

Getting To Know Our Professors

Associate Professor Lim Kam Ming



A/P Lim

is currently the Registrar of NIE, Deputy Divisional Director of Office of Academic Administration and Services (OAAS) and an Associate Professor at the Psychology and Child & Human Development (PCHD) Academic Group and an elected Senator of Nanyang Technological University.

What research area do you specialise in? How does it impact your work at NIE?

My main research area is in examining factors that influence helping and help-seeking behaviour, also known as prosocial behaviour. My first research project on helping behaviour was my dissertation for my Master's degree in 1988. For my Master's thesis, I examined the effects of control beliefs on helping behaviour. My PhD thesis that was completed in 1992, followed up on this research topic. To date, I have supervised 20 students at NIE who have studied prosocial/helping or help-seeking behaviour for their Master's theses and PhD dissertations. I have also completed research on teacher education and mathematics education.

How did your interest in the research area come about?

I was intrigued by the "bystander effect" research done by Professors Bibb Latane and John Darley. Their research examined the factors influencing individuals' helping behaviour in situations where others were present. I first learned about this research area at an introduction to psychology course during my undergraduate studies in 1984.

Could you share with us some interesting facets of your research area?

- Prosocial-video-game use was positively associated with helping, empathy being a significant mediator.
- The prosocial helping behaviour tendencies of individuals tend to increase after completing service-learning projects.
- Individuals are more likely to offer help to others when they have a higher perception of control over the situation.

Why is NIE a good place for you to do your work?

I joined NIE in January 1998 and enjoy working here. Three reasons: people, place and participation. Mainly, the great colleagues, great campus and great opportunities for everyone to contribute toward NIE's successes.

What does NIE offer to higher degree students that is unique?

NIE is internationally recognised for its people, pedagogies and programmes. In other words, it is a top-ranked institute that uses innovative pedagogies in its prominent programmes.

What have you learned from your students?

I have learned so much from my students regardless of whether they were from the pre-service teacher education programmes, in-service programmes or higher degree programmes. Each student brings his or her own talents, skills and knowledge into the classroom and collectively, we learn from each other.

What advice would you give to those who would like to pursue a higher degree programme?

Research is a critical component of the education process in a higher degree programme. Develop your research skills and knowledge regardless of whether you see research as part of your career. Knowing the what, how and why of research will be useful in your career.