefitted from what I share. . . . I would say they welcome a lot of contribution, the contributions from me. They are receptive. They are willing to listen actually.

P19: So they have a curiosity as well and so well for us then then it’s a good opportunity for us to share and exchange you know views and information with each other.

P20: For example I got invitation to, er by one of the program in the X college degree program requesting me to give industry perspective of human resource planning.
Subtheme #15: Experiencing confidence in sharing practical knowledge with colleagues. There is some evidence of the participants’ confidence in being able to share practical knowledge with colleagues.

P5: I think some of the colleagues kind of envy or they wish they have some kind of experience. . . . Because they look, er something like they respect us that, for having industry experience because they also wish to have that but unfortunately, it’s not ere r it’s not possible in their case

P9: They want to learn more what happen out there in the corporate world then I am more than happy to share information with them.

P10: Uh yea, I am happy to share and I feel the satisfaction especially when they give me feedback that things that I shared have actually helped them. So obviously there is a satisfaction.

P26: I think my colleagues er respect me for my experience so they are always asked me on certain things that what’s happening in, outside, you know er, and what my experience, er my personal experience that I went through and some of the stories that I told.

Subtheme #21: Feeling appreciated by students in terms of industry experience. Some of the participants experience appreciation from the students, besides their colleagues, on account of their practical experience. Being so appreciated serves as a motivating factor, which also sustains their perception of competency in teaching.

P1: perhaps by virtue of the fact that they can relate with me. . . . They would come for advice. . . . It’s because they want to know from a professional point of view, from the experience that I have gone through, what is the better way to go and a lot of the time.

P4: I know with the students and seeing them appreciating that gave me a lot of fulfilment and that’s the reason why I kept on staying on this line.

P5: But I felt happy ok with the recognition er given by the students. . . . They also er I feel like this job is like honoured. . . . Ya I feel honoured and they really really respect me for that and so I think that’s the main difference er with industry and. . . . That gives me a great satisfaction so that’s why I end up being academician.

P16: You know they will give you card even small token just to tell you that you know they you have touch their lives you know, so those are the messages. . . . So every time I get that it sort of it sort of, it sort of, it sort of validates what you were doing being it ok it’s sort say it’s all worth it ha, ha.
P31: Most rewarding feedback that I have actually get is when after graduated students still come back and say hey, I remember you taught me about this and you know we shared about this and you trained us how to make our brain exercise and I applied in my work. . . . I would say that is the greatest rewarding part.

Subtheme #42: Recollection of past bad experience in learning to improve current teaching task or pedagogy. Some participants fell back on their past experience as students and tried to recall what they felt was the wrong approach to teaching and learning at the tertiary level. This recollection apparently supports their perception of competency in teaching.

P1: So when I was, when I was doing accounting for example, in the university er, it took me a whole 6 months to fully understand what the lecturer was trying to tell me and I couldn’t see what was that, that they are trying to show me at the end. . . . Now er being I think more, er I suppose being more patient with those students who are less academic and you you encourage them.

P6: Being an academic, I mean of course when now we are in this position, we used to think back how our teachers taught us you know, how our lecturers taught us and being an academic, my mind was, the frame of my mind, sometimes was tuned into how when I was studying how the lecturers, you know, teach the class, how they treat us, that’s how actually I try to make better of it and then convey the thing, what the students need to learn and pass it to them, but in a positive manner right we need to teach.

Subtheme #53: Experiencing they can overcome the generation gap because of their experience. Some participants do experience a generation gap in their interaction with students. However, some of them state that they are able to overcome this gap.

P16: You have more students around you are in the midst of students a lot of young people so so that also a different environment so than in corporate sector you know when you work with some of your staff may be older. . . . I enjoyed it er I felt good er working with with that students young people and and I just I just mean I just somehow was able to because I think when you deal with students you sort of need to sometime go down to their level.

Participant in FGD 3: Yea, so in our class, I believe that we also have to adapt ourselves to the new generation because most of them, they are actually using the online, the devices, all these particular things . . . . I don’t get left behind by the generation Y because I have got to learnt to engage with them.
Subtheme #54: Experiencing that their previous industry experience as a trainer assisted them in getting acclimatised to academia. Some of the participants have experience in training, in their previous capacities as trainers or human resource managers.

P4: So I was in charge of training and development. . . . So while I was the training officer, I was also a part time lecturer, that’s when I started to enjoy and started to feel what being an academic was. . . . It was very much preparing for a training program just still within the lines of teaching objectives and learning outline, so those things were not new to me.

P18: we are also teaching but not in a formal situation because as a human resource person, people come to you for counselling, sometime people do not know how to do their job, we are also teaching but not in a formal classroom.

Subtheme #78: Experiencing being second-career benefitted from their experience in first career in industry. Some participants perceived their capability to teach or perform in academia can be attributed to their first careers.

P2: Yea, because coming from practitioner, there are certain knowledge that we think we are able to impart into students’ life. . . . Seriously after 6 years I think I am well prepared to comment about teaching, that’s why teaching not only need passion. I think this passion is another side that we need to be aware of but then how to teach is vital.

P14: Maybe it’s quite easy for you to adapt to a new environment and also your passion, you like. . . . But I think in second career, at least you know slightly better what you know, you know, what you like to do and what you don’t like to do, that’s why you choose to have second career, ok?

The category theme of competency to teach is also supported in all the three focus group discussions.

Participant in FGD 1: You know, it’s like in the industry, the people who come has other experiences which can enhance and can be developed further.

Participant in FGD 2: Positive side is that we bring in our experiences and it is real hands on experiences that is workable.
Participant in FGD 3: *I think one of the significance of my past experience, industry experience, is that I am able to share real life stories about internal controls with my students when I teach internal controls so it actually makes the class more interesting.*

Participant in FGD 3: *Ok, I always believe that working experience actually complement whatever things that we have in the university.*

Participant in FGD 3: *What my colleague have already shared is the richness and the variety of the experience you can bring on the table to them, the indirect benefit that they can actually feel it at the end.*

Participant in FGD 3: *I think it is that richness of our ability to connect this particular subject that we are teaching with every other discipline that is out there because of the experience that we have had. Um, I think one of the experiences.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Theme #1: SELF-EFFICACY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Category Theme #1:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency to teach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category Theme #2:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expatriate mentality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category Theme #3:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching</td>
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### 4.7.2. Category Theme #2

**Expatriate mentality**

I have constructed this category theme based on the views of some participants that their career transition is reversible. That is, they still harbour thoughts of returning to industry because of their perception that they can thrive in any environment. Some of them view their career transitions as similar to international migration. For example, participant P18 laments:

P8: *It’s like going into a foreign country and not knowing the language. . . So I find that it is a language, it is a different form of words or language, like I say, like going into a foreign country.*

In conceptualising this category theme, I evoke the term *expatriate* to describe the scenario whereby the participants view their stint in academia as a temporary visit. In the event that they find academia not meeting nor accommodating their expectations, they would return to industry. My conceptualisation of this category theme was also informed by the interim category theme, alienation (see 4.4.4, “Interim Category Theme #4: Alienation”), which I detected during the initial stage of data collection and data analysis. There is only one subtheme that supports this category theme.
Subtheme #47: Experiencing and feeling that they can and have the option to go back to industry if the situation warrants it

Subtheme #47: Experiencing and feeling that they can and have the option to go back to industry if the situation warrants it. Key phrases like the following quite explicitly portray the perception of the reversibility of the career transition:

Key Phrases (Subtheme #47)

- If I want to I still can go back into the industry
- I probably see myself going back to the corporate world one day
- I am not constrained because people from industry are not constrained

The relevant units of meaning that support to my conceptualisation are shown below:

P1: For example I find that a person who has, perhaps been teaching and not gone into industry would want to always remain in teaching, because they think that it is very difficult for them to go from teaching into industry but for people, who have been in the industry and they come into teaching I don’t think they have any second thought about, If I want to I still can go back into the industry.

P4: Right, where professional body is concerned, I am chartered member with CIPD and I keep myself abreast with all these latest development, reason being because I probably see myself going back to the corporate world one day so I leave the options open.

P8: The reason is because that we felt that you know we have a market value. . . . I am not constrained because people from industry are not constrained with that kind of politics. For us we have many avenues you know, not in A we can always go to B. . . . But being from industry person we are very versatile so we move on those who stay back are those who cannot get out ,they have no market value so they continue.

P13: What I mean is, of course I am not expecting that myself to be lecturer for 10 years or only lecturer for the, you know what I mean, like only for 15 years become lecturer, like that. But again for me, like what you mentioned just now, it all about satisfaction, whether I am satisfied with my current job or not.
4.7.3. Category Theme #3

Proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching

Besides teaching, some participants perceived that they are also proficient in other academic tasks. These other tasks include but are not limited to research and industry outreach. I have included six subthemes under this category theme:

Subtheme #8: Experiencing keenness to carry out industry engagement or outreach
Subtheme #18: Experiencing great satisfaction upon gaining higher academic qualifications
Subtheme #50: Experiencing and feeling that their industry experience prepares them well for academic career in terms of ability to withstand stress
Subtheme #51: Experiencing the retention of the vocal nature they inherited from industry
Subtheme #70: Experiencing their research topic and direction influenced by their previous career in industry
Subtheme #73: Experiencing no issue in research as previous career in industry involved research of a technical nature

Subtheme #8: Experiencing keenness to carry out industry engagement or outreach.
Some participants are enthusiastic about industry engagement or outreach. They seemed to perceive that they have an advantage in industry outreach because the industry partner would appreciate them more than the first-career academics. In most cases, their participation in industry outreach was in the capacity of a team member in a group comprising of both first-career and second-career academics.

P17: Yes, as I mentioned earlier, I work closely with some of the key industries in P and K such as M and some government agencies such as G, national productivity centre, . . . I am also doing some research on medical tourism, so these are some of the connections that we have with the government agencies and private sectors.
P26: Coming back here the er industrial linkages, I guess is. . . . Well, people from the industry they found out that you are also from the industry I think it’s easier for them to relate and they would say ok so you have been working with this firm before and if they know about the firm then it’s easier to link.

P31: Teams, so team approach in which we sell ourselves in our team we have a mixture of people from various functions, functional areas in the team, and it is a mixture of people with people with industry experience and people without industry experience, as well.

Subtheme #18: Experiencing great satisfaction upon gaining higher academic qualifications. From their narratives, I can discern that the participants experience great satisfaction in obtaining higher academic qualifications. There is evidence that the participants realised that their current level of education may not be sufficient for academic career advancement. Their institutions invariably support their endeavours in this direction.

P3: Yea of course my immediate measurement would be contributing to the field of knowledge, education, in terms of writing, research. Contribution to research might be one or 2 publications or maybe I set myself a standard of 5 researches then I will consider myself as a successful.

P7: But now I think I am thinking of broadening my research agenda. . . . But if you really want to publish in a good journal, you have to develop your theoretical ability. So now I am working more towards my theoretical ability.

P8: Ah I found it enjoying, I find it enjoying because it was tough alright, and in a nut shell it was because when I was doing my PhD I was doing it at a part time basis I have a full time job like any other lecturers I teach like two subjects per semester and I had throughout my four years journey.

P10: I am still in the quest of finding the answers but I feel the satisfaction in the process of finding the solution itself because it adds more knowledge to me concerning not just the students’ learning but in general in higher education.

P17: So er my research area is basically my core domain is international business, so other than international business.

P28: Ya, so I am actually, my topic is basically in corporate governance, yes and then corporate disclosures.

I have selected the following passages from their artefacts to indicate their experience in acquiring higher academic qualifications. These artefacts are journals written as a part
of their postgraduate courses. In these, there is an element of their dedication to teaching and also a determination to acquire higher degrees.

Artefact 1 from P10: Teaching Philosophy Statement

*Teaching is about developing a new generation. It is not merely about imparting knowledge to the learners. It encompasses motivating them to learn as well as using what they learn to build their own knowledge. This process involves many facets. It include finding how the learners think, what they believe in and in what ways they can utilise the knowledge learned. To achieve this, I need to keep monitoring the learning environment in a classroom. I believe learners must have the motivation to come to my class. Hence it is of essence that I build their interest in my subjects in the first few lessons.*

Artefact 2 from P3: Critical Moment

*During this semester, I have learnt the importance of the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and assessment tasks in a unit. The most critical moment in my learning is on choosing the best and right learning and teaching activities in my unit.*

I have interpreted and conceptualised that their earnestness and confidence of success in acquiring their postgraduate qualifications is an indication of their SELF-EFFICACY. For instance, participant P8 below mentioned that other academics tried to emulate P8’s method of obtaining their doctoral degree but were not as successful.

P8: *So that is my, you know, strong point. . . . So a lot of academics trying to follow my crazy pathway, none of them successful.*

Subtheme #50: Experiencing and feeling that their industry experience prepares them well for academic career in terms of ability to withstand stress. I can detect the sense of confidence by some participants who feel that they are accustomed to handling stress in the previous careers. They seem perceive that this considerably enhances their capability to deal with the unfamiliar demands of academia. For instance, participant P8 reflected on how their previous hectic lifestyle in the business world had prepared them for the new academic career, which to them, is much less demanding.

P8: *Ha, so because I had that kind of a life you know as an accountant in the corporate world, and especially as an auditor, ha ha, so coming in was like academic is like “kacang putih” [easy, in Malay language]. Ha ha so that’s why I say if I look at it me, my drive and my capability would*
not have actually you know reach this level if it is not because of my industrial training, my years in the industry.

Subtheme #51: Experiencing the retention of the vocal nature they inherited from industry. This is supported by the following selected units of meaning:

P1: There are those who make a lot of noise, there are those who just sit there. . . . So I say why don’t you bring these things up, you know, you got things that you are not happy about, voice it out, say it, because if you don’t say it nobody is going, nobody is going to know about it why you are still anticipating, an answer when you have not even asked the questions.

P29: There been cases where I wrote to the Vice Chancellor er I wrote to Head of Department of certain organisation, where I think there are things, that are in my view was wrong, done correctly, er or on case where I think we, er you know the university could save a lot of money, not doing it, er in term of not juts money, but in terms of man power, and so on, so the the the things like I mean give you real examples lah.

P31: Which we’re used to be out there talking at the table and shouting at the people and getting things done in in somehow the industrial way, you know it doesn’t get err em it’s it’s not the culture here. Or, put it, let me put it that way. So over here the culture is that when top management has a proposal people think that they are not happy about it nobody will actually talk, except for a few of us here 3 or 4 of us here who actually had er industry experience er ranging from 3 years to 18 years, who are the ones talking.

From the narratives of some participants, I gather that they think since they have experience of managing corporate functions successfully, their opinions on university management should be heard. I conceptualise this as reflecting another aspect of their perceived capability.

Subtheme #70: Experiencing their research topic and direction influenced by their previous career in industry. Besides teaching, the participants have to perform other academic tasks such as research. I reckon, some participants in my study did experience that their research topics and direction were being influenced by their previous career in industry.

P11: Ok my research, it’s has to do with risk taking behaviour ok. . . . Actually it’s combination of psychological aspects. . . . Alright psychological aspect and also some ere r some financial aspects it’s a
combination of both. . . . I am a member of the Malaysian Risk Management Society.

P16: Well my PhD topic is in financial reporting and but more on financial reporting, it’s in financial reporting but more from a conceptual framework, more from looking at some of the concept that we have applied in designing or in developing financial reporting standards.

P17: So my research area is basically my core domain is international business, so other than international business I have a few clusters of research which I am doing, number one is the internationalisation of SMIs in Malaysia, err green management among SMEs in Malaysia.

P24: I did supplier management. . . . I am talking about how to manage, at that time I was actually the supplier quality manager so I made use of my contact with the suppliers to talk about study their interaction with big corporation like us most of the suppliers are small suppliers right, so when you have a big organisation and a small supplier there’s going to have a lot of problems one, so I studied into that area for my DBA.

Subtheme #73: Experiencing no issue in research as previous career in industry involved research of a technical nature. There are two participants in my study who experienced no difficulties in research. Their previous career in industry involved research of a technical nature. Participant P12 had research experience in the field of economic policy while P27 had commercial research experience.

P12: I don’t have problem doing academic research because I was doing research in the private sector ha ha ha. My background is slightly different from other people who have, er, done private sector work, and I don’t do things that are totally unrelated to teaching. I do government research, and I was in the government regulatory body. . . . I was in central bank, I was in the stock exchange, and I was with some broking firms doing research into companies, and things like that. . . . I am, er, I am a finance PhD holder in money supply, liquidity, and share prices.

P27: Also because I have published books, to show them so when they read they can know what sort of level they have to reach, I am still very much into chemical research. . . . But you see there I also start to join, say for instance, design and experiments, I start to put in the management aspects, I am actually conceptualising a paper.

4.8. Main Theme #2: CALLING

When I launched into this study, I did not expect the theme of CALLING to emerge. Nevertheless, after immersing in the narratives, and reviewing more recent literature, I
began to conceptualise the theme of CALLING. There has been a growing interest in the issue of calling in career studies (see 2.3.8, “Academic Career and Calling”). There is a myriad of different versions and interpretations of what constitutes a calling. One definition of calling is based on the presence of a “guiding force, personal fit/eudemonic well-being, and altruism” (Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010, p. 181). There were some themes along these lines even in my preliminary results (see 4.4, “Preliminary Results: First Stage of Data Analysis”). These included the themes of experiencing motivation from appreciation by students (Interim Subtheme #11), being an academic is a form of give back to society (Interim Subtheme #12), and respect from society on being an academic (Interim Subtheme #24). Upon analysing the entire dataset, I began to conceptualise four category themes which are related to the main theme of CALLING. For some participants, assuming the role of an academic represents less of a fulfilment of one’s own needs and purpose, but more of a striving for a greater good. Some of the participants have experienced positive feelings from being able to make such contributions in academia. In some instances, there were assertions that the teaching profession was a noble one, and for some, being a teacher meant following in the footsteps of their parents. There was also the notion of being inspired by divine intervention and guidance. Accordingly, I have constructed four category themes in support of the main theme of CALLING:

(a) Category Theme #4: Altruism
(b) Category Theme #5: Congruity with family tradition
(c) Category Theme #6: Divine inspiration
(d) Category Theme #7: Nobility of academic career

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4.8.1. Category Theme #4

Altruism

Altruism represents a belief and practice of making a contribution to others without expecting anything in return. Associated with this is the positive feeling of being of some value to others and an experience of a virtuous life. This kind of positive feeling is
similar to what is called “eudemonic well-being” (Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010; also discussed in 2.3.8, “Academic Career and Calling”). From the narratives of the participants, I can discern that some participants experience eudemonic well-being through their: (a) perceived contribution to business education, (b) perceived transformation of their students, (c) perceived helpfulness to their students. I conceptualised this feeling of well-being as altruism. The following six subthemes support my conceptualisation of this category theme:

Subtheme #11: Experiencing positive feelings in using their industry experience to contribute to teaching

Subtheme #12: Experiencing positive feedback from students

Subtheme #20: Feeling they have a purpose in academia by contributing towards national or educational development in teaching business subjects

Subtheme #22: Feeling motivated in being able to transform students in terms of industry experience

Subtheme #48: Experiencing and feeling that they can contribute to education by virtue of their industry experience particularly in teaching

Subtheme #77: Experiencing being a mentor for the students, sometimes beyond campus even after they have graduated

Subtheme #11: Experiencing positive feelings in using their industry experience to contribute to teaching. From the narrative of some participants, I can glimpse their experience of eudemonic well-being in being helpful to their students by utilising their industry experience. For example, the unit of meaning as shown below:

P16: Absolutely that one definitely my industry experience helps. . . . My experience is by, but this is more in teaching

Subtheme #12: Experiencing positive feedback from students. I have conceptualised this subtheme which refers to their eudemonic well-being upon receiving positive feedback from students. The key phrases from the relevant units of meaning which prompted my conceptualisation are:

Key Phrases (Subtheme #12)

best experience
most rewarding
the Aha moments

This subtheme is illustrated in the units of meaning listed below:

P4: Of course there were moments that when parents come and see me or when kids who have graduated write to me, send me card tell me how I have touched their lives, how much difference I have made, I think those were the Aha moments rather than I got a promotion or I got an increment, that wasn’t something that I was really looking forward to because if I wanted to make so much money I wouldn’t be in this industry.

P7: You teach and when students are happy, they, the best thing is when they respond to you, they say you are a really good teacher. That’s rewarding yea. So, when, good student feedback is the, is very rewarding, is immediately rewarding.

P13: The best experience is actually when the student say that, thankful to me for sharing whatever that I have, what I mean is, whatever that I experienced in my industry in their lecture and then they say that it is actually very useful when they actually go outside.

P16: The most rewarding because of the students.

P20: Based on the feedback given by the students. . . . Their feedback had been pretty good.

Subtheme #20: Feeling they have a purpose in academia by contributing towards national or educational development in teaching business subjects. Some participants perceived that they served a higher purpose in academia by contributing towards national development through teaching business subjects. The key phrases are:

Key Phrases (Subtheme #20)

- contribute more to nation building
- adds more knowledge to . . . higher education
- contribution towards society

I present the some relevant units of meaning below:

P8: But as an academia you forget about your million buck, you don’t even think of your million bucks you know, ya it’s like how many lives that you have touched, how many lives you have contributed, so that it is for the next generation and for the nation . . . basically as academician I
find that I actually contribute more to nation building as compare to being in the industry.

P10: I feel the satisfaction in the process of finding the solution itself because it adds more knowledge to me concerning not just the students’ learning but in general in higher education as well.

P17: Our role is actually to help the school or the university to look at some of our curriculum, how to make the curriculum more relevant to the industry. . . . We can bring network to the school and the university.

P23: You know if you come from industry and you can do that in your class, I think that is something that is something er contribution towards society.

P31: Most rewarding feedback that I have actually get is when after graduated students still come back and say hey, I remember you taught me about this and you know we shared about this and you trained us how to make our brain exercise and I applied in my work. . . . I would say that is the greatest rewarding part.

Subtheme #22: Feeling motivated in being able to transform students in terms of industry experience. I can identify another source of altruism in the perception of the participants that they are able to transform students. The key phrases which resonate with this are the following:

Key Phrases (Subtheme #22)

- transformation process
- transformed them into probably be a more responsible person

A few extracts from the narratives that sustain this subtheme:

P1: I feel that being an academic means a higher responsibility, that you are putting on yourself, because you are essentially trying to educate the next generation . . . There is a higher responsibility involved in transforming er er . . . A Form 5 student to become a professional accountant, you know, er, em, it’s a whole transformation process.

P26: because you teach them in the first, second, third year and then in the fourth year, they are about to graduate and it transformed them into probably be a more responsible person. . . . So you can see the transformation.

Subtheme #48: Experiencing and feeling that they can contribute to education by virtue of their industry experience particularly in teaching. From the narratives I detect that
some participants perceived that they can contribute to education by virtue of their industry experience and knowledge.

P1: I think being an academic really means bringing to the institution that the education institution that you are with your knowledge, your experience, er and er I think what is important is the integration of that knowledge and that experience to enrich the learning experience in the classrooms.

P9: Because why, because basically you must know what happen in the industry so that that way you will be able to teach or give more information relevant to the industry to the student.

Subtheme #77: Experiencing being a mentor for the students, sometimes beyond campus even after they have graduated. Some participants perceived themselves to be mentors for their students, sometimes even after the students have graduated. From their narratives, such mentorship seems associated with the eudemonic well-being of helping others in their career development. I present a few units of meaning in support of this conceptualisation:

P19: Just yesterday I have a student who came to see me. . . . He was my student from last semester, he graduated. . . . He just wanted my view what what . . . what to expect and in my opinion er which would be a better option . . . so I just share with him based on what I know my experience.

P25: And I also find that the relationship between the students and you, it continues, even though after 20 years, I still have students coming back to me and say ah last time you used to teach me this and what is this person doing now.

P31: But it’s more on developing students as individual from all aspects and learning from them as well and making them grow and we grow with them and most importantly they are able to change not just them in terms of academically but also we able to change their thinking, and eventually hopefully improving their lives which is hopefully sustainable for the next 5 years 10 years. . . . So to me, being an academic is more than a large thing of just doing teaching, publication, research, consultancy, and training, it’s much more than that that is my personal view.

My conceptualisation of Subthemes #11, #12, #20, #22, #48, and #77 in support of the Category Theme #4: Altruism is also supported by the participants in the third focus group discussion (FGD 3):
Participant in FGD 3: Another thing that I can see here is that in terms of evaluating the syllabus. So we can come in to also sort of like make an improvement on the syllabus where we can share the reality out there and the practices out there which may not be incorporated within the syllabus, so there are suggestions to connect what we learn in the class and how we connect it with the environment, so there must be a connection so then to the students, it gives them some meaning, you know, that there is a connection with what they are going to learn with the outside world.

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4.8.2. Category Theme #5

Congruity with family tradition

My conceptualisation of the category theme of congruity with family tradition arises from the interpretation of the narratives of two participants, P14 and P22. In the interviews, the participants mentioned that their fathers were teachers. As these statements were made without any prompting from me, I began to ponder the essence of their statement in relation to their new career in academia. It seemed akin to being inspired by one’s own ancestors to work for a noble cause. There is only one subtheme, Subtheme #76, which supports this category theme.

Subtheme #76: Experiencing following family tradition in teaching. I attach two units of meaning in support of my conceptualisation of this subtheme:

P14: In terms of teaching, actually I quite passionate about teaching. I love teaching because my father is a teacher. Maybe I was influenced by him.

P22: Ah yes yes, my father . . . was a teacher, ha ha ha.
4.8.3. Category Theme #6

Divine inspiration

From the narratives, I noticed a few instances when the participants brought in the idea of divinity. This was not prompted by my questioning. Rather, as can be discerned from the units of meaning quoted below, references to divinity emerged unilaterally from the participants.

Key Phrases (Category Theme #6)
- which could be HIM above
- it’s like wanting to be a priest
- the sound, the invisible hand
- from religious perspective . . . whatever you do is niat [sincere belief or pious intent]

There is only one subtheme, Subtheme #14, which illustrates this category theme.

Subtheme #14: Experiencing divine inspiration in the academic profession especially in teaching. This is evident in the narratives of P8, P18, P21, and P29:

P8: So now we are building wealth, you know, for someone else, ya which could be HIM above, ok, install our wealth, treasure in heaven. . . . We won’t be driving a BMW, we won’t be driving a Mercedes Benz, you know, we won’t be driving another Rolls Royce. Ya so you just have to be contented with what you have. . . . Because it is calling because it is a calling you cannot go against the master plan, ya . . . You have no choice, when there is a calling you have to accept it; ya otherwise you will like Jonah, ha ha.

P18: Teaching is a vocation, it’s like wanting to be a priest, you know, rather than a career to support your lifestyle.

P21: Being an academic, ok er er at first I wouldn’t know how to answer this kind of question. But over time I ask, you know, trying to reflect what is exactly I am doing in this university. What is my purpose you know it’s not like I planned to be to work in a university; ok er then er then what
you call the sound, the invisible hand is trying to direct me and be in a university

P29: Thank you, there is always this, this believe . . . I mean . . . from religious perspective . . . Ya from religious perspective, religious perspective, ha, we been taught that whatever you do is niat [pious intention]; it is a role and that is depends whether you are going to be rewarded or not based on your intention, intention, which is a very fundamental thing in Islam basically this is one of the first hadith or the saying of the Prophet Mohammad [peace be upon him]. . . . And if this knowledge, whatever you impart regardless whoever the recipient if they take them and then they communicate that they teach the others, right, so is not they got benefit, you also got benefit.

The element of divine inspiration is also indicated in a focus group discussion:

Participant in FGD 1: It’s just like wanting to go into priesthood, you know what I mean?

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4.8.4. Category Theme #7
Nobility of academic career

References to the nobility of academic career are not uncommon. Consider this, for example: “I had already chosen to be an academic, while my friends went off to have well-paid jobs in banking, consulting, and industry. I was going to be a poor yet noble academic . . .” (Vermeulen, 2007, p. 754). The perceived nobility of being an academic as opposed to being a business executive finds expression in the narratives of participants P7 and P25. There is only one subtheme, Subtheme #13, which supports this category theme.

Subtheme #13: Perceiving the academic profession as a noble calling especially teaching. I have attached two units of meaning in support of my conceptualisation of this subtheme:
P7: I believe in scholarship, I believe in knowledge creation, I believe in philosophical engagement with, in philosophical engagement you know?
P25: Because teaching is a noble profession, we are here to nurture and help the students.

The nobility of academic career is also captured in a focus group discussion:

Participant in FGD1: Teaching profession was a very noble profession, that’s why they call it vocation instead of career.

4.9. Main Theme #3: ACCORDANCE

ACCORDANCE is the label for this main theme as it signifies agreeability, congruency, consonance, empathy, harmony, and compatibility in respect of personal values and beliefs. This is because the ideas listed above do resonate with the description of the experiences narrated by the participants of my research. Many participants appreciate the work environment, prevailing camaraderie, and agreeable cultural practices they experienced in academia, which seemed to be congruent with their personal values and beliefs. I have conceptualised all these favourable experiences as ACCORDANCE. In this conceptualisation, I am also influenced by my preliminary results obtained after the first stage of data collection and analysis (see 4.4.2, “Interim Category Theme #2: Congruence”). This main theme is supported by three category themes:

(a) Category Theme #8: Better work-life balance
(b) Category Theme #9: Congruity with academic values
(c) Category Theme #10: Supportive environment in academia
4.9.1. Category Theme #8

**Better work-life balance**

Several of my participants reported having a better work-life balance in academia than they had experienced in industry. They find the academic flexitime policy appealing. Supporting this category theme is the sole subtheme, Subtheme #19:

**Subtheme #19: Experiencing a better work-life balance due to the flexitime policy in academia.** I have conceptualised this subtheme from the following units of meaning, extracted from the narratives of ten participants:

P2: *The pleasant feeling of coming into academic are, I have a lot of free time. . . . Because I have a lot of free time to do a lot of research, writing papers and talk to students, you know? I don’t feel like working, first thing, it’s a very pleasant experience that for the first time in my life, I don’t feel like I am working at all.*

P4: *I could see the difference in terms of the way people do things in the service industry and the education industry, you know, there is a lot of flexibility, we don’t have really need to be sharp 8 o’clock, we can come at 9 and go back at 6 o’clock, so that is something that I found a bit difficult to accept in the beginning. . . . So it took me about at least 6 months to one year to get into this new culture and to accept that you know that I have to just loosen up a bit more.*

P5: *You know that there, unlike when I was with the you know in the industry I need to punch in 8 o’clock and then punch out 5 o’clock but here it’s like flexible if you have like class in the afternoon they give, the university has this policy you can come at ten and then you need to stay back for 8 hours or so just to fulfil that, you know, it gives me more flexible.*

P8: *Actually I find it better, I find it enjoyable because nobody bother me. . . . I wanted to join academic because you have so much of control, you have so much freedom, you are flexible, you are on your own you know. . . . Now I know I can enjoy my Christmas. Last time, I cannot enjoy my Christmas ha, ha last time is like every Christmas is yearend closing you know, now I can enjoy Christmas. I can take two weeks off ha ha ha you know. So of course this is kind of like, you know, benefits,*
you know, in terms of adjustment is very comfortable, its more comfortable, it’s more fulfilling.

P11: And then I found out there were there was quite a lot of free time and I mean free time we are the one who planned on our ere r the job that we intend to do. . . . Personally I was quite lost actually when I first joined because I found out there’s so much time and what am I going to do.

P12: Working culture, I think academic line is, you don’t have the clock in clock out but you have to be around most of the time, you could be, you got to be where the classes start, you have to be there whereas in the working life, you are always with the, you know you have to clock in a certain numbers of hours, the hours are longer that’s all. . . . The academic world I think more flexible, it’s not that shorter hours, sometime we worked at home on assignment questions and many other things but like I said the time is different, it’s more flexible hours here.

P13: But of course again here we also have the due date but I think it is not as critical as the industry that I worked with.

P22: Here it’s like academic you have a more balance of life but lousy pay.

P29: I mean compare to the industry obviously this this career the pace so not as fast as in the industry so it gives me time to do a number of things that I didn’t have time to do you know starting a little more balance in terms of family and life.

P31: What I see myself moving form a career switch from industry to academic forgoing so call monetary things but earning back some flexibility, better time for myself and family, and life.

One of the participants in the third focus group discussion suggested that the possibility of better work-life balance in academia can be used for attracting practitioners into academia:

Participant in FGD 3: On the promoting of balanced work life, by promoting that, you can actually attract practitioners who are in their late 40s and 50s, they feel that the industry is too much for them.
4.9.2. Category Theme #9

Congruity with academic values

I tracked various strands of congruity with academic values in the participants’ narratives. While some of them appreciated the opportunity in academia for mutual respect, self-reflection, and life-long learning, some of them were glad about pursuing their passion to teach. They experienced a higher level of integrity in academic management than in corporate management. Academia seems to offer them a chance to align their career with their values and beliefs. The five subthemes which support this category theme of congruity with academic values are listed below:

Subtheme #43: Experiencing opportunity for self-reflection in teaching
Subtheme #45: Experiencing more integrity in academic management than corporate management
Subtheme #52: Experiencing passion to teach
Subtheme #85: Experiencing respects for postgraduate students especially those with professional qualifications
Subtheme #86: Experiencing learning from postgraduate students, especially those with professional qualifications and working experience.

Subtheme #43: Experiencing opportunity for self-reflection in teaching. My conceptualisation of this subtheme is based on the participants who narrated how their experience in academia is enhanced by the opportunity for self-reflection and improvement. I present a few examples from their narratives below:

P1: *Ok it is also very interesting to see some of these graduates actually doing far better than those students who have done academically well. . . So it gives you that, er I think it’s an eye opener for myself on that never judge a book by its cover . . . I end up having been in, having seen all these, now being I think more, I suppose being more patient with those students who are less academic and you encourage them . . . I think it it helps me to develop as a person . . . I think it opens my mind to different...*
perspectives, rather than if you are in the industry, it’s actually you got to be competent to be there . . .

P8: It was, really taught me to teach, and it was actually eye opener . . . it is actually my highlight because I found that I become a better teacher and I also learn how to encourage student learning, and how to actually motivate them; it is very important . . .

P15: So sometime when students ask you something, it will trigger you that, Oh! Whether that you really understand them, you know . . . So it may not be; I don’t have any particular example, but it is there you see, I mean sometimes certain questions may trigger you to do your own thinking . . .

P18: Yes. So I am learning from them actually . . . When you talk about industry . . . We don’t think, we are solving problem, the problem come to us, we solve it, ok, we never reflect. Academic we reflect . . . Yes. We reflect back, you see . . . But in the industry, we don’t have time to do that.

P25: And that is what we call the reflection, for you to reflect and improve, the way you keep on improving . . . That is why in academia, it takes a longer time to change things as we need to research and reflect on issues for improvement . . . Because a lot of things like I told you is reflection, your reflection is captured as part of your research and the improvement that you write in the journal, in your publications.

Subtheme #45: Experiencing more integrity in academic management than corporate management. There is only one participant in my study who perceived that university management is more sincere, particularly in human resource development, than corporate management. To this participant, this is important for enhancing academic career:

P1: But I would say that in academic management they actually have more integrity . . . If I compare both corporate management and academic management, academic management tends to be more people-oriented.

Subtheme #52: Experiencing passion to teach. From their narratives, it appears that some of the participants are experiencing a passion to teach. This experience appears to enhance their career by cultivating a sense of purpose and meaning as an academic, which fits into the main theme of ACCORDANCE as it aligns their career with their values and beliefs. I have conceptualised this subtheme based on the following key phrases found in the dataset:
Key Phrases (Subtheme #52)

* it comes with passion
* teaching has always been my passion
* passionate about teaching
* I have the passion
* Teaching is something I love to do
* joy in teaching
* must be passionate
* passion to teach

A few examples of their narratives and extracts from their artefacts supporting this subtheme are as shown below:

P2: *Without passion, I think the interaction with students may not be effective because we have to spend time with student, be patient with what they don’t know, be forgiving for asking silly questions by not humiliating them and make them feel uncomfortable talking to us. I think that is vitally important. . . . That is skill I think. I think it come with passion, without passion I think it’s just going to be a very official way of doing things. . . . I think most of the academicians have that kind of passion.*

P3: *Teaching has always been my passion.*

P14: *Ok in terms of teaching, actually I quite passionate about teaching . . . Actually I always love to do teaching.*

P17: *Only those who have the passion will come. . . . And they should come with passion, without the passion I think they would not come, because it’s not worth it for them. To have pay cut. . . . So only those who have passion would join the academia.*

P18: *Yea actually when I think I look back on my career which is, which span for over 30 years, I find that teaching is something I love to do, it is like ah I became very interested in the unit I am teaching and at the same time its delivering what I know about the unit.*

P19: *You take joy in teaching, in doing this, that’s all motivate you.*

P20: *So it gives me great joy. . . . So I like what I was doing, certainly.*

P25: *I think you must be interested in what you want to do, you must be passionate. I think all lecturers have got a little bit of that passion in, you know, to disseminating knowledge and, you know, to sharing knowledge. If you don’t have that then I don’t think a the lecturing job is for you, ok?*

P28: *I developed the er passion to teach, so ok, I think that’s the main thing, you must have the passion on whatever you do, ok, so I develop, I develop the passion to teach, I want to teach. . . . When I said I develop passion means er, I look forward to go into class, ok. When I go to the tutorial class, I look forward to teach the students, to share with them the*
knowledge, right, whereas when I first started I find that it’s a what you call that, it’s a burden ya.

P30: You need to have an interest and passion to be in this line. . . . Without this no meaning to that person, even though they may be inside, or in this institution. . . . At the moment I have that interest and I have that passion.

Subtheme #85: Experiencing respects for postgraduate students especially those with professional qualifications. Second-career academics reported experiencing respect towards postgraduate students, who came with professional qualifications and working experience. My participants who expressed this, also mentioned experiencing a sense of comradeship with these students who share a similar career background. The following unit of meaning captures this:

P24: Respect them because some of them are very knowledgeable, I have people like coming from let say surgeon in my class, so when you come to like the quality management to the servicing line, I got really to respect his, her opinion, in the in the context of a hospital, they will tell you this is not the way we do things, they, the way we measure the effectiveness of that our colleagues itself is so and so and so I got to really respect her. So I can’t really like, behave like I am the lecturer, you are the student, cannot! You just have to treat him like a peer. . . . don’t think I am unique I am sure that some of all my colleagues which are handling those master students . . . you can’t just treat them just like kids you just have to treat then just like adults, you know we are having a discussion here and we are having a sharing session here things like this..

Subtheme #86: Experiencing learning from postgraduate students, especially those with professional qualifications and working experience. The presence of students with professional qualification and working experience also create opportunities for second-career academics to learn. I have conceptualised this phenomenon based on the following unit of meaning:

P31: I have in fact learn a lot from the students . . . we have students from very diverse backgrounds; we have students for example journalism, corporate communication, mass communication, and all sorts of different facets of the industry; so I learn a lot from them.
4.9.3. Category Theme #10

Supportive environment in academia

This category theme reflects the camaraderie and support experienced by the participants pursuing a second career in academia. This takes different forms for different participants. It includes support of the following kinds: (a) opportunity to research into their areas of interest, (b) egalitarian nature of academia, (c) time for self-reflection, (d) opportunities for learning, and (e) support for the acquisition of higher qualifications. The support appears to come from colleagues as well as respective institutions. From their narratives, I have conceptualised eight subthemes in support of this category theme:

Subtheme #1: Experiencing enhancement due to availability of opportunities to carry out activities not possible in the industry
Subtheme #2: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to teaching
Subtheme #3: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to research
Subtheme #4: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to industry outreach
Subtheme #5: Experiencing collegiality such as pleasant and positive fellowships that facilitate their teaching
Subtheme #17: Experiencing an egalitarian atmosphere in academia
Subtheme #59: Experiencing good feeling in receiving assistance from academic colleagues in teaching and/or research
Subtheme #87: Experiencing that academically qualified faculty (first-career academics) are better in research than them

Subtheme #1: Experiencing enhancement due to availability of opportunities to carry out activities not possible in the industry. From the narratives of the participants, it appeared that participants in my study appreciate the opportunity for them to try some
activities which they are unable to perform in the business environment. Participants in my study resonate with such opportunities, which enhance their experience in academia. Two units of meaning support this conceptualisation:

P10: Creativity in doing our job or in teaching for example because in accounting profession, we can’t be creative otherwise we will be creative accountants, so that is prohibited. . . . I think in academia it does give an opportunity for creativity because of the um . . .

P19: Ok so we can make decision. . . . The things which are taught you know in the subject and I said and feel that maybe certain areas are not so useful to students . . . . And I am allowed to er support from my head of department I means they say do whatever that you feel if good for the students er and then er in terms of the assessments we also have the you know a lot of autonomy in this . . . . Then I like to make changes you know and I read a lot to do that and that to me is good you know.

Subtheme #2: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to teaching. My conceptualisation of this subtheme is based on some participants who indicated that they appreciate the support given to them to improve their pedagogical knowledge and skills. Training offered towards acquiring postgraduate certificates or diplomas in the practices of teaching and learning was very much appreciated by the participants in my study. I have extracted the following units of meaning in support of my conceptualisation of this subtheme:

P1: Since 2008, 2009, when the accreditation of the institution, became a focus for the university, the education quality unit was set up, and I think that was the time when we actually have more er pedagogy development where we tried to reflect and analysed our experience and then identify what are the key problems that we have as well as er I supposed give us the an opportunity , you know , to actually come together to and say some of us actually faced this problems, and there are others who have faced, and they have tried other things, and it works for them so then they tried to shared that experience and you gained some kind of regular sessions where you actually come together and you have this kind of discussion and try to find solutions among yourselves.

P2: So if you ask me the ultimate mentor that I have is Professor Z who helped me a lot as far as how to teach well, how to administrate well as far as teaching is concerned. So it’s a huge window of learning, you know, from practitioner point of view, so teaching is a skill at the end of the day and I have this breakthrough, I think this is a very important breakthrough that I have during my first year of lectureship.
P3: Oh the nice experience is when they willing to share their experience in the research and the teaching and the student problem, ah ok this morning my class I have this problem, this and that, so if you are in my place, how are you going to solve this problem. So we share this problem and I say that me, I will take up this way. So my approach might not be applicable to you, your approach might not be applicable to me, so it depend on how you tackle the problem.

P8: So the first institution did not actually made it a compulsory to undergo there so I learn what everybody needed to know, it is like how to do your lecture notes, and how to do, prepare exam questions. . . . I thought that I know how to teach from the first institution, that’s how I learn my teaching methods, but it was completely wrong, ha ha. . . . It was a huge difference and you know, we had a very rigorous process in term of assessing or the actual evaluate our markings our markings and also the development of exam questions exam papers.

P10: I think a lot of facilities that is offered by the university. . . . Those are the technical seminars like accounting standards, changes in the tax acts which is actually, basically an essential part of my job.

P14: So I try my best, I can attend all the academic practice section.

P20: So all lecturers are expected to have a teaching qualifications . . .

P23: So when I first joined I have to attend a lot of workshop, a lot of training, a lot of seminars, try to understand what is distant learning, how to conduct distant learning how to write material how to develop course, and thing like that. . . . I mean I would say one thing good about U is that. . . . They will train you to you know to know to develop your academic, develop your academic life.

P24: Oh when I just join this university, I actually went through 1 week, just teach me various aspects er r as a lecturer what should I know, how to behave and even when I handle those students in the in the web site, the chat forum itself, how should I approach er them the kind of language that we are supposed to use.

P28: In fact the dean and deputy dean did encourage all the academics to go for training. . . . To develop their teaching skills, not only internally but externally like how to make the students interested in what you are teaching er. . . . Er I think that that would help, I mean the academics, I have attended one about 2 weeks ago.

P29: For the opportunity because I think in terms of the effort by the university is tremendous. there are workshops, for you to polish your teaching skills, whatever and so on, e-learning, things like that, I think all are there just a matter of whether you have the time to go through them, I think I think I have e to commend the university for that. . . . So I have had actually assistance from my colleagues, in the sense that where I need help, especially academic orientated stuff so they assist me.

P30: Institutional support, I think it is fairly reasonable. . . . So formal support, it is tremendous. . . . Like I said the management, our Dean . . . they gave you the support.
Subtheme #3: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to research.

Participants also appreciated the support given to them to improve their research knowledge and skills. The narratives from the participants indicate that they are keen to do research and they relish the opportunity to be trained as researcher. Some units of meaning in support of this subtheme appear below:

P2: They allowed and they paid my salary to complete my PhD for 3 months. . . . Alright and that is a fantastic, wonderful experience that I have. . . . For the past 6 years, I am lucky enough to be groomed by a few professors to be able, especially my external examiner, to, able for me to expose to the most of the weaknesses that I may have, I mean we have to learn very . . . fast. . . . And also the flexi hour they allow for me to expand my knowledge.

P3: Yea yea. In terms of do you feel supported . . . yea, I find that the university in terms of resource, ok, resource, the book and journals is easily available and in terms of research, they do have grant, they do have supervisors who are willing to help you in pursuing into your research and ah in terms of career development, they do have some budget for seminar and workshop to attend.

P5: Basically we cannot you know escape from fund. . . . I guess is the support in term of fund so they fund me they really fund me from maintain my professional qualifications also fund me to er go attend conference, not fully sometimes not fully 100% but partly, also I still appreciate.

P7: Research experience is by large good. I have been able to use my practical experience to do research in a particular area.

P8: So I had a very good mentor alright, who taught me how to write, and my first success case was e-science.

P9: Ok research because I think as you know I am also PhD student. . . . I would say lack of a time to do research but yet you can still find some time during the semester break. There is a 2 or 3 months’ time in a year for you to, you know, focus and do research.

P12: I think the university support us in the facilities, these are the library facilities, the software, some of the software we used, funding or research grant that we have applied, these are the things that they support you.

P13: Ah supported in terms of research. . . . My level of expectation, how I fulfil my this particular research need is I can actually see that the university supported us through the professional development.

P14: In terms of research, I think they also have some expectation but because of the, in terms of the limitation of the resources also, I don’t
think I meet the expectation so far but I am trying to be there because that’s why I take the first move of applying for the research fellowship.

P17: Yea, so I think [university] has given a great support, for example, they have a research centre, where they give us a lot of assistance into application for grants, offered by the government also and also other than from the government coming from outside, excellent grant, they also support in terms of funding, some of our research, our conferences so they have given us a lot support.

P26: Ah, but for me as I said just now, now the, I was lucky that, because I have some colleagues that are senior colleagues who are willing to spend at their time and to lead me.

P28: I have gone through some training, I mean the, in terms of the research methodology, when I join the university, when I enrolled with the PhD, er, we have to attend classes so they taught us how to do research in terms of literature review, in terms of methodology. . . . That was quite some time ago way back in, er, 2011 . . . 2011 but of course in [university], we also have training in term of research.

P30: Institutional support, I think it is fairly reasonable. . . . We are all encouraged to go to reach more than we can reach, they obviously encourage us to do so. And I like it because the environment is giving me the freedom, and the encouragement and the moral that I should pursue a PhD.

P31: In terms of research, the university itself do have . . . incentive grants which er 5000 RM and we have short term grant research university grant and all the grants up to 500,000 RM so in terms of the availability of funding it is actually quite good.

Subtheme #4: Experiencing institutional support in training pertaining to industry outreach. Some participants in my study indicated that they appreciated the support given to them through various forms of initiatives to reconnect them with industry and keep them up-to-date with industry practices. Notwithstanding that, however, a few lamented that they were either unfamiliar or unaware of the opportunities available for industry outreach (see comments from P10):

P10: It’s part of the staff development fund. We do have budgets to attend some dialogues or some seminars especially those organised by professional body. So that is I think the support that we, I am getting from the university but in terms of consultancy I would have no comment on that because I have no knowledge about the possibility of engaging with the industry through consultation especially those related to my field, accounting field.

P30: But in terms of the ACCA, I have a practicing cert because as an accountant if you want to do er consultancy outside we are required by
law to have a practicing cert, so before I actually joined U, I have er already under a public practice program. . . . So it’s all in the pipe line, er, because GST (General Sales Tax) is now in focus at the moment, so I enrolled myself to a couple of the trainings, of GST, I have attended one already, which have a very good support from the dean, she approved it, I am foreseeing the next couple of months I will be engaging with the industry perhaps one public company and hopefully if I am lucky another public company, listed company to help them try to err implement the GST err accounting system.

P31: I mean consultancy and training er currently we are not very much in as the school is not very much into consultancy and training, as in back to the question not many of us here has industry experience so just to share that when there is some attempts on going and approach industry, the client will just straight tell the whoever group that go you know, we do not want the university lecturer to come here and give lecture, we want somebody who has some business experience to come and tell us how to solve our problem, and people start giving that kind of very negative comments and somehow these consultancy part just cooled off. . . . You know while we encouraging our people to go out and do things for the industry, for the community, how much of their time are we willing to give them, meaning that university pays us our salary, 9 to 5 or during office hours we are supposed to be doing our work. . . . So how much percentage we should be paying back for and compensating the university for taking the time and do all these works so there is there is a separate part of the issue if you regard this as the support from the university; yes I think we can look at it from both sides of the coin.

Subtheme #5: Experiencing collegiality such as pleasant and positive fellowships that facilitate their teaching. Participants in my study are particularly amazed by the support extended to them by their colleagues in teaching, research, and industry outreach. The participants highlighted the collegiality that facilitated their teaching. Relevant extracts from their narratives are as shown below in support of this subtheme:

P1: My colleagues are always fine in sharing with me you know how their teaching, what kind of teaching experience they had. . . . And how if you got a certain group you cannot engage, people are always willing to share you know all these experience with you.

P2: The ultimate mentor that I have is Professor Z who helped me a lot as far as how to teach well, how to administrate well as far as teaching is concerned. . . . Yes, good mentoring but normally as academicians, I think they share and they don’t hold back, there is no secret.

P3: Oh the nice experience is when they willing to share their experience in the research and the teaching and the student problem.
P6: Actually I do have some er colleagues which are very helpful. . . . My cluster members is very nice is very supportive and that is very important.

P8: I like it because to me it is I like this kind of environment which we are actually transparent.

P9: Of course sometimes. . . . have some difficulty to cope up with this job because I am new, totally new so of course I face certain difficulties as well but overall I think it’s a very pleasant experience and I think the, my colleagues here, they are very supportive. . . . So overall this is my experience.

P14: I have to say, academics normally are more cheerful for my experience because maybe the work environment is not as stressful as the outside world, you know? . . . . You will not be stressful, you will be happier also, so there are less restriction.

P18: And academic I find that people are very helpful and they are not judgmental in the sense that you need help to do this, they come to do it with you and I like that atmosphere actually.

P19: The person I shared in my room also he had, he used to be an engineer previously before he went to teaching and the sharing was you know very open, whatever that that I wanted, they are more than happy to share. . . . So far it has been good, like I said I been enjoying my er now 3 years plus.

P22: I had the advantage of er colleagues who were very helpful. . . . And initially I struggle, and to answer your question how do I interact with academic colleagues, I was very lucky to have these people to guide me they were y mentor, the dean was very busy, but on and off he will spent sometimes with me, to just have a chit chat with me.

P24: This is the first university that I entered, I mean when I switch over to become academician, I can’t say about other universities lah, but in this university I think the relationship is kind of er em quite good, among us we can work er er closer together if you know, if you know the the norms inside the academician world, you don’t rush things, let them have their time to think about that most of our colleagues are very nice, I mean they are very good people you know, ha ha, we help each other when we have problems.

P25: Of course the organisation which I joined, they do have guidelines for us to follow to go about, ok? And also with colleagues to help you, I think helpful colleagues make a lot of difference.

P26: I was lucky that, because I have some colleagues that are senior colleagues who, er who willing to spend at their time and to lead me so I am when I first joined in they would say ok in terms of publication where can you help, so most of my colleagues. . . . Because for me I have er, good, good colleagues, senior colleagues who guided me ok er, but for others like in the same, like what you called second-career, the academicians, I think the most thing will be the university should assign them the mentors.
P28: Of course, the dean and I, they are, we get along very well. . . . Basically because I suppose he respect me in term of age, right, I am older than him, so he respect me also er because he look at me as somebody who has worked in the industry, right.

P29: Ya so I have had actually er assistance from my colleagues, in the sense that where I need help, especially academic oriented stuff . . .

P30: Em, luckily when I first came here, I had some moral support from D and err I think it was J, I cannot remember who send some emails on how, what would you do in your first lecture. But also from the experience I had gained from corporate world, usually the first class, even the first coaching class, of first conference, what you need to do as facilitator or tutor is to make very good introduction. . . . This is very very different if you are in the corporate world where usually the serious stare that you can ge,. . . . And in terms of the chancellery office er, the support is there, and I am amazed, the support is there.

Subtheme #17: Experiencing an egalitarian atmosphere in academia. My review of literature indicates that universities are undergoing changes (see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”), however, several participants have expressed experiencing an egalitarian atmosphere in academia. Some supporting units of meaning are listed below:

P1: Ok, I think the main difference in interaction with my industry colleagues and my er er, academic colleagues is that as a lecturer you have common objectives. . . . So collaboration is definitely a whole lot easier, but if you are, I found out that from my experience in the industry a lot of time you could be at I suppose a conflicting position in an organisation. . . . I find that, you are in a more antagonistic.

P7: The good thing is that you can, because it’s less hierarchical and it’s less, so you can also find your way around that by ignoring a lot of pressures. . . . But you can’t do this in the corporate world, in the corporate world, you can’t say I don’t want to do A, you have to do it because it is hierarchical and the goals are more specific, right? But in the academic world you can ignore, you can simply just say to your boss, I don’t want to do this, I have got my own things, alright.

P8: I like . . . this kind of environment which we are actually transparent. . . . So they basically seek opinions of every single person within the university then they actually formulate their strategic direction, so basically the feel is that I am your colleagues I am not your boss.

Subtheme #59: Experiencing good feeling in receiving assistance from academic colleagues in teaching and/or research. Some participants also experience good feelings in receiving assistance from academic colleagues in teaching and/or research.
They indicated that their experience is academia is particularly enhanced by the support they received from fellow colleagues.

P5: Oh ok a senior told me to mingle or mix around with the students, to just to have simple chat with the students just before I begin my lecture so sometime I just, you know, what you call circulating, circulating the attendance list, so I sometime I took the opportunity sometime I talked to them like where you from and I just to kill my nerve.

P6: Actually I do have some academic colleagues which are very helpful. . . . They are very helpful and they give you a lot of input, they are not selfish and I also have good friends. . . . My cluster members is very nice is very supportive and that is very important.

P9: They are very happy to share information if you feel you don’t understand something, you just ask, you know. Somebody, somehow, you know, they will explain it to you and support you because you can learn things very fast. . . . The seniors, the professors, you know, or your seniors, these kind of people. So if you have certain things you are in doubt, you have easy access on these senior people. They can share, they can give some suggestions, they can share their knowledge with you. So that is in terms of finding and acquiring information and knowledge. It’s much easier.

P26: Ah, but for me as I said just now, now the, I was lucky that, because I have some colleagues that are senior colleagues who are willing to spend at their time and to lead me.

P30: Luckily when I first came here, I had some moral support from D and I think it was J, I cannot remember who send some emails on how, what would you do in your first lecture.

Subtheme #87: Experiencing that academically qualified faculty (first-career academics) are better in research than them. The presence of colleagues without industry experience, but who excel in research, also creates opportunities for some of the participants to learn from them. I have conceptualised based on the following units of meaning:

P4: So I saw some of my colleagues who were professional researchers, their job is just to ensure there are 2 or 3 articles every year and they kept on looking into ranking and so on.

P17: And also to prove to ourselves that we also can be good academicians, by writing more.

P31: people from er purely academic they do have the strength as in actually doing research and so on, but in terms of the industry experience they may not, they may have difficulties er in enrich the class
by practical examples, except for the case studies, so that is something which I observed.

4.10. Main Theme #4: DISCORDANCE

The participants in this study also experience contradictions between the ideals of academic career and the everyday realities of academic work. On the one hand, their academic career experience confirms their beliefs about the nobility and collegiality of academia, but on the other hand, their experience of some aspects of academia also throws them into discord. The reported disparity between expectations and actual lived experiences led me to conceptualise the main theme of DISCORDANCE. Due to their work experience, the participants in my study are able to discern the differences between corporate and academic cultures. The difference between the two work cultures and the challenges they experienced in academia give rise to several disagreeable experiences. In appreciating this, I am also influenced by the preliminary results from the first stage of data collection and analysis, where I had recognised the theme of frustration (see 4.4.1, “Interim Category Theme #1: Frustration”). Building on the idea further, I have conceptualised this main theme of DISCORDANCE, based on four supporting category themes:

(a) Category Theme #11: Disharmony with academic culture
(b) Category Theme #12: Encountering academic practice challenges
(c) Category Theme #13: Inconsonance with university management
(d) Category Theme #14: Unpleasant parts of teaching

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4.10.1. Category Theme #11

*Disharmony with academic culture*

As clearly discernible from their narratives, the participants in my study encountered challenges with academic culture. Upon their transition from industry to academia, they
faced a degree of culture shock. This created some disharmony, dissension, schism, and alienation with the academic culture at their institutions, as I could note from the following key phrases in their narratives:

**Key Phrases (Category Theme #11)**

- when you are in the industry
- I have to bridge that culture
- academic words which we don’t use
- in academia the culture is definitely different
- you need some time to adapt
- people do work in silo
- people in academia are not eager for confrontation
- It’s a confused culture
- the good old days

When they encounter an aspect of academic culture which comes across as unfamiliar and alienating, they reminisce about the time they were in industry. Such reminiscence of industry practice precipitates a sense of disharmony. I have conceptualised ten subthemes in support of this category theme:

**Subtheme #16: Feeling nostalgic about the good old days**

- Experiencing the need to relearn or unlearn particular cultural practices due to new role in academia
- Experiencing frustration due to differences in the mode of communication
- Experiencing frustration due to differences between industrial and academic cultural practices
- Feeling the need for more time to familiarise themselves with academia as a new discourse community
- Experiencing surprise at the perceived silo mentality exhibited by pure academics
- Experiencing and noticing more reserve and less vocal behaviour from pure academic colleagues
- Experiencing unpleasant experience with academic colleagues
- Experiencing challenge in developing course material
- Experiencing confusion and threat because of perception that the world and the university are changing beyond their comprehension
Subtheme #16: Feeling nostalgic about the good old days. I can discern from their narratives that some participants still reminisce about their time when they were in industry. Transitioning into academia, they need time and effort to adapt to the new culture. But sometimes they revert back to their industry perspective to assess academic culture. Their nostalgic feeling is discernible from their narratives without any prompting or probing questions from me as the interviewer. Sample units of meaning in support of my conceptualisation are as shown below:

P3: Whereby when you are in the industry, you have your secretary, you have your clerk to do job for you

P9: Because I was from sales, ok, sales department, you know. In corporate, the competition is very stiff and everything is you know, sometimes we do things at and hoc basis, no routine. . . . When I working in corporate, so we want to request information from the senior.

P17: So last time working in an MNC, teamwork is very important, but when come to academia . . .

P18: You know, so actually when I look back and reflect back on what I did, in every industry, I worked in different industries, hotel, waterworks, forestry, telecommunication, I learn form from each of this industry.

P24: Definitely because I am not coming from academician background and a lot of practices inside the academic world I am not very sure of. . . . When I joined so there’s a lot of time that my mind is actually tuned towards the industry.

Subtheme #23: Experiencing the need to relearn or unlearn particular cultural practices due to new role in academia. The participants in their career transition into academia apparently realised that there was a need for them to unlearn and learn particular cultural practices. Accordingly, I conceptualised this subtheme based on the following units of meaning:

P9: I have to bridge that culture, that’s a different story, because I am from different culture. Ok, my background is from the corporate world. Of course I behave in different, in a certain way that different from what my colleagues behave.

P10: There are things that I need to pick up so I think that is my challenge in the academia.

P20: You see to move from industry to become academic is a major shift, you you lose that kind of control that you might have in the past.
P24: I mean after you have been 30 years in the industry itself when you come over here it is very hard for you to change overnight, so that kind of mentality still stick over here and you think tend to have a, er giving other people around you or your peer, superior a lot of pressure because of the way you do your work.

P25: For me, it was a gradual learning path . . . I started from college, and after that we moved on to university college, and finally then we moved on to a full-fledged university. So the transition allows me time to make adjustment to fit the management style.

P31: Yes, I would say of course it’s not easy come with a lot of er sweat and er . . . Whatever you call it comes with a lot of prices as well. . . . So people like us when we first step in, there were so much how to say, issue that we feel not happy about, there were so much dissatisfaction of how things work, in terms of, for example, how things should be done and thing is not done, the culture, the standard, the quality, and a lot of other issues which contribute to the overall so conformance of quality of the school but nevertheless, to cut the story short, I think the support from the top management is very important.

Subtheme #26: Experiencing frustration due to differences in the mode of communication. Some of the participants in my study seem to be frustrated with the mode of communication in academia which is perceived to be different from that practised in industry. I have conceptualised their frustration based on the following units of meaning:

P10: But I think in academia the quality of writing is important because we are academics so the choice of words, the tone of the sentence that we write must reflect our standard to meet. So that is perhaps I think the difference here between the practitioner and the academia.

P18: They use a lot of academic words which we don’t use in the culture . . . It’s a difference of language if you study culture.

P30: Yes, I think it’s got to do with the communication style, because in the corporate world, a lot of communication styles and the way we communicate. . . . How do you deal with er request from colleagues, how do you, er the most important things we must have communication and it must be on a timely basis. . . . But in terms of the first few weeks, in terms of administrative responsibilities, I find that yes we were requested to fill in a lot of forms. . . . But I am quite surprise to see. . . . Certain administrative matters are really er do not have that pressure due to dateline as compare to my corporate world.

Subtheme #34: Experiencing frustration due to differences between industrial and academic cultural practices. Some participants in my study were apparently frustrated
by the difference between industrial and academic practices. I have conceptualised this subtheme based on the following supporting units of meaning:

P7: It’s been hard because academics is probably, you know, have two different worlds. The academic world, the success in academic world is defined and structurally different than the success in the business world because in academic world it’s about research, right?

P16: Whereas in the university in academia the culture is definitely different, I mean from er instead of looking at thing very efficiently of course those are important but you need to start every step of the way you are questioning thing so as an academic.

P18: I must say that I do have a slight cultural shock when I come to academia.

P23: I find that, er especially at the university level, there’s a lot of protocol.

Subtheme #36: Feeling the need for more time to familiarise themselves with academia as a new discourse community. Some participants in my study expressed that more time was required for them to acclimatise themselves to their new career. Listed below are two units of meaning supporting this subtheme:

P7: You don’t have much time to establish yourself in a new career, right? So that’s why you need to quickly do things but the problem is you can’t do quickly because it takes time to publish, it takes time to do research, you might fail.

P26: But if you are new to this er industry er you would find you need some time to adapt; you need some time to at least find out what to do with each one.

Subtheme #38: Experiencing surprise at the perceived silo mentality exhibited by pure academics. Some participants seemed to be surprised due to what they perceived as silo mentality in academia. The following supporting units of meaning indicate this:

P15: In the academic it is different, I still look at it this way, most people are isolated and they work individually, because they have their own course, their own program to take care, so they are just taking care of themselves.

P16: I find in academia, people work more in silo, they work very individually, you know, so there is a lack of team.
P17: When come to academic er. . . . I encounter the lecturers, sometime they work alone, they work alone in the room, like what we are doing now er in the room, ha ha ha ha.

P18: I find that people do work in silo. They do work by themselves as opposed to organisation, you can’t do that, you have to be engaged with people, which are engaged with finance, with engineering.

P19: Academics tend to be very much more in the void, they don’t, they don’t er network as much.

P24: Here we can actually work on individual basis. You publish your paper; you don’t have to have collaboration with others. . . . I can go ahead to do my own stuff. . . . I think, I think this is the perception that I have.

P30: It’s a greater, its greater in higher education, the segregation of duties therefore er every individual people have different things to do when therefore they have to do it. Whereas in the corporate world, the segregation of duties in terms of administrative is a lot more lower, er lesser, em therefore er more attuned to our feelings.

Subtheme #46: Experiencing and noticing more reserve and less vocal behaviour from pure academic colleagues. Some participants experience that their academic colleagues tend to be less vocal, particularly in voicing out their grievance. Two units of meaning imply this:

P1: And I think . . . a lot of time that people in academia are not eager for confrontation, they are not eager for conflict, you know they will go back and and make a lot of noise about it in the background, but when it come to really coming out and say what you have on your mind, they withdraw, I don’t know why.

P31: But in terms of the impact to the school in general, I would say that by having people who are vocal and voice their opinion not for the sake of arguing, but present their viewpoint you know clearly and, er present a different perspective of the things to the top management I think I can see that it has positive impact to the school.

Subtheme #61: Experiencing unpleasant experience with academic colleagues. Several participants mention their unpleasant experience in the interaction with their colleagues. Although both academic and administrative colleagues are mentioned, incidents of unpleasant behaviour occur mainly with administration staff. A few units of meaning supporting this subtheme are as shown below:
P6: I don’t feel that these people are highly intellectual but when it comes to behaviour they are very emotional.

P18: Yea it’s like when you ask them something, they seem to throw it back to us. That I find very challenging and I find that it should not be. The people in administration, in finance, in HR, in student operation should be supporting the people who are operating.

P30: Sometime I encountered not so nice communication even with the er persons on the other side of the department, asking for this form to be filled in . . . if you have not done so , you have to remember to do it next time, and if this gets on in the email, er it got sent to everyone.

Subtheme #64: Experiencing challenge in developing course material. One participant expressed their challenge in developing course material:

P23: In terms of course materials, just now I showed you the course materials, you know they are all not done especially for my my cup of tea, marketing, none of the them was done except for principles for marketing, so I came here , I did nothing, but write course materials, or find writers to help me write or adapt or at the same time I will input, give my input as well so I spent a lot of time I develop er, let me see er, six marketing courses. . . . It is a struggle er, you know to develop course materials, to write assignment questions, to do examination blah blah blah, all these academic things.

Subtheme #65: Experiencing confusion and threat because of perception that the world and the university are changing beyond their comprehension. One participant perceived that the university is changing. I have conceptualised this as experiencing confusion and being threatened because of the change. Their narrative is as shown below:

P7: Academic culture again I would say is a confused culture. . . . Yea because I am also feeling like I am threatened because the world is changing now because the world, the knowledge, the whole notion of knowledge creation is changing now. So the role of, I am really worried about the role of the university in the modern world, I am really worried about the role of the university as a knowledge creating institution in the modern world and I am also beginning to question the role of the university to teach as a teaching institution and I am really worried and I am really sceptical and worried about the role of classroom based teaching, alright? And I am comparing this with my previous work experience, right? And I am realising more and more that my previous work, that what I learn in my previous experience, it’s very hard, it almost impossible to learn within the walls of university.
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4.10.2. Category Theme #12

Encountering academic practice challenges

This is another category theme I conceptualised as a constituent of DISCORDANCE. Key phrases such as the following articulated by the participants support my conceptualisation:

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Key Phrases (Category Theme #12)
in academia the quality of writing is important
I thought I can teach but I can’t teach
teaching is structured
how to do research because I came from industry
we don’t have enough time to really do justice to teaching
I am lacking in terms of research and consultancy
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Despite their practical experience, participants in this study reported encountering challenges with academic practices. They mentioned challenges in academic writing, research, pedagogical matters, and quality assurance. Informed by literature, I have conceptualised ten subthemes in support of this category theme:

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Subtheme #24: Experiencing difficulties in adhering to the conventions of academic writing particularly in research
Subtheme #29: Experiencing challenges in teaching due to lack of pedagogical knowledge and practice
Subtheme #30: Experiencing challenges in using computer technology in a university setting
Subtheme #31: Experiencing challenges in teaching in a university setting
Subtheme #40: Feeling restricted by the quality assurance requirements imposed by the national education policy
Subtheme #55: Experiencing the need to do research as a professional researcher in academia as opposed to being a researching professional in industry
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Subtheme #56: Experiencing being more keen to do teaching rather than research

Subtheme #57: Experiencing the importance of pedagogical knowledge and practice

Subtheme #68: Experiencing being different from pure academics in assessing the purpose of research endeavour

Subtheme #84: Experiencing inadequacy due to being able to teach and not so competent at research and industry outreach

Subtheme #24: Experiencing difficulties in adhering to the conventions of academic writing particularly in research. Some participants experienced the need to relearn their writing skills and adhere to academic standards. The following excerpts from their narratives indicate the difficulties they experienced:

P9: But here is different because we are the example for the student. If sometime we don’t, you know, write a memo or an announcement in a proper manner then it could be a bad example. . . .

P10: But I think in academia the quality of writing is important because we are academics so the choice of words, the tone of the sentence that we write must reflect our standard to meet. . . . I benefited a lot from the grammar strength, the academic writing workshops that has been offered because it does highlight to me how poor my writing skills is when come to academia.

P17: Ha ha, because we never write. . . . When we were in the industry, where we write! We never write!

P25: It depends on your specialisation . . . you may not use to writing and you just need to are not aligned to the academic writing style. . . . I think the most important thing is people from the industry coming back to academia, number one, you must be able to, I mean, you really like to read and write.

P29: I salute my colleagues who have been academician right from the start these people can read much faster and understand.

Subtheme #29: Experiencing challenges in teaching due to lack of pedagogical knowledge and practice. Some participants stated difficulties due to inadequate pedagogical knowledge. Some of them did have experience as part-time teachers or tutors. Nevertheless, very few of them have been trained professionally as teachers. Excerpts from their narratives support of my conceptualisation:
P1: I look back into 2004 when I started teaching, right, I was essentially trying to or give as much as as I can in the class for the students. But at the end of the days, then you realised then that the students cannot absorb that much.

P3: Yea, for example, student that are talking to themselves at the back, for example. This is a simple example, so I don’t how to say that, um so blame or punish the student.

P4: I was perceived to be a very strict teacher. So nobody talks when I am talking, the doors locked when the students come in and things like that, I used to do that.

P8: I thought that I know how to teach from the first institution, that’s how I learn my teaching methods, but it was completely wrong, ha ha.

P14: So I think teaching at the moment is a bit limited lah but resources wise I mean, I am talking about the method, teaching methods, you know, how to learn all the new techniques.

P16: Well err, I mean in I didn’t have any formal train in teaching. . . . I haven’t done any workshop or training so it just pick it up and and making it up as I go along so err I really don’t know how I survived all these years but err but err but it was more like trials and error.

Subtheme #30: Experiencing challenges in using computer technology in a university setting. Some of the participants in my study experienced technological barriers, particularly, having to deal with Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The impact of ICT on global higher education means that computer literacy is important for academics (see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”). I have conceptualised this based on the units of meaning shown below:

P3: So because of my background, I am not computer literate.

P10: And I have to say I am not a really IT savvy person. I am a immigrant not a native, an IT native.

P18: I am in the baby boomer group, we are not very hands on and very good in using computer, it come much later in my career.

Subtheme #31: Experiencing challenges in teaching in a university setting. Some of the participants had previous experience as corporate trainers or part-time teachers. But still, many participants encountered difficulties due to the pedagogical demands of teaching undergraduate students, particularly when the business curriculum is still evolving (see 2.2.2.4, “Curriculum in Business Schools”). I support my conceptualisation using the following units of meaning:
P2: I am a trainer, a trainer at the early stage of my career as a auditor in fact, I am training auditors... When I just joined academician... I thought I can teach but I can’t teach... Whatever experience we may have as a practitioner will stop somewhere, that is where I always say that I thought I can teach; at the end, I say I can’t teach.

P7: The teaching is structured. There is a very limited way of doing things, limited way of exams and it’s very rigid, the rigidity of teaching, you know, and so that’s one thing. And the other thing is that time is a factor because you don’t have a lot of time and teaching is a, very, is an art.

P18: As a human resource person, people come to you for counselling, sometime people do not know how to do their job, we are also teaching but not in a formal classroom... Of course there is challenges here and there because student may not be prepared for the topic or they themselves find the topic challenging.

Subtheme #40: Feeling restricted by the quality assurance requirements imposed by the national education. The participants in this study also narrated that the quality assurance requirements also adversely affect their experience. Due to growing competition in higher education, particular for business schools, indicators of reputation such as accreditation and ranking are highly emphasised. These translate into various quality assurance requirements within business schools. Having to comply with such requirements seems to add further stress to second-career academics. The following units of meaning support this subtheme:

P14: I mean unhappy experience is they keep on changing the policies, you know. When I started my career here until now, the QA [quality assurance] policy keep on changing and, I have to say, it’s quite confusing. Even though I am very particular person but I still feel it’s confusing, keep on changing every semester.

P21: You see university there are expectations that you have to achieve because here, we have to be cautious on how we teach because we will be monitored on whether we are doing it correct.

Subtheme #55: Experiencing the need to do research as a professional researcher in academia as opposed to being a researching professional in industry. While some of the participants have conducted research while in industry, they found that the type of research they are required to in academia is different. This becomes yet another source
of dissonance. I have considered the following units of meaning to conceptualise this subtheme:

P4: Honestly, the only time that I engage and do research is when there is a need for it. So it was not something that I aspire because I see the difference between a researching professional and a professional researcher. So I saw myself as a researching professional, I was a corporate person, a professional who wants to do some research. I now saw myself as a professional researcher, a person whose job is only to do research.

P20: Well, in industry, we don’t do research like what we do here. . . . But whereas in the university it is expected, it is a requirement, it is part of our KPI [key performance indicator], the research here is important . . . . We are evaluated based on the research outcome, research output.

P28: Research, which I am trying to do now, I am trying to spend more time doing the research and of course er maybe do a joint research paper with some academics. . . . And publish article on current issues in accounting yea, er er there are a lot of areas which we can research into which I just find that I really need time.

Subtheme #56: Experiencing being more keen to do teaching rather than research. The narratives of the participants revealed that many were keener to teach rather than conduct research. This is possibly due to their perception that their industry experience prepared them well for teaching, but not for research. This is illustrated in the following units of meaning:

P4: So I have very minimum research interest but more of teaching interest.

P14: I thought that is teaching only, after I join then I know oh research then I start enquiring myself, am I joining the right industry? Because in fact I don’t really like research, you know. But I feel like, but I already joined, you know, it’s not easy to say quit.

Subtheme #57: Experiencing the importance of pedagogical knowledge and practice. Some participants also narrated their realisation of the importance of pedagogical knowledge and practice in academia. This is indicated in the following quotes:

P2: When I just joined academician . . . I thought I can teach but I can’t teach.
P9: We have a few areas to talk about teaching, ok, and we have to know how to impart the knowledge to the students, the teaching methods I am talking about, so that’s why this will affect the quality of your teaching.

P16: I have attended some teaching and learning workshops occasionally but I don’t have a teaching certificate.

Subtheme #68: Experiencing being different from pure academics in assessing the purpose of research endeavour. Some participants have different perspectives from their colleagues on the purpose of research. The participants concerned are more interested in research for application rather than for academic purpose only. This is reflected in the following units of meaning:

P11: I mean without private working experience in the private sector for some, I think their research is too much theoretical, er driven, and not much of practical use, ok.

P27: Well actually very often they conceptualise either a topic or er a research project and all that out of thin air... and that is rather unfortunate.

Subtheme #84: Experiencing inadequacy due to being able to teach and not so competent at research and industry outreach. From the narratives of the participants, it seemed that some of them feel inadequate in their academic roles. This is apparently due to their lack of confidence in research and industry outreach. This experience of being able to teach but not being competent at research and consultancy indicates their uneasiness with academic culture, as the following units of meaning suggest:

P24: It’s not a real academician. . . . In the sense, I am lacking in terms of research and consultancy.

P26: From er the day I complete my Master’s degree, that was about er 12, no about 13, 15 years ago ok, and since then, in the industry you, you are not required to do research ok, you know at least the application side; you are not required to do that. And being away from research activities for so long coming into back into university . . . it’s a big jump; it was a big jump! Because you don’t know where to start.
### 4.10.3. Category Theme #13

*Inconsonance with university management*

Some of the participants in this study experience a fundamental difference between management in business in business organisation and management in academia. Their narratives indicate their inconsonance with university management. Such inconsonance is discernible from key phrases such as the following:

**Key Phrases (Category Theme #13)**

- they [university managers] *seem to be such a distance*
- management just like to force lecturers to do it
- Academic culture tend to talk talk talk
- in the corporate world, it’s more direct
- in the academic world, the decision making is very slow

My interpretation is that such dissonance is a result of the participants’ retention of the management culture acquired in industry, instead of discarding it and accepting the management culture of academia. I have conceptualised the resulting frustration captured in this category theme, consisting of the following supporting subthemes:

- **Subtheme #37: Experiencing shock/surprise at the low levels of contact with university management**
- **Subtheme #49: Experiencing academic leadership’s impact on their performance**
- **Subtheme #62: Experiencing slower pace decision making by university management**
- **Subtheme #69: Experiencing academia being a confused culture**
- **Subtheme #72: Experiencing of monitoring type of management in academia**
- **Subtheme #79: Experiencing no support from university management in nurturing them as academic**
Subtheme #80: Experiencing university management is more attuned to incremental change than drastic change

Subtheme #37: Experiencing shock/surprise at the low levels of contact with university management. Given that I had set the criterion that the participants should have at least 5 years’ experience in industry, they would have attained at least middle management level positions when they chose to enter into academia. Some of them expressed surprise at the low level of contact with university management, as evident in their following remarks:

P12: *We have a Cluster Head, that’s all, only management we can think of, we have the Deputy Dean, meeting and things like that, over evaluation yes, that’s about it, most of the time you are on your own.*

P18: *We have no experience with communication with the management of the university because they seem to be such a distance, you know.*

P26: *Interaction with the management of university, the management, when I first joined, I was not given much information and you have to figure out on your own.*

Subtheme #49: Experiencing academic leadership’s impact on their performance.

Despite the lack of contact with university management as indicated above, their career performance is still affected by the policies and priorities of the university management. This leads to feelings of discomfort, as might be gleaned from the following comments:

P5: *Well the management just like to force lecturers to do it! Research . . . it is part of the KPI [Key Performance Index].*

P6: *This is a new university right, a lot of thing is still underdevelopment, so there is no much support, we only have things like annual leave that they give you, but in term of financial support, like for research for conference, the budget is very very limited and if you applied second half of the year you basically don’t get anything. . . . So I am not supported by the university.*

P8: *There is a change of leadership, yea then you will find that there are politics that run along, yes you could be employed by the last management you know and then when there is a new management comes in they change the whole direction of the institution completely and you might not be in favour.*

P31: *So we have just recently changed er just last year we changed er the new set of people, the new set of top management and of course during this change of leaders er there was initially teething problems, so*
to speak . . . Whatever that the previous leaders have done I mean is has planned to roll out is not been actually carried out and the new management would like to do different things. So we being, you know the next level, down even though er we are program managers or even lecturers we find it, well like, hey what is the direction of the school?

Subtheme #62: Experiencing slower pace decision making by university management.
Some participants seemed to be frustrated by the slower pace decision making in academia, compared to fast decision making in industry. This is exemplified in the quotes below:

P6: I feel that in the academic world, the decision making is very slow . . .

P16: I find that in academia er the governance sector, the governance structure of the university is a bit bureaucratic, ok so you know you want a certain program to be launched you need to go through different different level for approval . . . . because we can talk talk talk and debate about things . . . and take a long time then no agreement is reached. In a private university here you know you cannot but it’s part of the structure of a university so you have to do it but to me it’s a bit you have to go back committee, committee, and committee before something is approved.

P22: Ya there is a lot of difference, there is a lot of difference yes. . . . In academia, they tend to spend more time talking talking talking about this concept, that concept, or that’s how Oxford did it, that’s how er NUS did it, or that’s how Melbourne University did . . . but coming from the corporate world, er we are very action oriented . . . we need to move things, we need to get things done, we tends to spend less time talking talking talking . . . Academic culture tend to talk talk talk and then they they were like side step here side step there whereas in in the corporate world, it’s more direct.

Subtheme #69: Experiencing academia being a confused culture. One participant narrated their experience of the “confused culture” of academia:

P7: Ok look, academic culture again I would say is a confused culture. . . . It’s a confused culture because they have so many many, they aspire to be an academic institution, you know, they aspire to become, they aspire to value which are 200, 300, 400 year old, 1,000 year old.
Subtheme #72: Experiencing of monitoring type of management in academia. Some participants narrated the high level of monitoring experienced in academia, which I interpreted as an experience of discomfort, because of their tone while narrating this:

P12: If there is complaints by the students, they would monitor you, I am sure. Most of it comes from complaints I think. Or whether you do your work like upload your teaching slides, set exam questions, there are all timeline down there, if you don’t do and set those timeline, they would come for you, where were you. . . . That’s the type of monitoring.

P21: We have to be cautious on how we teach because we will be monitored on whether we are doing er correct, in a right way that we followed . . . plan by the university.

Subtheme #79: Experiencing no support from university management in nurturing them as academic. Several participants expressed the existence of institutional support in their academic career. But two participants had a contrary experience, as seen in their following comments:

P15: If you ask me that I don’t really feel that I have . . .

P16: Well er, I mean in I didn’t have any formal training in teaching, so er basically, when I was, I can’t remembered exactly but, er I guess it was speaking to more of the senior like lecturers you know giving a few tips on what to do but basically I was left alone, you know.

Subtheme #80: Experiencing university management is more attuned to incremental change than drastic change. While universities are undergoing major changes (see 2.2.1, “The Changing Nature of University”), one participant commented on the side effects of making drastic changes:

P17: Because we have academics without experience er in the school in the university, because if we make drastic change it would affect them as well because they don’t have experience . . . people will think that these are more advantages for us because we come from industry, but that one is not the matter. . . . But don’t make drastic change, ha ha ha, we make er progressive change. . . . We cannot make a drastic change.

This is also brought up in Focus Group Discussion 2:
Participant in FGD 2: *Another thing is that I feel that the people, I mean the university is a bit hesitant to be bold and to be aggressive so I find that from that the fear of going out into the industry and doing the consultation part and being in the industry . . . The university is very scared and I feel that it is from the background of the management who has very lack, they are very lack in industry practice therefore they are afraid of taking risk.*

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**4.10.4. Category Theme #14**

*Unpleasant parts of teaching*

The final category theme which contributes to the main theme of DISCORDANCE arises from the unpleasant parts of teaching. The unpleasant parts of teaching are discernible from the following key phrases:

**Key Phrases (Category Theme #14)**

*I have difficulties at first*

*lecturers had to come down to the level of the students*

*when I don’t have good feedback*

*If you say any negative, it’s more the parents . . .*

Teaching is one of the core activities of academics. However, from the narratives for the participants, I can discern the unpleasantness in teaching experienced by the participants. This seems to arise from various circumstances: (a) their lack of knowledge and skills in pedagogy, (b) generation gap with students, (c) reminiscence of their previous position and experience which may not be applicable to what they are teaching, and so forth. A myriad of issues create a sense of dissonance in teaching. My conceptualisation of this category theme is based on 11 subthemes:

Subtheme #41: Experiencing shock due to a generation gap.

Subtheme #44: Experiencing boredom in teaching

Subtheme #58: Experiencing fear of public speaking as in addressing large cohort of students
Subtheme #66: Experiencing the need to portray new academic image rather than the professional image
Subtheme #67: Experiencing being seen as pressuring the students
Subtheme #71: Experiencing of having to go down to the level of the undergraduate in teaching
Subtheme #74: Experiencing that the students nowadays are interested in degree but not knowledge
Subtheme #75: Experiencing challenges in handling students
Subtheme #81: Experiencing challenges in handling parents of students
Subtheme #82: Experiencing challenges in teaching due to attitude inherited from previous industry experience
Subtheme #83: Experiencing age is catching up which saps their energy

Subtheme #41: Experiencing shock due to a generation gap. There are participants who encountered challenges in dealing with students. I have conceptualised such experiences as shock due to generation gap. Two examples appear below:

P12: Well I suppose the students, the people who attend the classes, are young whereas when I was in the private sector, those [people I interacted with in my previous position] are professionals, so er there’s the big difference, that’s all, the only difference.

P17: Em . . . . . . . er, when I start teaching, in 2009, er it’s er it’s er something very amazing because I am at that time 40 years and I am teaching my students who are 20, er 18 to 20 years.

Subtheme #44: Experiencing boredom in teaching. Some participants reported experiencing boredom with teaching. This is evident in the following units of meaning:

P1: It was after 5 years of full time teaching, and at that time I was getting quite bored because I was teaching something that was basic accounting. . . . But in all these units of study that I was delivering, it was similar content.

P7: My past experience, you know, using it in my teaching. But then sometimes I feel that it becomes boring. . . . I think, it is less satisfying than the other work where I used to get quick results and I used to show my results, you know, more concrete result.
Subtheme #58: Experiencing fear of public speaking as in addressing large cohort of students. One participant revealed that they experienced challenges when they had to address a large audience during lectures:

P5: Oh yes, yes when I joined, when I started, my first day being a lecturer, I was given a task where or a subject where I need to deal with a great number of students, like more than I think 100 over students and I have difficulties at first in terms of delivering my lecture because I never confronted or encountered something like what you called something like public speaking.

Subtheme #66: Experiencing the need to portray new academic image rather than the professional image. One participant mentioned that, as an academic, they experienced the need to portray a new academic identity rather than professional identity:

P10: When I was an accountant, I have to portray . . . professionalism towards a certain group of people. But in academia . . . professional expectations is more towards students, giving good service . . . as well as professionalism in the aspects of research and researcher. So that’s the mild difference.

Subtheme #67: Experiencing being seen as pressuring the students. Some participants sounded self-critical about how they may be overloading the students. As indicated in the quotes below, the overloading could arise from high expectations from students or excessive content:

P11: For example if . . . the presentation is in the afternoon, some of them actually, ok purposely, missed the morning classes of other lecturers and then and that particular lecturer actually told me you know your students actually missed class.

P30: It was quite tough, em the the speed of the teaching material we have to go through very very fast, er em in order to catch up on the weekly basis.

Subtheme #71: Experiencing of having to go down to the level of the undergraduate in teaching. One participant, who has a doctoral degree, lamented that they need to adjust their teaching in order to accommodate undergraduate students. Evidence of their disagreement or dissonance can be seen in the unit of meaning below:
P12: My approach with the students? Well I suppose I have to go down to their level. . . . So you have to go to their level, that’s all. . . . I have thought a lot about it, because I come from the private, I come to the university there’s so much focus on university must come down to the level of the students, understand that part? . . . They are not learning much, if you ask me. . . . But unfortunately, most universities want the professors to go down to the level of the student, which I don’t think is right.

Subtheme #74: Experiencing that the students nowadays are interested in degree but not knowledge. Two participants described the view that students nowadays are interested in acquiring degrees but not knowledge:

P12: Most students just want a degree and good grade that’s all, ha ha ha.

P31: In terms of negative experience with eh students I would say that . . . they are very much . . . grade oriented rather than knowledge oriented. . . . There was one student who came and talked to me directly, he said er er he is here just to make sure he passed and get the MBA; he is not bother what he is going to learn and everything because he just need that paper.

Subtheme #75: Experiencing challenges in handling students. Some participants described the difficulties experienced in their interaction with students. This is expressed in their statements cited below:

P14: I also have bad experience when I don’t have good feedback then I will feel very downhearted, especially the first time you taught the subject.

P16: I vaguely remember that they are totally disrespectful of you especially in my early days alright and I, I, yes it really hurt you.

P17: I find them, er there is a big change in term of when we were the students, in er 1990s, or late 1980s when we were the students, and compare with now where the teaching has changed a lot. . . . I think now the generation like to be interacted, they want us to use more technology, more multimedia.

Subtheme #81: Experiencing challenges in handling parents of students. Some participants reported facing difficulties in their interaction with the parents of the students. This is depicted in the extract below:
P19: Parents seem to have very high expectation of their children, you know, and if the children don’t perform well, you know, somehow they are not able to to communicate well with their own children, so they call up the lecturers and, you know, they keep on asking what’s wrong with my son, what’s wrong with my daughter . . . If you say any negative, it’s more the parents rather than the children themselves.

Subtheme #82: Experiencing challenges in teaching due to attitude inherited from previous industry experience. One participant who experienced initial difficulties interacting with students, felt compelled to change own mindset, upon the advice of colleagues. I have interpreted such difficulties as arising from the mindsets inherited from previous industry experience. A relevant extract from the data is shown below:

P22: At first . . . when I responded to students, it was a very business-like manner, 20 over years of writing business letters, you are formal you are very straight to the point, and what do you call this, very dry, you know, very dry type of writing, you know, straight to the point. But I learnt that there was the mistake, because I learnt from my senior that you should communicate, communicate in a humane manner.

Subtheme #83: Experiencing age is catching up which saps their energy. One participant held that their performance could be affected by their age:

P24: Another factor is that my age is, also I am not that young anymore; it’s almost like the end of my career. . . . It’s an issue.

4.11. Main Theme #5: GRIEVANCE

GRIEVANCE arises from disagreement, disaffection, incompatibility, impairment, estrangement, marginalisation, and injustice. These ideas resonate with the negative lived experiences narrated by the participants in my research. My study has revealed that many participants resent the disparity they encountered in terms of their position and remuneration in academia, particularly for those holding senior positions during their industry days. The main theme of GRIEVANCE appears to capture the disenchancing experience that fits the narratives of the participants, in their own words. In conceptualising this main theme, I am also informed by the interim category theme, frustration (see 4.4.1, “Interim Category Theme #1: Frustration”). One major source of
GRIEVANCE is the disappointment concerning their recruitment. Some participants were vocal in stating that their recruitment into academia was based on their practical industry experience, yet, their history of work experience was not taken into consideration in assigning them to suitable positions or roles. Another major source of GRIEVANCE is the disenchantment with the academic appraisal system. The appraisal system that second-career academics in Malaysian business schools experienced not only differed very much from the system they were used to in the corporate world, but it also appeared to assess their weaknesses rather than their strengths. The main theme of GRIEVANCE is constructed on the basis of three category themes:

(a) Category Theme #15: Marginalisation by academic appraisal system
(b) Category Theme #16: Non-recognition of industry experience
(c) Category Theme #17: Relegation to worker status

### 4.11.1. Category Theme #15
Marginalisation by academic appraisal system

The prevailing academic appraisal system appears to marginalise second-career academics in Malaysian business schools. This is implied by the following key phrases:

Key Phrases (Category Theme #15)
- appraisal system may not be that fair
- Who come from the corporate world will find it very frustrating
- when it comes to appraisal, it is not satisfying
- those who evaluate me have no business in evaluating me

Academic appraisal systems in Malaysian business schools appear to marginalise second-career academics in multiple ways. Accordingly, following five subthemes constitute this category theme:

Subtheme #32: Experiencing difficulties in carrying out academic research and getting published
Subtheme #33: Experiencing difficulties in setting and meeting performance objectives as per university requirements

Subtheme #35: Experiencing insufficient time to do research or outreach

Subtheme #60: Experiencing emphasis on research rather than teaching by the university management

Subtheme #63: Experiencing discrimination due to the university’s emphasis on specific research areas

Subtheme #32: Experiencing difficulties in carrying out academic research and getting published. Some the participants in my study find it hard to do research and publish in recognised journals. This is consistent with their difficulties with academic writing, as implied in the extracts below:

P3: Ok, in research . . . these are the research that I done in business but not as thorough as the research on the academic line.

P5: Just that maybe when they talked about research and being new in the university . . . I don’t research really know how to run research. . . . I think that’s one of my er challenges that I am facing now.

P14: Ok for experience of research, in terms of research, my experience is not so good, also . . . I do not put so much time in research.

P19: Well the research is a new area for me. . . . There is also another stream which is the pure research which definitely . . . not my area.

Subtheme #33: Experiencing difficulties in setting and meeting performance objectives as per university requirements. Several participants expressed difficulties in setting and meeting performance objectives:

P6: I feel that remuneration system and performance measurement for promotion should be well, need to be more well defined.

P7: It’s hard to really keep focus in academia and it’s hard to really do so many things at the same time which are really vague like teaching, research . . . Academia is really vague. . . . It’s a mess; it is not good for a business person . . . who come from the corporate world will find it very frustrating, I think.

P13: But when it comes to appraisal, it is not satisfying . . . Probably we are not being, how to say, mentioned well on how should we actually, how to say, achieve certain particular goals that given to us.

P14: You feel that you deserve to get certain mark but when come to appraisal they will cut your mark . . . But I feel like there is another thing
that I am not, I mean unhappy experience is they keep on changing the policies, you know.

P21: To me, those who evaluate me have no business in evaluating me because they do not know me, you see, they don’t work with me; they just see me, give you this workload, I will do it . . . this is where the feeling of unsatisfied happens in the university . . .

Subtheme #35: Experiencing insufficient time to do research or outreach. Some participants narrated their difficulty in performing their duties, due to a time constraint. This affects their performance, especially in non-scheduled tasks, such as research and service.

P7: So the scarcity of time is a big issue; we don’t have enough time to really do justice to teaching, right? So that’s one thing.

P13: Before I join here, I thought that I will have certain particular period of time to be allocated for research hour. But it seems that from the moment I come here, I see that instead of being like that, so most of the time is actually spent on teaching.

P23: Revising course material . . . that also take a lot of time, you get me or not, so definitely in term of research I can tell you honestly, I can honestly tell, I have no time.

P28: There are a lot of areas which we can research into which I just find that I really need time.

Subtheme #60: Experiencing emphasis on research rather than teaching by the university management. Several of my participants mentioned the emphasis their universities place on research, while appraising academic performance. Apparently, this leads to a sense of being coerced to do something for which second-career academics are not adequately prepared. The following comments support this conceptualisation:

P5: Well the management just like to force lecturers to do it! Research . . . it is part of the KPI [Key Performance Index]

P7: Because the university is all about, because research is what counts in the university career mostly.

P24: Here research is actually a primary, that is supposed to be, I mean you are supposed to do a lot of research and then have contribution to the society.

P25: Yea, I think all staff in the university are expected to do research in one way or another.
P26: So er . . . so the priority would be research.

Subtheme #63: Experiencing discrimination due to the university’s emphasis on specific research areas. One participant described how a university’s research priorities can be perceived as being discriminatory. If one’s research is not aligned with the university’s priority areas, it may not be supported, thus hampering the person’s performance:

P6: But if you are doing research mostly towards the area of open and distant learning then I think the university will give you support but if you are doing area, doing your own area of subject interest, then there is a lack of support for you.

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<tr>
<th>Main Theme #5: GRIEVANCE</th>
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<td>Category Theme #16: Non-recognition of industry experience</td>
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4.11.2. Category Theme #16

Non-recognition of industry experience

I can discern from the narratives of some participants that the non-recognition of industry experience at the point of entry into academia is one of their complaints. In constructing this category theme, I have relied upon the following two subthemes:

- Subtheme #27: Experiencing lack of appreciation and recognition for professional and practical knowledge
- Subtheme #39: Feeling marginalised due to comparatively lower remunerations and entry level positions

Subtheme #27: Experiencing lack of appreciation and recognition for professional and practical knowledge. A number of participants highlighted this in their narratives. Some relevant units of meaning are excerpted below:

P3: Now my question is that, is it fair to compare those lecturers with industrial experience with those who are academic, fully academic qualification or experience? In terms of pay, are these people with academic experience, should fall under the same salary scale or they should have their own salary scale? And I feel that it’s very very, I want
to stress one more that the industry experience is very very important because this is where we can elaborate more on the theory to the student. . . . So they don’t even count 20 over years into the formulating your salary scale.

P5: I still believe that they should give credit or valued the professional, the chartered professional experience, industry experience. . . . I said they should credit, they should value the professional qualification of the lecturers.

P6: The university still does not much emphasise on my working experience, they emphasise more on your formal education.

P11: If you have working experience then . . . how is it going to translate to, for example, promotion, all these things.

P16: I would encourage university to really think about a mechanism to support them. . . . Perhaps some of the top ranking universities like [universities] they do or they do encourage and they do support them but in any other universities, like including this university . . . we do welcome them but we may not have set up the right structure yet to support them.

P17: Industry experience, not really appreciated, in the academic for promotion, so for the academic the promotion or the recognition only will come when we deal or when we make ourselves as a scholar.

P22: That there is not much emphasis on top management looking at how much experience you are bringing in, into the course material, into your presenting your courses, you see for example, freight transport or warehouse management, logistics and so on all this are very operation oriented, very real live oriented, so they don’t consider so much.

P24: They do on verbally say that they appreciate our industrial background but in reality . . . when you come over here it’s just like from the very beginning again, start to learn new things and then grow and then I mean climb the ladder again.

P26: I think the management is not so much, they don’t give much emphasis on the practical practitioners who joined, they just treat you as a, you know any other academician, which I think is a bit unfortunate.

P27: I would say most universities would not appreciate.

One participant conveyed that second-career academics experience more appreciation and recognition from students rather than from the university management:

P31: I would just be very frank, that the appreciation comes from the students because the system does not recognised industry experience . . . . I don’t see any recognition of 18 years of industry experience . . . so I see this as a system deficiency.
Subtheme #39: Feeling marginalised due to comparatively lower remunerations and entry level positions. The units of meaning supporting this subtheme are shown below:

P5: I think the management, the administration they view us, especially accounting lecturer as ordinary lecturers; they didn’t really like realise that we are professional because we are in accounting. . . . Something like they don’t really really appreciate or value that chartered accountant yet, they are more on, more on PhD you know, you know so that actually really upset me, I feel sad you know.

P16: But things like pay structure, thing like reward remuneration where you fit in, those are structural things that I think university should have.

P17: In terms of salary, it’s not worth it, for example, like myself, I came with a pay cut; I think I came with a pay cut of at least 3 or 4 thousand.

P20: You see, to move from industry to become academic is a major shift, you lose that kind of control that you might have in the past, you lose that kind of income that you might have in the past.

P22: The pay scale of people in the academia is much lower than those in the in the corporate world. . . . So in academia, it tends to be much less paid than if you are in the, in the private sector.

P26: I think maybe the biggest concern would be . . . probably the . . . remuneration package, ok which I think is not as attractive as the one that was given to me in the corporate sector.

The same dissatisfaction with the lower remuneration is also reflected in Focus Group Discussion 1:

Participant in FGD 1: Another thing is people do know that of course as lecturers you don’t earn as much as when you are in industry. . . . Just because we don’t do research, it doesn’t mean that we are less valuable, you know. So when you compare the remuneration, we seem to be more of a second class.
4.11.3. **Category Theme #17**  

*Relegation to worker status*

Participants expressed a sense of being devalued due to their perception of being relegated from a managerial position in industry to a worker’s position in academia. This perception arises from the fact that they are now required to do administrative work, such as typing, filling forms, making own travel arrangements, and filing by themselves, instead of having a pool of administrative assistants, clerical staff, and secretaries to do these jobs for them. This category theme is supported by two subthemes:

Subtheme #25: Experiencing frustration due to needing to do their own administrative work.

Subtheme #28: Experiencing unpleasant feelings when dealing with service departments such as human resource, accounting, and finance.

**Subtheme #25: Experiencing frustration due to needing to do their own administrative work.** The participants voiced their sense of frustration about having to do various administrative and secretarial work, which were done by their subordinates when they were in the industry. This finds expression in the following remarks made by them:

P3: *Before I quit the industry, my last post was a general manager . . . The clerical part is a bit problem whereby when you are in the industry, you have your secretary, you have your clerk to do job for you but when come to education, there are some part of clerical job which you are not very familiar with then that is a process of adaptation.*

P7: *The negative thing is that there are too many things going on like at the same time, research, teaching, this that, you know, administrative work.*

P30: *But after I came in and a few weeks down the road, the administrative works, certain things, everything had to be documented, everything had to have a paper work.*
Subtheme #28: Experiencing unpleasant feelings when dealing with service departments such as human resource, accounting, and finance. Some participants described their unpleasant experiences while dealing with service departments. A few units of meaning illustrating this appear below:

P18: Yea, it’s like when you ask them something, they seem to throw it back to us. That I find very challenging and I find that it should not be. The people in administration, in finance, in HR, in student operation should be supporting the people who are operating. . . . What I think is the people in the administration, whether is HR, whether is finance, do not know that their job is to support us who deliver.

P21: I mean it is worse when I go to the other areas where it is non-academic. . . . Like the other department they seems to be they don’t really really, you know, that friendly, you know, to us, you know.

P30: Sometime I encountered not so nice communication even with the er persons on the other side of the department, asking for this form to be filled in they wouldn’t into heir what they, I have gathered from the conversation, to them is it is my work, you have to do this, I do not care whether you are free or you are tired, you just have to fill in the forms.

Chapter Closing Remark. In this chapter, I have conceptualised five main themes, which constitute the main result of my study. The main themes are: (a) SELF-EFFICACY, (b) CALLING, (c) ACCORDANCE, (d) DISCORDANCE, and (e) GRIEVANCE. This is achieved through deploying the principle of hermeneutic circle, through repeated reading, reflection, condensation, and conceptualisation processes, grounded in the dataset, informed by literature review, and influenced by my personal insider experience. My analytical process also takes into account the quality assurance steps described in Chapter 3. I have adhered to the steps as far as possible. In the next chapter, I discuss the significance and implications of the results of my study.
Chapter 5
Significance and Implications

5.1. Introduction

The focus of this research was to look into the experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia, and also to examine how their experiences may affect their sense of who they are. In this chapter, I reflect on the relevance of my results. I examine the extent to which I may have produced any new insights on the issues that prompted this study. This chapter is divided into five sections, dealing with the following matters: (a) theoretical significance of the results, (b) practical implications of the results, (c) limitations of the study, and (d) suggestion for future research. The chapter ends with a concluding remark, in which I return the research gaze back at myself, from where it had originated.

5.2. Theoretical Significance

Although the five main themes—SELF-EFFICACY, CALLING, ACCORDANCE, DISCORDANCE, and GRIEVANCE—are the main result of my study, the 17 category themes supporting the main themes and the 87 subthemes underlying these category themes constitute the overall results of my study. Several of these themes relate to the scholarly literature. In some cases, my results are aligned with the theoretical perspectives available in the literature, but in many cases my results either widen the existing perspectives or offer potentially new perspectives. The theoretical significance of my research is examined below.

5.2.1. Relating to Social Cognitive Theory

In this study, the Self-Efficacy I have discerned in second-career academics in Malaysian business schools appears to stem from their previous industrial experience. This is theoretically interesting as very few studies have focused on whether one’s self-efficacy, established in one working environment could be transferred to a dissimilar
working environment. In my study, the two working environments are industry/commerce and academia. Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory implies that second-career academics would have developed their self-efficacy in the domain of industry/commerce, because that is where they acquired their considerable work experience. However, to my understanding, the theory is silent about whether such self-efficacy is transferrable when an individual performs a career transition to a distinctly different setting. On the basis of my research, it seems reasonable to I would argue that self-efficacy developed in one environment may be transferable to another environment. My argument is being supported by the 10 subthemes categorised under the category theme of competency to teach by the second-career academics. Therefore their self-efficacy originated form their perception that they are competent and capable to teach primarily based on their professional and practical experience. Further, in respect of the social affirmation required to establish such self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Gecas, 1982, 1989; Lent & Brown, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2002; Lent & Hackett, 1987, discussed in 2.3.1 Concepts and Theories of Career) is strongly supported by very positive feedback as evidenced from the seven subthemes #6, 7, 9, 10, 15, 21, and 78. The result of my study in respect of transferability of self-efficacy therefore provides new perspective the social cognitive theory of human action. I would add that such self-efficacy is perhaps only transferable if the new dissimilar working environment provides the necessary social affirmation as in the case of the second-career academics in this study.

5.2.2. Relating to Protean Career Theory

My study indicates that CALLING is a major aspect of the experience of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia. This is consistent with other studies (e.g., Myers, 2006; Tunheim & Goldschmidt, 2013). In the career studies literature, the sense of calling is associated with the protean career concept: “One way of being protean . . . is pursuing one’s path with a heart with the intensity of a calling” (Hall, 2004, p. 9, italics in the original, discussed in 2.3.1, “Concepts and Theories of Career”). The essence of the protean career orientation is that career success is based on an individual’s values and competency, not so much the organisation to which one is attached (Hall, 1996, 2004). The spirit of protean career orientation is the alignment of
one’s career with one’s heart, in the sense that there is congruence in values, competency, talent, and interests between one’s career and one’s personal life (Hall, 2004, p. 9).

Comparing the theme of CALLING from my study and the element of calling in protean career theory, I infer that protean career theory may be useful for examining the career transition experience of second-career academics. So far, very few studies have evoked the element of calling in the study of career transition between dissimilar work environments. My discovery of the main theme of calling as experienced by the second-career academics has been supported by 9 subthemes precipitating in the emergence of the 4 category themes of altruism, congruity with family tradition, divine inspiration, and nobility of academic career. Combining my discovery of the main theme of calling with the main theme of self-efficacy and the category theme of congruity with academic values (which includes the subtheme of passion to teach), my results clearly support that indeed career transition experience of second-career academics has a strong protean career orientation.
5.2.3. Relating to Career Transition Literature

The results of my study share many points of contact with the research literature on career transition in general, and career transition from industry to academia in particular. H. Simon’s discussion on career transition from industry to academia in his classic book, *Administrative Behavior* (Simon, 1997/1945) may be the earliest reference to this topic. Commenting on business education in the USA, Simon argued that one ought to have adequate experience in industry in order to be effective as a business educator. My study elaborates this point considerably further by identifying both positive and negative experiences of career transition from industry to academia. The theme of SELF-EFFICACY emerging from my study supports Simon’s contention. Widening his contention further, my study also offers two other themes, namely CALLING and ACCORDANCE, which could enhance the effectiveness of business academics transitioning from industry. However, in a theoretically significant turn of argument, my study also recognises two additional themes, namely DISCORDANCE and GRIEVANCE, which draw attention to the challenges and risks involved in this type of career transition. But this turn of argument is not uniquely mine. Some other scholars have also identified the negative elements associated with career transition from industry to academia. However, by comparing my results with the discussions in the literature, I am able to identify what may be my specific contributions into these discussions. I have elaborated this below, under the five main themes conceptualised in my research.

**SELF-EFFICACY**

The SELF-EFFICACY experienced by the participants in my study is established upon their professional experience prior to their entry into academia. My study shows that the participants are motivated as their students and academic colleagues appreciate their professional experience. This is crucially important for their adaptation within academia. Without it, given the presence of the adverse experience of DISCORDANCE and GRIEVANCE, they may not remain long in academia. Very few prior studies have identified SELF-EFFICACY as a motivating factor, except the study by Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004), who found that the managerial experience of their participants accounts for their confidence as academics. My results contribute to this discussion by unpacking
the main theme of SELF-EFFICACY into the following category themes: (a) Competency
to teach, (b) Expatriate mentality, and (c) Proficiency in academic tasks beyond
teaching. Among these, the category theme, Expatriate mentality aligns with the
conceptualisation by Wilson, Wood, Solomonides, Dixon, and Goos (2014, p. 8). They
viewed career transition from industry to academia as a form of immigration. But
conceptualising this as Expatriate mentality, as I have done, suggests the reversibility of
the move—a perspective not found in the literature. In my study, I have recognised the
confident voice of some participants who entertained the idea that they can quit
academia and return to industry if they do not adapt, just like expatriates. This adds a
new angle to the discussion in the literature.

**CALLING**

CALLING captures the inspiration of second-career academics. In all its secular, non-
secular, and traditional forms, CALLING appears to have a positive impact on the
participants in my study. Recently, the topic of calling has gained attention in career
studies. Since the year 2007, there has been an increase in research on the topic of
calling in vocational psychology and related disciplines (Duffy & Dik, 2012). The place
of calling in career transition remains to be studied more extensively. In previous
studies on this topic, calling is recognised as a key motivator, especially in the form of
altruism and eudemonic well-being (Myers, 2006; Wilson et al., 2014). The results of
my study contribute to this conversation. In my study, I recognised four category
themes, including altruism: (a) Altruism, (b) Congruity with family tradition, (c) Divine
inspiration, and (d) Nobility of academic career.

Moreover, the nobility of academic career, experienced by my participants, contrasts
with the argument that higher education may have lost its soul and humanity and,
ultimately, its nobility (see references to the work of two Malaysian scholars, Faruqi
and Bajunid, discussed in 2.3.8. “Academic Career and Calling”). My study implies that
the situation may not be as gloomy. Perhaps what is needed is to focus scholarly
attention on how a sense of CALLING has survived despite the systemic changes in
higher education that seem to undermine it.
The literature also contains a warning that calling may have an adverse effect on careers. Some scholars have argued that a strong sense of calling can make someone workaholic, socially isolated, and stressed due to unrealistic expectation (Cardador & Caza, 2012). My study has not uncovered any evidence of this among the business academics I interviewed. This remains an open issue to be explored further in the context of second-career academics. I have not attempted to investigate whether the positive influence of CALLING bears any relationship with demographic, psychographic, cultural, or any other aspect of the career transition context. Much remains to be studied regarding the foundations, mechanisms, and consequences of CALLING as a motivator for second-career academics.

**ACCORDANCE**

The theme of ACCORDANCE is in contrast to the studies on the detrimental effects of the “new managerialism” in higher education and low levels of job satisfaction in academia (for a detailed discussion on these issues, see 2.3.3, “Academic Career and University Management” and 2.3.10, “Academic Career and Job Satisfaction”). My results reveal that the sense of ACCORDANCE prevails among second-career academics. In my research, ACCORDANCE consists of three category themes: (a) Better work-life balance, (b) Congruity with academic values, and (c) Supportive environment in academia. In highlighting the positive experience of ACCORDANCE, my study resonates with those of others who have reported similar positive experiences among academics (LaRocco & Bruns, 2006; Myers, 2006; Wilson et al., 2014).

However, other researchers have reported several negative experiences too, arising from the ongoing processes of massification, internationalisation, and marketisation of higher education (Barnett, 2000, 2005; Becher & Trowler, 2001; Buckley & Hurley, 2001; Burnes, Wend, & By, 2013; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Miliken & Colohan, 2004; Scott, 1995, 2005). There is discordance rather than accordance, due to the incongruence between the expectations of academics and the emerging reality of academia. I have captured this phenomenon through the main themes of DISCORDANCE and GRIEVANCE.
**DISCORDANCE**

The main theme of **DISCORDANCE** is a manifestation of the disparity between a second-career academic’s expectation and the reality they encounter in academia. Such disparity generates difficulties in career transition. This resonates with the argument of LaRocco and Bruns (2006). They highlighted multiple challenges, such as unpreparedness for academic career and cultural differences between industry and academia. Several others have also reported discordant experiences among second-career academics. Wilson et al. (2014) reported culture shock, isolation, and disillusion among second-career academics. LaRocco and Bruns (2006) reported that their participants found difficulties in balancing work and life. They also faced difficulties in understanding university expectations in pedagogical and other performance areas. These match with my results as captured under the four constitutive category themes that make up the main theme of **DISCORDANCE**: (a) Disharmony with academic culture, (b) Encountering academic practice challenges, (c) Inconsonance with university management, and (d) Unpleasant parts of teaching. Among these, the last theme, Unpleasant parts of teaching, could be my contribution to this discussion. The participants in my study reported issues relating to generation gap, boredom in teaching, fear of public speaking, interference by parents, age-related weakness, and so forth, which I have conceptualised as Unpleasant parts of teaching.

There is a different type of discordance reported by Learmonth and Humphreys, both second-career academics in the UK. In their autoethnographical study, they state that they were “uncomfortably confronted with (various versions of) former selves” (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012, p. 112) upon their transition from industry to academia. Having to play the “career game” in academia disconcerted them. They thought they had left it behind in industry, but the prevailing new managerialism in academia brought it to life for them. This created incongruence and stress in them. Although I have also identified the stress from the new target-driven performance management in academia, but these have emerged more in the form of **GRIEVANCE**, as discussed below.
**GRIEVANCE**

The main theme of GRIEVANCE is based on three category themes: (a) Marginalisation by academic appraisal system, (b) Non-recognition of industry experience, and (c) Relegation to worker status. This has ample echoes in the literature. Wilson et al.’s (2014) study also cited grievances stemming from similar sources. I have not found any new source of grievance. I have only clustered the myriad sources into three clear categories.

The category theme of Relegation to worker status was specifically mentioned by Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004). Their study focused on identity issues that arise for second-career academics. In their study, the participants’ grievances stemmed from losing their manager status and becoming workers, losing income, not being recognised for their management expertise, and confronting the need to do research—a task, for which their previous career did not prepare them well. But based on my results, I would argue, a career transition from industry to academia is not necessarily a fall in status; it is a more complex experience. For example, under the main theme of CALLING, one of the category themes is Nobility of academic career. This experience of nobility was not mentioned by Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004). I do note that the theme of Nobility of academic career has entered into more recent literature on career transition from industry to academia (e.g., Learmonth & Humphreys, 2012).

**5.3. Practical Implications**

**5.3.1. Academics With Special Needs**

Universities need to recognise second-career academics as a group of academics with special needs. Using them merely to fill vacant teaching positions, without offering well-targeted support programs, would not be advantageous in the long run. Several things ought to change in the entire human resource management lifecycle in order to get the best contribution from second-career academics and minimise their discontent, which seems rather widespread. Beginnings have been made in this direction, for example in Australia, as the useful primer titled *Down the Rabbit Hole: Navigating the...*
Transition From Industry to Academia, published recently with support from the Office for Learning and Teaching, Government of Australia indicates. In the Foreword, it states:

This booklet is about the transition to academia for those who are working in other sectors. Our aim is to encourage professionals to make the move to teaching and research in universities in Australia so that they can contribute to the learning of the next generation. . . . We offer a realistic description of the transition process as well as advice on how to successfully navigate the move.

Primers like this are needed in other countries too, where higher education is expanding rapidly, such as Malaysia. However, such initiatives need to be adapted to the ground realities. As my study shows, the Malaysian second-career experience may not be the same as the second-career experience elsewhere.

5.3.2. Recognising Practical Experience

The results of my study suggest that non-recognition of the practical experience in their employment contracts produces GRIEVANCE among second-career academics. Universities can address this by devising alternative career tracts, lateral entry levels, and appropriate promotion opportunities for second-career academics, in recognition of their prior experience and practical expertise.

For example, in the USA, special career tracks have been created for recruiting business executives, with the designation of Executive Professor (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008) and special doctoral and bridging programs have been established to attract practising accountants as accounting professors (also discussed in 2.2.2.7, “Shortage of Faculty in Business Schools”). There is indication that universities have begun to realise the importance of having second-career academics as faculty members by creating such alternative career tracks. However, it is not clear whether these institutions are addressing the pertinent issues as revealed in this study, by providing lateral entry points and promotion opportunities suitable for second-career academics that take into account their prior experience, professional qualifications, and practical expertise. From the narratives of the participants of this study, in Malaysia, it appears that alternative
career tracks, lateral entry points, and appropriate promotion opportunities are lacking, producing the Grievance that I have unravelled. Therefore institutions of higher learning in Malaysia need to address this issue if they aim to attract senior business executives to take up academic roles in business schools.

As discussed above, attracting, developing, and retaining second-career academics would require an appreciation of their motivations, assumptions, experiences, and special needs. These aspects need careful assessment for such initiatives to be effective in the long run.

5.3.3. Academic Mindset and Skills

A major element of DISCORDANCE arises from the difference in the work culture between industry and academia. Consequently, the mindsets and skills relevant for career success in these two domains are not the same. Based on my research, it seems reasonable to suggest that second-career academics need counselling and guidance at all stages of the career transition process—before, during, and after their transition from industry to academia. This ought to include a fairly intensive orientation program to familiarise them with academic culture and educational paradigms, especially as these have evolved under the contemporary policy regimes. These initiatives can help address the disparity between their expectations from academia and the ground realities of contemporary university work.

The very SELF-EFFICACY of second-career academics, which gives them the confidence to perform as academics may also hinder their integration within academia. Universities can help by creating opportunities for conversation and collaboration to improve mutual understanding between industry and academia. Specific training needs to arranged for second-career academics, and even professional and executives intending to move into academia. My study indicates various areas for such training, for example, teaching approaches, public speaking, curriculum design, quality assurance, computer technology, and academic writing.
5.3.4. Being a Second-Career Academic

This study suggests that second-career academics need to reflect on their role and purpose in business schools (or universities, in general). Reflection on their experiences, both individually and cooperatively, can produce better appreciation of their role and purpose.

In the course of this study, I had the opportunity to interact fairly intensely with 31 second-career academics in Malaysian business schools. This has contributed significantly to my understanding of being a second-career academic in a business school. On the basis of my experience, I can recommend such interactions for others, which can offer them multiple lenses to view their own situation and conceptualise the meaning of their academic career.

In the following sections I will elaborate on the interrelationships of the main themes of this research in an attempt to arrive at a better insight of the process of change towards being a second-career academics.

Interrelationship between themes. I have conceptualised five main themes, which constitute the main result of my research. The main themes are: (a) Self-Efficacy, (b) Calling, (c) Accordance, (d) Discordance, and (e) Grievance. In my exploration in search of interrelationship among the five main themes, and with reference to related literature I arrive at the following conclusions:

In respect of self-efficacy and calling, they are related as both are motivating experiences. For example, their perceived capability as teacher as manifested in the category theme of competency to teach and their experience of eudemonic well-being as reflected in the category theme of altruism contributed towards their motivation as academics (Blenkinsopp and Stalker, 2004; Myers, 2006; Wilson et al., 2014 as discussed in 5.2.3 Relating to career Transition literature).
In respect of self-efficacy and accordance, they are related as each reinforced the other. The establishment of self-efficacy needs affirmative environment as reflected in the accordance in terms of the support and collegiality from both colleagues and institutions as manifested in the category theme of supportive environment in academia (Bandura, 1986; Gecas, 1982, 1989, and please also refer to the discussion in 5.2.2. Relating to Career Transition Literature).

From the above analysis, I would argue that self-efficacy, calling, and accordance are interrelated as they are all motivating experience. Further, they can be conceptualised as interacting determinants of each other.

On the other hand, the main themes of discordance and grievance are interrelated as they reflect the adverse experience encountered by second-career academics. As discussed in 4.10. Main Theme#4: Discordance and 4.11 Main Theme#5: Grievance, the two themes are interrelated as they reflect negative experiences of being an academic. However, discordance refers to experience of contradictions between the ideals and realities of academic career whereas grievance refers to experiences related to their sense of impairment, estrangement, marginalisation, and injustice upon assuming the role of an academic. The difference between the two themes is reflected in their category themes which precipitated them respectively. The main theme discordance is being support by the category themes of disharmony with academic culture, encountering academic practice challenges, inconsonance with university management, and unpleasant part of teaching. These two main themes heighted the adverse experiences that these second-career academics encountered. As such experiences constitute the disincentive aspect of them assuming the role of academics. The interrelationship between these two experiences is the possibility of them being mutual interacting determinants of each other. I can discern such interrelationship from the subthemes that precipitate the emergence of the two main themes of discordance and grievance. My argument is supported by, for example, the participants encounter challenges in respect of academic writing (Subtheme#24), teaching (subtheme#29), use of ICT (Subtheme#30), and conducting academic research (Subtheme#55) which are captured under the category theme of discordance led to them feel which led to experience of grievance as captured under the subthemes #32, 33, 35, 60, and 63 which constitute the category theme of marginalisation by academic appraisal system.
While self-efficacy, calling, and accordance are interrelated as they are all motivating experience and discordance and grievance are interrelated as they reflect the adverse experience, both the motivating and the adverse experiences can be and are experienced by an individual second-career academic concurrently. This is reflected in narratives by all the participants as all of them have both motivating as well as adverse experience (This is discernible from Table 4.7 Thematic Analysis Master Tabulation where invariably all the five experiences are present as indicated in the narratives by the 31 participants).

**Process of change in assuming the new identity.** The results of my research and with reference to related literature indicate that indeed the process of change does take place as being a second-career academic involved career transition and the related identity works(Blenkinsopp and Stalker, 2004; Burns, 2013; Fachin & Davel, 2015; Zikic & Richardson, 2015). Both the motivating and adverse experiences (as discussed in the section Interrelationship between themes) have implications on them due to their career transition into academic as second-career academics. The five main themes paint an overarching picture of the diverse experiences they have undergone through as they are motivated by self-efficacy, inspired by calling, delighted by accordance, disenchanted by discordance and distracted by grievance. Through these themes, I have conceptualised the multi-faceted realities facing the re-entry of second-career academics in respect of their attempt to make sense of who they are as second-career academics. My study indicates that they undergo an identity disruption and required the reconstruction a new identity which may be termed as second-career academics (LaRocco & Bruns, 2006), management academics (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004), executive professors (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008), practitioner-academics (Wilson et al., 2014), and pracacademics (Posner, 2009).

In my study, I have conceptualised several category themes related to identity construction. These category themes are competency to teach which is related to their new identity in teaching roles and proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching. This is consistent with several studies such as Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004) and Gale (2011) which reveals that teaching is the major forte for these second-career academics. Further their strength as academic in research also rest upon their previous industry
experience as captured in the subtheme#8, 18, 50, 70, and 73 which highlighted their keenness in industry outreach, obtaining higher academic qualifications, conducting research related to their previous working experience, and possession of research skills from their previous work respectively. All these subthemes are captured under the category theme of proficiency in academic tasks beyond teaching.

Some of the category themes in my study suggest that the experience that being an academic has a noble connotation attached as reflected in Category Theme Nobility of academic career. This category theme is related to the Category Theme of Altruism parked under the main theme of calling. Both identities are positive motivator which some participants are keen to adopt the identity of a career that is perceived to be noble and purposeful to the community at large (Wieland, 2010).

However, there are identities which the participants have experienced challenge and difficulties to adopt. One of such identities is the identity as a full-fledged academic. This can be discerned from the Category Theme of Encountering Academic Practice Challenges in which due to their inadequacy in academic tasks such as research and academic writing resulted in their doubts about whether they are full fledge academic. This is consistent with studies by other scholars such as Santoro and Snead (2013), Simendinger, Puia, Kraft, and Jasperson, (2000) where the participants expressed concern whether they can be qualified as academic due to their deficiency in research and inadequacy in linguistic capabilities.

The other identity which the participants in my study find it challenging to adopt is their perceived relegation to work status. This is reflected in the Category Theme of Relegation to Workers Status (see 4.11.1. Category Theme#17). This is consistent with the results from the study by Blenkinsopp and Stalker (2004) where their participants found it demeaning and perceived a sense of relegation in respect of doing their own clerical works rather than having other workers to do these mundane tasks.

I would summarise that the results of my study show that assuming the identity as a second-career academic is a challenging one. Their adoption of academic identity is further compounded by the flux in the definition as manifested in the current debate on academic identity (Clarke & Knights, 2015; Knights & Clarke, 2013; Ylijoki & Ursin,
2013, as well as discussion in 2.3.4. Academic career and Identity, and the related section in 2.3.4.2. Identity Construction by Second-Career Academics). My research clearly shows that more studies are required for a better insight into how second-career academics construct and assume their new academic identity.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

5.4.1. One-off Interviews

My study is based on narratives from each participant, collected through a one-off interview. I have acknowledged the limitations of this data-collection method in Chapter 3 (see 3.4.7. in “Limitations of the Data Collection Methods”). However, this limitation is probably mitigated by the breadth of experience covered. This method allowed me to interview 31 participants across a wide range of university in Malaysia (see 3.6.5, “Ensuring Diversity Among Participants”). Moreover, I met some of these participants for a second time in the focus group discussions, where some further dialogue was possible with some participants, albeit in a group setting.

5.4.2. Audio Recording

I audio-recorded the interviews and focus group discussions, and transcribed the recordings later. The transcriptions constituted a key part of my dataset (the dataset also included artefacts collected from the participants). The main limitation of audio-recordings is that it does not capture the non-verbal communications. This may have some impact on the fidelity of my interpretations of the narratives. But audio-recordings do capture volume, pace, and intonation of speech. Although I did not transcribe these aspects, these did affect my analysis through repeated hearing. There were some parts where the tone was helpful in interpreting what was said (e.g., in interpreting Subtheme #72, “Experiencing of monitoring type of management in academia,” it was necessary to determine whether the underlying narrative expressed an approval or disapproval of this type of management practice; here the tone used in the speech was a clear marker of
disapproval, thus leading me to synthesis this subtheme under Category Theme #13, “Inconsonance with university management”.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Research

5.5.1. Alternative Researcher Backgrounds

I am also a second-career academic re-entering into a business school after 32 years in industry. As a result, there is an inevitable element of subjectivity. The methodological implications of this depend on the philosophical assumptions of the research paradigm, approach, and method one adopts in one’s research. Within my specific methodological combination of interpretive paradigm, narrative inquiry approach, and thematic analysis method, I was keen to treat my insider position as a strength in this research, rather than a weakness (see 3.3.4, “Selection and Justification of the Approach”). However, even within this methodological combination, researcher’s subjectivity can influence the results either positively or negatively depending upon the maturity with which one conducts the research process. With limited mastery over utilising this subjectivity appropriately, I am conscious of the possibility of poor listening and less open-minded consideration of alternative interpretations of the data that may have happened. Therefore, I recommend that similar research be carried out by researchers with other types of background. It would be interesting to know whether there is any significant variation in the result.
5.5.2. Alternative Research Focuses and Approaches

In this research, a narrative inquiry approach was adopted within the interpretative paradigm. But every paradigm and approach has its blind spots. I suggest that more research in this area be carried out with a variety of other research paradigms and approaches. Since my focus was mainly on the second-career experience and its impact on self-identity, I needed to access the participants’ experience through their narratives. However, there are several other important questions germane to theorising in the domain of career transition. For example, research is needed to theorise the decision making process associated with career transition from industry to academia. Research is needed to study the performance of second-career academics to look for patterns of success and failure in academia. Research is also needed to evaluate the effectiveness of various support strategies universities may develop towards this group of academics. Some of these research topics may be more amenable to the empirico-analytical paradigm and survey research approach, yielding insights on patterns, trends, causal paths, and so forth, based on statistical generalisation. A longitudinal design is certainly possible to theorise the changes in second-career experience over time.

5.5.3. Alternative Practice-Focused Disciplines

I focused on second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia, working at the tertiary level of education. The processes and outcomes revealed in my research need not be the same for second-career academics working in other practice-focused disciplines, such as architecture, computing, design, education, engineering, healthcare, journalism, law, public administration, social work, and so forth, where re-entry of practitioners into academia is also quite common.

5.5.4. Second-Career Academics Who Return to Industry

My research indicated the possibility of second-career academics returning back to industry after a stint in academia. I related this to what I called Category Theme #2: Expatriate mentality, an aspect of SELF-EFFICACY. A study focusing on this can add to the career-transition literature.
5.6. Concluding Remark

In this study, I have identified five main themes by analysing the experience of second-career academics in Malaysian business schools: SELF-EFFICACY, CALLING, ACCORDANCE, DISCORDANCE, and GRIEVANCE. These, together with their constituent category themes and subthemes make up my results. These results have, with limitations, theoretical significance and practical implications in the field of career studies as well as university management. It is my hope that such insights can be translated into further research and change initiatives relevant to second-career academics. In this way, my study may serve as just another pebble in the project of bridging the chasm between academia and industry, in reference to tertiary business education.

Personally, through this research, I have gained insights into the meaning of being a second-career academic. Through the prolonged process of data collection from 31 participants, concurrent thematic analysis, and cyclic reflection and reconceptualisation, I became the 32nd participant of my research. The whole experience has been quite intense and self-transformational. It has occasioned a deep examination of my role and purpose in my present career, identification and readjustment of my core values, recognition of my weaknesses and strengths, and acknowledgment and appreciation of my experiences in life. My journey in this research endeavour has enlightened and enriched my life in many ways. My research endeavour has shaped, aligned, directed, and prepared me for the exciting and rejuvenating world of academia. I am grateful to have this opportunity.
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B


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## APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Ethics Clearance

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Appendix A. Ethics Clearance
(cited in 3.6.1)

From: Sally Fried <sfried@swin.edu.au>
Sent: Monday, 19 August, 2013 11:43 AM
To: Debiprasad Dash
Cc: LiapTeck Ong; Anand Agrawal; George KwangSing Ngui; RES Ethics
Subject: SUHREC Project 2013/166 Ethics Clearance

To: Prof Debiprasad Dash/Mr Liap Ong, Sarawak

SUHREC Project 2013/166 Factors Affecting the Performance of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia

Prof Debiprasad Dash, Sarawak; Mr Liap Ong, Dr Anand Agrawal, Dr Kwang Sing Ngui
Approved Duration: 19/08/2013 To 19/02/2016

I refer to the ethical review of the above project protocol undertaken by a SUHREC Sub-committee (SHESC1). Your response to the review, as e-mailed on 07/08/13 with attachments, was forwarded to a delegate. Your response accords with the feedback.

I am pleased to advise that, as submitted to date, the project may proceed in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions here outlined.

- All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

- The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator/supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

- The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants any redress measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

- At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project.

- A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project may be undertaken at any time.
Please contact the Research Ethics Office if you have any queries about on-going ethics clearance. The SUHREC project number should be quoted in communication. Chief Investigators/Supervisors should retain a copy of this e-mail as part of project recordkeeping.

Best wishes for the project.

Kind regards,

Sally

Secretary, SHESC1

Sally Fried
Research Administration Officer (Ethics)/EA to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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Swinburne University of Technology
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# APPENDIX B

## Consent Information Statement

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Appendix B. Consent Information Statement
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Consent Information Statement

Project Title:
Factors Affecting the Performance of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia

Introduction to the Research

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project that will explore the lived experiences of the second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia for the purpose of discovering factors that affect their academic career performance. We are interested to learn about how you adapt to your new second career as academics and the factors that affects your career performance.

People Involved With This Research Project

- Mr Liap Teck ONG, PhD student and main researcher, Faculty of Business & Design
- Professor Debiprasad DASH, Principal Coordinating Supervisor, Faculty of Business & Design
- Dr Anand AGRAWAL, Associate Supervisor, Faculty of Business & Design [left Swinburne]
- Dr Kwang Sing NGUI, Associate Supervisor, Faculty of Business & Design

Aims of the Project

To use the findings from this research project to help us better understand the lived experiences of the second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia for the purpose of discovering factors that affect their academic career performance.

Consent to Participate & Right to Withdraw

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Before the research begins we need to have your “informed consent.” That means we need you to have carefully considered this and then sign the attached “Informed Consent Form.” The consent form can be returned to Liap Teck any time before the commencement of your interview.

After giving your consent to participate, it is still your right to withdraw from the research at any time. This means that you may cease to participate in interviews without giving any reason and you may also request that any data collected up to that point be omitted, returned to you, or destroyed.

During interviews if we touch on any topic that causes you to feel uncomfortable or distressed at any time you are free to pause or stop the interview.

We do hope that you will also derive some enjoyment and benefit from participating in this research. Your contribution will potentially help other second-career academics like yourself to better adapt to their academic career, and we hope that your own understanding of your
experiences will be enhanced by discussing and reflecting on them during the course of the interview.

What Participation Will Involve

This research project is concerned with factors affecting the performance of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia. For this research, Liap Teck would like to meet with you in person to conduct an interview on your career experiences. The interview will be recorded using an audio recorder. The following kinds of topics will be discussed:

Sample Topics for Interview

- Various activities in your current role
- Comparison between your current performance and your previous performance in industry
- Your experience with academic culture
- Your interaction with colleagues who do not have as much business experience as you do
- Your experience of the institutional support mechanisms

It is not Liap Teck’s intention that your career be documented or scrutinised, rather he is interested in what you personally think and feel about your lived experiences in your second career as an academic.

After the interview, Liap Teck will request you for a sample of your various academic work outputs (e.g., teaching materials prepared by you, academic documents, or articles written by you, if any). Please note that it is entirely at your discretion whether to fulfil this request or not. If you choose to share such material, you may collect these over the next 2 weeks and forward the same to Liap Teck. Liap Teck will eliminate all identifying details from such materials. The following “Privacy & Confidentiality” conditions cover everything you share through your interaction with Liap Teck.

Option to Join Focus Group Discussion

After the interview, Liap Teck will invite you to join a focus group discussion with a few other second-career academics participating in this research. The focus group discussion will be recorded using an audio recorder. The following topic will be discussed:

Topic for Focus Group Discussion

- The role of second-career academics in business schools

Privacy & Confidentiality

Liap Teck Ong will be the project’s record keeper. The records will be stored securely within the premises of the University’s Faculty of Business and Design at the Swinburne Sarawak campus. Your privacy and confidentiality will be protected as follows:

- Your signed “Informed Consent Form” will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a separate location from the data collected from you.
- A “Participant Index” will be created which assigns a random pseudonym to your Informed Consent Form. In all data records of your interview and in everything written about the data you will be identified only by this pseudonym, never by your real name.
- Records of your interviews and focus group discussions (audio recordings and transcripts) will be identified by your pseudonym only and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room.
- You would be given an opportunity to verify the transcripts to ensure their accuracy as well as adequate exclusion of identifying details.
- All computer files will be kept on a password-protected computer. Back-up disks will be kept in a locked cabinet.
• Only the four persons listed above who are involved with this research will have access to these records.
• Following completion of the study, the data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years and maximum of 7 years. After this time all notes and recordings will be destroyed.

This research project is being undertaken by Liap Teck Ong to fulfil the requirements of a PhD programme at Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus. As an outcome of this, work related to the research may be published in academic journals or presented at academic or professional conferences. Some direct quotes and biographical descriptions of you (e.g., an Asian male, aged 40-45) may be included in published documents. Kindly note that some of the information you reveal about your career may identify you (for example, locations, dates, other distinctive/identifying details). These identifying details will not be included in the interview transcripts.

Whom to Contact

If you would like further information about the project, please do not hesitate to contact:

**Professor Debiprasad Dash**
Faculty of Business and Design
Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus
Jalan Simpang Tiga
93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
Tel +60 (82) 260834 (Work), +6011 12628247 (Mobile)
Email: dash@swinburne.edu.my

Before, during, or after your interviews with Liap Teck, if there is any additional information that you would like to know, or if you have anything further to add, you can contact Liap Teck:

**Liap Teck Ong**
Faculty of Business and Design,
Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus
Jalan Simpang Tiga
93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
Tel + 6011 18002499 (Mobile)
Email: long@swinburne.edu.my

Concerns or Complaints About the Project:

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

**Research Ethics Officer**
Office of Research & Graduate Studies (H88)
Swinburne University of Technology
P O Box 218, Hawthorn VIC 3122, AUSTRALIA
Tel +61 3 9214 5218; E-mail: resethics@swin.edu.au
APPENDIX C
Informed Consent Form

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Appendix C. Informed Consent Form
(cited in 3.4.1)

Informed Consent Form

Project Title:
Factors Affecting the Performance of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia

Researchers:
- Liap Teck Ong (PhD student and main researcher) under the supervision of:
- Professor Debiprasad Dash (Principal Coordinating Supervisor)
- Dr Anand Agrawal (Associate Supervisor) [left Swinburne]
- Dr Kwang Sing Ngui (Associate Supervisor)

All belonging to Faculty of Business and Design, Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus, Jalan Simpang Tiga, 93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

1. I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided a copy of the project “Consent Information Statement” to which this consent form relates and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. In relation to this project, please circle your response to the following:
   - I agree to be interviewed by the researcher  
   - I agree to allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device  
   - I agree to make myself available for further information if required

3. I acknowledge that:
   (a) my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation
   (b) the Swinburne project is for the purpose of research and not for profit
   (c) any identifiable information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be (i) collected and retained for the purpose of this project and (ii) accessed and analysed by the researcher(s) for the purpose of conducting this project
   (d) my anonymity is preserved and I will not be identified in publications or otherwise without my express written consent
   (e) I would be given an opportunity to verify the transcripts to ensure their accuracy as well as adequate exclusion of identifying details

By signing this document I agree to participate in this project.

Name of Participant: .................................................................

Signature & Date: .................................................................
# APPENDIX D

**Letter of Approval for Change of Thesis Title**

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Appendix D. Letter of Approval for Change of Thesis Title  
(cited in Preface)

Student ID: 4300459  
23 January 2015  
Mr Liap Teck Ong

Dear Liap Teck

**RE: CHANGE OF THESIS TITLE**

I am writing to advise you that your application to change the title to your thesis was executively approved by the Director of Graduate Studies on **21/01/2015**.

The approved title is, as requested:

*Experiencing a Re-entry: Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia*

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

**Prof Pam Green**  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Swinburne Research  
Tel: +61 3 9214 5224  
Email

cc. Dr D Dash
## APPENDIX E

Sample Invitation Letter to Potential Participants

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Appendix E. Sample Invitation Letter to Potential Participants
(cited in 3.4.1, 3.6.3)

Dear [Name],

Research | Second-Career Academics

I am a PhD candidate with Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus where I have also been lecturing in International Business area since 2010. I am a second-career academic (i.e. a business educators who enter into academia after substantial industry experience). My research topic is “Factors Affecting the Performance of Second-Career Academics in Business Schools in Malaysia.” Part of the data collection process of my research involves conducting semi-structured in-depth interview. I have completed my interview with other second-career academics within my own faculty at Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus, would like to expand my research to include other Malaysian universities, including [Name] University.

I am looking to interview academics:

(a) who have had at least 5 years of prior business experience as professionals or entrepreneurs (the purpose is to capture a wide range of second-career academics with varying lengths of business experience) and

(b) have a postgraduate qualification (in order to be consistent with the definition of a Professionally Qualified [PQ] faculty, as per AACSB).

I would like to invite you to be a participant for my research if you meet the above criteria. Your participation would be highly appreciated. As I would be in [Name] next week 16 February 2014 till morning of 21 February 2014 (except 19 Feb when I will be in [Name] interviewing the academics of [Name] University), would it be possible for me to interview you at your university? Please let me know the time and date convenient to you.

I attach the following two documents as part of my research ethics protocol for your kind reference.

Appendix A Consent Information Statement
Appendix B Informed Consent Form

I attach a brief summary of my research.

Introduction

My research aims to explore the lived experiences of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia for the purpose of discovering factors that affect their academic career performance. I am interested to learn about how these ex-business practitioners adapt to their new second career as academics and the factors that affects their career performance.
Aims of the Project

To use the findings from this research project to help us better understand the lived experiences of the second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia for the purpose of discovering factors that affect their academic career performance.

What Participation Will Involve

This research project is concerned with factors affecting the performance of second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia. This means that I would like to meet with the academics in accordance with a set research protocol.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Before the research begins participants’ “informed consent” shall be obtained by signing the attached “Informed Consent Form” and returning it to me, any time before the commencement of interviews.

Option 1 (Meeting a Single Participant)

(a) An audio recorder will be used
(b) The location, date, and starting time of the interview will be recorded
(c) The interview protocol will be followed (Note. The interview protocol will be formulated after the pilot study has been conducted.)
(d) The ending time of the interview will be recorded
(e) A sample of academic artefacts will be collected (if prepared by the participant)
(f) The possibility of a focus group discussion will be shared and the participant will be requested to help in arranging one at their institution (this will be followed up by e-mail)

Option 2 (Meeting a Group of Participants)

(a) An audio recorder will be used
(b) The location, date, and starting time of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) will be recorded
(c) The FGD protocol will be followed (Note. The FGD protocol will be formulated after the pilot study has been conducted.)
(d) The ending time of the FGD will be recorded

Please be assured that such observations shall be used solely as topics for discussion in future interviews. It is not my intention to document or scrutinise participants’ career, but rather I am interested in what participants personally think and feel about their lived experiences in their second career as an academic.

Thank you for taking time to read my letter, and looking forward to hear your reply.

Best regards,

Liap Teck ONG
APPENDIX F
Sample Letter to Check Interview Transcripts

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3 June 2014

Dear,

Thank you for meeting me on the 20th March 2014 and participating in a semi-structured in-depth interview and sharing your lived experience as a second-career academic. I value and appreciate your willingness and enthusiasm to share your unique and personal thoughts, views, feelings, events and issues pertaining to your academic career after extensive career in the industry.

I have enclosed a transcript of the interview that we have had on the 20th March 2014. I would appreciate if you could kindly review the entire document. Be sure and feel free to reflect whether if this interview has fully captured your lived experience as second-career academic. If after reviewing the transcript of the interview, you would like to add on further experience and view which has been omitted during our interview, please feel to add comments in italics. Please do not edit for grammatical corrections. The way you told your story is what is critical.

When you have reviewed the verbatim transcript and have an opportunity to make changes and additions, please return the transcript as attachment in your return email to me at long@swinburne.edu.my.

I greatly appreciated and valued your participation in my study and your willingness to share your lived experience. If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With best regards,

Liap Teck ONG
APPENDIX G

Thematic Analysis
Master Tabulation

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