e-Proceeding

SULAM INNOVATE, SHOWCASE AND SYMPOSIUM (SUISS 2025)

CELEBRATING **C**hangemakers
INSPIRING   IMPACT

SULAM PROJECT

Editor in Chief
ENI NORENI MOHAMAD ZAIN

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**Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness &
Centre for Academic Excellence and Development**

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e-Proceeding

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INSPIRING IMPACT

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Editor in Chief
ENI NORENI MOHAMAD ZAIN

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Foreword

ASSOC. PROF. DR. MOHD FADIL MOHD YUSOF

DEAN
Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

It is with great pleasure and pride that I extend a warm welcome to all of you to the 3rd SULAM Innovate Showcase and Symposium (SUISS 2025), organized by the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness & Centre for Academic Excellence and Development, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. This event marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to fostering innovation, community engagement, and sustainable development through the transformative power of Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM).

In UMK, we believe in the profound impact of education that transcends the classroom, empowering our students to become catalysts for positive change in society. SUISS 2025 embodies this vision by providing a platform to showcase innovative projects, share impactful commitment, and foster meaningful collaborations that address real-world challenges. This symposium brings together academics, students, industry partners, and community stakeholders to celebrate the spirit of service learning and its role in shaping a sustainable future.

Drawing inspiration from the theme of this year's event, **CELEBRATING CHANGEMAKERS, INSPIRING IMPACTS,** we aim to highlight the creativity and dedication of our participants in developing solutions that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through SULAM, we are not only nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets but also cultivating a sense of responsibility and empathy among our students, equipping them to make a lasting impact on the communities they serve.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all participants, organizing committee, and sponsors for their unwavering support in making SUISS 2025 a reality. Your contributions and passion are the driving force behind this event's success. As we gather to exchange ideas, showcase innovations, and inspire one another, let us embrace the opportunity to learn, collaborate, and create a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.

Once again, welcome to SUISS 2025. May this symposium ignite new ideas, forge meaningful connections, and pave the way for impactful change.

SULAM Innovate, Showcase and Symposium (SUISS)
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan
Theme: Celebrating Changemakers, Inspiring Impact

PREFACE: e-Proceedings of the SULAM Innovate, Showcase and Symposium (SUISS) 2025

The e-Proceeding of SULAM Innovate, Showcase and Symposium (SUISS) 2025 celebrates the creativity, compassion, and scholarly commitment of Malaysia's academic community in advancing the principles of Service-Learning Malaysia (SULAM). This volume brings together 37 outstanding papers that exemplify how universities across the nation integrate academic learning with community engagement to create meaningful, measurable, and sustainable societal impact.

The third edition of SUISS was successfully held virtually on 19 June, jointly organised by the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness (FHPK) and the Centre for Academic Excellence and Development (CAED/PKPA). With the theme **"Celebrating Changemakers, Inspiring Impact",** SUISS 2025 served as a dynamic platform for academicians, students, practitioners, and policy advocates to exchange innovative ideas, present SULAM-driven projects, and strengthen the integration of experiential learning within Malaysia's higher education landscape.

The initiatives presented in this proceeding span diverse disciplines including education, tourism, public health, agriculture, entrepreneurship, social sciences, and technology, demonstrating the depth and breadth of SULAM's transformative influence. Collectively, these works embody the essence of Universities for Society, where knowledge meets compassion and learning is applied toward empowering communities and nurturing future-ready graduates.

The Editorial Team extends its sincere appreciation to all authors, reviewers, and organising committees for their invaluable contributions, as well as to UMK Press, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), and all institutional partners for their continued support and collaboration.

We hope that this publication not only commemorates the achievements of SUISS 2025 participants but also serves as a source of inspiration for educators, researchers, and students to further advance the culture of service learning in Malaysia and beyond. May this compilation continue to spark innovation, empathy, and collective action in shaping a more resilient and inclusive society.

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e-Proceeding SUISS 2025

SULAM Innovate, Showcase and Symposium (SUISS)
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan
Theme: Celebrating Changemakers, Inspiring Impact

About SUISS 2025

The SULAM Innovate, Showcase, and Symposium (SUISS) is an annual conference that will enter its third edition in 2025. Organized by the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism, and Wellness (FHPK) in collaboration with the Centre for Academic Excellence and Development (CAED) Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), SUISS serves as a platform to bring together academicians, researchers, professionals, students, and organizations from around the world. This conference aims to share key insights and experiences on Service Learning Malaysia - University for Society (SULAM) projects and other community initiatives to refine and enhance the quality of future projects.

Service Learning Malaysia–University for Society (SULAM) is a transformative learning approach integrating community service into academic coursework. Through SULAM, students engage with real-world societal issues, applying their knowledge and skills to create meaningful solutions while fostering civic responsibility and personal growth. SUISS strongly emphasises high-impact projects, the initiatives that go beyond short-term engagement and create sustainable, measurable, and transformative change in communities. This initiative, introduced by Malaysia's Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), is part of High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) to produce holistic, well-balanced and entrepreneurial graduates.

The Malaysian higher education landscape has increasingly emphasized community engagement and service learning. Universities across the country are integrating SULAM-based projects to strengthen the link between academia and society. A number of universities, such as Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Utara Malaysia and UMK have implemented various SULAM projects that involve close collaboration between students and local communities to address real-world challenges. There is also a growing trend in sustainable and impactful community projects. Universities such as Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) have been actively involved in green infrastructure and social sustainability projects that enhance the well-being of local communities. These initiatives provide practical learning platforms for students while contributing to the community's long-term development.

SUISS 2025

Building on the success of previous editions, SUISS 2025 aims to be a dynamic space for knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and innovation in SULAM and community engagement initiatives. The conference will feature:

- Virtual Presentations showcasing impactful projects
- Panel discussions with experts in community engagement and higher education
- Workshops and networking sessions to foster meaningful collaborations

With a relevant theme, esteemed speakers, and engaging sessions, SUISS 2025 welcomes participants from diverse backgrounds to contribute towards advancing service-learning, community development, and sustainability in Malaysia and beyond.

SI CILIK JELAJAH DESTINASI

Nur Alissa Aisyah Nazri, Nurul Aziah Ahmad*, Muhammad Amirul Hakim Ahmad Nordin, Nik Roid Nik Mustapha, Mohammad Farhan Syakir bin Mohd Bahtiar, Nur Aina Awatif Zahari, Nur Alya Humaira Mohd Noor, Nur Iffah Izzati Ahmad Saifulihshan, Nur Juriana Md Nor, Farhanida Atikah Rosli & Nurizzaty Maizatul Azwa Dzulkefli

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Highlight: The goal of the "Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi" project was to educate kindergartners about tourism through entertaining and engaging activities. The project not only improved university students' soft skills and their practical application of information through community engagement, but it also enhanced children's creativity and understanding of tourism.

Keywords: Preschool tourism education, Experiential learning, Student volunteerism, Community Engagement

Introduction

Kids aged four to six are at a crucial point in their growth, where their curiosity is blossoming and their creativity is limitless. At this stage, they learn best through playing, watching, and doing hands-on activities. Understanding how vital it is to support their developing minds, this SULAM project called **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi"** aims to introduce kindergarteners to the exciting world of travel and transportation in a fun, interactive, and educational manner.

The participants engage in enjoyable activities such as sketching various travel vehicles and locations, spotting concealed items, and numerous other captivating pursuits. By engaging with various objects and viewing informative pictures, children have the opportunity to enhance their imagination, improve their memory skills, and develop both cognitive and motor skills. These enjoyable yet meaningful learning experiences ignite interest and build a solid base for lifelong learning. By guiding these young adventurers today, it help to create confident, knowledgeable, and curious individuals for the future. **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi"** is more than just a learning program. It's an investment in what's to come, giving kids the values, understanding, and confidence they need to succeed in a constantly changing world.

In today's rapidly changing world, early childhood education plays a crucial role in shaping the emotional and social development of young learners. Research shows that children between the ages of four and six are full of curiosity, creativity, and a strong desire to explore. Recognizing the importance of nurturing these traits, the **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi"** project was conceptualized by volunteers who are students from Bachelor of Entrepreneurship (Tourism) program at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) as part of the Service-Learning Malaysia University for Society (SULAM) initiative. The program aims to integrate academic learning with real-world experience, especially at an early stage of a child's development.

Inspired by the importance of introducing tourism education to young children, the project adopted a play-based learning approach to teach basic tourism concepts such as transportation, destinations, and cultural diversity (Tourism Malaysia, 2024). This engaging method encourages young learners to develop a love for travel and sparks early interest in exploring Malaysia. At the same time, it contributes to the long-term growth of the nation's tourism sector. The approach also cultivates open-mindedness, creativity, and a spirit of adventure through interactive activities.

Conducted at Tadika Al-Barokah in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, the project provided UMK students with valuable hands-on experience, allowing them to apply classroom knowledge in a real-world setting. It also trained them to adapt to different situations and engage effectively with various age groups. The project reflects UMK students' commitment to holistic education and community involvement, demonstrating how creativity and innovation can significantly impact the development of younger generations.

Strategist and Approaches of Project

The volunteers who are students from the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan organized the program, which is named **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi."** Tadika Al-Barokah, located at Jalan Padang Tembak, Kota Bharu, Kelantan, provided ten volunteers and kindergarten students to help with this project. During its one-day run on 21 May 2025 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, the program included various and intriguing activities, such as colouring pages of tourist destinations *"Mari Naik Kenderaan,"* offering tourists a range of travel options. It's an interactive game called Hidden Object Hunt Poison Box that involves quizzes.

The primary aim of this project was to introduce young children to tourism at an early age and assist them in comprehending its significance to both individuals and the country. Additionally, via play, these activities enhanced their creativity, communication, and learning. In addition, the project improved soft skills like planning, cooperation, and communication with the community while providing university students with an opportunity to use their knowledge in a practical context. The program's tentative was as follows:

Table 1: Program's tentative

Time	Activity
8.30 – 9.00 am	Registration & ice-breaking session
9.00 – 9.45 am	Activity 1: Coloring (Tourism theme)
9.45 – 10.30 am	Activity 2: *"Mari Naik Kenderaan Pelancongan"*
10.30 – 10.45 am	Break
10.45 – 11.30 am	Activity 3: *"Cari Barang Tersembunyi"*
11.30 – 12.15 pm	Activity 4: *"Kotak Beracun"* game & matching the pictures
12.15 – 12.45 pm	Gifts ceremony & group photoshoot
12.45 – 1.00 pm	Closing & dismiss

Despite its focus on volunteer work with kindergarteners, this project holds potential economic value in the long run. The project can further develop educational materials and services in the future through innovative pedagogical strategies, active participation, and proper interaction with students. These products can take the form of activity sets, introduction to education modules, and accompanying books for adults, which have gained popularity in the modern expanding industry of preschool education.

The volunteer project invests the immense experiences it instils in volunteers to build careers in education, child development, and social entrepreneurship. Therefore, it gives project implementers a competitive advantage when searching for jobs in academia and industry, as well as when establishing their early education start-up. Therefore, this project is not only an ideal volunteer program,

but it also has immense commercial value as well as tremendous potential in every aspect involving offering, serving, allying strategically, and career jumping.

Figure 1: Activities conducted with the preschool children

To better and expand the scope of the **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi"** program in the future, some changes can be implemented. Among the main suggestions is to extend the duration of the program from one day to two or three days. This will allow more time for a wider variety of activities, such as real trips to places like museums, amusement parks, or local handicraft centres, giving children a more experiential and hands-on learning experience. Another recommendation is to introduce a **"Mobile Tourism Education Tour"** concept. The volunteers can introduce this mobile version of the program to rural or underserved areas where children have limited access to tourism education. By bringing the activities directly to them, the program ensures equal and inclusive learning opportunities for all children, regardless of their location.

In addition, encouraging the participation of parents will strengthen family bonds and allow parents to see how important informal learning is for their kids. More community engagement and support also result from their inclusion.

Lastly, the program can be expanded to include more kindergartens in other districts of Kelantan or even other states. This enables more preschool children to receive such early exposure to tourism education while, in the process, promoting local tourism aspects in each state.

Conclusion

The participants involved in this project are kindergarten students aged from four to six years old. They are at a developmental stage in which their creativity and curiosity are rapidly expanding. The goal for this SULAM project, **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi,"** is to help children grow through intriguing activities like drawing travel vehicles and places, discovering hidden things, and studying informative photos.

It offered valuable hands-on experience for university students while also strengthening community connections and promoting parental participation. Looking forward, the program has a lot of potential for growth and greater impact, whether by extending its duration, adding mobile outreach to rural areas, or including more kindergartens throughout Kelantan and beyond.

In the end, this project acts as both an educational and economic investment, setting the stage for a more curious, informed, and connected generation.

Acknowledgement

The volunteers are grateful to thank everyone who helped make the **"Si Cilik Jelajah Destinasi"** event a success, especially the headmaster of Tadika Al Barokah, who allowed them to use the kindergarten pupils for this voluntary activity. The Si Cilik Jelajah Destination Program aims to provide kids with an

engaging and instructive introduction to tourism. The opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge, interact with the community, and develop soft skills is another benefit it offers college students. In conclusion, the volunteers would like to thank everyone who was directly or indirectly engaged for their hard work, encouragement, and support.

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CLASSROOMS WITHOUT WALLS- MOBILIZING FUTURE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCATES FOR DENGUE-FREE COMMUNITIES

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Highlight: The community service project to strengthen dengue prevention practices in one of the rural areas in Negeri Sembilan, Tampin, aims to empower residents with the knowledge, skills, and motivation needed to protect themselves and their families from dengue fever. By focusing on health education, behavioural change, and participatory engagement, the project helps communities take ownership of dengue prevention efforts. Through student-led research, interactive interventions, and collaboration with local stakeholders, this initiative cultivates civic awareness, fosters sustainable health practices, and ultimately contributes to a healthier, more resilient society.

Keywords: Community Health, Student-led initiatives, Health Intervention Day

Introduction

The concept of SULAM that was intergrated in this project was grounded in both Naqli & Aqli knowledge traditions and Maqasid Syariah, while also aligning with Social Learning Theory. The model integrates three core components: theory (pembelajaran), experience (pengalaman), and application (aplikasi), reflecting a holistic approach to student development. Service learning is implemented through direct services (khidmat secara langsung), such as lectures (kuliah), field attachments (latihan sangkutan), and visits (lawatan). It also includes research-based services (khidmat penyelidikan) and advocacy services (khidmat advokasi), which support community research, health interventions, and community programs. This structured blend of academic learning, practical exposure, and societal engagement fosters civic responsibility and real-world problem solving among students, resonating with both Islamic educational philosophy and modern pedagogical practices. In alignment with SULAM's core mission—to bridge university knowledge and community wellbeing—the students designed and implemented a comprehensive initiative to address one of Malaysia's most persistent public health threats, which is dengue fever.

Dengue, a mosquito-borne viral infection, poses an enormous burden on Malaysia's public health system. In 2024 alone, over 12 million global cases were reported, with Malaysia contributing significantly to the regional surge. Despite widespread government campaigns and media attention, dengue continues to plague semi-urban districts such as Tampin, where community-level prevention efforts remain inconsistent and awareness of emerging tools such as the dengue vaccine is limited. Recognising this gap, the USIM student team initiated a SULAM-driven public health intervention targeting knowledge enhancement, behaviour change, and vaccine awareness.

In partnership with the Tampin District Health Office (PKD Tampin) and supported by local community leaders and schools, the students conducted a multi-phased project focused solely on dengue prevention and education. Through epidemiological research, community surveys, health promotion campaigns, and a signature Health Intervention Day (HID), the project aimed to empower residents with the knowledge, tools, and motivation to prevent dengue and embrace innovations like the dengue vaccine. This initiative not only enriched the students' academic learning but also built a lasting bridge between the university and the community, exemplifying the highest ideals of SULAM.

Context or background of the community/SULAM project

Dengue fever has long been endemic in Malaysia, with cyclical outbreaks often overwhelming health services and triggering public anxiety and resulting in a significant economic burden. Transmitted by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, the disease thrives in tropical climates, especially in densely populated and poorly maintained urban and semi-urban environments. While nationwide public health messaging exists, prevention remains unevenly practised at the community level. The Tampin district in Negeri Sembilan, where this project was conducted, is particularly vulnerable due to its mixed urban-rural setting, high-density residential areas, and seasonal rainfall patterns that facilitate mosquito breeding.

The decision to conduct this SULAM project in Tampin was strategic. The area has previously recorded dengue outbreaks and exhibited a limited community-level response to vector control. Preliminary assessments by the students, in collaboration with PKD Tampin, confirmed low knowledge and inconsistent practices related to mosquito prevention, as well as a near-complete lack of awareness regarding the availability and safety of the dengue vaccine. Residents relied mostly on fogging operations and home remedies, often unaware of how their environmental practices contributed to mosquito proliferation.

Compounding the issue was widespread misinformation spread via social media and informal community channels. Many residents believed dengue could only be controlled by government action, rather than community-driven environmental sanitation. Others were sceptical about the efficacy and safety of the dengue vaccine, influenced by outdated or misleading information.

These realities laid the groundwork for a focused and evidence-driven SULAM project aimed at three key goals: (1) assessing knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) related to dengue prevention, (2) promoting actionable behavioral change at the household level, and (3) increasing community awareness and acceptance of the dengue vaccine as a preventive measure. This SULAM project spearheaded by Year 4 medical students from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FPSK), Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). Conducted in, Negeri Sembilan, as part of the Community Health (PAJ4019) course, the project exemplifies transformative learning by integrating public health theory with on-ground community engagement activities.

Importance of the dengue-focused community/SULAM Project

This project is significant because it directly addresses a high-burden national health issue using a community-centred, student-led approach that reflects the core values of SULAM: community responsibility, academic application, mutual respect, and capacity building. Rather than relying on top-down interventions, the students engaged with residents through participatory research and grassroots education. The project became a living classroom where students applied epidemiological and health communication skills to a real-world health crisis, and where residents were treated as active partners rather than passive beneficiaries.

From a public health perspective, dengue is both preventable and controllable with the right combination of personal behaviour, community participation, and technological innovation. However, widespread adoption of these practices and tools is hindered by a lack of awareness, cultural habits, and distrust. This project tackled all three barriers by contextualising health information, using accessible language and culturally relevant messaging, and offering face-to-face interactions with health professionals. By addressing misconceptions, such as fogging being the sole preventive method, and introducing new knowledge about the dengue vaccine, the project bridged the gap between biomedical science and community belief.

The initiative also provided students with irreplaceable professional development. They learned to translate medical knowledge into effective public messaging, to design interventions grounded in data,

and to navigate the complexities of community health work. These skills—often hard to teach in traditional lecture settings—were cultivated through hands-on engagement, reflection, and mentorship.

In short, the project empowered both students and the community, and it did so in a way that is sustainable, replicable, and scalable. It highlighted how academic institutions like USIM can serve as catalysts for public health transformation, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.

Description of the dengue prevention and vaccine awareness project

The project was executed in three overlapping phases: community-based research and needs assessment, data analysis and intervention design, and the implementation of the Health Intervention Day (HID). In the first phase, the student team conducted a structured Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) survey involving 380 adult residents from Taman Indah and neighbouring communities. Using a validated questionnaire, the survey explored several key areas: residents' knowledge of dengue symptoms and transmission, their attitudes toward community cleaning and fogging initiatives, their practices related to household and environmental sanitation, and their awareness and acceptance of the dengue vaccine. The initial findings were both enlightening and concerning. While approximately 75% of respondents were aware that mosquitoes are responsible for spreading dengue, only 24.2% engaged in consistent weekly cleaning of potential mosquito breeding sites. Even more alarming was the limited knowledge surrounding the dengue vaccine. Fewer than 10% of respondents possessed accurate information about the vaccine, and more than 60% expressed either unawareness or skepticism regarding its availability and safety. Common misconceptions included beliefs such as "the vaccine is only for children" or fears that it could cause dengue-like symptoms, indicating the urgent need for focused educational outreach.

In the second phase, students worked under the supervision of faculty members and officers from the Tampin District Health Office (PKD Tampin) to analyse the collected data using SPSS statistical software. The analysis identified several risk factors contributing to poor dengue prevention practices in the community. These included lower levels of formal education, which correlated with weaker engagement in personal prevention behaviours; an overreliance on external measures such as fogging, often viewed as the sole preventive method; and widespread fear and misunderstanding surrounding the dengue vaccine. These findings informed the development of a targeted health education strategy that emphasised visual communication, interactive engagement, and the promotion of vaccine literacy. The goal was to design an intervention that was not only evidence-based but also culturally sensitive and accessible to the entire community.

The third and final phase of the project was the Health Intervention Day (HID), which served as the centrepiece of the initiative. This full-day event was co-organised with PKD Tampin, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Taman Indah, and local community leaders. It successfully attracted the participation of more than 300 residents from Taman Indah and surrounding areas. The day began with morning aerobics and a communal "gotong-royong" activity to model collective action and promote environmental cleanliness as a shared responsibility. Throughout the event, students presented the findings of their KAP study in simplified Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil to ensure inclusivity and understanding across different demographic groups. Medical officers delivered expert talks addressing both effective dengue prevention methods and common myths surrounding the dengue vaccine. Various interactive educational booths were set up to illustrate the mosquito life cycle, demonstrate the correct use of larvicides, and guide participants on how to maintain clean household environments.

To further promote vaccine literacy, students designed and distributed multilingual health materials, including infographics that explained the benefits, safety, and eligibility criteria of the dengue vaccine. A mock vaccination station was also installed to familiarise residents with the vaccination process and dispel fears through firsthand exposure. Dedicated Q&A booths staffed by doctors and pharmacists allowed residents to ask detailed questions about the vaccine and receive accurate, personalised information. Additionally, dengue-themed community games and quizzes were organised to engage children and young adults, making the learning experience both informative and enjoyable. The entire event was meticulously organised and managed by the student team, integrating their academic learning objectives with practical, real-world civic engagement. All activities were logged as part of their Community Health course requirements, perfectly aligning with the values and objectives of the SULAM service-learning model.

Impact and advantages to the community and student learning

The project yielded tangible and measurable outcomes that significantly benefited both the local community and the participating students. For the community, the impact was particularly visible in several key areas. First, there was a marked increase in awareness surrounding dengue prevention and the dengue vaccine. Post-event surveys revealed a 70% improvement in participants' accurate knowledge of the vaccine, including its availability, safety, and purpose. Second, positive behavioural changes were observed. Households began initiating weekly cleaning routines to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds, and many residents reported a noticeable reduction in stagnant water sites around their homes. Several community members also approached local authorities to request additional trash bins to support ongoing cleanliness efforts, demonstrating a growing sense of collective responsibility. Third, the intervention sparked greater interest in the dengue vaccine itself. Multiple families inquired about where and how to receive the vaccine, and PKD Tampin reported a modest but encouraging increase in vaccine-related inquiries and requests in the weeks following the Health Intervention Day (HID). In addition to that, Weekly epidemiological surveillance conducted after the intervention showed a noticeable decline in reported dengue cases in the community. This suggests the intervention may have contributed to lowering disease incidence.

For the students, the project served as a transformative learning experience. It facilitated the development of essential professional skills, including data collection, public speaking, stakeholder engagement, and the design and delivery of health education. By interacting directly with a diverse group of residents, students also cultivated empathy and cultural competence, learning to communicate complex health messages in a respectful and accessible manner. Additionally, the process of organising and executing a large-scale community event helped them develop leadership abilities, teaching them how to manage logistics, coordinate with government agencies, and respond flexibly to real-time challenges. These experiences provided the students with a strong foundation for future roles in public health and community medicine. Additionally, Over 90% of the participating students achieved an 'A' grade in their Community Health (PAJ4019) course, a testament to their engagement, competence, and the successful integration of academic and practical skills. Students gained hands-on experience in public speaking, stakeholder engagement, health education delivery, and real-time event management.

Perhaps most importantly, the project fostered a spirit of mutual trust and respect between Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) and the residents of Taman Indah. The community appreciated the students' respectful, hands-on approach and responded with enthusiasm and openness. For USIM, this initiative reinforced its role not only as an academic institution but also as a key contributor to societal wellbeing, deepening its commitment to service, collaboration, and nation-building, in full alignment with the SULAM philosophy. The project yielded tangible and measurable outcomes that significantly benefited both the local community and the participating students. Notably, a scientific publication based on this project was successfully presented at the International Health Education Conference (IHEC) 2024, reinforcing its academic impact.

Commercial value and marketability

While the primary aim of the project was educational and civic in nature, it nonetheless produced several outputs with significant market and policy relevance. Among these were a range of reusable health education materials, including flyers, posters, and social media content, all designed to be easily adapted and distributed in other dengue-prone communities. The students also developed training modules tailored for local community health volunteers, which can be repurposed into short courses or public health workshops to sustain long-term engagement. In addition, the structured approach and successful execution of the Health Intervention Day (HID) provided a replicable event model that can be marketed to municipal councils, schools, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for broader health outreach initiatives. Also, a health promotion video produced by the students and disseminated through USIM's and community social media channels, further broadening public reach.

The data collected throughout the project offers valuable insights into public knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours surrounding dengue and vaccine awareness. These findings are not only relevant to public health stakeholders and pharmaceutical companies but can also support policy deliberation and evidence-based planning by agencies such as MAHTAS (Malaysian Health Technology Assessment Section) under the Ministry of Health (KKM). The data may assist MAHTAS in conducting

future evaluations and cost-effectiveness analyses for the potential large-scale implementation of the dengue vaccine in Malaysia.

Beyond the public sector, the project also revealed potential for local business partnerships. There is a clear opportunity to collaborate with small and medium enterprises to supply mosquito repellents, safe and affordable larvicide kits, and even digital tools for vaccine appointment scheduling—all tailored to the specific needs and preferences of the community. These commercial possibilities demonstrate that student-led civic projects, when well-designed, can not only educate and empower communities but also generate innovative solutions with practical, marketable value.

Future recommendations to expand the project

To ensure the sustainability of the project and to amplify its long-term impact, several key recommendations are proposed. First, the successful Health Intervention Day (HID) model should be scaled up and replicated in other vulnerable communities, particularly with the support of regional health offices to ensure adequate resources and reach. Secondly, the initiative could benefit from the institutionalisation of "Dengue Ambassadors"—local community members who are trained to carry out ongoing dengue education and outreach, thereby fostering year-round awareness and behaviour reinforcement at the grassroots level.

Another strategic step is to integrate dengue education into school curricula and extracurricular clubs, enabling intergenerational learning and encouraging health-conscious habits from a young age. In addition, digital innovation can play a vital role in sustaining engagement; the development of mobile applications that provide timely reminders for cleaning routines, vaccination schedules, and outbreak alerts would modernise public health communication and improve adherence to preventive behaviours. Also, it is essential to engage local councils and the Ministry of Health (MOH) to secure long-term funding, ensure alignment with national public health policies, and promote strategic collaboration that can expand the reach and institutional impact of such community-based interventions. Other than that, it is important to ensure project continuation and knowledge retention. Initially launched in 2023, this project continues into 2024 to reinforce previous gains and track knowledge sustainability. A Training-of-Trainers (ToT) program that was conducted for several representatives should be continues to enable them to lead independent health education sessions an ensuring the efforts are sustainable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this SULAM project on dengue prevention and vaccine awareness serves as a powerful model for student-led public health intervention. It underscores the value of bridging classroom learning with societal challenges and demonstrates the ability of students to act as civic innovators. By combining data, dialogue, and dynamic engagement, the USIM medical students not only enriched their own educational journey but also planted seeds of lasting health improvement in Tampin, Negeri Sembilan. This project exemplifies the SULAM vision—where universities serve as engines of national resilience, and students become architects of a healthier, more informed Malaysia.

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EMPOWERING YOUNG FARMERS USING FIELD SURVEYS AND BUSINESS PLANS TO IMPROVE LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISES VIA SULAM

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Highlight: This project employed the Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) initiative to empower livestock farmers in Kelantan through experiential learning involving university students. The project aimed to address significant challenges smallholder farmers confronted, such as a lack of capital, technical knowledge, and access to veterinary services, as determined by the field surveys, and develop tailored business plans aligned with the Agropreneur Muda grant requirements. Students from Animal Husbandry Science, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, collaborated with ten farmers and the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), gaining hands-on experience while supporting them in improving their agribusiness practices and accessing financial aid. Results, improved business planning skills for farmers, and out of 10 applications reviewed in 2025 by DVS, one young farmer successfully acquired a government grant (Agropreneuer Muda) for livestock business expansion. Therefore, this is an indicator of potential replication of this model in other communities.

Keywords: SULAM, livestock farming, experiential learning, business plan, Agropreneur Muda

Introduction

The youth's involvement in agriculture is significant for sustainable food production and economic development. Nevertheless, many young farmers faced obstacles such as a lack of capital, limited technical knowledge, extension assistance, and poor market access. Previously, this agricultural business was dominated by low-educated farmers (Ramli et al., 2024). The participation of youngsters, especially graduates from university, has expedited the business expansion. Moreover, recognition by various stakeholders, such as government agencies, significantly empowers young farmers to engage in sustainable agricultural development. In Kelantan, the livestock sector is particularly pivotal in rural livelihoods and food security (Ramli et al., 2024). However, the livestock farming business in this state is still at an extensive level, and several issues like inadequate technical knowledge and poor business planning have hindered productivity and growth. Hence, there is a need to develop innovative interventions to bridge the gap between extension service (provided by the university expertise) and on-the-ground needs.

The service-learning Malaysia (SULAM) initiative has emerged as a medium to connect academic knowledge with real community needs. Certainly, SULAM is a teaching and learning method that provides university students with hands-on experiential learning opportunities while delivering tangible benefits to the community (Wahab, 2024). Furthermore, via this approach, the university may produce graduates who are socially responsible, entrepreneurial, and capable of applying the knowledge and skills (Nazlin et al., 2024). Particularly in agriculture, SULAM from university experts,

with the assistance of government agencies like the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), empowers the farmers (target

Context or background of the community/SULAM project

SULAM integrates academic learning and community service to foster civic concern among university students (Siti Manisah et al., 2020). In Kelantan, a state known for its strong agricultural roots but facing rural economic challenges, livestock farming is still a significant livelihood for many smallholder farmers (Rosli, 2016). To collect information on factors that influenced the extension of livestock farming, SULAM devised a plan to engage university students and experts in supporting local livestock farmers through a field survey, an interview, and a tailored business plan. It also monitored their updates on extending the government grant application.

This SULAM project addressed critical gaps in the livestock sector by connecting academic institutions and target communities with livestock farmers. Recent findings show that economic pressures (rising input costs, low market prices, lack of finance) dominate farmer concerns, hindering their expansion. Furthermore, many young farmers in Kelantan lack formal training in rearing animals and agribusiness management, limiting their potential for growth and sustainability. Moreover, SULAM enhances student learning and contributes to real-world problem solving by directly engaging farmers.

Furthermore, the SULAM project was part of an academic course involving Animal Husbandry Science students. In this project, students develop and distribute structured questionnaires to the target community, which comprises livestock farmers in all ten (n=10) districts of Kelantan. Then, students dealt with the livestock farmers and held field visits to gather the qualitative and quantitative data via a survey, interview, and field observation (Mann et al., 2017). Data were collected from 85 livestock farmers, primarily running small-scale sheep, goat, and cattle farming. Key challenges identified included high feed costs, animal health and disease outbreaks, lack of access to veterinary services, lack of financial resources and technical knowledge, low market prices, high input costs and competition from imported livestock (Table 1). Table 1 demonstrates the average scores (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) that livestock farmers in Kelantan assigned to various challenges faced in the enterprises. These scores indicate the perceived severity or relevance of each challenge in their farming operations. Farmers perceive limited access to capital as a major constraint. This aligns with previous findings that financial constraints are among the top barriers for small-scale producers (Ramli et al., 2024). Farmers struggle to invest in improved breeds, feed, veterinary care, or modern technologies that could enhance productivity and resilience without adequate financing. Consequently, based on the survey results, students drafted customised business plans for each farmer aligned with the Agroprenuer Muda grant requirements from the analysed data, and finally, engagement with DVS for validation and support until the application was approved.

The impacts of the SULAM project were twofold: For students, they gained great experience applying knowledge from the classroom and the fieldwork as well. This work also gives the students an understanding of how extension agents empower the target community (livestock farmers). Farmers gained improved skills and understanding of the expansion of livestock farming and business planning. Of 85 farmers, only ten (n=10) wanted to be assisted in applying for Agroprenuer Muda grants, and the rest were not interested yet and not convinced by the students' approach.

The integration of business planning into livestock enterprises showed commercial benefits. Farmers who adopt the business plan that students make have a higher chance of applying for the Agropreneur Muda grants. The approved application could extend their livestock business for RM 30,000. On the other hand, the Business Plan can also be used as a blueprint for the farmers' reference to farm their livestock profitably. The Business Plan also suggests opportunities for value-added products such as composting fertilisers and silage, which could enhance revenue streams for their business. In this SULAM project, one young livestock farmer from Pasir Puteh, Kelantan successfully secured the grant (1st round) and received RM30,000 for procurement of sheep and pen expansion (Fig. 1). Subsequently, this successful model has indicated a potential for replication in other places and requires more local farmers to participate.

Figure 1: (a) Mr. Wan Muhammad Nur Aiman (left), a young livestock farmer from Pasir Puteh, Kelantan, succeeded in securing RM 30,000 from the Agropreneuer Muda Grant to expand the livestock business. (b) The expansion of the sheep pen progressed after the grant was received.

Based on this SULAM project, three recommendations could be proposed to expand the reach and effectiveness approach from the university to the farmers. First, this project should develop partnerships with government and private agricultural bodies. Second, it will raise awareness among the farmers of their readiness to apply digital tools for farm record keeping to assist farm management. Finally, integrating the impact assessment will allow a more rigorous evaluation of SULAM outcomes.

Table 1: Major Challenges Identified by Farmers (Scale 1–5; 5 = Strongly Agree)

Challenge	Average Score
Lack of financial resources	4.6
Animal health/disease issues	4.1
Rising feed prices	4.4
Limited market access	3.8
Lack of technical knowledge	3.4
Difficulty accessing veterinary services	2.7
Low market prices	4.4
High input costs	4.3
Competition from imported livestock	4.5

Conclusion

SULAM-based experiential learning projects can serve as powerful platforms to empower young farmers and enhance student competencies. Integrating academic coursework with community engagement offers dual benefits, addressing real agricultural challenges and preparing future-ready graduates. Intensive awareness and collaborative works with government agencies is required to help more farmers. Therefore, the model has strong potential for replication and scaling in other agro-based communities.

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ARDUINO@SCHOOL PROGRAMME AT MAAHAD TAHFIZ SAINS DARUL MUTTAQIN (MASDAR): A UNIMAP SULAM SUCCESSFUL STORY

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Highlight: The arduino@school programme is a SULAM project of Microcontroller & Interfaces (NMJ21304) course for Biomedical Electronic Engineering Programme, Faculty of Electronic Engineering & Technology, Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP). In this SULAM programme at Maahad Tahfiz Sains Darul Muttaqin (MASDAR), 82 students from UNIMAP who registered this course engaged in the programme as the tutors to 104 MASDAR students for Arduino coding knowledge sharing. This 3 hours sharing programme has triggered positive impacts to both students and staff of MASDAR and UNIMAP sides as several outcomes have been achieved. The achievement includes improvement of the NMJ21304 exam results and MASDAR RBT subjects, successful innovation projects, two secured grants, as well as the increasing numbers of staff and students who are motivated to organize or join the CSR/USR and STEM activities.

Keywords: Arduino, STEM, grants, motivation, USR and STEM activities

Introduction

The SULAM project entitled "*Arduino@School at MASDAR*" is a community engagement initiative integrating academic knowledge with real-world application through service-learning (. Conducted at Maahad Tahfiz Sains Darul Muttaqin (MASDAR), Changlun, Kedah this project aims to introduce students to foundational electronics and programming using the Arduino platform. Developed and implemented by undergraduate students under faculty supervision, the program provides hands-on workshops and guided learning sessions focused on microcontroller basics, sensor integration, and simple coding tasks.

Through this initiative, MASDAR students—many of whom come from underserved rural backgrounds—gain exposure to STEM education in a practical, engaging manner that complements their Quranic and science-based curriculum. The project promotes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills while fostering confidence and curiosity in technology among young learners.

Simultaneously, participating UNIMAP students benefit from real-life teaching experience, leadership development, and deeper community awareness (Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2019). The project supports Malaysia's national education goals and is aligned with selected UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Quality Education (SDG 4) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10).

"*Arduino@School at MASDAR*" exemplifies the impact of SULAM in empowering both students and communities through meaningful, credit-bearing academic engagement, bridging the gap between university and society in a sustainable and transformative way.

Project Background

In today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, integrating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education into school curricula is essential to prepare students for future careers and innovations (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015). Recognizing this need, Maahad Tahfiz Sains Darul Muttaqin (MASDAR) aims to enhance its educational offerings by incorporating hands-on learning experiences (Amran, 2018) in electronics and programming through the Arduino platform to support the Rekabentuk dan Teknologi (RBT) subject offered at the school.

Arduino, a cheap and affordable open-source electronics platform, provides students with the tools to explore coding, circuitry, and automation in a fun and interactive way. This programme is designed to foster creativity, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking among students through Arduino coding activities.

The initiative aligns with MASDAR's vision to blend Islamic education with modern scientific knowledge, nurturing well-rounded individuals who are both rooted in their faith and adept in cutting-edge technologies. Through this programme, students gain valuable skills, inspire innovation, and develop a passion for science and technology that can benefit their personal growth and the community at large.

Knowledge Transfer Program

The Knowledge Transfer Programme (KTP) involved in the Arduino@School initiative at MASDAR is a structured process designed to facilitate the effective sharing and dissemination of knowledge related to Arduino technology, programming, and electronics among students. The program provides hands-on 3 hours workshops and guided learning sessions focused on Arduino microcontroller basics, sensor integration, and simple coding tasks.

In the workshop as shown in Figure 1, MASDARs students were divided into smaller groups (3-4 students in a group) led by 1 or 2 tutors from UNIMAP. Each group was provided with a laptop, arduino kits and lab module. In this module, four guided exercises were prepared, while at the end of the module students were challenged to complete the task with their own coding creativities.

Figure 1: Knowledge Transfer Programme Session

Programme Impact

The programme gives positive direct and indirect impacts to both Biomedical Electronic Engineering UNIMAP and MASDAR. The achievement as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Impacts of the programme for the year 2023-2025

Institutions	Subjects Performance	Grants	Students' involvement in innovation projects	Number of CSR/USR projects	Number of Staffs/students involved in CSR/USR projects
UNIMAP	Failure rate has been decreased to <3% for NMJ21304	Secured 2 STEM Camp MOSTI Grants - 2023 and 2024 (Total RM 19k)	10 students volunteer as the advisors for MASDAR innovation projects	10	Staff: 25 Student: 136
MASDAR	Increment of 32% interest for electronic topics in RBT subject	Shortlisted for 2025 STEM Camp MOSTI Grants applications (Total RM 9k)	8 students and 4 teachers involved in 2 innovations projects - MASWANS (2 Gold Medal & 1 Special Award) - MASGRUN (1 Gold medal)	3	Staff: 6 Student: 150

Future Recommendations

The SULAM "*Arduino@School at MASDAR*" project can be further improved with the enhancement of the content through the integration of IoT in future activities to step up the students' practical skills. Regular workshops, competitions and collaborative projects should be organized to sustain student interest and innovation.

Conclusion

The "*Arduino@Achool at MASDAR*" programme has successfully created positive vibes at both MASDAR and UNIMAP by empowering students and teachers with the knowledge and skills to innovate using Arduino technology. It also fosters a culture of continuous learning and collaboration, ensuring that the benefits of the programme are sustained beyond initial training sessions.

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"FROM CLASSROOM TO COURTROOM": ONE MISTAKE, ONE SENTENCE, THE CRIMES THAT CAN LOCK TEENS UP

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Highlight: From Classroom to Courtroom" is a legal literacy initiative that connects second-year law students of Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA) with secondary school students from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tengku Bariah (SMK Tengku Bariah) through forum and interactive sessions focused on youth crime, particularly issues such as bullying and sexual harassment, and assault. In collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organisations, the project aims to raise awareness among school students about juvenile delinquency.

Keywords: Youth crime, community awareness, school outreach, civic education, SULAM

Introduction

"From Classroom to Courtroom" is an initiative by second-year law students from UniSZA to engage directly with secondary school students of SMK Tengku Bariah to promote legal awareness, particularly on youth crime. In partnership with the Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF), Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), Baitul Qanun, the Student Representative Council of the Faculty of Law and International Relations of UniSZA, and the Organizational Chart of Student Consumer Movement Association, the programme will deliver a comprehensive and impactful experience.

The programme not only imparts practical legal knowledge to the school students through expert-led forums and interactive booth activities but also aims to educate UniSZA students about their social responsibilities and enhance their soft skills. The objective is to create a dynamic and meaningful learning experience for all participants while fostering legal awareness amongst the school students.

Background of the SULAM Project

In recent years, youth involvement in crime has gained increasing attention globally, including in Malaysia. Between 2016 and 2020, Malaysia recorded more than 4,800 criminal cases annually involving underage offenders, peaking at 5,443 cases in 2017, with a resurgence to 5,342 cases in 2020. The variety and complexity of adolescent delinquent cases reported to the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) were reflected in these charges, which spanned from gambling, illegal weapons possession, traffic infractions, and crimes involving drugs and property. The situation is equally worrisome in Malaysia (Mohd Idris et al., 2023, 80).

In 2022, Malaysia recorded 3,013 cases of children involved in crime, reflecting a 12.8% decrease compared to 3,457 cases in 2021. Despite the overall decline, the issue remains significant, particularly within the Bumiputera community, accounting for 82.2% of the recorded cases. This was

followed by children of Chinese ethnicity (8.8%), Indian (4.9%), and Others (4.1%) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2023). These figures highlight the need for targeted preventive efforts and legal education that address the specific social and community contexts in which these offences occur (Othman et al., 2018).

On the other hand, the DOSM reported a 26.5% increase in child sexual crimes, rising from 1,239 cases in 2022 to 1,567 in 2023. Of these, physical sexual assault alone accounted for 1,389 cases, marking a 21.1% increase. The number of children needing care and protection also rose sharply to 8,536, reflecting a 26.1% increase from the previous year (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024).

Recognising the critical need for early legal education, the SULAM Project, "From Classroom to Courtroom", is launched. This programme, led by law students and supported by community partners, aims to empower young students through legal literacy. It provides them with direct exposure to law enforcement and legal professionals, offering an educational and age-appropriate introduction to the criminal justice system in an engaging and impactful way.

The Importance of the SULAM Project

The SULAM project, "From Classroom to Courtroom", is more than just a university initiative. It is a transformative movement that addresses one of society's most pressing challenges, which is the growing involvement of youth in "crime".

This programme provides a safe, empowering platform for students to learn about their legal rights and protections. It introduces them to the concept of consent, respect, and dignity through relatable and age-appropriate content, helping them understand that everyone deserves safety and respect, and harassment in any form should never be tolerated. At the same time, this programme brings law students out of the academic bubble and into the direct service of the community by contributing to immediate, meaningful change. What also makes this project truly outstanding is its collaborative spirit. It unites government agencies, NGOs, educators, and university students in a shared mission, to prevent crime, protect the vulnerable, and build a legally literate, safer community. This is what the SULAM initiative stands for, Service-Learning Malaysia: University for Society, and we are proud to embody this mission. (Wahab, M. Z. H, 2024).

This project highlights UniSZA's unwavering commitment to social responsibility and community empowerment. It reinforces the University's role as a leader in community-based legal education, preparing graduates not only for courtrooms, but also to serve the people. We believe this project should serve as a blueprint for future SULAM projects because it does more than fulfil a syllabus as, it fulfils a moral duty, uplifts a community, and creates a lasting impact. This is what it means to bring the law to life, and this is what we have archived.

Description of SULAM Project

Rooted in the belief that knowledge is the first step toward prevention, this programme aims to address the alarming rise in juvenile crimes, including cyber bullying, theft, vandalism and increasingly, sexual harassment, by equipping students with legal literacy and practical understanding of their rights and responsibilities (Nixon, C. L., 2014).

This project includes interactive forums with experts from the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) and the Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF), legal education booths, quizzes, and role-play sessions designed to encourage student participation. Special emphasis is placed on raising awareness about sexual harassment, what it is, how to recognize it, and how to report it, ensuring that students understand their right to feel safe and respected. The legal education booth also supports our faculty's legal clinic, Baitul Qanun's mission of bridging legal knowledge with the community, while also promoting higher education among youth.

Through this initiative, law students step beyond classroom walls to serve as educators and role models, translating their academic knowledge into real-world social impact. This programme also strengthens collaboration between universities, schools, NGOs, and government agencies in building a safer, more informed youth community.

Ultimately, "From Classroom to Courtroom" reflects the spirit of SULAM by transforming education into community service, prompting legal empowerment, and fostering a generation of students who are aware of the law and confident in standing up for justice.

Impacts of the SULAM Project Towards the Community and Learning Experience

By focusing on common juvenile offences such as bullying, theft, and sexual harassment, the project provided a practical understanding of the legal consequences of such to the secondary school students. Students will be exposed to various key aspects of the criminal justice system through forums, quizzes, and interactive booth sessions. This initiative promotes greater awareness and informs better decision-making in their daily lives.

The programme also serves as a platform for law students to apply their theoretical law knowledge in real-life situations. By simplifying complex legal concepts for a younger audience, law students can strengthen their own understanding and develop the ability to communicate beyond academic settings. by. This experience highlights the relevance of legal education outside the classroom and emphasises its role in community development.

Furthermore, through active involvement in organizing and implementing the project, students can develop a range of soft skills essential for future legal practice. These include communication, teamwork, leadership, public speaking, and problem-solving abilities. Engagement with stakeholders such as PDRM, MCPF, and other agencies provides valuable exposure to professional collaboration and project coordination, which contributing to their personal and academic growth.

The initiative has successfully fostered closer ties between UniSZA and the local community, particularly among youth. By promoting student-led initiatives, the project positions the university as an active contributor to public education and crime prevention. This community-based legal education initiative aligns with SULAM's goal of producing socially responsible graduates and strengthening institutional-community engagement.

Lastly, the project holds long-term potential to benefit society. By educating young people about the consequences of crime and the functioning of the legal system, it serves as a deterrent to juvenile delinquency. Informed and conscious students are less likely to engage in unlawful behaviour and contributing to safer and more accountable communities. This initiative also encourages open discussions on juvenile crime, rehabilitation, and justice reform, helping shift public perception from punishment to prevention and support (Ab Aziz et al., (2022). Moreover, the narratives and insights generated through this programme have the potential to raise public awareness and foster advocacy for more humane and efficient juvenile justice laws.

Recommendations

As SULAM is a curriculum-based community service initiative, it serves as a vital instrument for fostering moral consciousness, instilling responsibility and cultivating leadership qualities among students. However, despite the noble intentions behind these projects, they often face limitations in term of reach, sustainability, and public engagement. To enhance the impact of future community service projects like SULAM, several recommendations are proposed which are strengthen partnerships with NGOs, leverage social media and digital influencers, and introduce Augmented Reality (AR).

First, it is to invest time in identifying potential NGO for collaboration. Partnering with organisations that align with the project's goal is crucial for creating a more grounded, effective and sustainable initiative. These partnerships not only enrich the project's content and credibility but also provide participants and beneficiaries with access to long-term support and resources. Moreover, collaborating with the established organisations can help promote the project to audience, thereby increasing community engagement. While many tend to focus on local non-profits, exploring international partnerships can elevate SULAM's visibility both regionally and globally.

Second, in today's digitally progressive world, leveraging technology is key. With almost everyone attached to a gadget nowadays, it would be a great chance to jump on that opportunity and make use of this. It is as simple as utilising social media to promote SULAM projects in the future. In

fact, social media offers a powerful platform to promote SULAM project. Partnering with local influencers, especially micro-influencers with strong niche audiences, can help normalise community service within the digital realm. These individuals can act as ambassadors, using their platforms like TikTok or Instagram Reels to share meaningful content that resonates diverse age groups into becoming interested in participating in community services.

Finally, embracing technological advancement, by introducing AR into SULAM projects presents a compelling opportunity. AR is basically a real-world experience with generated perceptual information overlaid on top of it, like 3D. It is commonly used in Google Maps, where they have 3D arrows pointing in the direction of the place you want to go, on top of images of landmarks of places leading up to your destination. It makes it easier for people to navigate, especially visual learners. Similarly, AR can be used in SULAM projects, where we could create an app for the public to play and collect points by integrating real-life tasks for them to accomplish. The concept would be similar to the game Pokémon Go, where its users use AR to travel around the country, searching for rare Pokémons and catching them. Inspired by applications like Pokémon Go, a custom SULAM application could guide users to locations in need of volunteers for community service projects and have them participate to earn points and win prizes. This approach makes volunteering more accessible and enjoyable, especially younger crowds while raising awareness and encouraging active participation.

With that, these recommendations offer meaningful ways to expand the reach of future SULAM projects. By building strategic partnerships with local and global NGOs, the help of local influencers of digital creators and integrating cutting-edge technologies like AR, SULAM can evolve a more dynamic and impactful platform. These enhancements not only align with the initiative's educational mission but also inspire the next generation to view community service as both valuable and exciting.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the SULAM project plays a significant role in raising awareness about two pressing juvenile crime issues among the teens in Terengganu, which are bullying and sexual harassment. Although these topics may be considered sensitive or even taboo, especially for students aged 15, but we firmly uphold the core mission of SULAM, which is to promote awareness. Awareness is one of the greatest gifts that can be offered to those who are unprepared or uninformed. We believe that our project will inspire future generations to engage openly in conversations about sexual harassment and bullying, rather than treating them as off-limits or sensitive subjects. Normalising these discussions allows today's youth to express their emotions more openly and fosters honest conversation about their experiences. This SULAM project not only educates students about law but also encourages them to embody its principles. Our aim is to instill the spirit of advocacy in them so that they may grow into confident and ambitious adults with clear aspirations for their future. We hope that through this initiative, students gain not only knowledge about bullying and sexual harassment but also insight into the life of a law student and inspire them to pursue a career in law in the future.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT "HEALTHY TOGETHER, HAPPY FOREVER"

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Highlight: The goal of this community health program for elementary school pupils is to raise children's early understanding of health care. This curriculum caters to the needs and comprehension level of primary school pupils by emphasizing health education in an engaging and participatory manner. In addition, to spark students' attention and cultivate a love of health care from an early age, recreational activities like aerobics, a colouring contest with a healthy lifestyle theme, and interactive tests were also organized. We all share responsibility for ensuring that the next generation of the country is exposed to healthy lifestyles, personal cleanliness habits, balanced nutrition, and comprehensive physical and mental health care at a young age. The engaging and enjoyable health education technique used in this program is appropriate for the comprehension and developmental stage of primary school pupils. Overall, it is anticipated that this initiative will support the nation's efforts to generate a healthy, active, and exceptional generation by helping to build a solid basis for fostering a healthy lifestyle among the younger generation.

Keywords: Community health, Health education, Healthy lifestyle, Personality development, Healthy generation, Early education

Introduction

The "Healthy Together, Happy Forever" Community Health Program is an extracurricular education initiative specifically designed to provide early exposure to personal health care to Year 6 students at Sekolah Kebangsaan Datu Hashim. This program is implemented through the SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society) project which combines students of higher learning institutions with the local community to apply knowledge practically while making meaningful contributions to society. Primary school children are an important group in forming the foundation of a healthy life because lifestyle practices adopted from an early age will have a long-term impact on their physical, emotional and social health. Therefore, this program is designed with various interesting and interactive activities such as health talks, educational games, team activity, and interactive sessions. Through the implementation of these activities, students are not only able to increase their knowledge about health aspects but also could form a positive attitude towards self-care, build confidence, and cultivate noble values such as cooperation and concern. Furthermore, this program provides students with space to interact with university students who act as facilitators and mentors, thus opening students' minds to future learning opportunities. This experiential learning approach makes the knowledge conveyed easier to understand and internalize. In addition to supporting the content of the Physical and Health Education curriculum, this program also helps instil early awareness of the importance of personal well-

being and a healthy lifestyle in everyday life. Overall, this program not only benefits students in terms of knowledge and awareness but also contributes to character development and forming a more balanced identity and prepared to face life's challenges in the future. The implementation of this program is believed to have a lasting positive impact, not only from a knowledge perspective, but also in shaping healthy attitudes and practices in students' daily lives.

Background

SULAM is widely recognized as a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address community needs, coupled with structured opportunities intentionally designed to enrich student learning [1]. It is distinct from student community service or volunteerism. Sulam represents the exchange of information while keeping the warmth of Malaysian wellness. It is one of the programs in Malaysian higher education that aims to produce graduates with an entrepreneurial attitude, who are balanced and comprehensive. In the academic program's curriculum, SULAM is also one of the components that define High Impact Educational Practices, which were implemented by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) in 2016. It is advised that primary school pupils participate in this community health program to raise their early awareness of health care. The project bridges the gap between academic learning and real-world application, giving students hands-on experience while also assisting out volunteer activities in a group. It promotes student engagement, improves learning, and addresses community concerns. The SULAM project "Service-Learning Malaysia-University for Society", is an educational approach that aims to give students the chance to apply their knowledge, abilities, and competencies in their profession to address problems or concerns in their communities.

Description of Community

The community chosen to carry out this volunteering activity is the 'school community'. The community in this school refers to a network of individuals consisting of students, teachers, parents and other staff who interact and work together to achieve educational goals and social development. An active and comprehensive community has a positive impact on the learning environment and social life of students. Among the elements of the community found in schools are students who are the main elements involved in the learning process, social and co-curricular activities. In addition, teachers who play a role as educators and guides who are important in shaping the personality of a student [2]. Next are parents who play a role in strengthening the relationship between home and school who also provide moral support to students. School staff also play a role in supporting the daily operations of the school and helping to ensure a safe and comfortable environment.

Therefore, the school community was selected to carry out this volunteering activities. The volunteer program carried out at this school involves voluntary activities carried out by external parties who are with the teachers and students at the school. The selected school that are willing to co-operate in organizing this programme was Datu Hashim National School located at Pengkalan Chepa, Kota Bahru. Through this program, the participants could interact with their peers through group activities. In addition, this volunteer program allows students to develop skills by honing leadership skills, teamwork and communication by solving problems that may arise during activities. Next is the practical experience that exists in this program provides useful experience for students to apply the knowledge learned in this volunteer activity. Overall, the community at school plays an important role in providing support to students and the volunteer program is one effective way to connect all members of the community. With this volunteer program, it can help to develop skills and values that can be used in the future.

The integration of this programme with Sulam promises to provide a unique experience. Primary school students' comprehension and developmental stage are suitable for the program's entertaining and engaging health teaching approach. A volunteer activity was conducted at SK Datu Hashim and implemented using several methods. One of the methods was talks by, Dr. Syamlina Binti Che Abdul Rahim, a lecturer from University Malaysia Kelantan. group activities about the food pyramid and individual quizzes with questions pertaining to the health talk was also conducted. Ultimately, by laying the groundwork for encouraging a healthy lifestyle among the younger generation, this program is expected to complement the country's efforts to produce a generation that is remarkable, active, and healthy. This experiential learning opportunity fosters cooperation between students, industry professionals, and academics, offering a platform for information exchange and skill improvement. The

possibility of product commercialization highlights the project's significance and originality in promoting sustainable practices.

Important Attributes

The Community Health Program "Healthy Together, Happy Forever" implemented through the SULAM project provides great benefits to Year 6 students of SK Datu Hashim, not only in aspects of physical health but also covering moral, social, and academic development. Firstly, this program helps students enhance their basic knowledge about self-health care, including the importance of balanced nutrition, personal hygiene, sufficient physical activity, and disease prevention. With interactive approaches such as workshop talks and health games, students find it easier to understand and remember the health knowledge conveyed compared to traditional learning methods in the classroom. Additionally, this program also instills noble values such as responsibility, discipline, and care, as students are encouraged to actively participate in maintaining their own health and spreading awareness to their families and friends [3]. Through interactions with university students and external facilitators, the students are also exposed to the world of higher learning, thus building self-confidence and future aspirations. Group activities conducted throughout the program also foster social skills and cooperation, which are very important for the holistic development of students at the primary school level. Overall, this program not only supports learning in the subject of Physical Education and Health, but also helps shape a more aware, healthy, and responsible generation of young people.

Figure 1: Participants during a group activity

In addition, this program also instils noble values such as responsibility towards oneself and others, discipline in maintaining health, and a caring attitude towards the well-being of the community. When students are involved in health activities that require cooperation between teachers, university students, and external parties, they are indirectly educated to work in teams, communicate effectively, and respect others' opinions. Moreover, the interaction of students with university students provides early exposure to the world of higher education, which in turn sparks a desire to learn and build aspirations from an early age. This program also helps students form healthy lifestyles as a continuous practice, not only during school but also at home with their families. Overall, this SULAM project not only supports curriculum content such as Physical Education and Health as well as Moral Education, but also plays an important role in producing healthier, smarter, knowledgeable, and competitive students, in line with the desire to nurture a balanced future generation in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual development.

Impact and Advantages

The "Community Health Program" held at SK Datu Hashim, Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan, was a community health awareness program aimed at educating Year 6 students about balanced diets and healthy eating habits. This project provided meaningful benefits not only to the students and the school community but also to the volunteer program group involved in organizing and running the event. Through this initiative, the program achieved a dual impact: improving health awareness within the

community and enhancing the educational experience of the volunteers. One of the main impacts on the community was the increased awareness among students about the importance of nutrition and healthy eating. Many of the Year 6 students were introduced, often for the first time, to important concepts such as the Malaysian Food Pyramid, food groups (carbohydrates, proteins, vegetables and fruits) and the health risks of consuming too much sugar, salt, and processed food. The program used fun and interactive teaching methods, such as quiz question and group discussions, to help students understand and remember these concepts. As a result, students became more aware of the choices they make during school recess and at home.

In addition to building knowledge, the project also encouraged students to adopt healthier eating habits. They were taught to recognize nutritious foods and understand the role of each food group in their physical and mental development. The students were encouraged to share their new knowledge with their families, which created a ripple effect beyond the school and into the wider community. Group-based activities, such as constructing the food pyramid using food cards, not only strengthened their understanding but also helped improve their teamwork and communication skills. These activities created an enjoyable learning environment where students could confidently express themselves and support each other. The project also contributed to developing a more health-conscious culture within the school. Teachers welcomed the program as it supported and complemented their health education efforts. The materials provided, including posters and activity sheets, could be reused for future lessons, making the program's impact more sustainable. It also set a strong foundation for similar health-based initiatives in the future.

For the volunteer group, the project was a valuable educational journey. In preparation for the event, volunteers had to conduct research on nutrition, child health, and creative teaching methods. This process deepened their understanding of public health and nutrition education. Volunteers also improved their communication and teaching skills by explaining health topics to young students using simple language, storytelling, and visual aids. These experiences helped build confidence, especially in speaking publicly and engaging with different age groups. The planning and execution of the program also provided hands-on experience in project management. Volunteers were responsible for designing the activities, preparing materials, handling logistics, and coordinating with the school. This experience enhanced their leadership, decision-making, and time management skills. Working closely with one another throughout the project strengthened their collaboration, adaptability, and ability to work effectively as a team under pressure.

Furthermore, the project allowed the volunteers to develop a deeper sense of empathy and social responsibility [5]. By working directly with children from various backgrounds, the volunteers gained a clearer understanding of the challenges faced by certain communities, particularly in terms of health education and access to nutritious food. Witnessing the students' enthusiasm and curiosity reinforced the importance of giving back to society and inspired the volunteers to stay committed to future community service efforts. A particularly impactful part of the program was the creative food pyramid activity. In this task, students worked in groups to categorize different types of food into the appropriate levels of the pyramid. For the volunteers, designing and facilitating this activity was a fun and challenging learning experience. It tested their creativity, problem-solving abilities, and instructional skills, while giving the students an enjoyable way to grasp the concept of a balanced diet. The activity also promoted active participation and built stronger connections between volunteers and students.

Commercial Value

Although the "Healthy Together, Happy Forever" Program is conducted on a voluntary basis, it holds strong potential for commercialization in the following four aspects. Firstly, Children's health education module. This program can be developed into a structured health education module for children and offered as a paid package to other primary schools. The inclusion of informative health talks, interactive group activities, and quizzes makes it a suitable tool for instilling healthy habits in young students. With the addition of supporting materials such as activity books, educational videos, and health-themed games, the module can be marketed to schools, training institutions, and both governmental and non-governmental organizations. As such, this initiative has the potential to become a commercially viable educational product within the children's health sector. Next is Potential for Industry Collaboration. The program also presents opportunities for collaboration with health and nutrition-related industries,

particularly those focusing on children's products. Organizers can explore sponsorships or product partnerships with companies that offer healthy food, supplements, or educational content. These companies may benefit from increased brand visibility and corporate social responsibility (CSR) engagement, while the organizers can gain financial or logistical support. This dual benefit enhances the program's impact while simultaneously unlocking its commercial potential.

By providing workshops and events for Community Health, the program framework can be modified for workshops and health events aimed at families and the community, in addition to schools. Expert discussions, health screenings, cooking demonstrations, and discussions about nutrition and healthy eating are some examples of these paid events. The program can make money while encouraging community health awareness and participation by providing event packages that can be customised for community centres, workplaces, or local government agencies. Finally, this event can help in promoting healthy eating and physical exercise among students. These initiatives aid in lowering the chance of developing diseases later in life. This can lessen the financial strain on families and the healthcare system by indirectly lowering long-term medical expenses. Commercially speaking, this benefits clinics, medical facilities, and health insurers who recognise the potential of school-based health prevention initiatives.

Recommendations

To ensure that the healthy lifestyle program being implemented has an effective and lasting impact on Year 6 students, several improvement suggestions can be considered for future implementation Firstly, Integrate health education into the curriculum. Develop age-appropriate modules on nutrition, hygiene, mental health, and physical activity. For example, there can use interactive teaching methods like games, storytelling and role-playing to keep young learners engaged. Next is to promote health education via digital platforms. Create animated videos, mobile apps, or SMS-based learning tools for students and families to access health tips at home. For example, find the apps can give education and knowledge to everyone inspired about healthy life in our routine such as eating healthy and keep maintain our daily life. Social media campaigns also can be used to share success stories, health tips, and community events online to build visibility and encourage community-wide involvement. For example, create digital newsletters, short videos, or podcasts involving students to share health messages with the broader community and launch a school-based app or portal where families can access resources and track participation. A teacher can monitor, evaluate, and advocate student health and let students track progress on health goals and run peer-to-peer initiatives, fostering ownership and leadership. Therefore, they also can plan annual community health days with screenings, games, fitness activities, and stalls for families and neighbours. For example, celebrate global health days such as World Oral Health Day and World Water Day with student-led activities. A more advance method was data-driven planning. By using data planning, it can showcase student and family stories through posters, videos, or school blogs to build momentum and community pride. Data driven planning can be collected by feedback and health data such as absenteeism and hygiene practices to adapt programs and advocate for continued support and funding.

A more significant and important method was parental involvement. Parental involvement can be expanded to reinforce healthy lifestyle practices at home. Activities such as Family Healthy Days can be conducted as a space for healthy interaction between parents and children. In addition, the distribution of easy-to-understand health education materials such as pamphlets, infographics or short videos can help parents promote healthy eating and physical activity at home. The incorporation of game also can help by adding game elements, or gamification, it can enhance student interest and involvement in the program. Methods like point tracking, rewards for accomplishments, and regular appreciation can be implemented to foster positive competition. Students might receive charming titles like "This Week's Empty Water Champion" or "Vegetable King of the School" to encourage them. A school also can organize a session with Inspirational Role Models. The engagement of individuals who serve as role models for students, including athletes, coaches, or influencers who lead a healthy lifestyle, can encourage and energize students. A laid-back experience sharing session can broaden students' perspectives on the significance of prioritizing health from an early age. Program evaluation and feedback can be done to ensure the effectiveness and improvement of the program over time, it is recommended that an evaluation and feedback session be conducted. This can be done through a short questionnaire to students, teachers, and volunteers after the program is completed. This

feedback can be used to improve the content and approach of the program in the future. Finally, the integration of healthy lifestyle into daily learning. This can be done to ensure that the healthy lifestyle message continues to be practiced, related activities can be integrated into daily subjects such as Science, Malay Language (health essay), and Physical Education. In addition, routines such as light exercise during breaks or after learning can be made an ongoing practice to instil a healthy lifestyle culture in schools.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the "Community Health Program" program had successfully made a positive impact on both the community and the volunteer group. This program is implemented with an interactive and fun health education approach, in line with the level of understanding and development of primary school students. Overall, this program is expected to help form a strong foundation in cultivating a healthy lifestyle among the younger generation, thus supporting the country's efforts to produce a healthy, active and excellent generation. It was an eye-opening experience that enhanced their health awareness, encouraged better food choices, and built social skills. For the volunteers, it was a meaningful learning experience that strengthened their knowledge, leadership, teamwork, and sense of responsibility. This project stands as a strong example of how volunteerism can create a lasting and meaningful difference while contributing to the personal and professional growth of everyone involved.

Acknowledgement

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FROM VILLAGE TO VARSITY: EMPOWERING RURAL YOUTH THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL CAMPUS EXPOSURE

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Highlight: This direct service-learning project, Jelajah Kampus: Inspirasi Kejayaan Masa Depan, aims to motivate underperforming rural students by exposing them to the university environment and inspiring their educational aspirations. Through experiential campus tours and peer sharing, this project seeks to reframe their future outlook and reinforce the value of education as a pathway to success.

Keywords: Educational motivation, Campus tour, rural students, experiential learning and university-community engagement

Introduction

This paper presents a direct-service SULAM initiative carried out under the SGDVK3993 Community Service Project course at Universiti Utara Malaysia. This programme was initiated in collaboration with SMK Bandar Bukit Kayu Hitam, following feedback from school leaders who expressed concern over students' lack of motivation and limited awareness about higher education opportunities.

Service learning, especially through direct engagement, is a powerful educational strategy that connects students with real-world community issues while instilling civic values and social responsibility (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2020). The project allowed university students to plan and implement meaningful outreach activities, promoting mutual learning between higher education institutions and school communities.

By applying experiential learning principles (Kolb, 1984), the project exposed rural students to the university setting and inspired them through peer-led interactions and motivational activities. This initiative not only addressed local educational challenges but also served as a scalable model for university-community partnerships in shaping future-ready and socially aware youth.

Background of the SULAM Project

The *Jelajah Kampus: Inspirasi Kejayaan Masa Depan* project was initiated as a direct-service SULAM initiative under the SGDVK3993 Community Service Project course at Universiti Utara Malaysia, fulfilling the course learning outcome of proposing and conducting a community-based service project. In this course, students are required to design, plan, and implement a community service project as part of their academic learning This project was conducted in response to the pressing issue of declining student motivation and limited academic aspirations, especially among rural learners in SMK Bandar Bukit Kayu Hitam (BUKSES – Bukit Kayu Hitam Secondary School). Preliminary visits and interviews with the school's administrators, including the principal, assistant principals, discipline teacher, school counsellor and subject teachers confirmed a significant gap in student exposure to higher education

environments. According to Freire (1970), education should be grounded in the lived experiences of learners, and this project sought to situate learning in the context of students' realities. By conducting interviews and needs analysis with school administrators, university students identified motivational issues and designed a community engagement programme that reflects an authentic, problem-based learning context.

Recognising this need, the SULAM project was designed as a direct intervention involving undergraduate students from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) to inspire and motivate these students. Therefore, the university students that took SGDVK3993 Community Service Project course have collaboratively designed a community engagement programme that directly responds to the identified needs. Grounded in principles of authentic and problem-based learning, the project was implemented as a direct SULAM intervention, with the goal of inspiring and motivating rural students through immersive, campus-based experiences.

Importance of the Project

This project is important because it bridges the experiential gap often faced by rural youth, who may lack exposure to tertiary education settings and role models. Dewey (1938) argued that education must be rooted in experience to be meaningful and impactful. By facilitating campus exposure and peer mentoring, the project encouraged students to visualise educational success as a realistic and achievable goal. Furthermore, the project aligns with the national agenda outlined in the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (2020) guidelines for SULAM, which promotes high-impact educational engagement and university social responsibility (USR) in solving real-world community issues.

This SULAM project is also significant because it addresses the motivational challenges that hinder rural students from envisioning higher education as an attainable goal. It also embodies the principles of service learning by integrating academic instruction with meaningful community service, helping university students develop civic responsibility while contributing to nation-building through educational outreach.

By conducting such a programme, the university students also learned and gained meaningful experience in community engagement, project management, and educational leadership, while deepening their understanding of social responsibility and the realities faced by under-privilege school communities (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Since the participating students were enrolled in the Bachelor of Moral Education programme, the project also served as a platform for them to embody and apply moral values throughout the planning and execution process. It provided authentic exposure for them to interact with school students and design impactful educational activities that align with both moral and civic learning goals.

Description of the Project

Conducted on 18 December 2024, this one-day programme engaged 75 Form 3 students from BUKSES in a series of interactive and motivational activities on UUM's campus. Activities included ice-breaking sessions, experiential and motivational games such as "Future Box" and "Blind Game", energiser sessions, campus tours, and heart-to-heart sharing sessions led by undergraduate students.

In the "Blind Game" module, participants were blindfolded and guided through a rope course while also receiving voice instructions. They had to decide whether to follow the physical guide (the rope) or the verbal instructions, often needing to trust both; testing their trust, focus, and decision-making. This activity symbolised the role of teachers and schools in guiding students through life's challenges. More importantly, the module was designed to highlight the value of knowledge, learning, and education as essential tools to navigate the world full of uncertainty. It aimed to motivate participants, uplift their morale, and reinforce the belief that education can light the path toward a better future.

In the "Future Box" module, participants were provided with recyclable materials such as used cardboard boxes, plastic wrappers, and paper. They were tasked with designing and modelling a creative costume that represents their future ambition or desired profession. Figure 1 shows participants confidently showcasing their self-made costumes on stage, each symbolising the career they aspire to pursue.

Figure 1: Participants presenting their costume designs during the "Future Box" module.

One of the most impactful sessions in the programme featured two undergraduate students who shared their personal life experiences to inspire the participants. The first speaker was a student from Sarawak, the first in her family to pursue a university degree. She grew up in a rural area with limited access to basic infrastructure such as electricity and clean water. During her sharing, she presented a video showcasing her village, including her daily journey to fetch water from a river, and the emotional moment her family celebrated upon receiving the news of her university acceptance. Her story powerfully demonstrated that coming from an underprivileged background or living in a low-income rural community does not hinder one's ability to pursue higher education and achieve excellence. Her experience deeply resonated with the majority of programme participants, many of whom also come from similar socio-economic backgrounds, offering a captivating message that dreams are still attainable despite life's challenges.

The second speaker was an avid esports gamer who maintained academic excellence throughout his studies. Despite his passion and active participation in esports, including winning first place in a university-level esports tournament with his teammates; he consistently earned the Dean's Award in almost every semester. His story conveyed a powerful message that academic excellence remains a priority, and those personal interests or hobbies such as esports should not be seen as obstacles to one's true aspirations, especially in pursuing one's ambition. These compelling stories served to inspire and motivate the students of BUKSES, demonstrating that perseverance, discipline, and passion can coexist with academic success regardless of background or interest.

For the university students, the experience of planning and running this programme taught them how to lead, communicate, and work as a team. They learned to listen to community needs, respond creatively, and apply what they learned in class to real situations. This made learning more meaningful and helped them grow both as students and as future educators.

The planning and execution were led by students enrolled in the SGDVK3993 course, following the principles of collaborative learning and peer teaching (Vygotsky, 1978). Roles such as logistics, facilitation, technical support, and more were divided among students to simulate real-world project management and leadership practice. This participatory approach enhanced both cognitive and affective domains of learning.

Impacts on the Community and Learning Experience

The project had a dual impact. For the school community, it rekindled students' interest in learning, fostered early academic goal-setting, and built excitement around university life. For the UUM students, the experience cultivated essential soft skills such as leadership, communication, empathy, teamwork, and communication. The project also reinforced course learning outcomes through authentic engagement with real-world educational challenges. The project exemplifies Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, particularly in how it allowed students to reflect, act, and learn through direct engagement. Furthermore, the programme contributed to the development of critical consciousness, particularly among university students, by encouraging them to examine their social roles and assumptions through meaningful interaction with the school community (Graff & Ballesteros, 2024).

In addition to the SULAM project execution, UUM students also engaged in a structured four-phase reflection process: before the project, after visiting and collecting data from the school, during the implementation, and after the project concluded. This reflective cycle allowed them to internalise their learning at each stage, helped them track their growth and learning throughout the experience. Prior to the project, students expressed uncertainty and lacking real exposure to community needs. However, the school visit and data collection process enabled them to develop empathy and awareness of the socio-economic realities faced by rural students.

During the programme, they served as hosts, taking on active roles in facilitating activities and ensuring smooth execution. They applied moral values, communication skills, and leadership in real time while managing logistics and responding to unexpected challenges. Post-project reflections revealed increased confidence, improved teamwork, a clearer understanding of their responsibilities as future educators, and a heightened appreciation for inclusive and values-driven teaching. The reflection process strengthened their ability to connect academic learning with real-life community engagement, in line with experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) and the goals of service learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

The reflection data revealed significant learning gains among the university students across all phases. Initially, students held assumptions about rural students and expressed self-doubt in their roles. However, the school visit shifted their perceptions, allowing them to recognise specific community challenges and better prepare for meaningful engagement. During the programme, they actively led and hosted the activities, applying values such as empathy and responsibility while developing teamwork and leadership skills. Post-project reflections showed enhanced confidence, a deeper understanding of their role as future educators, and an appreciation for how service-learning fosters personal growth, moral responsibility, and real-world readiness. Table 1 shows the summary of students' reflection across four reflective circles.

Table 1: Summary of Student Reflections Across Four Phases of the SULAM Project

Reflection Phase	Key Learning Theme 1: Awareness of Community Needs	Key Learning Theme 2: Personal and Professional Growth	Key Learning Theme 3: Values and Collaboration
Before Project	Students assumed rural students were unmotivated and might have attitude problem like rude, aggressive, lazy and disconnected from education. They realised the need to create motivating content.	Students expressed self-doubt, especially about speaking out in front of the crowd and organising the event. Hoped to gain confidence and leadership skills.	Before the project, students were aware that their role as Moral Education majors required them to promote values. They hoped to apply moral concepts like respect and responsibility in the programme and act as positive role models.
After Preliminary Interview & School Visit	Students found the school environment welcoming, with BUKSES students warmly greeting the UUM team. They identified key issues such as low motivation, unclear aspirations, and limited exposure to the outside world.	Students realised the need to adjust roles, planning and logistics after understanding school realities. Felt more responsible as future teachers.	Students were inspired by teachers' empathy and professionalism during the school visit and interview with school administrators and teachers. Wanted to build similar supportive teacher identity.
During Project	By directly interacting with students, they saw that many were eager to connect and express their thought during 'heart-to-heart session' but lacked exposure and encouragement. They realised that creating a safe, motivating environment helped students open up.	Students took the lead as hosts and facilitators. They developed confidence in managing the programme, adapted on the spot, and found themselves capable of handling real school-like scenarios with the participants.	They recognised how moral values like empathy and responsibility played out in real situations. Teamwork became crucial in solving problems and supporting each other under pressure.
After Project	Students acknowledged their stereotypes were challenged. They saw rural students as	Students gained confidence, empathy, and confirmed their passion for	Reflected on collaboration, effort, and how service learning

capable and full of potential, shifting their mindset about equity in education.	teaching. Saw themselves growing into supportive and impactful educators.	built their readiness to become educators who lead with heart.

Commercial Value or Marketability

While the project was not designed with profit in mind, it holds potential marketability as a scalable education outreach module. With structured materials and sponsorship, it could be adopted by other universities or turned into a flagship USR initiative, targeting different regions and communities. With proper packaging, such as a facilitation module, student-led toolkit, and institutional endorsement, this programme could be replicated by other universities or NGOs as part of their social outreach portfolio. According to Eyler and Giles (1999), service learning not only promotes civic responsibility but can also generate institutional visibility and long-term stakeholder value when implemented strategically.

Commercial Value or Marketability

To ensure sustainability and wider impact, future initiatives could incorporate follow-up mentoring (online or hybrid), partnerships with alumni or corporate sponsors, and integration of digital storytelling as a reflective tool for school participants. A longitudinal study to track student progression and aspiration after exposure to the programme would also add academic value. As suggested by Bringle and Hatcher (1996), sustainable service-learning models require structured reflection, institutional support, and reciprocal benefit; which this project has laid the foundation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *Jelajah Kampus: Inspirasi Kejayaan Masa Depan* successfully achieved its objective of motivating rural youth by introducing them to the higher education environment in an engaging and meaningful manner. The programme fostered a renewed enthusiasm for academic success among the participants while enriching university students with hands-on experience in community service and educational leadership. The integration of real-world engagement with academic instruction exemplifies Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory. As a pioneering direct SULAM initiative by the School of Education, Universiti Utara Malaysia, this project demonstrates the potential of university-community partnerships in shaping more inclusive and aspirational futures.

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EMPOWERING WELLNESS PROGRAM THROUGH COMPASSION: A VOLUNTEER PROJECT AT RUMAH KEBAJIKAN DHUFA QAMARIAH

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Highlight: The volunteer service project at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah, aims to focus on social well-being, emotional well-being, physical well-being and nutritional well-being. Through emotional support, structured activities and peer engagement, this project fosters the health of participants, encourages them to build healthy lives, and contributes to long-term social harmony.

Keywords: SULAM, social wellness, emotional wellness, physical wellness, self-worth, social harmony

Introduction

In order to foster a culture that is kind, accepting, and understanding, youth participation is essential. In addition to giving young people chances to give back to the community, it also cultivates a strong feeling of civic duty, social awareness, and self-worth. These are crucial elements in promoting the overall health and well-being of people and society at large. Children and people with disabilities can find a safe haven at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah, which provides necessary assistance like housing, basic schooling, and emotional support. The inhabitants nonetheless struggle in spite of these safeguards, especially with regard to limited creative expression, limited social exposure, and little engagement with the outside world—all of which have a direct impact on their emotional and social health.

To address these challenges, a volunteer initiative was launched by university students with the aim of fostering meaningful connections between youth volunteers and the residents of the welfare home. This project was thoughtfully designed to enhance emotional well-being, create lasting and meaningful experiences, and strengthen interpersonal communication skills among the residents. Through artistic endeavors, games, and one-on-one conversations, the project gave people a safe space to express themselves, gain self-assurance, and experience a feeling of community. Student volunteers simultaneously developed empathy, inclusion, and a greater understanding of social realities while gaining insightful knowledge about the lives of people with exceptional needs.

In addition to fostering the residents' mental, emotional, and social growth, this program helped the pupils grow into more sympathetic and socially conscious adults. It taught kids virtues like compassion, voluntarism, and community service that benefit the environment and the community in the long run. Ultimately, the project embodies the true essence of service learning, where educational goals are interwoven with purposeful civic engagement. It creates a shared space for learning, growing, and healing—promoting holistic wellness for all parties involved, and leaving a lasting impact on both the givers and the receivers.

Project Description

The project took place at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah involving 24 students and 10 volunteers from University Malaysia Kelantan. The team conducted activities such as:

1. Ice breaking and motivational sharing.
   Ice breaking to make participants feel less awkward and relaxed at the beginning of the program and it also makes it easier for participants to interact with other volunteers. Including motivational sharing which helps participants learn about new things from this participant will learn about social wellness skills. For example, they will get strengthened interpersonal skill in the group because they make a communication each other while sitting in the group.
2. Aerobic activities.
   Aerobics can provide many benefits, including playing an important role in well-being, such as increasing stamina and strategy. For these activities' participant will learn about physical wellness while they are doing an aerobic these activities can promote active lifestyle.
3. Healthy foods games.
   This healthy food game is suitable for inclusion in this wellness because it can teach students to learn more about healthy eating and they can also distinguish between healthy and unhealthy food. These activities teach participants about nutritional awareness. These activities can encourage participants to learn about healthy food.
4. Musical Chair.
   During the volunteer's program one of the activities that we conducted was Musical Chair This game organized in a relaxed cheerful to encourage active participants among the participants. The rule of playing this game is participants need to move around chair while music played and when it stopped, they need to quickly find the seat This game in wellness perspective promote on reduce stress and provide on improving body balance & coordination.
5. Radio Karat.
   Radio Karat Game, used generally as an ice-breaking or participative exercise, has an input to wellness by promoting socialization, emotional expression, and low levels of physical movement. It promotes social well-being through cooperative teamwork communication and smiling fostering a sense of belonging and community. It alleviates stress and enhances mood emotionally through fun and participative involvement. The game is gestures or dance-like in nature, it also contributes to physical well-being by encouraging circulation and gentle exercise, thus being an all-around means of boosting overall health.
6. Appreciation gift.
   This appreciation gift was intended to make students feel recognized and value after successfully completing the program it can motivating them and boosting their confidence while creating positive memory of the experience

Figure 1: Activities during the volunteer program.

Rationale of the Project

The volunteer service project at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah was designed to promote holistic wellness by addressing social, emotional, physical, and nutritional needs within a vulnerable community. Recognizing the multi-faceted challenges faced by participants, the initiative provided emotional support through structured activities and peer engagement, fostering connections and alleviating isolation. It emphasized physical health through exercise and nutritional education, encouraging healthy habits and enhancing overall well-being. By empowering individuals to rediscover their dreams and cultivate resilience, the project aimed to create long-term social harmony and stability, while highlighting the importance of community collaboration in fostering sustainable change.

Impact and Learning Experience

Volunteer activities at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah a great impact from a holistic wellness perspective that encompasses emotional, social, mental and spiritual well-being and contribute significantly to the development of a more inclusive and balanced community wellness.

First, the presence of volunteers brings positive social interactions between university students and vulnerable communities, especially children from low-income families and special needs. This interaction builds bridges of understanding and empathy, thus reducing social gaps in the community.

Second, activities such as games, guidance and donations not only help residents emotionally and mentally, but also create a healthier community atmosphere psychosocially, where each individual feels valued and cared for. This indirectly contributes to building a more caring, resilient and mutually supportive community.

Third, the involvement of students in such programs strengthens civic responsibility and the spirit of volunteerism, which are the foundations of a sustainable community. When the younger generation is involved in helping the community, they bring positive change and become agents for the long-term well-being of the community.

Commercial Value/ Scability

The volunteer program at Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah has high value as an impactful social model that can be expanded nationwide. Activities such as interactive games and guidance sessions not only help children's emotional and social development but also contribute to the overall well-being of the community.

This flexible program model is suitable for being absorbed into government initiatives, educational institutions and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. With strategic branding and support, it can be used as a high-impact volunteer platform, thus opening opportunities for the formation of a sustainable and inclusive social model. Rumah Kebajikan Dhuafa' Al Qamariah can be a pilot center for the implementation of community well-being programs at the national level.

Future Recommendations

To enhance the impact and sustainability of the initiative, it is essential to form strategic partnerships with corporate sponsors to secure material aid. Additionally, digitizing the module can ensure wider accessibility and facilitate ongoing training efforts. Incorporating elements that involve family participation will help reinforce the learning process and provide a supportive environment for beneficiaries. Lastly, encouraging long-term follow-up visits by volunteers can help monitor progress, offer continuous guidance, and strengthen the overall effectiveness of the program.

Conclusion

Dhuafa' Al Qamariah Welfare Home is living proof that small but meaningful interactions can have a big impact on the well-being of individuals and communities. Through an empathy-based and action-based approach, the program not only helps children rebuild their confidence and emotional stability, but also provides volunteers with a space to find self-worth, a sense of belonging and meaning in their service. These two-way relationships build strong social support, reduce loneliness and instill a culture of mutual care within the community. It creates the foundation for a more resilient, inclusive and emotionally and socially balanced community. Overall, the program highlights how genuine human

connections can be a catalyst for holistic well-being and the development of a more harmonious community. This program impacts participants well-being and wellness after joining these activities Through the activity they became healthier and more energetic.

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EMPOWERING KAMPUNG PEROS: A COLLABORATIVE ART-BASED SULAM PROJECT FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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Highlight: This SULAM project highlights how a collaborative arts and digital storytelling initiative empowered the community of Kampung Peros located within the Sarawak Delta Geopark to promote sustainable tourism. By merging creative disciplines such as mural design, documentary filmmaking, and digital marketing, the project increased the village's visibility, enhanced cultural preservation, and built the digital and creative capacities of local residents. This community-led transformation has contributed to new economic opportunities, revitalized cultural pride, and aligned with national and global goals for sustainable development.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Community Empowerment, Visual Arts, Sarawak Delta Geopark, Cultural Preservation, Kampung Peros

Introduction

Kampung Peros is a predominantly Bidayuh village in Krokong, Bau (Sarawak), located near ecotourism attractions like the Bung Podad Hiking Trail and the Wind and Fairy Cave. Historically, the village had limited online presence and relied on external parties for promotion. In early 2025, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) launched a 12-week Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) project under its Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts to address these gaps. The initiative brought together design technology, fine arts, and cinematography students with Kampung Peros residents in a multidisciplinary collaboration. Its goals were to boost sustainable tourism and preserve Bidayuh cultural heritage. This aligns with SDG 11's emphasis on inclusive, culture-sensitive communities (target 11.4 protects cultural heritage and SDG 17's focus on multi-stakeholder partnership. The project also dovetailed with Sarawak Delta Geopark objectives of community involvement and heritage conservation.

Project Activities and Community Engagement

The SULAM team implemented a series of media and art activities to empower the community (Table 1). UNIMAS design technology students overhauled the village's digital marketing: they updated the Bung Podad Hiking Trail Facebook page and created a new Kampung Peros tourism page, which quickly attracted public interest. Fine arts students teamed up with local youth and international artists to paint murals celebrating Bidayuh culture. For example, Indonesian artist Anang Saptoto painted a mural of local chef Sinah Dihoi and her signature dish ayam pansuh (bamboo-cooked chicken), highlighting the village's culinary heritage. One mural has even been certified as a Pokéstop/Portal, drawing additional visitors. Cinematography students produced two documentary films showcasing Kampung Peros's

landscapes and traditions. These films, along with social media content, provide enduring promotion and preservation of local heritage.

Table 1: Participant involvement and project activities.

Participant	Activities	Outcomes/Impact
Design Technology Students	Updated Bung Podad trail Facebook page; created Kampung Peros tourism webpage.	Enhanced online visibility; increased public interest.
Fine Arts Students	Co-designed and painted murals with locals (e.g. Bidayuh motifs, local chef) participated in mural revivals (gotong-royong event).	Cultural pride; village beautification; heritage celebrated.
Cinematography Students	Filmed and produced two documentaries on village culture and scenery.	Visual content for promotion; cultural documentation.
Community Members	Learned video skills in workshops; collaborated on murals; organized local events.	Empowerment in self-promotion; new digital skills; strengthened community bonds.
International Partners (Borneo Lab artists)	Assisted in mural projects (e.g. *"On Reciprocity"* gotong-royong)	Cultural exchange; enriched artistic quality; global linkages.

Figure 1: The smartphone videography workshop at Kampung Peros (February 2025) taught villagers to create promotional videos for the new tourism page.

Such hands-on training exemplified the project's focus on building local digital skills. In this workshop (7–9 Feb 2025), residents learned to shoot and edit video content, producing ten short promotional clips for Kampung Peros. Community members remarked that prior to the project they "*relied on others to promote [their] village. Now, we have the skills to create our own promotional videos*".

Challenges Addressed

Before SULAM, Kampung Peros faced two main challenges. First, its **limited digital marketing** capacity meant tourism potential was underutilized. As noted by a youth leader, villagers previously depended on outsiders for publicity. The SULAM initiative addressed this by training locals in digital storytelling, enabling them to self-promote online. Second, there was a pressing **need for cultural preservation**. Like many rural communities, Kampung Peros risked seeing its Bidayuh traditions overlooked. The mural project and documentaries directly tackled this by celebrating intangible heritage (e.g. traditional cuisine and attire) in public art and film. These efforts link to the Geopark's conservation mission – SDG 11 calls for safeguarding cultural and natural heritage– by ensuring local culture is documented and showcased.

Project Background

Kampung Peros is a Bidayuh village located in Krokong, Bau, Sarawak, within the Sarawak Delta Geopark. Surrounded by natural attractions such as the Bung Podad Hiking Trail, Wind Cave, and Fairy Cave, the village holds great potential for ecotourism. However, it previously lacked an online presence and the capacity to promote itself as a tourism destination.

In Semester 1 2024/2025, Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), implemented a 12-week SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia–University for Society) project to address these challenges. The project was a collaborative effort involving third-year students from three academic courses: GKT3133 Design, Culture and Society (Design Technology), GKS3123 Documentary Film & Video (Cinematography), and GKV3343 Visiting Artist Workshop (Fine Arts).

A total of 90 third-year students and 7 lecturers participated in this multidisciplinary initiative, working closely with the Kampung Peros community. The aim was to promote sustainable tourism and preserve Bidayuh cultural heritage through creative approaches such as digital storytelling, visual arts, and community engagement. This project supports the goals of the Sarawak Delta Geopark and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11 on sustainable communities and SDG 17 on partnerships for development.

Importance of the Project

This project is significant because it directly addresses the marginalization of rural cultural communities in tourism narratives and digital spaces. Kampung Peros, though rich in natural beauty and Bidayuh heritage, has long faced challenges in promoting itself as a destination. The village lacked access to professional promotional tools, visual media, and the technical knowledge necessary to manage a sustained tourism campaign. Without intervention, the community risked being left out of the Sarawak Delta Geopark's growing ecotourism economy.

By involving university students and faculty from multiple creative disciplines, this SULAM initiative empowered the Kampung Peros community to take ownership of their cultural narrative and present it to a broader audience. The project not only bridged the digital divide but also preserved local heritage through murals and films, giving residents new economic opportunities and renewed cultural pride. It demonstrates how higher education institutions can collaborate meaningfully with underserved communities to promote inclusive, sustainable development.

Project Description

The SULAM project was a collaborative arts and digital media initiative co-developed by UNIMAS students (from Design Technology, Fine Arts, and Cinematography) and the Kampung Peros community. The project aimed to elevate Kampung Peros as a sustainable tourism destination through visual storytelling and creative placemaking. Key components of the project included:

1. **Digital Content Creation**: Design Technology students worked with residents to build a dedicated Facebook page and other digital assets that highlight tourist attractions like Bung Podad, local cuisine, and cultural crafts.
2. **Mural Design and Painting**: Fine Arts students collaborated with the local youth group (Persatuan Belia Kampung Peros) to create murals reflecting the village's identity, food culture, and traditions. The murals served as both a visual attraction and a symbol of cultural affirmation.
3. **Documentary Filmmaking**: Cinematography students produced two short documentaries based on interviews and footage collected during immersive stays in the village. These films documented traditional practices, daily life, and the natural environment, and were later screened for the community.
4. **Workshops and Skills Transfer**: Villagers participated in hands-on videography and smartphone content creation workshops, empowering them with the skills to maintain their digital presence independently after the project's conclusion.

The initiative culminated in a closing exhibition and community screening, solidifying shared ownership of the outcomes and ensuring the sustainability of project benefits.

Impact of the Project

The SULAM project yielded significant positive impacts on the village. Visibility and tourism improved: the new Facebook page and videos attracted attention beyond Bau district, and local leaders report that "more visitors are coming" since the interventions. Community members now point tourists to the murals and trails themselves. This likely translates to economic opportunities for residents (e.g. through homestays, guide services, or food sales at local eateries). Importantly, villagers gained digital skills: participants across age groups learned to shoot videos and manage social media, increasing their capacity to sustain tourism marketing independently. The project also boosted community pride and cohesion. Collective activities like the gotong-royong mural event reinforced social bonds, with one organizer noting it was *"more than a mural-painting activity – it was an exchange of ideas between students, artists and the community."*. The content itself affirms local identity: murals depicting a native chef and traditional motifs made heritage highly visible. Community leaders expressed optimism about Kampung Peros's future and eagerness to continue partnerships: *"we are seeing real changes in our village…we hope to continue collaborating with UNIMAS and other partners*," said the village coordinator.

Commercial Value

This initiative strongly complements the Sarawak Delta Geopark's objectives of sustainable tourism and community stewardship. The Geopark framework emphasizes collaboration among government, local communities and NGOs to manage natural and cultural sites and promote sustainable tourism. Kampung Peros's project mirrored this model on a village scale. For example, local people took the lead in tourism promotion and site interpretation (e.g. updating online trail information), while academia provided technical support. As the Geopark's development plan notes, community management of geosites (such as Wind and Fairy Caves in Bau) and cultural attractions is a core strategy. By empowering locals in Kampung Peros, the project adds to this community-driven approach.

The work also advances specific SDG targets. SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) includes target 11.4 on protecting cultural heritage. The Kampung Peros initiative fulfills this by actively preserving Bidayuh traditions through art and media. SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals) is exemplified by the collaboration among UNIMAS, villagers, and international artists. In line with SDG 17's spirit that "*greater cooperation between public, private and third sector organisations… to implement sustainable development*" is essential. this project brought together academia, NGOs (e.g. Borneo Laboratory), and local stakeholders. Such cross-sector teamwork accelerates community development and creates synergies in skills and resources. Overall, the Kampung Peros program is a practical embodiment of leveraging SDG-driven partnerships to achieve inclusive, culture-sensitive tourism development in a geopark setting.

Future Recommendations

To ensure long-term sustainability and scalability, several steps are recommended. First, **continued** training and handover is key: UNIMAS should work with village leaders to establish ongoing content creation (e.g. train-the-trainer programs, and routine digital marketing duties for youth groups). Second, expand the model to neighbouring villages in the Geopark. Other communities in Padawan or Bau with rich heritage could benefit from similar workshops and mural projects, potentially creating a network of culturally branded destinations. Third, strengthen institutional support by linking local initiatives to regional tourism boards and geopark management. For instance, Kampung Peros content could be featured in Sarawak Delta Geopark promotions, and joint events (festivals, trail fairs) could raise broader awareness. Fourth, monitor outcomes by collecting data on visitor numbers and economic impact to attract further funding. Finally, maintain cultural exchange partnerships (with groups like Borneo Lab or foreign arts programs) to keep the creative energy strong. By embedding these activities into village plans and Geopark strategies, Kampung Peros can continue to grow as a sustainable tourism example and role model for community empowerment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the SULAM initiative in Kampung Peros demonstrates how creative collaboration can transform a rural village. By integrating digital media training, visual arts, and community engagement, the project addressed local challenges (limited online outreach and cultural vulnerability) and generated tangible benefits. Villagers emerged with new skills and pride in their heritage, visitorship increased, and Kampung Peros's cultural narratives are now preserved and shared. This model of

community-empowered tourism aligns with both Sarawak Delta Geopark objectives and global SDGs (especially 11 and 17) through its emphasis on local stewardship and partnerships. The Kampung Peros case offers a blueprint for scaling up sustainable tourism development in other Sarawak communities, ensuring that economic growth goes hand-in-hand with cultural preservation and social empowerment.

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EMPOWERING RESILIENCE: COMMUNITY-AGENCY COLLABORATION TO MITIGATE TRADE DISTRUPTIONS IN LOCAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SUPPLY CHAIN IN JELI

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Highlight: The SULAM project connects local fruit and vegetable growers, suppliers and agencies in Jeli to collaboratively tackle challenges in the supply chain caused by trade disruptions. Through collaborative problem-solving, the project strengthens the resilience of local fruits and vegetables producers by improving logistics, market access, and supply chain management. By fostering knowledge sharing, capacity building, and innovative solutions, this initiative helps ensure a stable, high-quality fruits and vegetables for consumers while empowering communities to adapt changing market conditions and external shocks. Ultimately, the project enhances food security, supports local economies, and provides students with valuable experiential learning in real-world agricultural issues. Based on the findings, this project comes out with the recommendation to community members to improve the efficiency of handling the agricultural market product especially for fruits and vegetables. The project also emphasised the management practices that can be applied during the handling of fresh agricultural products to overcome the unstable stock and supply chain in Jeli, Kelantan to ensure the long-term survival. The initiative is to improve the shelf life of the stock of local fruits and vegetables through the best management practices and postharvest storage on the premises. Strengthening the infrastructure of storage facilities, upgrading the local farm facilities to improve farmers' production and finally fostering collaborations between farmers, local government, agricultural agencies and research institutions are the best methods to solve fruit and vegetable issues.

Keywords: Supply chain, local fruits and vegetables, food security, food system, empowering communities

Introduction

The local fruit and vegetable supply chain in Jeli, Kelantan is crucial for food security, nutrition, and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers but faces significant challenges such as supply disruptions, inefficient distribution, poor post-harvest handling, and trade barriers that affect product quality and market access. Dominated by multiple intermediaries and lacking modern marketing practices like grading, packaging, and traceability, the conventional supply chain limits farmers' profitability and competitiveness, especially as modern retailers demand consistent quality. Small-scale producers struggle to meet these standards, resulting in high post-harvest losses and price volatility. The SULAM project, "Empowering Resilience: Community-Agency Collaboration to Mitigate Trade Disruptions in Local Fruits and Vegetables Supply Chain," aims to strengthen supply chain resilience and efficiency

by fostering collaboration among farmers, traders, and government agencies to identify bottlenecks, promote sustainable practices, and improve market access. This initiative supports Malaysia's goals to modernise horticulture, enhance food safety, and empower smallholders, ensuring long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the sector for the benefit of producers, consumers, and the national economy.

Background

In Malaysia, the supply chain of fruits and vegetables is essential to maintain national food security, enhance nutrition and support smallholder farmers' financial stability. This is especially true in areas where horticulture production plays a major role in rural livelihoods, such as Jeli, Kelantan (Madhaved et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the industry has a lot of issues that make it less resilient and sustainable. In recent years, a decline in crop yields and quality has been seen due to environmental variables as soil degradation, climate change and changing rainfall patterns (Lee & Baharuddin, 2018). In addition to environmental pressures, structural and institutional barriers persist. These include a reduction in government assistance for smallholder farmers, rising input and production costs and a lack of infrastructure for post-harvest processing, transportation and cold storage.

Ineffective distribution networks, inadequate post-harvest handling procedures, and regular trade disruptions further restrict the supply chain and compromise the quality, accessibility, and marketability of regional goods. Additionally, traditional supply chains are still very dispersed and frequently controlled by a number of middlemen, including wholesalers, retailers, and collectors. In conjunction with raising marketing expenses, this arrangement reduces primary producers' profit margins (Golam et al., 2018). Local fruits and vegetables were less competitive due to the limited use of contemporary marketing techniques like grading, packaging, traceability, and contract farming, particularly considering the growing demand from supermarkets and hypermarkets that demand a steady supply and quality standards.

Studies have shown that the current fruit and vegetable supply chain in Malaysia remains largely conventional, with limited adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and minimal integration of small farmers into formal marketing contracts. This situation results in high post-harvest losses, price volatility, and challenges in meeting consumer expectations for quality and safety. The emergence of modern retail formats has further marginalised small-scale producers, who struggle to meet stringent procurement standards, thereby limiting their market opportunities.

In response to these challenges, the SULAM project titled "Empowering Resilience: Community-Agency Collaboration to Mitigate Trade Disruptions in Local Fruits and Vegetables Supply Chain" seeks to strengthen the resilience and efficiency of the local supply chain through active collaboration between community stakeholders and government agencies. By engaging farmers, traders, and regulatory bodies, the project aims to identify critical bottlenecks and trade disruptions, promote sustainable post-harvest management practices, and develop practical solutions to improve market access and supply chain coordination.

This initiative aligns with Malaysia's broader agricultural policies aimed at modernising the horticultural sector, enhancing food safety, and supporting smallholder farmers. Through participatory approaches and capacity building, the project not only addresses immediate supply chain issues but also fosters long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the local fruit and vegetable industry, ultimately benefiting producers, consumers, and the national economy.

Moreover, the project contributes to food security by ensuring a stable supply of fresh fruits and vegetables while empowering communities to adapt to trade fluctuations and market demands. It also supports national policies focused on sustainable agriculture, rural economic development, and consumer safety (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2021). Through capacity building and participatory problem-solving, the initiative strengthens the local supply chain's competitiveness and sustainability, ultimately benefiting producers, consumers, and the broader economy. The project also tackles the vulnerabilities brought on by resource constraints and environmental change by encouraging climate-resilient farming methods and post-harvest innovations. (FAO, 2021).

Raising knowledge and providing training on food safety regulations enables producers to comply with legal obligations and build trust among consumers (World Bank, 2019). Better access to technology and financial resources allows smallholders to invest in solutions that increase productivity. These efforts align with Malaysia's National Agro Food Policy 2021–2030, which emphasises efficient, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural development (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2021).

Additionally, integrating smallholder farmers into modern value chains through inclusive practices supports rural development and poverty reduction (IFAD, 2020).

Importance of SULAM Project

Strengthening Malaysia's fruit and vegetable supply chain is crucial for the country's food security, nutrition, and rural livelihoods. Numerous issues confront the industry, such as post-harvest losses, climate fluctuation, land degradation, and ineffective distribution networks controlled by middlemen. When modern marketing techniques like grading, packaging, and traceability are not widely used, local products become less competitive, particularly when it comes to satisfying the demands of supermarkets and hypermarkets. Food waste and shorter shelf life are also caused by inadequate cold chain infrastructure and storage. Limited access to technology, financial services and market information is another issue facing smallholder farmers. This project's targeted initiatives will raise farmer incomes, increase supply chain efficiency, and guarantee a more robust and sustainable food system for Malaysia.

By fostering collaboration between community stakeholders and government agencies, the project aims to enhance supply chain resilience, improve post-harvest management, and streamline market access. This approach aligns with government efforts to modernise the horticultural sector, reduce food waste, and support smallholder farmers. The project's interventions can lead to improved product quality, extended shelf life, diversified market opportunities, and increased incomes for rural producers.

The project will encourage fostering cooperation between government agencies and agricultural extension services, as well as community stakeholders such as farmers, cooperatives, traders, and local entrepreneurs to improve the overall resilience of the fruit and vegetable supply chain. This includes building stronger linkages among players, facilitating knowledge exchange and promoting coordinated decision making to tackle the challenges. The focus is on improving post-harvest management through the introduction of better handling practices, investment in cold storage and transportation infrastructure, and training on proper grading, sorting, and packaging techniques to preserve freshness and reduce losses.

The main problems in fruits and vegetables marketing for retailers are the challenge of unstable stock. This issue is highlighted by FAMA and comes with a solution to overcome the stock problems. FAMA operates its own business and has 40 branches across Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak. The organisation consolidates stock and sells it to sellers who are willing to purchase at the prices and quantities set by FAMA. By doing so, FAMA helps stabilise stock levels while catering to the specific needs of vegetable sellers.

According to the input from the agency, the problems of enhancing the quality of vegetables local sellers produce can be improved by the program called FAMA Standard in Malaysia or also known as Malaysia Standard (MS). The labelling on the agricultural products is based on grading. By applying the grading method, it encourages farmers to sell to buyers and us with a good quality outcome. When it comes to quality products, it will sometimes be high in terms of price, but it will not be that pricey. So, by doing this can ensure the quality of the vegetables.

In addition, vegetable sellers often face the challenge of food wastage due to unsold stock. To address this issue, FAMA operates a processing facility known as '*Pusat Pemproses Buah-Buahan dan Makanan*" FAMA, which helps reduce food waste. For instance, during the Covid-19 pandemic and the PKP period, there was a surplus of unsold durians. These excess durians were sent to FAMA's processing centre, where they were transformed into downstream products such as "*tempoyak*" and other durian-based goods. Similarly, if there is an excess of vegetables, they are also sent to the processing facility. FAMA not only offers fresh products but also supports entrepreneurs by creating value-added downstream products in various ways.

Description of SULAM Project

This project, "Empowering Resilience: Community-Agency Collaboration to Mitigate Trade Disruptions in the Local Fruits and Vegetables Supply Chain in Jeli," was carried out as part of the Food Security initiative. Through cooperation and community involvement, the project aims to understand and

strengthen the local supply chain's resilience. A qualitative, field-based approach was used to look into the dynamics and problems in Jeli, Kelantan's fruit and vegetable supply system. Site visits were conducted at nearby stalls to observe post-harvest processing techniques, supply trends and current market practices. In order to record local vendors' experiences, difficulties, and coping mechanisms in the face of trade disruptions, these visits were supplemented by unofficial and semi-structured interviews.

The project team also consulted with the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) Kelantan to provide an institutional viewpoint. Interviews with FAMA officers provided insights into the broader policy environment, government interventions, and infrastructure limitations impacting the fruits and vegetables supply chain in the region. Their suggestions were helpful in identifying the structural inefficiencies, such as holes in the cold chain, obstacles to market access, and problems with producer-distributor coordination. In order to improve supply chain resilience, the initiative helped find practical solutions through fostering communication between government organisations and community groups. It underlined how crucial cooperation is to maintain the local food system's sustainability, efficiency and continuity especially in the face of trade-related disruptions.

These SULAM project focuses on enhancing the stability and efficiency of Malaysia's local fruit and vegetable supply chain. Recognising the challenges posed by supply chain disruptions, inefficient distribution networks, post-harvest losses, and trade barriers, the project brings together local farmers, community members, and government agencies to collaboratively identify and address these issues. The initiative employs participatory approaches to map supply chain bottlenecks, improve post-harvest handling, and promote sustainable agricultural and marketing practices. It emphasises strengthening communication and coordination among stakeholders to ensure better market access, product quality, and compliance with food safety standards. Capacity building and knowledge transfer are integral components, empowering smallholder farmers with skills in modern farming techniques, packaging, grading, and traceability systems.

By fostering community-agency partnerships, the project aims to build resilience against trade disruptions and market fluctuations, ultimately supporting the livelihoods of local producers and enhancing the availability of fresh, high-quality fruits and vegetables for consumers. This project also provides students with valuable experiential learning opportunities, bridging academic knowledge with real-world community challenges, and contributes to Malaysia's broader goals of sustainable agriculture, food security, and rural development.

Impact and Advantages for the Community

The SULAM project significantly benefits the community by addressing real local challenges through collaborative efforts between students, academic institutions, and community members. It fosters social cohesion and empowerment by actively involving community stakeholders in problem-solving and development initiatives, which leads to improved local services, environmental conditions, and overall quality of life. The project promotes sustainable development and capacity building, equipping community members with new skills and knowledge that enhance their economic opportunities and resilience against social and economic challenges.

Promoting contract farming agreements between farmers and consumers, including wholesalers, supermarkets, and exporters, is crucial to guaranteeing a steady supply of vegetables and stabilising market prices. These agreements would reduce supply and revenue uncertainties by precisely defining the expected quantity, quality, pricing, and delivery timetables. Such arrangements can also protect farmers from price fluctuations while assuring buyers of steady access to produce. Government agencies like FAMA or the Department of Agriculture can facilitate these contracts by acting as mediators or providing legal and technical support to ensure fair terms for all parties involved. Additionally, by integrating academic learning with community service, the project strengthens community bonds and encourages a shared sense of responsibility, fostering long-term social harmony and inclusive growth. Overall, the initiative not only improves immediate community needs but also builds a foundation for sustainable development and self-reliance.

Financial difficulties prevent many Malaysian farmers from making large investments in infrastructure and agricultural inputs. Without adequate funding, they find it difficult to embrace contemporary technologies, boost output, or successfully manage farming risks. Agrobank offers

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financial solutions by providing loans tailored to the needs of the agricultural sector. These loans can be used as startup capital or for expanding existing farming operations. One major advantage is Agrobank's flexible repayment schemes, which align with farmers' seasonal income cycles.

Through these community programs, sellers have gained valuable knowledge via agricultural extension services and knowledge transfer initiatives focused on minimising post-harvest losses. Students have shared practical techniques to extend the shelf life of fresh produce. For example, removing bruised fruits from storage boxes helps prevent cross-contamination among products. Additionally, maintaining moisture levels in leafy vegetables preserves their humidity and freshness.

Impact and Advantages of Learning Experience / Education

The SULAM project "Empowering Resilience: Community-Agency Collaboration to Mitigate Trade Disruptions in Local Fruit and Vegetables Supply Chain" holds significant commercial value by enhancing the marketability and profitability of local produce. By improving supply chain efficiency, post-harvest handling, and product quality through community and agency collaboration, the project helps local farmers meet the quality standards demanded by modern retailers such as supermarkets and hypermarkets. This opens up access to higher-value markets and increases consumer confidence in locally sourced fruits and vegetables. Additionally, the promotion of grading, packaging, and traceability systems adds value to the products, enabling better price negotiation and reducing losses due to spoilage. Strengthening market access and supply chain resilience also helps stabilise prices and income for smallholder farmers, contributing to more sustainable livelihoods. These improvements collectively enhance the competitiveness of local produce, offering commercial opportunities for farmers and traders while supporting national goals of food security and economic development.

Future Recommendations

Expand collaboration by actively engaging more universities, government agencies, industry players, and community organisations via the SULAM-Net platform. This will enhance coordination, resource sharing, and create larger, more impactful projects that address diverse community needs. More public and private universities can be added to the network by aggressively fostering collaboration and participation, which will improve academic variety and student involvement. This provides students with meaningful hands-on learning experiences while delivering innovative, research-driven solutions to community challenges. The involvement of government agencies, such as ministries, local authorities and development departments to ensure that SULAM projects are aligned with national and regional priorities. These government agencies can provide logistical assistance, policy recommendations and access to infrastructure and critical public data.

Utilise the SULAM Portal and other digital tools to increase community participation, facilitate issue reporting, and promote innovative solutions through online challenges such as the e-SULAM Innovate competition. This approach can broaden reach and encourage creativity among students and communities. The SULAM Portal and other digital platforms are essential instruments for communication, participation, and innovation that may be used to double the impact and accessibility of community-based activities. The SULAM Portal can serve as a centralised hub for students, academic staff, community members, and partner organisations to access information, participate in projects, and contribute ideas. User-friendly features such as online registration, interactive forums, project dashboards and feedback mechanisms on the platform can help to increase participation and make it easier for communities to report local issues, share concerns and request support in real time.

Additionally, the project could include educational programs for the community to raise awareness of the importance of supporting the local fruits and vegetables supply chain and the impact of the disruption of the local fruits and vegetables trade. Implement awareness programs by developing more extensive training workshops, leadership seminars, and community service initiatives that focus on sustainable practices, technology adoption, and social entrepreneurship. Incorporate digital learning modules to reach wider audiences and improve skills relevant to community development. Other than that, increasing visibility and engagement by actively using social media platforms to raise awareness, sharing success stories and attracting participation from youth will help build a strong community identity and encourage continuous involvement.

Figure 1: The community project fostered teamwork and communication skills, enhancing adaptability and problem-solving abilities.

Figure 2: Problem issues found during the community project on the handling of fresh vegetable products that meet consumer demand.

Figure 3: A leaflet distributed to the community based on the findings from the project.

Conclusion

The SULAM project, "Empowering Resilience: Community-Agency Collaboration to Mitigate Trade Disruptions in Local Fruit and Vegetables Supply Chain," successfully addresses critical challenges faced by local producers by fostering strong partnerships between communities and government

agencies. Through collaborative efforts, the project enhances supply chain resilience, improves product quality, and expands market access, thereby supporting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and contributing to national food security. Additionally, the initiative provides valuable experiential learning opportunities for students, bridging academic knowledge with practical community engagement. Moving forward, sustained collaboration, capacity building, and innovation will be essential to further strengthen the local fruit and vegetable supply chain, ensuring its sustainability, competitiveness, and positive impact on both communities and the broader Malaysian economy.

Acknowledgement

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FROM WASTE TO WORTH: STUDENT-COMMUNITY RECYCLING COLLABORATION THROUGH SULAM AT MASJID AL-KARAMAH

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Highlight: This paper presents a volunteer-driven recycling workshop and community clean-up activity (gotong-royong) conducted at Masjid Al–Karamah, Mukim Baung Besar, aimed at enhancing environmental awareness and fostering cooperation within the local community. Through active participation, approximately 30 volunteers collaborated to clean and beautify the mosque's surroundings, collecting around 30 bags of waste. An educational recycling workshop was also conducted, with about 20 participants learning practical methods for waste reduction and the importance of sustainable practices. The initiative successfully improved the cleanliness and sustainability of the mosque's environment while strengthening social bonds and promoting intergenerational learning. By integrating environmental education with community engagement, the program cultivated a shared sense of responsibility and demonstrated how grassroots initiatives can drive long-term behavioural change. The outcomes highlight the potential for similar programs to be replicated in other communities aiming to promote green practices and social cohesion through collective volunteerism.

Keywords: Recycling, Community Engagement, Environmental Awareness, Gotong-Royong, Social Responsibility

Introduction

Volunteerism involves contributing free labour to support community service or nonprofit initiatives (Hay, 2025). In alignment with the goals of SULAM (Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society), which aims to integrate academic learning with meaningful community engagement, a volunteer program was carried out at Masjid Al–Karamah to promote environmental consciousness and strengthen social responsibility among students and residents. SULAM encourages students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problems, enhancing their learning experience while contributing positively to society.

This program addressed the urgent need for environmental awareness and sustainable practices. The recycling performance of Malaysians is still low, standing at around 33.17% in 2022 (Zainal, 2023). Community-level action remains essential to tackling this issue. At Masjid Al–Karamah, the initiative combined a gotong-royong (community clean-up) session with an educational recycling workshop, engaging participants in practical environmental stewardship. Approximately 30 volunteers contributed their efforts, collecting around 30 bags of waste, while 20 individuals joined the recycling workshop to learn about proper waste segregation and sustainable habits.

The program fostered cooperation, mutual respect, and inclusivity across age groups and backgrounds. By blending physical activity with knowledge sharing, the initiative not only improved environmental awareness and local cleanliness but also strengthened social cohesion. More than a one-off event, this project aligned with SULAM's educational goals by promoting long-term behavioural change and intergenerational learning. Ultimately, it catalyzed continued community development, sustainable living, and stronger ties between the mosque and the surrounding population.

Background of the community/SULAM project

Masjid Al-Karamah serves as a central hub for social, educational, and religious activities within the neighbourhood. However, challenges related to environmental cleanliness and limited awareness about the importance of recycling and environmental preservation persist in the surrounding community. The local population is diverse, encompassing various age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds, making it an ideal setting for inclusive community engagement initiatives.

Recognizing these needs, a volunteer group initiated a SULAM project that combined environmental education with physical activities to promote environmental responsibility and strengthen community bonds. The initiative focused primarily on two activities: a recycling workshop and a gotong-royong (community clean-up) event around the mosque. These were strategically chosen to raise awareness of sustainable environmental practices while addressing the community's cleanliness concerns directly. The project's main objectives were to create a healthier, cleaner environment and encourage active community participation in environmental preservation.

The importance of the community/SULAM project

The SULAM project plays a pivotal role in bridging higher education institutions and local communities, supporting the goals of the *gotong-royong* initiative at Masjid Al-Karamah, Kelantan. Beyond serving as a platform for student engagement, it acts as a catalyst for positive social and environmental change within the mosque's community. One of the core aims is to foster a spirit of cooperation and solidarity between university students and the local population by organizing collaborative activities at the mosque. This includes goal-setting, team-building exercises, resource sharing, and celebrating collective achievements, which enhance social cohesion (Choi & Kim, 2021).

Moreover, the project emphasizes raising environmental awareness. Education, practical involvement, and community participation are key strategies to instil knowledge about recycling and conservation (Nguyen et al., 2023). The mosque's empowerment is also a significant outcome, transforming it into a centre for nurturing an active and environmentally conscious community (Abdul Rahman et al., 2022).
Lastly, the initiative targets waste reduction through recycling activities, which are vital for minimizing landfill use and maintaining environmental cleanliness (Santos et al., 2020). This involves promoting waste reduction, reuse, and appropriate material sorting among community members.

Description of the community/SULAM project:

This project was implemented at Masjid Al-Karamah through a *gotong-royong* collaboration between Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students and local residents. The project aimed to improve mosque cleanliness and beautification, promote recycling awareness and environmental responsibility, and empower students as volunteer leaders. It also sought to strengthen bonds between students and the community while providing students with practical learning experiences linking theory to real-world applications.

Key activities included cleaning and beautifying the mosque surroundings, such as sweeping, vacuuming, and wiping surfaces to ensure a hygienic and welcoming environment for worshippers and visitors. The second core activity was a recycling awareness campaign, which provided opportunities to educate the local community about recycling benefits, proper waste segregation, and overall waste reduction importance (Lee et al., 2024).

Table 1: Program's tentative

Time	Activity	Details
8.00 – 8.30 am	Arrival	10 students and 20 community gather at the mosque
8.30 – 9.00 am	Task briefing	Briefing on the objective and safety(divided into teams)
9.00 –10.30 am	Gotong-royong (Mosque Clean-Up)	About 30 bags of waste were collected around the mosque
10.30 -10.45 am	Break and light refreshments	Light snacks are provided by the committee and students
10.45 -11.30 am	Recycling workshop (theory & activities)	Short awareness talk, Live demonstration
11.30 – 12.00 pm	Closing session & group photo (Dismissal)	Final remarks, sharing session by students, and a photo with the community

Expected outcomes included a cleaner, more inviting mosque environment, enhanced recycling awareness, and stronger community-university relations. Additionally, students developed valuable soft skills, including leadership, communication, and teamwork. Overall, the SULAM initiative successfully promoted student learning through active community engagement and contributed to societal well-being (Rahman & Azmi, 2023).

The project has been a meaningful experience for both students and the local community, improving relationships through service-learning activities like recycling drives and mosque environment beautification.

Community Feedback

The feedback from the local community has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the meaningful impact of the gotong-royong and recycling workshop at Masjid Al-Karamah. Many residents expressed their appreciation for the cleaner mosque environment and the increased awareness of recycling practices. These testimonials reflect the program's success in fostering a stronger sense of community and environmental responsibility among participants.

For more comments and testimonials from the villagers, please refer to the following Facebook link: https://www.facebook.com/share/1CD4RsN59j/

The Impact or Advantages of the Project on the Community and the Learning Experience / Education:

The Imarah Mahabbah project at Masjid Al-Kareem has brought substantial benefits to both the local community and the participating students. One of the most immediate and visible impacts on the community is the improved cleanliness and overall ambiance of the mosque. Activities such as sweeping, mopping, cleaning restrooms, and maintaining the mosque grounds created a more comfortable and welcoming environment for worshippers. These efforts also reflect core Islamic values, particularly the emphasis on hygiene and respect for places of worship. Moreover, the spirit of cooperation fostered through the gotong-royong activities strengthened the relationship between students and the community, promoting harmony and encouraging sustained engagement.

For students, this initiative provided a valuable educational experience that extended beyond traditional classroom learning. By actively participating, students developed essential soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communication skills vital for their personal and professional growth. This aligns closely with the objectives of SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society), which aims to nurture holistic education by integrating academic learning with community involvement. Additionally, the project enhanced students' sense of social responsibility and volunteerism through direct engagement with real-world challenges.

Figure 1: Photo with community

The inclusion of a recycling workshop further enriched the project by educating both children and community members on the importance of environmental sustainability. This educational component broadened the project's impact and relevance in today's context of environmental awareness. The workshop also provided students opportunities to collaborate with mosque officials and local residents, thereby improving their social and interpersonal skills.

In summary, the Imarah Mahabbah project successfully integrated religious appreciation, community service, and educational development, creating a meaningful and lasting experience for all participants involved.

Future recommendations to expand the community/SULAM project in the future:

To expand the SULAM project effectively, one key recommendation is to establish structured partnerships with other local mosques and community centres. By replicating the successful model implemented at Masjid Al-Karamah, the initiative can extend its reach and impact across a broader geographical area. Such partnerships would facilitate the sharing of resources, volunteers, and best practices, ensuring consistent quality and deeper community integration. Additionally, creating a central coordination body comprising university representatives and community leaders would help align new project sites with the core values of cleanliness, cooperation, and Islamic principles.

Introducing a formal mentorship program would further enhance the educational benefits for students. Senior participants or program alumni could serve as mentors for new volunteers, providing guidance, support, and leadership training. This would help sustain institutional knowledge within the project while fostering a sense of ownership and continuity among participants. Mentorship could also be extended to community members, particularly youths, promoting mutual learning and long-term engagement across generations.

To ensure the sustainability and continuous improvement of the project, it is vital to implement a feedback and evaluation mechanism. Tools such as surveys, interviews, and community forums can assess the effectiveness of each initiative and provide insights for refinement. Engaging all stakeholders—including students, mosque officials, and local residents—in this evaluative process ensures future projects remain responsive to evolving community needs. Periodic reports based on feedback can maintain transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, broadening the project to incorporate intercultural and interfaith components can promote inclusivity and social cohesion. Organizing joint service activities involving members of diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds can nurture mutual understanding and tolerance. Focusing on shared values such as community service, cleanliness, and education, these events would contribute to building a more united and resilient society. Such experiences also equip students with crucial cross-cultural communication skills, increasingly valuable in Malaysia's multicultural context.

Finally, institutionalizing the SULAM project as a credited component of the university curriculum would secure its longevity and commitment from all stakeholders. Formal integration of service-learning projects like gotong royong into academic programs signals the university's dedication to holistic education and community engagement. This institutional support can streamline resource

allocation, enhance coordination, and encourage greater student participation, ensuring the project's sustained growth and relevance.

Conclusion

The volunteer program at Masjid Al–Karamah successfully achieved its goals of raising environmental awareness and strengthening community bonds. Through the combination of a *gotong-royong* clean-up and an interactive recycling workshop, participants contributed to improving the mosque's environment while gaining valuable knowledge on sustainable practices and environmental responsibility.

What set this program apart from typical clean-up efforts was its educational component and inclusive approach. Conducted under the SULAM framework, it integrated academic learning with community service through engaging activities such as talks, demonstrations, quizzes, and upcycling. The collaboration between students and community members fostered intergenerational learning and meaningful social interaction, serving as a model for future initiatives that aim to promote environmental consciousness and collective action.

Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of our volunteer program at Masjid Al-Karamah. Notably, we appreciate the mosque committee's support that facilitated our activities on the premises. Our gratitude also goes to the community members and volunteers who were actively involved in the *gotong-royong* and recycling workshop, their dedication being a crucial factor in the program's success. We are also thankful for the guidance and motivation from our lecturers and the university, whose ongoing support made this project feasible.

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FROM HEARTS TO HANDS: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY AND STUDENT VALUES THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM PROGRAM

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Highlight: The Semarak Kasih: Riang Ria Bersama program is a service-learning initiative developed under the SULAM framework to support the emotional and social well-being of orphaned children, while simultaneously cultivating civic responsibility and interpersonal skills among university students. Recognizing that children in institutional care often face emotional deprivation and limited social engagement, the program was designed to offer a structured day of joyful, meaningful interaction, grounded in values such as compassion, collaboration, and shared responsibility. The one-day program involved 11 university students and 24 orphaned children in a series of activities including gotong-royong (communal clean-up), interactive games and a communal meal. The experiential format allowed students to apply academic knowledge in real-life contexts while providing a safe and engaging environment for children to develop positive social behaviours. Findings from post-program feedback (N=23) indicate overwhelmingly positive responses. All participants reported learning something new and expressed strong interest in future participation. Although their prior exposure to volunteerism was moderate, participants demonstrated significant gains in teamwork skills, sense of belonging and confidence to engage in social settings. In conclusion, the program effectively achieved its goals of enhancing knowledge, fostering emotional intelligence, and strengthening social bonds. It demonstrates the potential of service-learning to generate meaningful community impact and student growth. To optimize outcomes, future programs should consider repeated or semester-long engagement to foster sustainable social development.

Keywords: Social bonding, Teamwork, Share Happiness, Unity, Emotional Well-being, Positive Values.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of community-based learning approaches in higher education that foster both academic achievement and social responsibility. The Service-Learning Malaysia University for Society (SULAM) initiative, introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, serves as a transformative educational framework that emphasizes learning through meaningful service to the community (MOHE, 2019). This approach is particularly valuable in addressing social and emotional needs of underserved populations, such as children living in orphanages, who often face emotional distress, social isolation, and a lack of consistent support systems (Yusof & Ishak, 2022).

Children in institutional care settings are often deprived of stable emotional relationships and opportunities for social development, which are critical for their mental health and future well-being

(Nordin et al., 2021). As such, community engagement programs that promote interpersonal interaction, joyful experiences, and positive reinforcement are essential. Semarak Kasih: Riang Ria Bersama is a response to this need, offering a one-day event focused on emotional and social enrichment through volunteer-led activities. Activities such as gotong-royong, educational games, and communal dining are not only culturally rooted but also psychologically enriching, as they foster belonging, cooperation, and positive emotions (Abdullah et al., 2021).

At the same time, this program supports university students in applying theoretical knowledge in real-life contexts, enhancing their soft skills and emotional intelligence. Studies show that students involved in service-learning demonstrate increased empathy, leadership qualities, and a deeper understanding of societal issues (Shaharuddin et al., 2020; Mohd Yusof et al., 2022). As Malaysia moves toward producing holistic and compassionate graduates, integrating service-learning in higher education through initiatives like SULAM becomes increasingly crucial. Therefore, the Semarak Kasih program not only meets the immediate emotional and social needs of orphaned children but also aligns with the national educational agenda of developing socially responsible, employable, and ethical graduates through Volunteerism course.

Description of SULAM Project

This study adopted a qualitative-descriptive design complemented by quantitative feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Conducted under the Service-Learning Malaysia University for Society (SULAM) framework, the project was implemented as part of the Volunteerism course at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. A total of 11 undergraduate students participated in the program as part of their course assessment. In addition, 24 children from a selected orphanage in Kelantan were involved as the primary community beneficiaries. Ethical considerations were observed, and consent was obtained through coordination with the orphanage management.

The program was carried out over a single day and included a series of structured activities aimed at promoting emotional well-being, social bonding, and values such as teamwork, empathy, and environmental responsibility. Activities began with a registration and light breakfast session, followed by an aerobic exercise to energize participants. A interactive games session was held to encourage interaction and teamwork through a series of collaborative games. This was followed by a *gotong-royong* (communal clean-up) activity to promote a sense of environmental stewardship and shared responsibility. A communal lunch allowed participants to relax, interact, and build emotional connections. The program concluded with a closing ceremony, prize giving, and a group photo session to commemorate the experience.

To assess the outcomes, a post-program self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 23 participants. The instrument measured two main areas: knowledge acquisition and interpersonal skills development. It included both Yes/No items and 5-point Likert scale statements (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) focusing on confidence, teamwork, openness to social interaction, and perceived program impact. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to analyze responses and determine the extent to which the program achieved its intended learning and social objectives.

Result and Discussion

A. Demographic Analysis
Based on demographic profile, majority of orphan are aged from 11-14 years old (50.0%) followed by 7-10 years old (34.6%) and 15-18 years old (15.4%).

B. Knowledge and interpersonal skills
The results from Table 1 indicate a strong positive perception among participants regarding the effectiveness of the program in enhancing both knowledge and interpersonal skills. Participants unanimously agreed that the program helped them learn something new and expressed strong interest in participating again in the future, as reflected by the mean score of 1.00 (on a Yes response). The relatively moderate mean of 1.48 for prior knowledge of volunteer activities suggests that most participants had limited exposure or understanding before the program.

Table 1: Knowledge and interpersonal skills of respondents (N=23)

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Did the activities in the program help you learn something new?	1.00	0.01
Would you like to join this program again in the future?	1.00	0.01
Before joining this program, how much did you know about volunteer activities?	1.48	0.51
Did you gain any new knowledge or skills through this program?	4.65	0.49
I feel more confident to participate in volunteer activities after joining this program.	4.65	0.49
This program helped me develop teamwork skills.	4.96	0.21
After participating in this program, are you more open to socializing with others?	4.70	0.47
Did the activities in this program encourage cooperation and a sense of belonging?	4.83	0.39

Substantial gains in learning and confidence were evident, with high mean scores for acquiring new knowledge or skills (4.65) and increased confidence in volunteering (4.65). These findings support the program's success in fostering skill development. The highest mean score was observed in the item related to teamwork skills (4.96), emphasizing that the program effectively promoted collaborative experiences among participants. This is further reinforced by the high score for openness to social interaction (4.70) and feelings of cooperation and belonging (4.83), suggesting the program nurtured a supportive and inclusive environment.

However, the overall impact on social development scored comparatively lower (2.00), indicating a potential disconnect between immediate interpersonal experiences and long-term perceptions of social growth. This may reflect participants' need for more sustained engagement or more diverse social interaction contexts to perceive broader social development.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that the program successfully achieved its goals of improving knowledge and interpersonal skills, particularly in teamwork, confidence, and social interaction. Nonetheless, there is room for enhancement in reinforcing long-term social development impacts through follow-up activities or extended program durations.

Impact/Advantage of the SULAM Project

From the students' perspective, the significantly enhanced their learning experience beyond classroom-based instruction. As part of the SULAM initiative, the project served as a platform for integrating academic content with meaningful community service, encouraging reflective thinking, civic engagement, and a heightened sense of social responsibility (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2019). Through active involvement in planning and implementing the program, students developed essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving. These competencies are highly valued in the job market and contribute to the development of holistic and ethical graduates (Shaharuddin et al., 2020; Mohd Yusof et al., 2022). Moreover, the direct interaction with underserved children cultivated empathy and reinforced students' awareness of socio-economic inequalities, inspiring them to become proactive agents of social change.

From the community's perspective, particularly that of orphanage children, the program created a rare and impactful opportunity for social interaction, emotional expression, and shared joy in a supportive environment. Many institutionalized children often face emotional neglect and limited recreational opportunities (Nordin et al., 2021). The activities provided through *Semarak Kasih*, such as

collaborative games, communal meals, and gotong-royong, helped foster a sense of belonging, self-worth, and emotional security. These experiences are critical for their psychological development and social integration. The presence of university students also introduced new role models and expanded the children's social networks, potentially influencing their aspirations and interpersonal skills in the long term.

In alignment with Malaysia's higher education aspirations to nurture balanced, entrepreneurial, and compassionate individuals (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2020), this program represents a mutually beneficial learning journey. It not only enriched the students' academic and personal growth but also brought tangible emotional and social benefits to a marginalized community, thus fulfilling the core mission of the SULAM framework.

Limitation and Recommendation of the Study

Despite the notable advantages of the program for both student volunteers and the orphaned children, several limitations warrant consideration. One primary challenge concerns the program's limited duration. Being conducted as a single-day intervention, the depth and continuity of its impact are particularly with respect to the children's emotional development and social integration remain constrained (Nordin et al., 2021). Empirical evidence suggests that the formation of meaningful emotional bonds and the promotion of behavioral change among vulnerable groups typically require sustained and repeated interactions. Accordingly, a one-off engagement, while beneficial in the short term, may not suffice in fostering enduring developmental outcomes (Aziz et al., 2020). In addition, a proportion of student participants may lack prior exposure to or experience in working with vulnerable populations, which may influence the quality and depth of their engagement, potentially limiting the overall effectiveness of the service-learning objectives (Shaharuddin et al., 2020).

Another notable limitation relates to resource constraints. Effective implementation of community-based programs requires adequate funding and logistical planning to support various operational components such as transportation, meals, materials, and safety provisions. In the absence of sufficient institutional or external financial support, the quality, scale, and sustainability of the program may be compromised (Mohd Yusof et al., 2022). Furthermore, engagement with institutional care settings is often governed by regulatory frameworks that can delay access approval or restrict the range of permissible activities (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2019).

To mitigate these limitations, it is recommended that the program be redesigned as a longitudinal initiative, ideally spanning an academic semester with scheduled monthly or bi-weekly engagements. Such a structure would facilitate stronger rapport between students and participants, deepen the developmental impact, and allow for progressive reflection and learning (Yusof & Ishak, 2022). Strategic collaborations with non-governmental organizations, local welfare agencies, and university student bodies could enhance program reach and resource availability. Moreover, incorporating structured pre-engagement training and post-program debriefing sessions for student volunteers would further strengthen the pedagogical value of the initiative and ensure alignment with the intended outcomes of the SULAM framework.

Conclusion

The program illustrates the transformative impact of community-based service-learning in promoting emotional well-being among underserved populations while simultaneously cultivating civic responsibility among university students. Through structured activities such as *gotong-royong*, interactive games, and communal meals, the program provided children in orphanages with opportunities for meaningful engagement, social bonding, and emotional support—elements that are often lacking in institutional care environments. These experiences contributed to fostering a sense of belonging, self-worth, and joy in a safe and supportive setting.

From the community's perspective, the presence and involvement of university students were not only refreshing but also empowering. For the children, interacting with empathetic and enthusiastic role models expanded their social networks and offered new perspectives on trust, teamwork, and interpersonal communication. The program also helped enhance the emotional climate of the orphanage by promoting positive reinforcement, shared responsibility, and collective joy.

At the same time, the initiative provided student participants with practical, hands-on learning experiences that reinforced key soft skills such as empathy, leadership, and collaboration. By applying theoretical concepts in a real-life setting, students gained a deeper understanding of social issues and developed a stronger commitment to civic engagement. These outcomes align closely with the objectives of the SULAM framework, which seeks to produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also socially conscious and community focused.

In conclusion, this program is not merely a recreational event but a meaningful educational intervention that benefits both students and community stakeholders. To enhance its long-term impact, future iterations should adopt a longitudinal approach, allowing for sustained engagement that deepens emotional bonds and delivers more profound developmental benefits for all parties involved.

Acknowledgement

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KNOWING THEIR GAME: IDENTIFYING CHILD GROOMING

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Highlight: "Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is a programme that facilitates interaction between university students and elementary school students through knowledge-sharing sessions and group activities. It aims to enhance soft skills such as communication, teamwork and leadership among university students while raising awareness about child grooming among elementary students.

Keywords: school students, knowledge-sharing sessions, soft skills, awareness, child grooming

Introduction

"Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is an initiative designed to provide interactive awareness to the students of Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan Gong Tok Nasek in Kuala Terengganu. This programme focuses on the issue of child grooming through educational forums led by specialists from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are the Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF), Malaysians Against Pornography (MAP), and Baitul Qanun, FUHA by engaging activities conducted by university students. The objective is twofold, to educate young students on the dangers of child grooming and to foster essential soft skills such as communication and leadership among university students through meaningful community engagement.

Background of the community/SULAM project

Child grooming is a hidden but deeply harmful crime that continues to affect children. In 2016, Malaysia witnessed one of its most shocking abuses when Richard Huckle, a so-called "respectable" foreigner, groomed and abused up to 200 Malaysian children for over nearly a decade (The Guardian, 2016). This case is a grim reminder that predators can operate undetected for years. Despite such incidents, child sexual cases continue to occur. According to the Royal Malaysian Police, over 1,300 child sexual abuse cases were reported in 2023, many involving grooming by someone the child knew (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024). On the other hand, in 2021, around 9% of Malaysian children reported receiving unsolicited sexual images, while another 9% have encountered disturbing sexual remarks online (ECPAT, INTERPOL & UNICEF, 2022).

With reference to the statistics, it is clear that the rise of digital platforms has made it easier for perpetrators to access children, often using anonymous pseudonyms and trust-building tactics. Many victims are groomed without realising it until it is too late. Although Malaysia's Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 (SOAC 2017) specifically targets sexual offences against children, public awareness and early detection remain low, especially among children, parents and educators, leaving many still vulnerable.

With 93% of Malaysian children using the internet, the rise in online grooming highlights the urgency for digital safety education (Erda Khursyiah Basir, 2024). Thus, empowering children aged 7 to 15 with skills to recognise online danger is essential. A UNICEF study reveals that 1 in 10 Malaysian children has experienced sexual abuse, yet many suffer in silent. This programme is designed to focus on awareness, education and early identification of grooming behaviours to help communities recognise the warning signs of grooming early on. All in all, this initiative is not only a timely effort, but also a vital step in protecting the well-being and safety of our children. Unity participation in environmental preservation.

The importance of the SULAM project

"Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is an initiative designed to provide interactive awareness and address child grooming, as it is a growing concern in Malaysia. Using role-plays and age-appropriate activities, the programme helps children identify grooming behaviours and speak up confidently. Apart from that, the programme fosters long-term community support by training teachers, students, and volunteers as child safety advocates. As 85% of children who experience abuse never report it (Darkness to Light, 2025), this initiative plays a vital role in strengthening both prevention and support systems within communities.

Description of the SULAM project

The programme "Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is a community-based awareness initiative organized by Year 2 Bachelor of Laws students from Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), in collaboration with the MCPF, MAP, and Baitul Qanun, FUHA. It is designed to educate primary school students about the dangers of child grooming and the legal protections available to them. A key component of the programme is a session led by a representative from the MCPF focusing on the basic legal understanding of child grooming. Recognising the sensitivity and complexity of the topic, MCPF delivers the content using a module tailored to the comprehension level of Year 5 and 6 students. This session is crucial in laying the foundation for children to understand personal safety and the concept of grooming. It also plays a vital role in fostering early awareness and promoting a sense of agency among young students to protect themselves from potential harm.

Another session is conducted by MAP which emphasises the importance of safe digital behavior among students. It highlights how child grooming often begins through platforms such as social media, online games, and messaging apps. This session is particularly impactful due to its interactive nature and designed as a two-way sharing session, where students are encouraged to actively participate, ask questions, and share their own online experiences. In addition, the programme includes a hands-on group activity session facilitated by the UniSZA law students and supported by Baitul Qanun. This segment includes a demonstration on safe and unsafe touches, as well as the screening of a short and informative video. These interactive and visual components are essential in reinforcing the key messages in a manner that is accessible and memorable for young children. The session also provides a safe space for students to reflect, ask questions, and internalize the importance of speaking up when they feel unsafe.

Impact of the SULAM Project

"Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is an initiative designed to make a meaningful impact on both its target groups. Through the educational forums led by specialists from NGOs, complemented by engaging activities conducted by university students, the programme achieved significant educational and developmental outcomes.

The programme aims to raise awareness of child grooming in a manner appropriate to the student's age and comprehension levels. Using games and discussion, children became more informed about the nature of grooming and personal safety. Beyond benefiting the participants themselves, the programme also fosters collaboration and strengthens community ties between NGOs and educational institutions. This, in turn, encourages schools to take a more proactive role in promoting child safety. Additionally, this programme serves as an opportunity for university students to engage in community-based learning and develop soft skills such as leadership, communication and teamwork. By being directly involved in the project, the students also will gain a deeper understanding of social issues.

Recommendation and Suggestions

"Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming" is an initiative designed to provide interactive education and raise awareness within communities, particularly children, parents and educators about the signs, dangers, and legal framework regarding child grooming in Malaysia. There are several recommendations and suggestions to ensure the success, relevance, and sustainability of this initiative. Firstly, establish early collaboration with stakeholders. It is strongly recommended that the project team forms partnerships early on with key stakeholders such as schools, child protection NGOs and legal enforcement agencies like Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) and Department of Social Welfare (DSW). Their insights will help to ensure the programme's content is accurate, impactful and capable of encouraging wider community participation.

Secondly, emphasize legal literacy and practical awareness. The programme should not only educate participants on what constitutes child grooming under laws such as Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 but also bring these concepts to life scenarios to help them identify grooming behaviours. To improve understanding, it is recommended to use interactive methods such as short dramatizations, mock interviews, and role-playing exercises to demonstrate how grooming occurs and how it can be reported or prevented. Lastly, focus on ensuring long-term sustainability. The initiatives should be designed with long-term impact in mind. One effective approach is to develop a digital toolkit or awareness module that can be shared and adapted by other universities or community groups, allowing for continued use and expansion beyond the initial programme.

Conclusion

All in all, *"Knowing Their Game: Identifying Child Grooming"* is an initiative designed to protect children in our society from the hidden dangers of grooming. By raising awareness, educating, and empowering the children with knowledge to recognise and report inappropriate behaviour, we can break the cycle of silence and vulnerability. Through efforts like this, we can create a safer environment for all children where they will grow up in formed, protected and free form exploitation.

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SERVICE IN ACTION: STRENGTHENING MIN HOUSE CAMP THROUGH COLLABORATIVE VOLUNTEERISM

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Highlight: This two-days volunteer program engaged participants in several experiential learning modules designed to foster leadership values and critical soft skills. Emphasizing problem-solving, teamwork, and communication, the activities provided participants with hands-on leadership experience in task completion. Students participated in group projects, and the structured exercises encouraged engagement, enabling them to develop independence in a nurturing environment.

Keywords: Min House Camp, Down Syndrome, volunteer, leadership

Introduction

This project was carried out as part of the University for Society – Service-Learning Malaysia (SULAM) initiative, which integrates academic learning with meaningful community engagement. Through hands-on activities that foster civic participation, personal growth, and the acquisition of practical skills, SULAM aims to empower students while addressing the needs of the local community. The program focuses on Service in Action: Strengthening Min House Camp Through Collaborative Volunteerism, which took place at Min House Camp, Kota Bharu, Kelantan, from April 17th to 18th April 2025, involving students from University Malaysia Kelantan (UMK).

Feedback from students and informal observations revealed tangible benefits in terms of self-confidence, teamwork, and idea expression. The uniqueness of the program lies in its adapted methodology at Min House Camp, featuring a sophisticated and scalable framework to promote personal growth among volunteers. This project of Service in Action: Strengthening Min House Camp Through Collaborative Volunteerism, was held in two-days program at Min House Camp in Kota Bharu. This initiative also nurtured a spirit of cooperation among participants in accomplishing tasks together. The program focused on problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and confidence-building within the supportive and welcoming environment of Min House Camp.

Led by a team of university students, this effort not only served as a valuable outreach initiative but also provided a practical platform for volunteers to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. This paper outlines the significance and impact of the program, reflects on key lessons learned, and explores its potential for replication and commercialization.

Background of community/SULAM Project

The spirit of volunteerism is a highly appreciated virtue in the life of society and sharing the meaning of mankind. The population of youth is predominantly a part of volunteers who are involved in the success of various activities, programs, and engagements for the benefit of a nation and religion. Tuan Pah Rokiah et al. (2016) theorizes that volunteering is one of the national and religious requisites in the context of national unity to combat the challenges of the times. It is a measure of human nature which lives in a person or a human collective.

As SULAM project exemplifies a transformative approach to experiential learning, where academic knowledge is applied through volunteerism to address real-world community challenges. So, this project engages the community in Min House Camp from 17th to 18th May 2025. with volunteer students to implement the real community relationship and education benefits for both. Additionally, this program allows participants to build up self-awareness, confidence level, and responsibility. Participating in volunteer work will develop beneficial experience in handling responsibilities and implementing leadership principles in real world.

Description of community/SULAM project

The community involved in this project was based at Min House Camp, an eco-tourism site located in Kubang Kerian, Kelantan. The project was carried out in two days, specifically on Saturday and Sunday. Min House Camp serves as a sustainable living area, including organic farming, compos and community-based learning into its daily activities.

What makes this site more unique, and education is it also has a house of Syndrome Down Centre of Negeri Kelantan (PDSNK), that dedicate residential and learning space for people with Down Syndrome. In addition, to creating an important environment for community learning and volunteering in the community. This creates a welcoming environment where social care and environmental education exist. This is an exciting and encouraging community that was created by the Min House Camp staff, including those who work with PSDNK. For people with Down Syndrome, they offer therapy, training in life skills and organized daily activities including crafting and gardening.

Moreover, purpose of this project is to help residents become more independent and improve their emotional health. By working within this friendly and environmentally sustainable community, our group was able to contribute to support the objectives of volunteer education, sustainable growth and preserving the environment. Our involvement not only supports the ongoing work of the staff but also creates opportunities for meaningful exchanges that encourage empathy, teamwork, and service learning among our volunteers.

Impact of community/SULAM project

The SULAM project conducted at Min House Camp (MHC) on May 17 and 18 had a significant impact not only on the local community but also on the students involved. Volunteer activities such as collecting saga seeds, organizing items in the surau, composting, labeling items in glass bottles, and other communal tasks contributed to a more organized and sustainable environment. This initiative fosters meaningful collaboration between student volunteers and the community at the MHC, integrating academic knowledge with real-world application to promote sustainable development, in line with SULAM's aim of enriching student learning through service-based experiential education.

In terms of community, the project contributed to creating awareness of environmental sustainability via sorting and packaging of saga seeds for the next Bumi Festival in Penang. The community clean-up of the surau benefited the local Muslim community by keeping the praying space clean and tidy. Labelling and signage activities assisted visitors in better comprehending and recognizing areas and their usages. Meanwhile, offering support for bamboo help to the plants in the gardening corner set aside for individuals with Down syndrome highlighted an inclusive approach towards individuals with special needs. For the students, the project served as an experiential learning platform, through which they were able to test classroom theories into practice within real-world settings (Kolb, 2020). The cooking activity using locally grown vegetables promoted sustainability and farm-to-table ideals, in addition to promoting life skills and collaboration. Hands-on participation in the activities also taught noble values like cooperation, empathy, social responsibility, and care for nature.

Also, cooking method and food nutrition was shared to the community and create awareness the important of balancing course during food preparation.

Commercial value

The volunteer program at Min House Camp can influence the attractiveness of this place as a tourist destination in the state of Kelantan. This is because visitors who come to the place will encounter or meet volunteers and see the results of the hands that are helped there. For example, the activity of collecting and packing saga seeds to be taken to the Bumi Festival in Penang at the end of this month, and so on. Therefore, the activities that take place make Min House Camp more known and popular, especially for those who like tourism experiences that benefit the community.

Next, in terms of profit, this program can have a positive impact on the local economy. Whenever more people are visiting to participate in volunteer work or just visit the place, they will also spend money within the place, such as buying food, drinks, hiring accommodations, and the like. Aside from that, different activities can charge a small fee, such as a guided tour or workshop, to make the program smoother. With the support of volunteers, Min House Camp can also reduce labour costs while improving the experience of more visitors. Overall, the Min House Camp volunteer program provides meaningful experiences for participants and helps increase the attractiveness of this place as an ecotourism destination. In addition, it gives positive impact to voluntarists and community in term of future relationship engagement, education sharing and awareness. Therefore, the program can help the destination as well as the society, so that it can emerge further with stakeholders involved to make Malaysia a leading destination for sustainable tourism.

Future recommendation to expand the community/SULAM project

The viability of the SULAM project at Rumah Min House Camp, Kota Bharu, and its continued growth and impact on the community, greatly depend on the active participation of volunteers. Although the program has provided university students with valuable opportunities for experiential learning and community engagement, there is still room for improvement in terms of sustainability and effectiveness. Strengthening collaborative networks between academic institutions and external partners, including local government agencies, corporate partners, and NGOs, can enhance the program's reach and effectiveness, ensuring that the benefits extend to the broader community.

Building long-term partnerships at Rumah Min House Camp is more than just creating a network, it is about nurturing a family of volunteers who are always eager to contribute. With support from local authorities and private organizations, the camp transforms into a breathtaking natural escape for all visitors, especially those who love exploring flora and fauna. Its diverse facilities, including chalets, a multipurpose hall, a bee farm, a firefly garden, an organic farm, and a mini petting zoo, offer visitors a range of experiences. Outdoor activities such as kayaking, river bathing, fishing, and clam hunting further enhance the appeal, creating an enriching environment for volunteers and visitors alike.

To ensure the program's sustainability, digital technology should be integrated as a key component. Digital platforms can facilitate wider community interaction, accelerate information transfer, and enhance communication between colleges and universities. For instance, University Malaysia Kelantan's "Volunteers at Rumah Min House Camp" program has effectively used digital tools to document and share activities on social media, increasing awareness and highlighting the benefits of student-led community service. By leveraging digital advancements, adopting sustainable funding models, and fostering strategic partnerships, the SULAM initiative has the potential to evolve into a significant and high-impact program for both students and the wider community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Service in Action: Strengthening Min House Camp Through Collaborative Volunteerism* program highlights the value of experiential, classroom-based learning in fostering early leadership development. The program successfully equips volunteers with essential soft skills such as self-confidence, teamwork, and effective communication. Beyond benefiting both students and the Min House Camp community, the program also provides valuable learning opportunities for volunteers themselves. This initiative has the potential to cultivate future leaders from an early stage while delivering significant social, economic, and educational benefits—establishing it as a sustainable

model for leadership development. Given its clear scalability and commercialization potential, *Service in Action: Strengthening Min House Camp Through Collaborative Volunteerism* presents a promising framework that can be expanded across various leadership education contexts.

Acknowledgement

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INTEGRATING SULAM PROJECT INTO ACADEMIC CURRICULUM: IMPACTS ON STUDENT KNOWLEDGE AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

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Highlight: This study examines the impact of the SULAM program on knowledge and interpersonal skills on third year student from undergraduate students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). A total of 20 students from Volunteerism course demonstrated positive impact in implementing SULAM programme. The result shows that the students improved on their academic development which focus on knowledge and understanding as well as enhanced on interpersonal skills after conducting service-learning projects. Hence, it is indicated that there were impacts imposed by implementing service-learning projects involved the students with the community. An initiative to introduced SULAM programme by the Ministry of Higher Education was the same aim with the University to contribute and share knowledge, skills, and expertise to the community through the involvement of student's project-based learning and community issues analysis.

Keywords: Service-Learning, Academic Development, Interpersonal Skill, Community, Volunteerism Course

Introduction

Service learning is a type of experiential learning. It is described as an efficient teaching and learning pedagogical approach that aims to include students in community service with a connection to their academic work (Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Rio, 2022). It offers students an opportunity to improve their comprehension of the subject matter covered in the course and make a positive impact on the community's growth. Service-learning has benefits for everyone involved. For example, the community receiving the program benefits from economic and social development (Compare et al., 2023; Poteau, 2020), students providing the program benefits socially and academically (Hanum et al., 2021), and educational institutions hosting the program improve their curriculum offerings and meet institutional goals (Naufal et al., 2024). Even though colleges are becoming more interested in incorporating service learning into their undergraduate curriculum, higher education in developing nations, like Malaysia, is still in its infancy. Therefore, to support experiential learning in Malaysian universities, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) has taken the initiative to introduce Service Learning through various academic courses, including the Volunteerism course offered at the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness. This course aims to instill civic responsibility, foster community engagement, and strengthen soft skills among students by integrating academic content with meaningful community service activities.

There is growing evidence that integrating volunteerism course into higher education allows students to interact with community partners to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-world situations. Scholars have identified service learning as a useful tool that enables students to apply course principles in real-world settings by resolving real-world issues and meeting community

needs. Furthermore, according to Maloyed (2016), student-directed service-learning projects help participants expand their knowledge of civic involvement and self-efficacy. Similarly, Marshall et al. (2015) explained that service-learning benefits students in a number of ways, including a greater comprehension of course material, a feeling of civic duty, empathy for other cultures, and civic leadership. However, the viewpoint of undergraduate students regarding the support that service learning provides for academic learning and skill development remains uncertain. By definition, service-learning support is a part of the curriculum that academicians purposefully include into their courses to encourage their students to perform community service. Students will be able to contribute significantly to their communities and improve their comprehension of the course material with its assistance.

In volunteerism courses, it is important to take the student's viewpoint into account, especially when it comes to how volunteerism supports students' academic learning and skill development. Certain experts, namely in the field of academic development, have proposed that thorough testing is necessary to ascertain the true impact of service learning on students. According to a recent study by Hebert & Hauf (2015), students have improved more in their interpersonal, civic engagement, and intellectual development than in their final exam scores.

These results highlight the necessity for an empirical investigation to evaluate the effects of volunteerism course support on students' academic growth and skill acquisition. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the knowledge and skill development that students experienced as a result of taking the Volunteerism course at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK).

In order to support the Ministry of Higher Education's initiative to achieve Shift 1 of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education), which is to generate graduates that are holistic, enterprising, and balanced SULAM through volunteerism course has been introduced at UMK. Hence, the aim of this research is to determine the impacts of implementing the volunteerism program on undergraduate students in terms of knowledge and interpersonal skills after conducting and completing the service-learning project with the community.

Description of Project

Purposive sampling method with cross sectional study was adopted in this study. One mentor from university lecturer was assigned to develop a project-based learning which involved 20 third year students-built service-learning projects in groups as part of the 14 weeks of required studies at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan from Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism, and Wellness, these students were pursuing undergraduate degrees in Volunteerism course. This project involved community which among university students.

The implementation of the Sulam Project – Program Siswa Sihat adopted a community-based participatory approach, aiming to improve participants' knowledge, health awareness, and interpersonal skills. Program modules were designed to include health education, lifestyle awareness, and interpersonal communication components. The activities consisted of a series of interactive and educational activities facilitated by university students. These included awareness-based games, and group activities such as peer discussions, role-playing, and teamwork-based physical sessions. These activities were designed not only to disseminate health knowledge but also to foster engagement, empathy, and communication among participants. The informed consent was collected from all participants prior to data collection.

Several research instruments were utilized in this study. The main tool was a structured Knowledge and Awareness Questionnaire, which included multiple-choice and Likert-scale items. To assess interpersonal skills, an Interpersonal Skills Observation Checklist was used during group sessions to evaluate participants' communication abilities, leadership, teamwork and empathy. A 5-point Likert scale is used to record the student's response from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Descriptive analysis was analysed, and the data was presented as mean ± standard deviation.

Result and Discussion

A. Demographic Analysis

The demographic of students in the sample group is presented in Table 1. The majority of students were third-year students with 30% of male and 70% of female students. Their age is about 22-23 years old (95.8%) and only 4.2% for students with aged 24 years old and above.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

	Variables	Frequency (%)
Age	22 - 23	95.8
	24 and above	4.2
Gender	Male	30
	Female	70
Year of study	Year 3	100

B. Knowledge

As this study intends to identify the impacts of implementing SULAM in public university based on UMK students' insights, the data analysed in this study used the descriptive analysis to discuss the result and findings to achieve the objective of this study. The results and discussion presented the impacts of implementing SULAM which include knowledge and understanding as well as interpersonal skills in service-learning projects.

Below are the results and discussions from the data findings pertaining to the impacts of implementing SULAM in UMK to measure student's knowledge and understanding and interpersonal skills after they carried out SULAM programme with the community related to their academic programme. Based on Table 2, the total of the responses of 20 respondents to rate the impact of implementing SULAM programme in terms of their knowledge and understanding have a very positive impact. Firstly, the variable that has been measured was the student's knowledge and understanding before and after the project. Hence, the mean score for before was 3.25 with standard deviation score was 0.56 which increased to 4.55 and 0.51 for the mean score and standard deviation after the project.

Meanwhile, in terms of learning and experience, most of the respondents agreed they have sufficient knowledge, understand the concept of healthy lifestyle, improve physical and mental health as well as implement activities to health which the result contributes to the mean and standard deviation on the respectively (4.30, 0.47; 4.35, 0.49; 4.55, 0.51 and 4.50, 0.51) by implementing SULAM programme in their curriculum has had an impact on reflecting the knowledge and understanding of the students.

Table 2: Service – learning survey responses of students (N=20)

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation
Knowledge		
My knowledge before participating in this project	3.25	0.56
My knowledge after participating in this project	4.55	0.51
I have sufficient knowledge about the importance of a healthy lifestyle after conducting the project.	4.30	0.47
I understand the concept of healthy eating and physical activity before and after this program.	4.35	0.49

This program helped improve my understanding of physical and mental health.	4.55	0.51
I know how to plan and implement activities related to health.	4.50	0.51
Awareness		
I am more aware of the need for health programs after the project.	4.45	0.51
I understand the challenges in encouraging students to adopt a healthy lifestyle.	4.60	0.50
I realize the importance of good planning in ensuring the effectiveness of a program.	4.70	0.47
I understand the positive impact of this program on the students.	4.70	0.47
Interpersonal Skills		
Creative and Innovative	4.50	0.51
Practical Skill	4.35	0.49
Understanding of one's own capabilities.		
Problem-solving skills.	4.35	0.47
Critical thinking skills.	4.30	0.51
Communication skills.	4.50	0.51
Leadership skills.	4.45	0.51
Teamwork skills	4.45	0.51
Community engagement	4.55	0.51

C. Awareness
Data from the findings below indicates that the responses in measuring the impacts of implementing SULAM programme in terms of student's awareness skills after they conducted the project under SULAM programme with the community. After the project, the students have aware of the need for health programs (4.45, 0.51), understand the challenges in encouraging students to adopt a healthy lifestyle (4.60, 0.50), the importance of good planning in ensuring the effectiveness of a program (4.70, 0.47) and understand the positive impact of this program on the students 4.70, 0.47).

D. Interpersonal Skills
Data from the findings below indicates that the responses in measuring the impacts of implementing SULAM programme in terms of student's interpersonal skills after they conducted the project under SULAM programme with the community. Table 2 shows the variables that explained implementing SULAM programme in the students' academic courses had a positive impact on them in enhancing their interpersonal skills which can be utilized in the real working environment when they graduate from the university.

After the students carried out the project under SULAM programme with the community, most of them responded that they had experienced positive impacts in terms of these programmes has increased and enhanced their interpersonal skills. Based on the table above shows that the mean score was 4.35 and the standard deviation score was 0.49 indicated that most of the respondents agreed that after they conducted the project under SULAM programme, they were able to improve practical skills which understanding own capabilities. Besides it has been improved student's practical skills, they also expressed that when they carried out the project with the community, the level of problem solving (mean: 4.35; standard deviation: 0.49) and critical thinking (mean: 4.30; standard deviation: 0.47) were increased for them to work as a team as well as capable to give instruction clearly in conducting this programme. The mean of teamwork and leadership skills were 4.45 with 0.51 of the standard deviation. It is showed that the response from students suggested that working together had a greater impact than working as individuals. They also seemed to understand the importance of having a common goal when working as a unit.

Referring to community involvement, implementing SULAM programme has enhanced their engagement and the data presented of the mean score was 4.55 with the standard deviation was 0.51. Besides, the mean of communication skills was 4.50 with 0.51 of the standard deviation. This indicates that the students were able to communicate effectively with the community and their involvement with the community was improved and enhanced. Overall, the students were able to link the knowledge they had to the practices soft skills when they carried out the project under SULAM programme. It clearly stated that it positively impacts them in increasing and improving their interpersonal skills after they involved in the service-learning with the community.

Conclusion and Recommendations of the Study

The findings of this study quantify the impacts of implementing service-learning projects under SULAM programme integrated with the student's academic curriculum. The results demonstrated that there were impacts imposed by implementing service-learning projects involving the students with the community. An initiative to introduce SULAM programme by the Ministry of Higher Education was the same aim as the University to contribute and share knowledge, skills, and expertise to the community through the involvement of student volunteerism, problem-based learning, project-based learning, community issues analysis, as well as multidiscipline service-learning-based-projects.

Although the implementation of SULAM programme in Public Universities still in the early stages, the positive impacts can be seen in this study which indicates that the students who have participated in and implemented service-learning projects with the community were managed to utilize the knowledge and have a deeper understanding to help the community to resolve any issues or problems occurred. Besides that, SULAM programme improved and empowered the student's interpersonal skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, teamwork and communication skills after they carried out service-learning projects with the community. Overall, SULAM programme has positive impacts that can be benefited by the students who are involved in service-learning projects and these approaches would directly benefit the lecturers, universities, communities, agencies and industries and most importantly to the country.

Despite the promising outcomes of the SULAM programme integration with academic curricula, this study is not without limitations. Firstly, the findings are context-specific and limited to a particular group of students from selected public universities, which may not represent the broader student population across all Malaysian higher education institutions. Secondly, the evaluation of the impacts was primarily based on self-reported data through surveys and reflections, which may be subject to social desirability bias or exaggeration of positive outcomes. Thirdly, the study only captured short-term impacts following the completion of service-learning projects, and did not assess long-term behavioural changes or sustained community benefits. Furthermore, variations in the implementation of SULAM activities, including different academic disciplines, project scopes, and community settings, may have influenced the results and limited the generalizability of the findings. Lastly, the study did not include the perspectives of community members or partnering agencies, which are crucial to fully evaluate the reciprocal value and impact of the programme.

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ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE SULAM PROGRAM

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Highlight: Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) knowledge among secondary school students remains limited despite the importance of early exposure to Safety and Health practice. This study addresses the need for proactive OSH education at the school level through a Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) initiative. This SULAM program, themed "Safety and Health Detective," was conducted in collaboration with Sekolah Menengah Sains Batu Pahat (SEHEBAT) and involved 125 Form Four students as participants. Meanwhile, 20 second-year students from the Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Aircraft Manufacturing) program at UTHM served as the organizing committee, facilitators, and exhibition presenters. The aim was to enhance OSH knowledge, while exposing school students to risk management, Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control (HIRARC) technique, as well as career paths in OSH and engineering. The program was implemented through interactive lectures, industrial case studies, practical HIRARC assessments, and exhibitions. A pre-and post-program feedback analysis using median scores from samples of 28 students revealed significant improvement (from Moderate to Very High) in knowledge and skills. The findings suggest that the SULAM approach cultivates OSH knowledge and skills among school students while enhancing the soft skills and real-world experience of university students.

Keywords: Occupational Safety and Health, SULAM, Secondary School

Introduction

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) is a critical component of every workplace environment. Ensuring a safe and healthy workplace benefits not only employees but also employers by reducing work-related injuries and diseases while improving productivity. In Malaysia, sectors such as manufacturing, aviation, and construction are categorized as high-risk industries. As such, it is essential to develop awareness and understanding of OSH early, particularly among secondary school students who will soon enter the workforce (Hassan et al., 2018).

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA, 1994; OSHA, 2022) mandates that all employers conduct risk assessments to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all individuals involved in their operations (OSHA, 1994; OSHA, 2022). Introducing Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and

Risk Control (HIRARC) methodology at an early age prepares future workers to proactively manage workplace hazards (DOSH, 2008).

Background of the SULAM Program

Service-Learning Malaysia (SULAM) is a service-learning initiative launched by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, designed to integrate meaningful community engagement with student learning outcomes (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2019; Naufal et al., 2024). In Semester 2, Academic Session 2024/2025, the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) course (BDX20902) under the Department of Manufacturing Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering (FKMP), UTHM was selected as an academic course to implement SULAM activities. This SULAM program, themed "Safety and Health Detective," was conducted in collaboration with Sekolah Menengah Sains Batu Pahat (SEHEBAT) and involved 125 Form Four students as participants. Meanwhile, 20 second-year students from the Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Aircraft Manufacturing) program at UTHM served as the organizing committee, facilitators, and exhibition presenters.

This program aims to equip school students with foundational knowledge of OSH, emphasize the importance of risk assessment, and expose them to various educational and career opportunities in engineering as well as OSH-related fields. Participation in the program enables students to develop greater awareness of the importance of safety and health in daily life and to implement proactive safety measures—not only to protect themselves, but also their school community and future work colleagues.

Importance of the Program

This program is essential in providing early exposure to OSH knowledge, particularly in identifying hazards and implementing risk control initiatives. Such exposure equips students with the skills and mindset necessary for safe behavior in school and future workplaces. It also serves as a service-learning platform for UTHM students, who benefit from hands-on experience in leadership, teamwork, communication, and direct community involvement (Naufal et al., 2024).

Implementation of the SULAM Program

Preparatory activities began in the first week of lectures with briefings and planning meetings. Program content and training modules were developed, followed by a site visit to Sekolah Menengah Sains Batu Pahat (SEHEBAT) on April 21, 2025.

The SULAM program was successfully carried out on April 26, 2025 (Saturday), from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Dewan Sri Banang, SEHEBAT. A variety of activities were conducted, including lectures, case studies, quizzes, hands-on HIRARC training, and exhibitions. Table 1 summarizes all the activities. Meanwhile, Figure 1 shows the photos of SULAM program activities. Themed "Safety and Health Detective," the program gave students the opportunity to learn as "detectives" on a mission to identify hazards, assess risks, suggest risk controls, and explore knowledge in the field of OSH.

The program began with a lecture on the importance and implementation of OSH, followed by a session on educational and career pathways in engineering and OSH, which broadened participants' perspectives on their future. An industrial case study video demonstrating HIRARC technique was also shown, followed by a fun and engaging interactive quiz to test students' understanding. Additionally, a practical "detective" session was conducted where students carried out real-time HIRARC assessments around the school compound, guided by UTHM students who acted as facilitators. The exhibition featured displays on OSH in industry, ergonomics, noise and vibration, indoor air quality, chemical safety, and academic programs offered by UTHM.

Following the program, several activities were carried out to document outcomes and assess impact. These included analysis of feedback from school participants and teacher; the publication of program highlights on official social media platforms of UTHM and FKMP including the UTHM News Portal, Facebook, and Instagram; submission of the final SULAM report to the university; the preparation and distribution of certificates to participants, committee members, and school collaborators; and a reflection session with UTHM students.

Table 1: Program Activities

Activity	Activity Details
Lecture / Talk	Two lectures were conducted by UTHM academic staff covering the following topics: - Occupational Safety and Health: Importance and Implementation - Educational and Career Pathways in Engineering and OSH
Case Study on HIRARC Technique in Industry	This activity included: - Industrial case study video - Quiz to assess participants' understanding of the program and video content. UTHM students served as facilitators.
HIRARC Assessment Around the School	This activity involved hands-on HIRARC assessments conducted in the school's dining hall, classrooms, labs and surrounding areas. Program participants were divided into groups and guided by UTHM students acting as facilitators.
Exhibition	The exhibition was conducted where participants were divided into groups and guided by UTHM students and staff who acted as presenters and/or demonstrators. Six exhibition booths were prepared covering topics such as industrial OSH, ergonomics, noise and vibration, indoor air quality, chemical handling, and UTHM academic programs.

Figure 1: Photos of SULAM program activities

Impact of the Program

The impact of the SULAM program was assessed through feedback collected from samples of 28 Form Four students of Sekolah Menengah Sains Batu Pahat who participated in the activities. Their responses were measured using a 5-point rating scale, where 1 indicated "Very Low", 2 "Low", 3 "Moderate", 4 "High", and 5 "Very High". The results are presented in Figure 2, which clearly shows a

consistent increase in median scores across all five evaluation items: knowledge, skills, attitude, knowledge sharing, and practice.
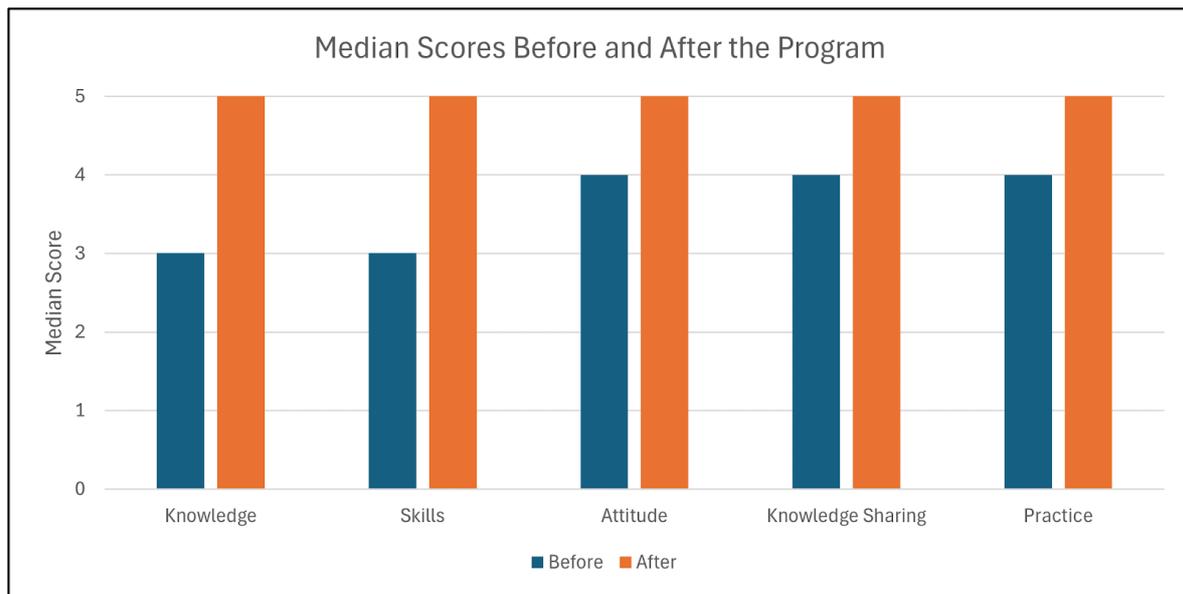

Figure 2: Median Scores of Participants Before and After the Program

Before the program, students rated their knowledge and skills at a median score of 3.0 (moderate). After participating in interactive lectures, industrial case study videos, school-based HIRARC assessments, and exhibitions, these scores improved significantly to 5.0 (very high). This demonstrates that the program effectively enhanced their knowledge and skills to apply OSH concepts in real-life situations. In addition, the students showed improvements in attitude, willingness to share knowledge, and practice. These aspects were initially rated at 4.0 (high) and improved to 5.0 (very high) after the program. This indicates not only a gain in knowledge and skills but also a meaningful shift in students' mindset and behavior regarding OSH, both in school and in their future workplaces.

As for UTHM students, they had the opportunity to apply OSH theory in real-life situations through their involvement with the school community. Their knowledge of risk management and the HIRARC method was practically applied within the school environment. This experience not only improved their communication, teamwork, and decision-making skills, but also helped shape them into more competitive graduates in the job market. Additionally, students were able to interact directly with the community, understand real-world challenges in managing safety and health, and contribute to raising community knowledge of OSH.

At the institutional level, the program reinforced UTHM's commitment to impactful community engagement and strengthened its relationship with the school community. The success of the program was further amplified through publicity across multiple platforms, including the official UTHM Facebook page, UTHM Online News portal, FKMP Facebook page, and FKMP Instagram account. This media coverage not only broadened the visibility of the initiative but also highlighted the role of the university in promoting safety education and social responsibility.

Commercial Value

The project holds commercial potential through the development of adaptable OSH educational modules suitable for other schools and organizations. UTHM could leverage this successful model to offer tailored OSH training, certification programs, and consultancy services to various institutions, providing revenue-generating opportunities.

Future Recommendations

Future implementations could expand this initiative to additional schools and broader regions, maximizing its community impact. Introducing digital educational platforms and mobile applications can facilitate scalable and remote OSH learning. Establishing partnerships with industry leaders for

authentic training scenarios would further enrich the project. Conducting longitudinal impact studies would offer deeper insights into the long-term benefits of early OSH education. Developing formal OSH certifications and micro-credentials endorsed by industry and educational institutions could further validate the skills acquired by participants.

Conclusion

The Safety and Health Detective program under the SULAM initiative has successfully delivered OSH education to school students while enhancing university students' soft skills through real-world community engagement. It demonstrates UTHM's commitment to shaping responsible graduates and contributing meaningfully to societal development through service-based learning.

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FOSTERING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH VISITS WITH TAHFIZ STUDENTS AT MADRASAH AL-INSANIYAH WA TAHFIZUL QURAN, KG. MELAWI, BACHOK, KELANTAN

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Highlight: Volunteering—the voluntary giving of time, effort, and skills to support a cause or help others without expecting financial reward—is more than just a good deed; in an Islamic context, it is also considered a form of ibadah (worship). This is because it embodies the values of kindness, generosity, and communal care emphasized in the Quran and Sunnah. Volunteerism among Tahfiz students plays a vital role in shaping well-rounded individuals who are actively involved in community service and possess a deep understanding of the Quran. Guided by Islamic principles such as sincerity (ikhlas), compassion (rahmah), and brotherhood (ukhuwah), these students contribute selflessly to society. This hands-on experience enhances their leadership, communication, and social skills, positioning them as role models within their communities. Ultimately, Tahfiz students who engage in volunteering develop into holistic individuals who demonstrate both civic responsibility and spiritual excellence

Keywords: Community relationships, Raising awareness, Volunteering, Story sharing, Social responsibility, Recreational activities.

Introduction

One of the most effective ways to cultivate empathy, understanding, and mutual respect is by forming meaningful relationships through community involvement. Visits to religious institutions, such as Madrasah Al-Insaniyah Wa Tahfizul Quran in Kampung Melawi, Bachok, Kelantan, provide a valuable opportunity for such engagement. This madrasah, well known for its dedication to Quranic memorization and Islamic education, offers a spiritually enriching environment where students develop not only religious knowledge but also moral and social values.

Religious schools like madrasahs play a dual role—as centers for spiritual learning and as spaces for nurturing social connection and character development (Yusof & Rahman, 2020). Through these visits, guests gain firsthand exposure to the students' disciplined, faith-based lifestyle and build relationships that transcend educational and cultural boundaries. Such encounters are proven to strengthen social bonds and promote civic engagement, especially among youth (Brown, 2021; Dierckx et al., 2022).

One of the most memorable moments during the visit was sharing a simple yet meaningful meal with the Tahfiz students. After a morning of introductions and spiritual activities, everyone gathered to enjoy a meal prepared by members of the local community. Sitting cross-legged on the floor beside the students fostered a warm, humble, and inclusive atmosphere. Shared meals like this are more than just nourishment—they are a form of social connection that promotes trust, belonging, and open communication (Dunbar, 2021; Spence et al., 2022). Despite differences in background, we found unity through laughter, stories, and food—illustrating how small gestures can build strong and lasting bonds.

Project Background

Madrasah Al-Insaniyah Wa Tahfizul Quran, located in Kampung Melawi, Bachok, Kelantan, is an Islamic religious institution that focuses on Quranic memorization (tahfiz) and the cultivation of moral and spiritual values. Serving a diverse student population, particularly from underprivileged backgrounds, the madrasah is deeply rooted in its local community and contributes significantly to the development of future generations grounded in Islamic values.

The institution operates with limited financial resources, relying heavily on public donations and community support to meet operational needs such as infrastructure maintenance, food provision, and educational materials. Due to these constraints, integrating modern educational tools and expanding holistic learning opportunities remain a challenge. This project, aligned with the principles of service learning and sustainable community development, aims to support the madrasah while fostering stronger ties between higher education institutions and the local community.

Significance of the Project

The project was initiated to enhance students' awareness of the role of Tahfiz institutions in Islamic education in Malaysia. It offers a unique opportunity for university students to observe the disciplined, faith-oriented lifestyle of Tahfiz students and to appreciate the spiritual and moral values instilled within these institutions.

Beyond observation, the program actively engages participants in community service through gotong-royong, motivational sharing, and meaningful interactions. These activities promote empathy, social responsibility, and solidarity—key objectives of the SULAM initiative. The project encourages university students to connect with real-world issues and instills a deeper sense of civic consciousness and compassion.

Project Description

The project titled *"Fostering Meaningful Relationships Through Visits with Tahfiz Students at Madrasah Al-Insaniyah Wa Tahfizul Quran, Kg. Melawi, Bachok, Kelantan"* was implemented as a community-based service-learning activity. It aimed to establish a bridge between university students and the Tahfiz community through immersive experiences and shared values.

Students engaged in informal interactions with Tahfiz students, participated in recreational activities, observed daily routines, and shared meals with the madrasah community. These hands-on engagements helped break social barriers, build mutual understanding, and promote a culture of respect and inclusiveness. This gathering and interaction is illustrated in Figure 1, showing the close bond formed between the visitors and the Tahfiz students. The project also reinforced community spirit and created opportunities for mutual learning through experience and dialogue.

Problem Statement and Project Objectives

Many Tahfiz students at Madrasah Al-Insaniyah have limited interaction with individuals outside their educational environment, which restricts their exposure to broader social and educational experiences. This isolation can impede their personal development and ability to engage effectively with diverse communities. Research on mentoring programs in Malaysian Tahfiz institutions indicates that structured external engagement can significantly improve students' self-confidence, motivation, and interpersonal skills—demonstrating the value of social exposure beyond the classroom (Hasan et al., 2022).

The objective of this project was to build close relationships with Tahfiz students by organizing regular visits and interactive activities. Through these engagements, the project aimed to enhance their social confidence, expand their worldview, and provide motivational experiences that complement their formal religious education.

Figure 1: Group photo with Tahfiz students

Project Outcomes and Impact

A. Impact on the Community

This project significantly strengthened collaboration between the university and the local community through structured and meaningful interactions. By promoting the values of volunteerism and charity, the initiative helped foster a culture of giving and mutual care. The interactive sessions facilitated during the visit enhanced the communication skills of Tahfiz students, encouraging open dialogue and greater self-expression. Furthermore, the disciplined lifestyle and strong moral values demonstrated by the Tahfiz students served as positive role models for visiting youth, reinforcing the importance of integrity, respect, and spiritual commitment. Through the exchange of ideas and experiences, the program also contributed to the reinforcement of Islamic values within the broader community, nurturing a more informed and spiritually aware society.

B. Impact on the Community

For the university students involved, the project offered numerous educational benefits. Through collaborative planning and execution of activities, students developed key teamwork and leadership competencies. Engaging with a real-world audience provided an excellent platform to enhance public speaking and interpersonal communication skills. The direct exposure to the Tahfiz environment increased students' sense of social responsibility and empathy, encouraging a deeper understanding of diverse community needs. Moreover, the process of organizing and conducting community engagement activities stimulated critical thinking and creativity. Reflection sessions held post-visit supported personal growth, helping students internalize their experiences and promoting lifelong learning and continuous self-improvement.

Marketability and Commercial Potential

Although grounded in social and spiritual development, the project holds potential for commercial expansion:

A.   Educational Experience Packages:
The madrasah can offer short-term immersion programs for schools, NGOs, or corporate CSR teams interested in service learning, Quranic memorization, and spiritual retreats. These experiential packages can be marketed as part of SULAM, educational tours, or team-building activities.

B.   Local Economic Empowerment:
Visits can be packaged to include traditional meals, cultural showcases, and local products, supporting community-based tourism. Local entrepreneurs can sell Islamic crafts, food, and souvenirs, empowering women and youth through microbusinesses.

C.   CSR Sponsorship Opportunities:
By framing the project within a CSR context, partnerships with corporate bodies, Islamic banks, and NGOs can be pursued. These partnerships may support infrastructure upgrades, digital learning tools, and scholarship schemes for students.

Future Directions and Recommendations

To ensure continuity and long-term impact, the project should be institutionalized through a formal university-madrasah collaboration, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This would allow for consistent implementation of programs such as motivational seminars, academic mentoring, health awareness campaigns, and skill development workshops.

Further, increasing the visibility of the project through digital storytelling, media coverage, and social media campaigns will help attract sponsors, volunteers, and broader community involvement. Integrating multidisciplinary efforts from other university faculties (education, health sciences, technology) can further expand the reach and impact of the program. This strategic approach will transform the SULAM initiative into a model of inclusive, values-driven, and sustainable community engagement.

Conclusion

In summary, our visit to Madrasah Al-Insaniyah Wa Tahfizul Quran in Kampung Melawi, Bachok, Kelantan, enabled us to build strong and respectful relationships with the Tahfiz students. Through this experience, we gained valuable insights into their values, daily routines, and unwavering dedication to memorizing the Quran. The visit also provided a platform for mutual encouragement, exchange of ideas, and community growth. Such visits are essential for fostering understanding across different social groups and nurturing bonds of brotherhood.

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INSPIRE INAQ: EMPOWERING YOUTH TO ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES THROUGH DIGITAL CAMPAIGN AND THE INTEGRATION OF NAQLI AQLI KNOWLEDGE

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Highlight: The INSPIRE INAQ project pioneers the digital campaign with the integration of Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational knowledge) or INAQ with digital tools to address social issues through the Service Learning Malaysia–University for Society (SULAM). Involving participants (high school and university students) in Malaysia and Indonesia, the project involved them in collaborating together to identify social issues, finding ways to address those issues, and incorporating INAQ-based values alongside digital campaign skills to produce impactful digital campaigns using digital platforms. This innovative, hands-on approach empowers the youths by equipping them with interpersonal and practical skills grounded in knowledge integration, fostering the creation of meaningful content to tackle real-world social problems. The initiative has demonstrated tangible outcomes, including a campaign video that reached over 23,000 views and substantial engagement. With strong potential for replication, commercialisation, and collaboration, INSPIRE INAQ exemplifies how traditional knowledge can be effectively applied in the digital age to promote social responsibility and community engagement.

Keywords: Digital Campaign, INAQ, Social Issues, Youths

Introduction

The INSPIRE INAQ project represents a pioneering advancement in the integration Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational thinking knowledge) with digital tools to address social issues through the implementation of Service Learning Malaysia-University for Society (SULAM). It engaged 100 high school students and 180 undergraduates from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) in 2023, followed by 80 high school students and 71 USIM undergraduates in 2024, and 36 high school students and 107 undergraduates (45 from USIM and 62 from IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo, Indonesia). Participants represented diverse academic fields, including New Media Communications, Da'wah and Islamic Management, Akidah and Religious Studies, and Counselling.

The project's originality lies in its unique integration of Naqli and Aqli to create impactful digital campaigns. By bridging these two aspects, the initiative introduces a novel approach to utilising digital platforms for addressing social issues with the implementation of integration of perspectives. The innovation's applicability is evident in its practical approach to addressing real-world issues. Students and community were trained in designing and executing digital campaigns, specifically on social media platforms like TikTok, and managing projects using tools like Trello. This hands-on experience ensures

that the skills acquired are directly transferable to various real-world scenarios, making the approach highly relevant and practical for both students and community members. The initiative seeks to empower youth and communities by providing them with digital skills and grounding the importance of knowledge integration, enabling the creation of impactful social campaign. The primary goals is to integrate naqli and aqli knowledge to develop meaningful digital content that tacles real-world issues.

The project has achieved notable success, demonstrating significant impact through the effective use of digital content creation and management of social campaign. For example, one of the campaign videos garnered substantial organic engagement on social media, receiving over 23,000 views, 1,050 likes, 104 saves, and 88 shares. The status of the innovation reflects its potential for expansion and adaptation pertaining to the development of digital application for the purpose of digital campaign and integration of naqli and aqli. The commercial potential of this innovation is considerable. By showcasing how traditional knowledge of campaigning can be effectively integrated with digital media, the initiative opens avenues for further development of educational and promotional programs.

Background of INSPIRE INAQ SULAM Project

The INSPIRE INAQ SULAM project was implemented through the course AEN3183 Electronic Da'wah and Campaign, offered by the New Media Communication Program, Faculty of Leadership and Managemenet, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, for every second semester as part of the academic curriculum. It is a 3-credit hour and an elective course. It was developed to emphasise teaching and learning related to persuasive media communication, skills in designing social campaign content, and the use of digital media in delivering campaigns with the integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge. Through this course, students and communities are exposed to designing digital campaign program content to effectively deliver it to the target audience.

The course is also implemented through the Service Learning Malaysia-University for Society (SULAM) project. Students participate in activities that fulfill identified community needs collaboratively, reflect on the activities conducted, and create meaningful experiences to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Theoretical course content is applied in real-world contexts while fostering personal values, community relationships, and civic responsibility. Teaching and learning methods are not limited to lecture notes but include involvement from industry players such as Interactive Da'wah and Tarbiyah (IDT) Association, which add value by sharing approaches to da'wah campaigns on social media platforms.

Table 1: Programme learning outcomes, description and tasks

Programme Learning Outcome	Programme Learning Outcome Description	Task
Interpersonal skills (PLO4)	Interpersonal relationships with communities and diverse audience	Critical Reflective Journal and log diary Trello Application
Practical skills (PLO3)	Performing digital campaign with INAQ based strategies to solve social issues	Ability to produce digital campaign with the implementation of naqli and aqli and based on the input gained from the community to address social issues

For SULAM implementation, the course focuses on two Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). The first relates to interpersonal skills (PLO4), and the second refers to practical skills (PLO3). For interpersonal skills, the focus is on the ability to convey ideas by identifying appropriate methods and demonstrating confidence in interpersonal relationships with diverse audiences or communities. This also includes collaboration skills with various audience/community groups. To assess interpersonal skills, students are assigned tasks related to critical reflection journals and diary logs as suitable methods for providing feedback and presenting the results of their interpersonal relationships with communities involved in the SULAM project implemented through the course. Meanwhile, practical skills are assessed through the ability to produce digital campaign videos with the community and assisted with web-based platforms to discuss and brainstorm ideas on addressing social issues of

which identified together with the community. For practical skills, it sharpens students' abilities to use various essential methods to solve problems identified and by using digital platform

The Importance of INSPIRE INAQ SULAM Project

The INSPIRE INAQ SULAM project plays a critical role in bridging knowledge, values, and technology to empower youth as agents of change in addressing current social challenges. Its importance is underscored by its ability to respond to the developmental needs of both high school and higher education youth through the strategic integration of Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational knowledge) within the digital landscape.

For school youth (aged 15−17), this project aligns with a formative stage in their social, emotional, and intellectual growth. At this age, their values, identity, and worldview are still being shaped. By introducing them to digital campaign tools underpinned by the integration of knowledge, INSPIRE INAQ ensures that the technological exposure they receive is purposeful and value-driven. In line with findings from the Malaysian Youth Development Research Institute (2024), this initiative promotes positive youth development by embedding religious values, digital literacy, and social awareness. It offers an alternative narrative to the often negative and value-deficient content prevalent on social media, fostering a more balanced and ethical digital presence among teenagers.

For undergraduates (aged 18−24), the project serves as a platform to advance both their professional and civic competencies. The integration of digital tools like TikTok and Trello with Islamic and rational perspectives allows students to produce meaningful digital campaigns while honing real-world skills in project management, communication, and critical thinking. As emphasised in the Ministry of Higher Education Report (2024), the demand for digitally-skilled graduates continues to rise, especially within the communication and digital sectors. By embedding these competencies within the academic curriculum of the course and SULAM, INSPIRE INAQ provides a competitive edge for students entering the workforce and as agents for social change in the community.

Moreover, by actively engaging in community-based campaigns and collaborating with local youth, students learn to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts. Their involvement fosters interpersonal skills (as aligned with PLO4) and practical digital campaign capabilities (PLO3), reinforcing values such as empathy, responsibility, and ethical conduct of digital campaign. This dual development enhances their readiness to participate in social activism that is informed, ethical, and impactful.

The relevance of INSPIRE INAQ becomes even more pronounced when examined against the backdrop of contemporary social challenges facing Malaysian youth. Issues such as moral decay, reduced spirituality, and the erosion of volunteerism are exacerbated by unregulated social media exposure. Research by the Malaysian Youth Development Research Institute (2024) also highlights how media content often shapes youth behavior and beliefs, frequently undermining religious and moral values. The INSPIRE INAQ project directly counters this trend by cultivating a media-conscious youth population equipped with both technical skills and spiritual intelligence.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education Malaysia Annual Report (2024) stresses the importance of behavioral change and value formation among students to tackle problems such as bullying, drug abuse, and disrespectful behavior. INSPIRE INAQ addresses these concerns proactively by using digital campaigns as tools for behavior modification and character development. By involving the community and encouraging reflective practice through logbooks and journals, the project enhances accountability and personal growth among participants.

Description of INSPIRE INAQ SULAM Project

The INSPIRE INAQ SULAM project is a values-driven digital empowerment initiative that integrates Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational knowledge) with digital tools to nurture youth as socially responsible digital citizens. The project aims to cultivate their interpersonal and practical skills while raising awareness on social issues, instil noble values and spirituality, and equipped with digital campaigning skills to address real-world problems. Structured into three phases, the project began with a *pre-project survey* and engagement activities where students and communities identified local social issues, documented reflections, and collaborated using the Trello platform to maintain

organised records. Phase 1 also included workshops emphasising the INAQ-based integration of religious and rational perspectives. In Phase 2, participants co-created digital campaign videos based on earlier insights, which were then published on social media platforms. Phase 3 focused on campaigning and evaluating the impact, followed by a post-project survey. This structured, reflective, and participatory approach not only enhanced digital competencies but also fostered youth empowerment and positive behavioural change, demonstrating the project's potential to reduce social issues and promote responsible technology use.

Table 2: Program Activities

Phase	Description of Activities	Task/Responsibilities	
Phase 1	Survey before the SULAM project.	Students and community filled in 'before' SULAM project survey.	
	Engaging with community and identifying social issues.	Using Trello application to keep conversation/record of activity in organised way.	
	Finding ways to address social issues.		
	Incorporating INAQ-based values and perspectives.	INSPIRE INAQ Workshop with the community. Students get engage with the community.	Critical Reflective Journal and Log Diary throughout the SULAM project. (Before, During, and After)
Phase 2	Producing digital campaign video with the community.	Students and community produced the digital campaign video together with the community based on the input they gained in phase 1. Published the video through social media platform	
Phase 3	Campaigning the digital campaign videos with the community. Evaluation of the campaign.	Students and community practically campaigning the digital campaign videos and create impact.	
	Survey after the SULAM Project.	Students and community filled in 'after' SULAM project survey.	

The Impact of INSPIRE INAQ SULAM Project

For the community, the project increased exposure to the importance of integrating naqli dan aqli knowledge into digital campaign strategy among the youth. It also strengthened intergenerational ties between university and high school students, empowering communities to address social issues through INAQ-based digital campaigns. Furthermore, the initiative enhanced digital literacy and persuasive communication skills that are important in the essence of digital campaign. It strengthened their confidence in interpersonal in and practical skills. Additionally, it helped them develop an ethical framework for digital engagement grounded in naqli and aqli principles. Participants shared positive testimonies about their experience such as: "I became more aware of how naqli and aqli knowledge can be implemented through digital campaign and can counter social media ignorance", "I learned to deliver Islamic messages creatively using TikTok anmd campaign it", and "This helped me become more responsible and confident person in delivering content through campaign".

Overall, the project overall added impacts towards the students and community in the integrated approach to message delivery derived from the processes of (i) identifying social issues, (ii) finding ways to address these issues, and (iii) incorporating noble values alongside digital campaign skills. This process stimulates critical thinking and logical reasoning while fostering an understanding of values related to morality and spirituality. The key themes include such as (i) Tadabbur Al-Quran and the Unity of Knowledge, (ii) Management of Differences and Islamic Brotherhood, and (iii) Moral values. Subsequently, students and the community collaborated to produce campaign digital campaign videos covering various social issues such as etiquette within multiethnic communities, moderation, peace, and racial tolerance. Furthermore, through interactions, discussions, and interpersonal relationships,

the students successfully built a portfolio of assignments and critical reflection journals to reflect before, during, and after the project implementation.

The project's implementation has also shown changes in knowledge, skills, and practices not only among students but also the community. A survey conducted indicates that 60.6% strongly agree and 34.8% agree that the implementation of the INSPIRE INAQ SULAM has motivated students and the community to apply INAQ-based digital campaign. This is evident through improvements in knowledge and skills measured via survey questions. The survey reflects positive changes in the level of knowledge and practices of students and the community regarding INAQ-based digital campaign. Indirectly, this project has also fostered positive relationships among educators, students, communities. Some of the testimonies given include: "I learned the importance of identifying social issues occurring among students and the community, and we were given knowledge to find solutions, campaign strategies, and ways to resolve these issues."

Figure 1: Students and community campaigning on the digital video they produced

This project has also shown a positive impact to the university, as local newspapers (such as BERNAMA; 18 October 2024, Berita Harian; 24 July 2024) and news portals (such as Dagang News, 11 June 2024) have reported the project activities as a success in sustaining education aligned with the government's aspiration to produce skilled and innovative human capital capable of facing global challenges. In this aspect, it refers to digitally skilled human capital who are able to develop communities while collectively addressing social issues.

The project has also created a greater impact, especially among youth who frequently seek information and life guidance through social media. Critically, without an integrated knowledge approach that harnesses technology, the intended messages risk being sidelined. Thus, the justification for this project is to equip youth with problem-solving skills related to social issues through digital campaigns connected to technology. The implementation of INSPIRE INAQ within the community has already been carried out, with digital campaign skills sharing helping the community achieve over 23,000 views, 1,050 likes, 88 shares and 104 social media users saving the content. This demonstrates that the skills imparted have made a significant impact on the wider online community.

Commercial Value

INSPIRE INAQ presents substantial potential for commercialisation and broader adoption. The educational modules developed can be adapted for training programs not only for communities but also targeting educators and community leaders. Religious authority can provide consultancy services in Islamic or revealed knowledge-based for digital communication. The high-quality campaign materials, especially videos and infographics, may be licensed for use by governmental and non-governmental agencies. Additionally, the projecy opens opportunities for developing digital products such as mobile applications to guide youth in ethical content creation, or AI-based tools to assess the effectiveness of digital campaign. These innovations would meet increasing market demand for culturally and religiously informed digital engagement solutions.

CULTIVATING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

18/10/2024 11:11 AM

Opinions on topical issues from thought leaders, columnists and editors.

By Dr Norsimaa Mustaffa & Dr Kartini Kamaruzzaman

Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) was launched in 2019 by the Ministry of Higher Education, and broadly defined as a form of experiential education that involves students engaging in activities alongside the community to address needs or issues exist in society.

SULAM concept

The SULAM concept encompasses multiple dimensions, integrating both curricular and co-curricular approaches that focus on service and education in collaboration with the community.

This concept emphasises the importance of balancing learning outcomes and service results, ensuring that both are achieved in partnership with the community.

The activities are significant in engaging students to explore education and careers related to STREAM of which encompassing science, technology, religion/spirituality, engineering, artistry, and mathematics.

Besides, are crucial in raising awareness among parents or guardians including community. It encourages them to support and motivate their children in pursuing these fields.

Revealed Knowledge and Rational Thinking

SULAM and STREAM that integrate with both Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational thinking) in the delivery and implementation of practical STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education to create a more holistic impact.

The implementation of SULAM fosters a spirit of collaboration and complementarity. It builds critical and creative thinking skills while developing communication and leadership abilities which are among essential competencies for individuals navigating the challenges of the 4.0 industrial revolution.

SULAM implementation through courses in universities that integrate *Naqli* and *Aqli* serve as a platform to provide students with theoretical understanding and concepts, while also honing their skills to apply classroom learning in real-world situations embedded with good values.

This approach is crucial for motivating the community to take actions that benefit society.

High Impact Educational Practices

SULAM has the potential to become an element of High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs), where students are exposed to the 'CARE framework' related to Community Resilience Experiential Learning.

This core component of the curriculum promotes student learning through addressing societal issues and needs, ultimately fostering positive social change based on community service and learning.

The integration of core values such as *al-Qawiyy* (Strength) and *al-Amin* (Trustworthiness) into the SULAM project fosters a collaborative environment among students, educators, and the target community.

This approach enhances students' ability to identify issues and implement solutions related to the community in addressing local issues by applying the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom.

Figure 2: News Article: BERNAMA, 18 October 2024

Figure 3: Video Analysis – INSPIRE INAQ digital campaign impact

Future Recommendations

To support growth and ease of replication, the project should develop digital resources such as ready-made campaign templates, design toolkits, and communication guides rooted in Naqli and aqli knowledge. These tools can help users efficiently create consistent, high-quality digital campaigns without starting from scratch each time. This reduces the training burden and increases scalability to more users and locations. Therefore it requires investment in digital tools.

Conclusion

INSPIRE INAQ exemplifies the transformative power of integrating naqli and aqli knowledge. By engaging local and international (school and university) students in digital campaigns, this project has cultivated responsible, skilled, and creative individuals who are prepared to address social challenges with INAQ based digital campaign strategies. The project's outcomes demonstrate how traditional naqli knowledge and values can be reimagined within modern communication contexts to foster spiritual growth, societal awareness, and digital excellence.

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ENERGIKU: TRANSFORMASI KOMUNITI MELALUI KEJURUTERAAN TEKNOLOGI ELEKTRIK

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Highlight: This extended abstract presents "Energiku: Transformasi Komuniti Melalui Kejuruteraan Teknologi Elektrik", a high-impact service-learning initiative conducted under Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM), championed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Conducted in Kampung Che Ok, Perlis, this initiative integrates community service into engineering coursework, enabling students to apply academic knowledge to real-world challenges. The students involved in this project are from 4th year student Bachelor of Electrical Power Engineering Technology from Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Technology (FKTE), Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP). The program included the deployment of solar-powered lighting, smart IoT poultry incubators, safe residential rewiring, mosque facility upgrades and energy efficiency awareness campaigns. Through practical engagement, the project not only improved infrastructure and livelihoods but also instilled civic responsibility, problem-solving skills, and a lifelong learning mindset in students. Energiku exemplifies the essence of SULAM in term of sustainable, scalable and socially transformative education.

Keywords: SULAM, service learning, electrical engineering, IoT, sustainable development, community empowerment, renewable energy

Introduction

Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) is a transformative pedagogical approach introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) to integrate academic learning with civic responsibility. As part of Malaysia's High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs), SULAM aims to produce holistic, entrepreneurial, and socially conscious graduates by immersing students in real-world challenges (Ooi, Abdullah, & Mat Isa, 2023). In this context, Energiku: Transformasi Komuniti Melalui Kejuruteraan Teknologi Elektrik was conceived as a high-impact, student-led community engagement initiative carried out in Kampung Che Ok, Perlis by FKTE UniMAP.

The village, characterized by aging infrastructure and limited access to modern technology, faced multiple challenges: unsafe household wiring, insufficient lighting in public spaces, low poultry hatching rates due to manual incubation, and a general lack of awareness in sustainable energy use. These societal issues presented a unique opportunity for engineering students from UniMAP to apply their academic knowledge through service learning.

Through SULAM, students conducted electrical safety interventions, installed solar lighting systems, deployed IoT-based smart chicken incubators, and led community workshops on energy efficiency. These activities aligned with the theoretical underpinnings of service learning, which emphasizes experiential education, reflection, and reciprocal community benefit (Bringle & Hatcher, 2009). From an academic standpoint, this initiative reinforced the value of engineering education as a socially embedded practice. Literature underscores that service-learning in engineering programs significantly enhances student engagement, real-world problem-solving, and professional readiness (Lim & Tay, 2022). The hands-on experiences gained in Energiku fostered critical thinking, communication, and adaptability—skills vital for today's technologists.

Technological interventions such as the IoT-based incubator not only addressed local agricultural inefficiencies but also showcased scalable solutions grounded in smart farming research (Yu et al., 2021). Additionally, community energy audits and the promotion of LED lighting practices were guided by evidence-based strategies known to reduce household energy costs and carbon footprints, especially in the Malaysian context (Hasanuzzaman, Mahlia, & Rahim, 2019). In summary, Energiku embodies the ethos of SULAM in merging academic theory with hands-on community service to produce measurable, sustainable, and socially meaningful outcomes.

Project Background

The Energiku SULAM project was conducted in Kampung Che Ok, a rural community in Perlis, Malaysia, under the Ministry of Higher Education's Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) initiative by student of FKTE UNIMAP. The village is primarily inhabited by middle to low income families, many of whom depend on agriculture, informal trades, or government assistance. Despite their active social engagement, the community faces ongoing challenges related to basic infrastructure and technological access.

Several key issues prompted the need for this project. First, there were electrical safety concerns, as many homes were found to have outdated or unsafe wiring systems, posing serious risks of fire and electrocution. Second, the lack of public lighting particularly at the Islamic cemetery, created nighttime visibility and safety issues for residents. Third, the village faced inefficient agricultural practices, where local poultry farmers relied on manual egg incubation methods, resulting in low hatch rates due to inconsistent temperature and humidity control. Additionally, there was minimal awareness of energy conservation practices or the use of renewable technologies such as solar power. Community members also had limited exposure to hands-on training in electrical safety or basic wiring techniques.

In response, students from UniMAP designed and implemented a community-centred engineering solution through the Energiku project. Key interventions included the installation of solar-powered street lamps, the development of IoT-based smart incubators, residential electrical upgrades, and public education sessions on energy efficiency and conservation. The project effectively integrated academic coursework in electrical engineering with real-world community service, reflecting SULAM's mission to cultivate civic responsibility, lifelong learning, and sustainable societal impact.

Figure 1: Program SULAM Energiku at Kampung Che Ok, Perlis.

Project Significance

This project holds significant value for both the community and the students involved. For the community, the installation of solar-powered lamps in public areas, including the Islamic cemetery, greatly enhanced night-time visibility and helped reduce accidents. In terms of agricultural

advancement, the implementation of IoT-based smart chicken incubators led to higher hatch rates and improved economic outcomes for local poultry farmers. Households that participated in energy audits and received LED lighting upgrades reported electricity bill reductions of up to 40%. Additionally, local residents gained hands-on experience in basic electrical wiring, fostering confidence and essential technical knowledge.

For students, the project provided practical engagement with real-world electrical challenges, including rewiring, socket installation, IoT system deployment, and energy system integration. It also contributed to their holistic development, enhancing soft skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork through direct community immersion. Furthermore, students cultivated a strong sense of civic-mindedness, developing empathy and accountability while gaining a deeper understanding of the engineer's role in public service and nation-building.

Project Description

The Energiku program comprised a series of multi-faceted sub-projects that demonstrated both the depth of student engagement and the relevance to community needs. These sub-projects included: solar lighting installation, IoT-based chicken incubators, house wiring interventions, community workshops and awareness talks, as well as upgrades to mosque and public facilities.

A total of five solar-powered lamps were installed at key community locations to improve night-time visibility and safety. To support local agriculture, automated, cloud-monitored incubator systems were deployed, reducing reliance on manual processes and environmental conditions. Residential interventions included full rewiring, socket upgrades, LED lighting installations, and MCB safety corrections, significantly improving household electrical safety and functionality.

The program also featured hands-on workshops, where residents participated in wiring kit training and energy efficiency awareness sessions. In public facilities, improvements were carried out at Masjid Nurul Muttaqin and KEMAS Kindergarten, including air conditioner maintenance, electrical safety audits, and lighting enhancements, all of which increased comfort, safety, and usability for the community.

Result and Impact

This initiative resulted in a complete enhancement of electrical functionality and household safety through systematic rewiring and the adoption of LED lighting solutions. Upgrades to the electrical wiring substantially improved safety and system reliability, significantly reducing reliance on unsafe extension cords. Furthermore, improvements to communal facilities including the mosque and outdoor spaces fostered greater inclusivity, with particular consideration for the needs of elderly residents.

Students actively applied IEC 60364 and MS IEC standards in real-world installation settings, effectively bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application. The project promoted reflective growth, as students meticulously documented valuable lessons in teamwork, adaptability, and resilience under field conditions. Additionally, the initiative successfully fostered a sustainable mindset among participants, inspiring future engagement with green technologies and social entrepreneurship.

Commercial and Scalable Value

The IoT Incubators project demonstrates strong market potential for rural poultry entrepreneurs by providing tailored, technology-driven solutions that enhance productivity and operational efficiency. Moreover, the project is highly scalable, with applications extending beyond poultry farming to broader agro-tech sectors, thereby offering versatile tools adaptable to various rural agricultural enterprises.

The Solar Installations Foundation establishes a robust model for rural electrification through strategic partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and corporate sponsors. This collaborative approach not only facilitates sustainable energy access in underserved communities but also fosters community empowerment and economic development by providing reliable, clean power solutions.

The development and deployment of specialized training kits and workshops present significant opportunities for monetization and formal integration within Technical and Vocational

Education and Training (TVET) programs. These resources are designed to equip learners with practical skills and technical knowledge, enhancing workforce readiness and supporting regional capacity building in renewable energy and smart technology sectors.

The Smart Electrical Solutions initiative holds considerable potential for local manufacturing and branding of critical components such as wiring kits, sensors, and LED lighting systems. By fostering local production capabilities, the project aims to stimulate economic growth, generate employment opportunities, and establish a sustainable supply chain for smart electrical products tailored to regional needs.

Alignment with SULAM Goals and Future Directions Long-Term Sustainability

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, both the community and students have successfully established local maintenance teams responsible for managing and servicing the installed systems. This localized approach not only enhances system longevity but also builds technical capacity within the community. Additionally, the development of mobile monitoring applications for tracking incubator performance and solar energy usage has enabled real-time data collection and system optimization, further supporting sustainable operation and maintenance.

The project actively fosters youth and community empowerment by launching STEM outreach programs in rural schools, aimed at cultivating interest and participation in engineering and technology careers. Through these initiatives, young people gain exposure to practical applications of science and technology, inspiring future career pathways. Moreover, the project promotes community co-ownership by engaging residents in participatory design and implementation processes, thereby strengthening local commitment and ensuring that solutions are contextually appropriate and socially accepted.

Strategic engagement with key stakeholders—including Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Perlis (MAIPs), Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), and municipal authorities—facilitates project expansion and replication across additional rural communities. This collaborative framework aligns with national development goals and enhances the potential for scaling sustainable rural electrification models. Furthermore, the project supports the Ministry of Higher Education's (MOHE) SULAM roadmap by incorporating continuous impact measurement and iterative refinement, thereby contributing to evidence-based policy development and institutional learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion Energiku epitomizes the transformative spirit of Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM). It merges academic rigour with real-world relevance, yielding not only infrastructural improvements but also fostering personal growth and civic consciousness among students. By addressing structural inequities in Kampung Che Ok, the project delivers on the promise of SULAM: producing well-rounded, entrepreneurial graduates who contribute meaningfully to nation-building. This initiative is more than a project, it is a living model of how high-impact educational practices can engineer lasting change.

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VIRTUAL GERMS, REAL CHANGE: EMPOWERING ORANG ASLI YOUTH THROUGH AR-BASED HEALTH EDUCATION

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Highlight: The use of Augmented Reality (AR) in health education for Orang Asli primary school students offered a transformative and engaging approach to hygiene learning. Through culturally relevant, game-based activities such as the Healthy Explorace, the program significantly enhanced students' understanding and practice of proper handwashing, encouraging sustainable health habits in rural settings.

Keywords: SULAM, Community Health, Health Literacy, Augmented Reality, Experiential Learning

Introduction

Improving health literacy among underserved communities is essential to achieving equitable health outcomes. In line with the SULAM (Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society) philosophy, experiential learning empowers students to engage directly with real-world health challenges while benefiting local communities. The integration of Augmented Reality (AR) in health education provides an immersive, visual method that enhances understanding and retention—especially among low-literacy populations and marginalized learners (AlGerafi et al., 2023; Shihab et al., 2023). By combining AR with hands-on, community-based activities, learners are able to connect theory with practice, strengthening engagement, encouraging behavior change, and fostering social responsibility in both students and community members (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022; Shihab et al., 2023).

The Orang Asli communities living in remote areas of Kelantan face ongoing challenges regarding basic healthcare and health education. Factors such as limited health literacy, restricted access to modern education, and strong adherence to traditional beliefs contribute to the prevalence of hygiene-related infectious diseases, waterborne illnesses, and nutrition-related issues. Conventional health education approaches, typically involving lectures and printed materials, often fail to engage young learners, particularly those with lower literacy skills. Consequently, important health messages do not effectively reach the community's younger generation. Recognizing these barriers, this project aimed to introduce an innovative, culturally relevant, and engaging method—by integrating Augmented Reality (AR) technology into hygiene education specifically tailored for Orang Asli children. The use of AR has shown to enhance motivation, attention, and learning retention, particularly among students with limited literacy and educational access, making it an ideal tool for inclusive, community-based health education (AlGerafi et al., 2023; Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022).

This project plays a crucial role in bridging health education gaps within marginalized communities by leveraging the power of Augmented Reality (AR) technology. It enabled students to visualize the invisible—such as germs on their hands—and directly relate it to real-world behaviors like proper handwashing. Health messages were delivered through an experiential and gamified format, significantly enhancing engagement, comprehension, and knowledge retention. The initiative aligns with the broader goals of empowering underserved populations through innovative, technology-driven education. Additionally, the students involved in the project, both as developers and facilitators, gained invaluable experience in translating academic knowledge into meaningful community impact, reflecting the true spirit of SULAM (Service Learning Malaysia – University for Society).

The project was implemented at Sekolah Kebangsaan Pasir Linggi in Gua Musang, Kelantan, engaging 63 primary school students from the Orang Asli community in a culturally responsive health education initiative. Central to the program was the Explorace Health Challenge, where students were grouped into small teams and participated in a series of station-based activities focused on hygiene and wellness. Using the Healthy Explorers Augmented Reality (AR) application, students scanned their hands and nearby surfaces with mobile devices to visualize virtual "germs" that were otherwise invisible. This interactive experience was followed by a handwashing simulation, where students practiced proper hygiene techniques in line with WHO guidelines. To maintain motivation and engagement, students collected stamps in a "Health Passport" after completing each station and were awarded a "Healthy Hero" badge upon completion. The program was facilitated by university students who acted as mentors, providing clear guidance, technical support for AR usage, and reinforcing key health messages through mini-education sessions at each station.

The project produced meaningful impacts on both the Orang Asli community and the university students involved. At the community level, post-program assessments revealed a marked improvement in students' understanding of hygiene practices, healthy eating habits, and the importance of physical activity. This increase in knowledge was also accompanied by positive behavioral changes, with participants showing greater enthusiasm and accuracy in demonstrating proper handwashing techniques, indicating real, observable shifts in behavior. For the university students, the project served as a valuable platform for applying academic knowledge in real-world settings. They were actively involved in AR technology development, health education delivery, and community engagement—strengthening their practical, interdisciplinary skills. Furthermore, their role as facilitators allowed them to cultivate essential leadership, teaching, and mentorship capabilities through direct interaction with the children, aligning closely with the goals of experiential and service-based learning under the SULAM initiative.

The AR Healthy Explorers application presents strong potential for marketability and future scalability. Its content and framework can be easily adapted and expanded for broader health education initiatives across rural schools nationwide. As a low-cost and highly scalable digital tool, the app is well-suited for use in government-led health campaigns and non-governmental organization (NGO) initiatives targeting underserved communities. Its flexible design allows for the development of additional modules covering topics such as oral hygiene, environmental health, and mental wellness—enhancing its usability and extending its reach as a comprehensive platform for digital health education. With appropriate support, the app holds significant promise for both educational impact and sustainable deployment in community health programs.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of the project, several key recommendations are proposed. First, the AR modules should be integrated into the standard health curriculum in rural schools to allow continuous use without reliance on external facilitators. A "train-the-trainer" model can be developed to empower local teachers and community leaders with the skills needed to independently manage and implement AR-based learning activities. Additionally, the AR application should be updated annually to include a wider range of health topics—such as oral hygiene, environmental health, and mental wellness—to meet the evolving needs of the Orang Asli and other rural populations. From a research and development perspective, longitudinal studies should be conducted to assess long-term behavioral change and health outcomes resulting from the intervention. Collaborations with government agencies, NGOs, and health organizations are recommended to support broader deployment and funding. Lastly, publishing the project's findings in peer-reviewed platforms will contribute to the global discourse on technology-enhanced community health education and inspire similar innovations worldwide.

Table 1: The waste sources and variety of product to contribute for community

The waste (survey)	Sources	Potential of the product to be done	Target Community
Waste banana peel	The Banana	Packaging	Hayati Alam
Waste fish bone	Keropok Cap Kapal	Seedling Pot	Hayati Alam
Waste eggshell	Akok industry	Seedling Pot	Hayati Alam
Waste risk husk	Bernas Bhd	Seedling Pot	Hayati Alam
Waste coir fibre	Small Medium's Industries	Seedling Pot	Hayati Alam
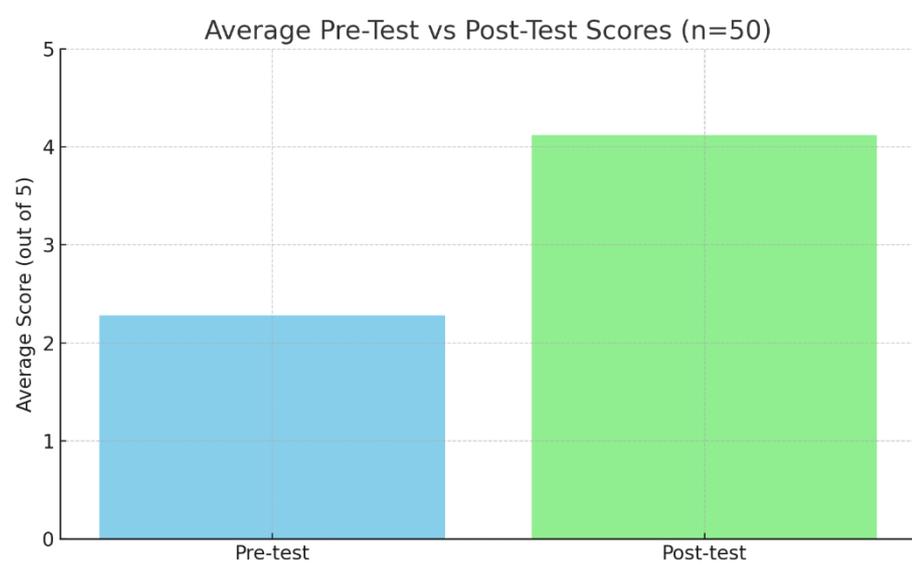
Figure 1: Average pre-test and post-test scores

The bar chart shows a clear improvement in students' health knowledge after taking part in the AR-based Healthy Explorace program. Before the program, 50 Orang Asli students scored an average of 2.3 out of 5 in the pre-test, reflecting limited understanding of key topics like handwashing, healthy eating, and basic first aid. After the intervention, the average post-test score rose significantly to over 4.1 out of 5, showing around an 80% improvement. This proves that the hands-on, AR-assisted approach made learning more engaging and effective, especially for students from low-literacy backgrounds. By allowing students to "see" virtual germs and apply the knowledge in real-time, the program helped turn abstract health concepts into meaningful actions. The success of this project supports the idea that technology-enhanced experiential learning, in line with the goals of SULAM, can greatly improve health literacy and encourage positive behavior change in rural and indigenous communities. It also shows strong potential to be scaled and used in similar settings across Malaysia.

This Figure 2 shows how Augmented Reality (AR) is used to make invisible germs visible on a person's hand. By using an AR app, animated "germ monsters" appear on the palm, turning a simple concept into a fun and visual learning experience. The germs are shown as cartoon-like bacteria and viruses, helping children understand where germs might be and why handwashing is important. This method is especially helpful for rural or low-literacy communities because it uses visuals instead of long explanations. It supports experiential learning and aligns with SULAM goals, where students bring creative solutions to real community needs.

Figure 2: Augmented Reality (AR) app germs.

Conclusion

In conclusion through the innovative use of Augmented Reality, this project successfully transformed hygiene education for the Orang Asli community, promoting meaningful behavioral change and providing an empowering learning experience for both school children and university students. The project exemplifies the transformative power of experiential, technology-enhanced service learning and offers a sustainable model for future health education initiatives in marginalized communities.

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EARTHSOS: OUR PLANET, OUR FUTURE

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Highlight: The *EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future* volunteer program fosters meaningful and educational engagement between Year 4 students of under the course PBK4204 Campaign and Event Management, Strategic Communication Program, Faculty of Education, Language and Communication, and students of Sekolah Kebangsaan Rakyat, Jalan Haji Bolhassan, Kuching, Sarawak. This project centered around the theme of climate crisis awareness and the program creates a collaborative platform for knowledge exchange and friendly interaction. Through a series of interactive and themed activities, the initiative aims to raise environmental consciousness among primary school students while allowing university participants to apply communication strategies in a real-world context. The program not only nurtures environmental stewardship among young learners but also enhances the civic responsibility and communication skills of the participating undergraduates. The participants were 89 undergraduate students from FELC, UNIMAS and 70 students from SK RAKYAT, Kuching.

Keywords: Communication, community awareness, climate action

Introduction

"EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future" is an environmental awareness campaign that is aimed at empowering the younger generations through the choices they make against climate crisis with the adoption of the 5 Rs of sustainability: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle. This SULAM project related on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 13 Climate Action. The campaign leverages hands-on initiatives, social media engagement, interactive activities, and digital storytelling to encourage the primary school students to learn how small actions can lessen the harmful effects of climate change. The goal is to foster a deeper understanding of the importance of combating the climate crisis, and the role of students can play in reducing waste and promoting sustainability within their schools and communities.

Climate change has become one of the most pressing global issues, with rising temperatures, extreme weather events, sea level rise, and biodiversity loss affecting communities worldwide. Students and young people will inherit the consequences of today's environmental decisions. However, despite being highly vulnerable, many lack access to adequate education or awareness about climate issues, sustainable practices, and their role in climate action. In many communities, especially in developing nations, climate change is still not a prioritized topic within the school curriculum or public discourse.

This lack of awareness can lead to apathy, misinformation, and unsustainable habits. The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education, through the SULAM framework, encourages university students to engage in real-life community service projects that integrate academic learning with civic

responsibility. This climate awareness campaign aligns perfectly with SULAM's objective to create socially responsible graduates. "EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future" was conceptualized to bridge the awareness gap through interactive, youth-friendly campaigns in schools and communities. By leveraging peer influence, multimedia tools, and hands-on activities, the project aims to inspire behavioral change and collective action among students.

Significance of Campaign

Students are future decision-makers, leaders, and change agents. Equipping them with knowledge and awareness about the climate crisis empowers them to make environmentally responsible choices and to advocate for sustainability within their communities. Despite the severity of the climate crisis, many students are unaware of its causes, consequences, or solutions. This project addresses that gap by translating complex climate science into relatable, engaging, and age-appropriate content. Awareness alone is not enough—EarthSOS promotes active learning through workshops, campaigns, and challenges that encourage students to adopt sustainable habits such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and advocating for green practices.

The project aligns with Malaysia's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement and supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly *-SDG 13: Climate Action.* For the university students involved in organizing the campaign, it provides real-world experience in project planning, communication, leadership, and civic engagement—key graduate attributes emphasized by the SULAM framework. Students often influence their peers and families. By targeting young minds, the project has the potential to initiate broader conversations and actions within households and local communities, amplifying the campaign's long-term impact.

Community Engagement- SULAM project

This project is designed to fulfill Course Learning Outcome 3 (CLO3), which emphasizes the importance of public engagement in evaluating students' communication and comprehension abilities—critical for addressing identified issues and achieving project goals. The initiative is structured around three key milestones. During Month 1 (Weeks 1−4), the focus is on "Project Planning and Initial Preparation," involving the definition of project objectives, formation of the core team, budget allocation, and a baseline survey. This phase, currently underway, is led by the director, deputy director, vice president, secretaries, and treasurers. In Month 2 (Weeks 5−8), the project transitions to the "Sponsorship and Materials Development" phase, which includes the creation of educational resources, promotional efforts, and engagement with potential sponsors and stakeholders.

Teams responsible at this stage include Sponsorship, Design, Media, and Outreach & Public Relations. Finally, in Month 3 (Weeks 9−12), the "Finalisation and Execution" phase begins, involving all committee members in delivering the campaign. The project will be officially launched at Sekolah Kebangsaan Rakyat in Kuching, Sarawak. Scheduled for January 8, 2025, the event will begin with student registration and the arrival of VIPs and guest speakers. The "EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future" awareness campaign will commence with the National and State Anthems, school song, Doa recitation, and a welcome address by the headmaster. A video presentation will showcase promotional materials and a PSA, followed by a keynote speech on the campaign's theme. A photo session and presentation of appreciation tokens to the VIPs will take place before a short refreshment break. The day will continue with interactive group activities, including a chair-building challenge using egg cartons and a DIY banner-making session. The event will conclude with a feedback-sharing session involving both students and teachers, followed by a closing ceremony.

Impacts of SULAM project

The SULAM project has had a significant impact in fostering environmental awareness and action among students and the wider school community. By deepening students' understanding of climate change, its causes, and its consequences, the project has encouraged more informed and responsible decision-making around sustainability. Educational initiatives combined with hands-on activities have empowered students to adopt practical environmental habits, particularly through the implementation of the 5 R's—Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle. As a result, communities have observed a reduction in waste generation, leading to cleaner surroundings and a healthier environment. Moreover, students have carried these sustainable practices beyond the classroom into their homes, promoting a ripple effect of positive behavioural change in waste management and environmental

stewardship. The project not only cultivates eco-conscious individuals but also lays the foundation for long-term community transformation.

SULAM project Outcome

The EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future initiative served as a practical platform for Year 4 students of the Strategic Communication Program to apply their academic knowledge and competencies in a real-world setting. Through collaborative efforts with primary school students of Sekolah Kebangsaan Rakyat, Jalan Haji Bolhassan, the program emphasized awareness-raising activities centered on the climate crisis. Student reflections reveal significant growth in few key areas of learning especially on knowledge, skills, and attitudes directly aligned with the course learning outcomes. The EarthSOS program offered a meaningful experiential learning opportunity, bridging academic knowledge with community outreach. Student reflections affirm the program's effectiveness in reinforcing course learning outcomes and nurturing well-rounded communicators equipped for both professional roles and civic responsibility.

Participation in the program significantly enriched students' learning across cognitive, practical, and affective domains. Academically, they demonstrated a deeper understanding of campaign planning and environmental communication by effectively applying theoretical concepts such as audience analysis, message framing, and strategic media use to design engaging, age-appropriate activities. This hands-on experience bridged the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, as one student reflected, "Designing activities for young students required us to rethink how we simplify messages without losing their essence. It made theory come alive." The program also cultivated essential soft and technical skills, including project coordination, teamwork, public speaking, content creation, and time management—skills vital for their professional growth. As one participant noted, "Working with teammates and adapting to a live school environment improved my flexibility and boosted my confidence in managing events under pressure." On a personal level, students developed a stronger sense of empathy, social responsibility, and ethical awareness. Their interaction with children deepened their commitment to community service and environmental advocacy, with one student remarking, "Seeing the children's enthusiasm made me realize how powerful and necessary our role is as communicators for change."

Future Recommendations to The Community/SULAM Project

To enhance the reach and impact of the Community/SULAM Project, it is recommended to broaden collaboration with more primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions, particularly in rural and underserved areas, to ensure inclusive participation across different age groups and regions. Integrating climate education into formal school curricula by working with education authorities will help embed environmental awareness within the academic framework, with EarthSOS materials serving as supplementary or pilot resources.

The development of a digital learning platform such as an interactive website or mobile app can further extend the project's accessibility, offering modules, videos, quizzes, and eco-project ideas for continuous learning beyond in-person sessions. Introducing a "Green Ambassador Program" will empower trained students to take on leadership roles in sustainability advocacy, peer education, and school-based eco-clubs. To increase visibility and engagement, national-level campaigns and competitions (e.g., poster contests, short film challenges, and innovation pitches) should be launched, encouraging students to creatively express and act on climate issues.

Collaboration with local authorities, environmental NGOs, and green technology companies can bring in valuable resources, mentorship, and sponsorship for localised environmental initiatives. Community participation can be expanded through family- and neighbourhood-based activities like clean-up drives, tree planting, recycling campaigns, and workshops on sustainable living. To ensure continual improvement, the project should adopt robust tools for impact assessment and feedback collection, allowing for transparent evaluation and informed development. Securing long-term funding through corporate CSR programmes, governmental grants, or environmental foundations will be crucial for sustaining and scaling the initiative. Finally, producing a comprehensive Climate Action Toolkit including ready-made lesson plans, activity guides, and presentation slides will enable other schools or student bodies to independently implement the EarthSOS model, fostering wider replication and long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the EarthSOS: Our Planet, Our Future campaign has laid a vital foundation for raising climate crisis awareness among students by promoting knowledge, engagement, and action. Through the SULAM framework, this project has successfully connected academic learning with real-world community impact, empowering students to become informed, responsible, and proactive citizens in the face of a global environmental challenge. Moving forward, the expansion and continuity of this initiative are crucial. By scaling outreach efforts, deepening partnerships, and integrating innovative digital tools, EarthSOS can evolve into a nationwide movement that fosters a generation committed to sustainability. As climate challenges intensify, the role of education and youth empowerment becomes even more critical—making this campaign not only relevant, but necessary for our planet's future.

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HOSPITALITY-BASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH ORPHANS: A SULAM PROJECT AT PEKAYATIM, KOTA BHARU

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Highlight: The below is a service-learning project entitled Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai that was conducted under the SULAM model in PEKAYATIM, Kota Bharu. The project aimed at engaging orphans of the age group 7-19 in hospitality activities, enhancing experiential learning and emotional development through cooking classes and hotel towel folding demonstration. The project involved fourteen orphans and ten student volunteers, whose aim was to promote confidence, communication, and social bonding. Findings reveal increased confidence and involvement of the orphans, while student volunteers gain leadership, sympathy, and hands-on experience in hospitality. The project emphasizes the value of integrating service learning into hospitality education for both students and disadvantaged societies.

Keywords: Hospitality, Service Learning, Volunteerism, Orphans, Community Engagement, Experiential Learning

Introduction

This SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia University for Society) volunteerism activity was conducted as part of the HPT30203 Volunteerism subject by students of Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. As one of the higher education policies of Malaysia to develop holistic and experiential learning, the SULAM concept targets community involvement, social responsibility, and student-focused learning through experiential learning. This complements the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2015−2025), whereby it is promoted that universities generate graduates with excellent character, leadership, and civic responsibility.

Conducted on 17 May 2025 at Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Yatim Kelantan (PEKAYATIM), this community-based initiative aimed to address a notable gap in access to hospitality education among underprivileged youth. Many orphans and under-resourced children lack opportunities to acquire practical life skills, confidence, and industry exposure that could enhance their future employability. This project was designed to offer experiential learning through hands-on hospitality-related activities while nurturing emotional development and social connection.

The primary beneficiaries were 14 orphans aged 7 to 19, who participated in a half-day program led by 10 student volunteers. The activities included ice-breaking games, a culinary workshop featuring sandwich and fruit salad preparation, and hotel-style towel folding demonstrations (e.g., Swan, Crab, Heart, and Artichoke). The program's objectives were to introduce hospitality skills in an engaging environment, instil empathy and leadership among students, and strengthen university-community ties.

Both the orphans and the volunteers responded positively to the program. The children showed greater engagement and confidence, while the student participants reported improved communication skills, compassion, and a deeper sense of purpose. This project exemplifies the role of service learning in developing holistic graduates and demonstrates how hospitality education can be applied beyond the classroom to foster social impact and empowerment (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Background of SULAM project

The Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai project was conceptualized under Universiti Malaysia Kelantan's HPT30203 Volunteerism course, aligning with the Service-Learning Malaysia–University for Society (SULAM) framework. This framework emphasizes the integration of academic learning with community service, aiming to develop graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also socially responsible (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015).

Community-based learning models, such as service learning, are grounded in experiential learning theory, which suggests that knowledge is constructed through active participation and reflection (Kolb, 1984). In hospitality education, experiential and service-learning approaches provide students with real-world exposure that enhances both technical and soft skills, including teamwork, empathy, leadership, and problem-solving (Barth, 2011; Ruhanen, 2005). These methods are particularly effective in preparing students for people-centred industries like hospitality, where interpersonal communication and community engagement are essential.

Several studies support the positive impact of service learning on student development and community well-being. For example, Bringle and Hatcher (1996) argue that service learning enhances students' civic engagement, academic outcomes, and interpersonal growth. Similarly, Holdsworth and Quinn (2010) highlight the importance of volunteering in fostering personal transformation and institutional connection within higher education.

This project also addressed a specific social need limited access to life and vocational skills among orphans and underprivileged youth. Research by Eyler and Giles (1999) emphasized that structured service-learning programs can empower marginalized groups by offering emotional support, role modelling, and practical skills, while also enriching the student learning experience.

By engaging underprivileged children in sandwich-making, fruit salad preparation, and hotel-style towel folding activities, the Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai project created a platform for dual impact: enriching the educational journey of hospitality students and supporting the psychosocial and skill development of orphaned youth. Unlike most service-learning projects which focus on teaching or environmental work, this initiative is unique in its use of hospitality specific skills as a medium for emotional support and engagement. It demonstrates the relevance of combining hospitality training with social outreach, aligned with global calls for socially conscious and community-engaged higher education (UNESCO, 2017).

Important of SULAM project

This project plays a vital role in fostering both educational growth and social impact by merging hospitality education with community service. By providing orphans with fundamental hospitality skills in a warm and encouraging environment, the initiative helps them develop confidence, enhance communication abilities, and strengthen their sense of belonging. Simultaneously, student volunteers gain firsthand experience in hospitality practices, leadership, and teamwork, reinforcing their empathy and social responsibility. This project goes beyond traditional classroom learning, offering real-world interactions that create lasting connections between academia and the community. The simple yet meaningful activities, such as food preparation and hotel-style towel folding, serve as powerful tools to uplift and empower underprivileged children while making them feel valued. Through the seamless integration of education and kindness, Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai demonstrates how hospitality can be leveraged to inspire social change, foster inclusivity, and cultivate a sense of purpose for both the children and the volunteers involved.

Methodology of SULAM project

The project was implemented as a half-day program on 17 May 2025 at PEKAYATIM. A total of 14 orphans and 10 student volunteers participated. Activities included structured icebreakers, sandwich and fruit salad preparation workshops, and hotel-style towel folding tutorials. These modules were selected to introduce participants to foundational hospitality practices in a fun and engaging manner.

Evaluation of the project's impact was conducted through multiple feedback tools. Each student volunteer was encouraged to write a reflection journal after the event. In their journals, they shared their personal feelings, what they learned, and how they felt the children responded to the activities. This helped the team understand how the project affected them both personally and academically.

In addition, verbal feedback was collected from the staff at PEKAYATIM and the facilitators. They shared their observations on how the children interacted, how much they enjoyed the activities, and whether they showed signs of increased confidence or interest. The feedback showed that the children were more active, smiled more, and looked proud of what they accomplished, especially during the cooking and towel-folding sessions.

These simple feedback methods helped the team to understand the strengths of the program and areas that could be improved for future projects. They also highlighted how such a short program could still leave a lasting impression on both the orphans and the student volunteers.

Facilitators, comprising course instructors and appointed team leaders from among the students, played a critical role in guiding activities, ensuring smooth transitions, and supporting both the volunteers and the children throughout the program. Ethical considerations were prioritized due to the involvement of minors. Volunteers were thoroughly briefed on child-sensitive communication, appropriate behavior, and the importance of maintaining a respectful, inclusive environment. Informed verbal consent was obtained from the orphanage management prior to the event.

Description of SULAM project

The "Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai" project was a community initiative developed by Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students under the HPT30203 Volunteerism course. Conducted on 17 May 2025 at Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Yatim Kelantan (PEKAYATIM), the project aimed to promote happiness, knowledge, and a sense of belonging among 14 orphans aged 7–19. Supported by 10 student volunteers from the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness, the half-day program featured interactive activities such as ice-breaker games, sandwich and fruit salad preparation, and towel folding tutorials using hotel-style techniques.

The goal was not only to teach basic hospitality skills but also to empower the children by fostering confidence, recognition, and a sense of being valued. For the students, the project served as a practical extension of their academic training, providing meaningful exposure to community service and people-centred learning.

The impact of SULAM project towards the community

The project had a positive impact on both the orphanage participants and the student volunteers. The children gained more than just a recreational experience; they developed new skills, grew in confidence, and experienced a supportive learning environment. Their engagement in hands-on activities such as culinary preparation and towel folding served as a valuable outlet for creative and emotional expression.

For the student volunteers, the project deepened their understanding of hospitality beyond the classroom. It enhanced their soft skills, including empathy, teamwork, and communication. By applying their academic knowledge in a real-world setting, they also cultivated a greater sense of social responsibility. This project demonstrated that hospitality education can serve as a meaningful bridge between academic learning and community enrichment.

Commercial value in terms of marketability of the SULAM project

Although the primary aim of Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai was social development and community engagement, the project also holds potential for commercial value, particularly in promoting hospitality-based experiential learning as a scalable service model. The hands-on modules such as towel folding, and simple food preparation can be developed into packaged hospitality training workshops for schools, NGOs, or community centres. These workshops can generate income while simultaneously promoting hospitality, education and social responsibility.

Furthermore, the positive public perception and goodwill generated by such CSR-aligned projects can enhance the branding and marketability of the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. This initiative demonstrates the faculty's commitment to holistic education that blends practical skills with values, which may attract future students, sponsors, and institutional collaborations. In essence, this model can be replicated and adapted as a sustainable social enterprise that brings commercial viability alongside meaningful impact.

Future recommendations of SULAM project

To enhance the sustainability and long-term impact of this SULAM project, several strategies can be adopted for future implementation. Firstly, the project can be replicated in other regions by extending the program to orphanages, rural schools, or community homes across Kelantan and other states in Malaysia. This would allow a broader group of underprivileged children to benefit from the initiative.

Secondly, incorporating entrepreneurship elements would add valuable life skills. For example, modules on packaging and selling handmade sandwiches or creatively folded towels could teach basic business concepts and encourage self-sustainability among the children. This would also introduce them to real-world applications of hospitality in a commercial context. Long-term engagement should also be considered, such as establishing follow-up visits, mentorship programs, or periodic workshops. These efforts would help maintain relationships with the children and allow project teams to track their personal development over time.

Another key recommendation is to collaborate with industry partners, such as local hotels, cafes, or food and beverage businesses. These partnerships could provide material support, co-organize workshops, or offer short-term internships for both the orphans and student volunteers, further strengthening the bridge between academia and industry. In addition, promoting the project through digital documentation would help raise awareness and encourage wider support. Creating social media content or short documentary videos could attract sponsors and inspire similar initiatives at other institutions or within other faculties.

Finally, feedback-based improvement should be implemented by collecting input from participants and volunteers. Surveys, informal interviews, and reflection sessions can provide valuable insights that help refine and improve future iterations of the program, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness for both students and the communities they serve.

Figure 1: Our SULAM project at PEKAYATIM

Conclusion

The "Sentuhan Hospitaliti, Kasih Disemai" project effectively merged academic instruction with community outreach, offering meaningful benefits to both orphans and university students. Through hands-on hospitality activities, the children gained confidence and practical skills, while the volunteers developed empathy, leadership, and social awareness. Despite its success, the project was limited by its short duration and the small number of participants. Future implementations should consider longer engagement periods and broader outreach to enhance impact. Expanding this model to other underserved communities and integrating entrepreneurship elements could further strengthen its sustainability. This project affirms the potential of hospitality education to contribute to community development. By embedding service learning into the curriculum, higher education institutions can cultivate compassionate, skilled graduates equipped to make a positive societal impact.

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SULAM @ ANGGERIK: TRANSFORMING WASTE INTO WEALTH FOR COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

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Highlight: This project was conducted under AGR4303 Crop Nutrition, an elective course offered in Semester II 2023/2024 by the Department of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in collaboration with Apartment Anggerik, Puchong, Selangor. It is designed to achieve CLO3: Explain the sources, absorption, and metabolism of nutrient elements, and is mapped to PO7: Lifelong learning and information management by encouraging students to engage with the community beyond the classroom. Through the transformation of organic waste into fertilizer, students apply scientific knowledge in real-life contexts while managing and disseminating relevant information. The project promotes self-directed learning, information literacy, and civic responsibility, aligning with lifelong learning principles and empowering students to make meaningful contributions to sustainable community development.

Keywords: Service-Learning, Organic Fertilizer, Community Engagement, Lifelong Learning

Introduction

Household kitchen waste, if not properly managed, contributes significantly to urban solid waste problems (Ashtab & Gong, 2020). However, this organic waste can be transformed into compost, offering a sustainable and cost-effective solution for the development of community urban farming. Compost serves as a natural soil amendment that reduces reliance on expensive synthetic fertilizers, which are often subject to price fluctuations (Vos et al., 2025). It also improves soil structure and nutrient retention, leading to more efficient nutrient use and lower input costs over time, while helping to reduce the burden on landfills (Chali & Genati, 2021; Jin et al., 2022). This cost-effective alternative contributes to the financial sustainability of small-scale and community farming initiatives, particularly in urban settings, while also raising awareness of environmental stewardship within the local community.(Doughmi et al., 2024; Hara et al., 2011). To address these issues and promote sustainable practices, several composting techniques, such as DIY compost bins, vermicomposting, hot composting, and liquid composting, were introduced to the community of Urban Farm Apartment Anggerik, Puchong, Selangor, which is predominantly composed of B40 households. These practical, low-cost methods enable the conversion of kitchen waste into organic fertilizer (Sulaiman et al., 2023), supporting the production of healthy crops while providing the community with access to fresh, affordable, and nutritious vegetables for household consumption.

This initiative was part of a community-based project implemented by students enrolled in the AGR4303 Crop Nutrition course during Semester 2, 2023/2024, from the Bachelor of Agricultural Science with Honours and Bachelor of Horticultural Science with Honours programmes by the Department of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture, Universiti Putra Malaysia. In addition to promoting

environmental sustainability, the project supported academic learning outcomes, Explain the importance of nutrient supply to crop productivity (CLO3). It also fostered lifelong learning and information management (PO7) skills through active community engagement, which was evaluated by the community itself using a rubric provided via Google Form, contributing 8% to the final course assessment. Furthermore, students completed a structured report, including a reflective component, which was evaluated using a separate rubric and contributed an additional 10% to their final grade.

Objective of SULAM project

To provide students with hands-on learning experiences that deepen their understanding of nutrient management through the practical application of composting techniques, while fostering lifelong learning skills and promoting sustainable organic waste management within the community.

Project Implementation

Figure 1 illustrates a step-by-step timeline of a student-led SULAM project under the AGR4303 Crop Nutrition course, focusing on the implementation of composting techniques in collaboration with the Apartment Anggerik community.

Figure 1: Timeline of Student-Led Community Engagement Project on Composting Techniques at Apartment Anggerik

In Week 2, students conducted a meet-and-greet session to understand the community's needs regarding organic waste management. In Week 3, a brainstorming session was held where students selected four relevant composting methods, which are hot composting, liquid composting, a DIY buried compost bin, and vermicomposting. Week 4 focused on activity planning and material preparation. Students were encouraged to use recycled items where possible, while the lecturer covered essential costs. From Week 7 to 10, each group implemented their composting activity, including demonstrations and explanations on compost application and nutrient-related plant symptoms. Community members evaluated these sessions using a rubric via Google Form, which can be accessed at https://forms.gle/2EPyoxeokcbu687M6 (Figure 2), contributing 8% to the final course mark.

Figure 2: Community-Based Assessment Rubric for AGR4303 Crop Nutrition SULAM Activity on Organic Fertilizer Production

In Week 12, students submitted a report and reflection, evaluated using a rubric (Figure 3) that contributed 10% to their final assessment. Combined with the 8% from the community evaluation, this brought the total contribution of the SULAM activity to 18% of the overall course marks (Figure 4). This

project not only enhanced students' hands-on learning but also strengthened their lifelong learning skills through active community engagement.

AGR4303 CROP NUTRITION
RUBRIC FOR SULAM REPORT
SEMESTER II 2023/2024

Criteria	Excellent (4 marks)	Good (3 marks)	Satisfactory (2 marks)	Needs Improvement (1 mark)	Total Marks (10)
Self-Learning through Community Activity (2%)	Demonstrates excellent self-learning and applies new knowledge effectively in a report	Demonstrates good learning and adapts based on feedback and observations	Adequate ability to learn from the community activity experience	Limited ability to learn from community involvement	
Initiative in Community Activity (3%)	Demonstrates excellent initiative; solves problems, and delivers insightful reports	Demonstrates good initiative; actively contributes and reflects effort in report	Shows moderate initiative; participates with some independent effort	Demonstrates limited initiative; needs prompting to participate or report	
Reflection (5%)	Thorough reflection well-explained	Good reflection mostly clear	Basic reflection somewhat clear	Minimal reflection unclear	
*Marks calculation	(Marks given based on level applicability/4) × percentage attribute				

Figure 3: Assessment Rubric for AGR4303 SULAM Report for Semester II 2023/2024

Tarikh : 15/10/2024

BAHAGIAN AKADEMIK
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

SENARAI PECAHAN MARKAH KESELURUHAN MENGIKUT KOD KURSUS DAN KUMPULAN
SEMESTER KEDUA SESI 2023/2024

Fakulti : FAKULTI PERTANIAN
Pensyarah : NOR ELLIZA BINTI TAJIDIN
Kursus : AGR4303 PEMAKANAN TANAMAN
Kumpulan : 1
Program : BACELOR SAINS HORTIKULTUR DENGAN KEPUJIAN
Klasifikasi : 07

BIL.	MATRIK	NAMA	KERJA KURSUS 60 60%																	AKHIR 100 40%					MARKAH PENUH	GRED
			PENILAIAN MINGGU 1-7 98 20%				PENILAIAN MINGGU 8-12 12 12%		PENILAIAN BERTERUSAN 28 28%								PO1 34 14%		PO3 66 26%					
			PO1 76 16%		PO3 22 4%		PO2 12 12%		LAPORAN 10 10%		KERJA KUMPULAN 8 8%		TUGASAN 10 10%											
									PO7 10 10%		PO7 8 8%		PO7 10 10%											
1.	208780	ZHANG YUXI	37	7.55	11	2.25	7	7	9.3	9.3	8	8	9.48	9.48	4	1.6	30	12	57.18	C+
2.	209824	NUR HANA DAMIA BINTI NOR AKMAL	46	8.39	22	4.49	12	12	9.2	9.2	8	8	9.03	9.03	18	7.6	28	11.2	70.91	B+
3.	209965	SITI NURNAJWA BINTI ZULKARNIEN	40	8.16	14	2.80	10.93	10.93	9.2	9.2	8	8	9.03	9.03	17	6.8	36	14.4	69.38	B
4.	210127	ALINI BATRISYIA BINTI MOHD HANIFF	59	12.04	16	3.27	12	12	9.3	9.3	8	8	9.48	9.48	24	9.6	41	16.4	80.09	A
5.	210179	MUHAMMAD AQIL BIN AZHAM	70	14.29	22	4.49	12	12	9.3	9.3	8	8	9.48	9.48	23	9.2	33	13.2	79.98	A
6.	210291	NUR IZZATI NADZIRAH BINTI HASNULALIUDIN	51	10.41	20	4.08	11.07	11.07	9.3	9.3	8	8	9.48	9.48	18	7.2	41	16.4	75.94	A-

Figure 4: Final Mark Breakdown for AGR4303 Crop Nutrition Course for Semester II 2023/2024. The red rectangular section highlights 18% of the marks allocated for the SULAM activity, which includes community evaluation (8%) and report and reflection submission (10%) by the students.

Impact of the Project on Students and the Community

The project had a meaningful impact on both students and the local community. For students, it provided hands-on experience in applying composting techniques and reinforced their understanding of nutrient management in real-life settings. It also enhanced essential soft skills and information management. By engaging directly with the community, students developed a deeper sense of social responsibility and a lifelong learning mindset (Figure 5).

We also gained new gardening techniques and tricks essential for successful urban farming. We are learning about soil preparation, transplanting methods, and the specific needs of various plants to enrich our horticultural knowledge. For instance, understanding the importance of minimizing seedling stress during transplantation has equipped us with the skills to ensure healthier plant growth.

Furthermore, the program introduced us to composting practices, an invaluable aspect of sustainable gardening. We learned how to create compost using kitchen scraps and garden waste, promoting a circular approach to waste management. This not only reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills but also provides nutrient-rich soil for our plants, enhancing their growth and productivity.

In addition to these practical skills, the program fostered a sense of community and environmental management. By working together towards a common goal, we strengthened our bonds with community members and cultivated a shared responsibility for our local environment. This collaborative effort has instilled a sense of pride and ownership, motivating us to continue supporting urban farming initiatives and contributing to food security and sustainability in our community.

Example of a student's reflection: Applied composting knowledge, engaged the community, and reflected on the learning experience effectively to achieve the PLO7

Figure 5: Example Reflection from Student Report on AGR4303 SULAM Project

For the community, the project increased their knowledge awareness of sustainable organic waste management and introduced practical, low-cost composting methods suitable for urban households. Figure 6a shows a significant increase in knowledge among participants, with most scoring 5 before the program and 10 after, indicating the program's substantial impact on improving community awareness and understanding. Community members benefited from knowledge transfer that supported healthier food production and reduced dependence on chemical fertilizers. The initiative empowered residents, particularly those from low-income groups, to take an active role in environmental stewardship and urban farming, while also creating opportunities to generate extra income through composting and homegrown produce (Figure 6b).

Figure 6: Improvement in Community Knowledge and Income Potential Through Urban Farming and Composting Practices. Survey Response on Knowledge Level (a) and Organic Vegetables Produced by the Urban Farm Community of Apartment Anggerik (Photo taken on 15 November 2024 featuring Mrs. Nor Hafizatul Zalilah binti Hamad Sabri and her daughter selling freshly harvested organic vegetables from the community farm.) (b)

Commercial Value and Knowledge Transfer

The project helped the community earn extra income by selling organic vegetables (Figure 6b) and vermicast tea in 30 mL bottles for RM3 each to interested residents (Figure 7a). It also shared knowledge beyond the main group by teaching nearby kindergarten students about organic farming, helping young children learn the importance of sustainability from an early age (Figure 7b). This project not only provided financial support to the community but also educated others about eco-friendly practices.

Figure 7: Figure 7. Vermicast Tea Bottled for Sale and (a) and Organic Farming Education for Kindergarten Students Near Apartment Anggerik (b)

Conclusion

This project allowed students to apply their classroom knowledge in real-life situations. The community learned how to turn kitchen waste into compost and use it for farming. Some community members also began selling organic vegetables and vermicast tea to earn extra income. Overall, this initiative supported student learning, promoted environmental care, and strengthened community relationships. It is recommended that this project be continued with other communities and future batches of students to expand its positive impact and promote broader awareness of sustainable practices.

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DRONE & DISCOVER: CONSERVATION EDUCATION FROM ABOVE

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Highlight: This SULAM project attached to ENE3203-Sustainable Forest Management course for Natural Resources Science students. It demonstrates the innovative use of drone technology to engage primary school children in environmental conservation. By capturing aerial images of local natural areas, drones provided a dynamic visual tool that enhanced students' understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem importance. The project was implemented at Sekolah Kebangsaan Jeli, Kelantan involving interactive lessons where 295 school children learned to identify flora, fauna, and signs of environmental changes. The hands-on approach increased student engagement and fostered environmental stewardship from an early age. The pre- and post-survey results showed a 4.75% increase in school children's awareness of monitoring endangered species and an 11.53% improvement in their understanding of forest conservation. This approach shows that integrating modern technology such as drones into education can make learning about nature more accessible and impactful for young learners. The success of this project underscores its potential for integration into the Malaysian early education curriculum, supporting broader efforts to cultivate environmental awareness and conservation values among young learners.

Keywords: Drone technology, environmental education, conservation awareness, primary school, biodiversity, interactive learning

Introduction

Despite Malaysia's rich biodiversity, conservation literacy among rural schoolchildren remains low, particularly in understanding endangered species and forest preservation (Mustafa et al., 2019). This gap highlights the urgent need for innovative, accessible approaches to environmental education. Technology-enhanced learning tools have shown promise in improving environmental awareness by making content more interactive and engaging (Kamaruddin et al., 2020; Lee & Abdullah, 2022). When embedded in school programs, such tools can foster lasting attitudes and behaviors toward nature conservation.

In the other hand, environmental conservation education is crucial in developing responsible attitudes among young learners. Traditional classroom methods often lack engagement and real-world connection. Drones, as emerging technology, offer unique opportunities to visualize and explore the

environment from new perspectives. This project aimed to use drone technology at primary school level to enhance primary students' understanding of conservation, biodiversity, and sustainable practices.

In the digital era, technology-enhanced learning can play a vital role in environmental education, especially for young learners. This SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia–University for Society) initiative was designed to improve conservation awareness among primary school children in Kelantan through drone-assisted teaching. Conducted at Sekolah Kebangsaan Jeli, the project created an opportunity for students to connect more meaningfully with their environment while providing practical service-learning experience for university students. The approach aligns with national education and sustainability goals by fostering early environmental stewardship.

Drone Technology in STEM and Environmental Education

Recent advancements in drone technology have opened new avenues for experiential learning in STEM fields. However, while drones are increasingly used in secondary and tertiary education, evidence on their effectiveness in primary school environmental education is limited. Kamaruddin et al., (2020) note that while ICT tools enhance student engagement, few studies have evaluated the outcomes of drone-mediated learning among younger learners.

Meanwhile, children in rural regions such as Jeli are often immersed in natural environments, yet they may not fully understand the value of these ecosystems or the importance of protecting them. Conventional environmental education in classrooms is often limited to textbooks, offering little real-world connection. This project addressed the gap by leveraging drone technology to capture real-time visuals of the school's local ecosystem and/or forest models, turning them into an immersive educational experience. The initiative not only brought technology into a rural classroom but also addressed a broader goal by encouraging environmental stewardship from a young age. By combining conservation with hands-on learning, the project supported national education aspirations for sustainability while strengthening the role of universities as agents of community empowerment. This project addresses that gap by integrating drones into forest conservation modules, allowing students to participate in simulated species monitoring activities.

Project Description

The project involved a series of structured activities beginning with drone introduction, function and benefits to drone flights which was conducted by university students and facilitators to capture aerial images and videos of the school's natural surroundings and forest models developed by the class. These visuals were then used in a series of interactive lessons designed to engage students in topics such as biodiversity identification, environmental observation, and understanding human impact on nature. Activities included drawing based on drone imagery, storytelling sessions, group discussions, and simple mapping tasks. The university team also facilitated short training sessions for teachers to ensure continuity in using the materials after the project concluded. The project culminated in a mini-exhibition where students presented their work, reinforcing the learning outcomes and building confidence. Throughout the project, students were encouraged to ask questions, express ideas, and think critically about how they can protect their local environment.

Impacts and Educational Benefits

This project delivered multiple positive impacts to both the local community and the university participants. For the community, particularly the students of Sekolah Kebangsaan Jeli, it increased awareness and appreciation of their local natural environment and introduced new digital tools in the classroom besides strengthening STEM education. Teachers benefited from exposure to innovative teaching approaches and materials that could be adapted for future use. For university students, the project provided a platform to apply their knowledge in drone technology, environmental science, and education in a real-world context. They also developed soft skills such as leadership, communication, and teamwork. Overall, the project successfully fulfilled the principles of SULAM by delivering mutual educational value and fostering a spirit of social responsibility through meaningful engagement.

Among output from the use of drone technology in environmental education showed promising results, with a 4.75% increase in awareness of monitoring endangered species and an 11.53% improvement in understanding forest conservation. The highest gain was 14.57% increase of students'

recognition of drones' ability to detect environmental changes, proving its effectiveness as an educational tool as shown in figure 1. Data taken from pre-and-post survey carried out in this project.
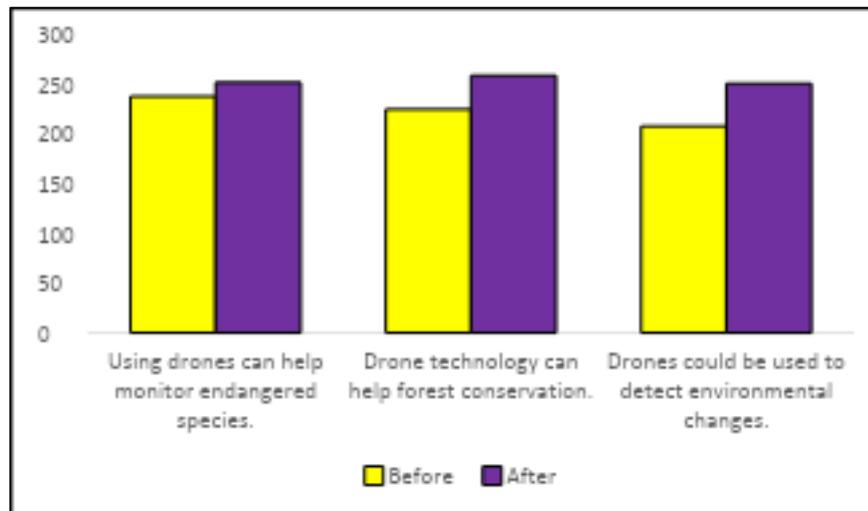

Figure 1: Increasing of level of understanding on drone, conservation and environmental changes among school children

Marketability and Commercial Potential

Although the project was primarily educational, it carries potential for commercialization in several areas. The visual content and lesson modules developed from the drone footage could be packaged into a drone-assisted environmental education kit for use in other schools. Training workshops for teachers in rural and semi-urban schools could also be developed, allowing them to independently use drone footage in their classrooms. These products and services could appeal to government agencies, NGOs, or corporate CSR programs focused on environmental awareness or digital education. Additionally, customized drone-based content could be marketed to private educational institutions or tourism centres seeking to create place-based environmental learning materials.

Conclusion and Future Recommendations

The use of drone technology in this SULAM project successfully enhanced conservation education among primary school children, demonstrating how technology and service learning can intersect to create impactful community programs. By making conservation topics visually engaging and personally relevant, the project encouraged students to develop a stronger connection with their environment. The hands-on, collaborative approach also offered a valuable learning experience for university students. Moving forward, this initiative could be expanded to other rural schools in Malaysia, with enhancements such as the integration of augmented reality (AR) for deeper immersion. Establishing strategic partnerships with environmental agencies and education ministries could support the development of a scalable model. Furthermore, securing grants or CSR funding could allow for the development of commercially viable educational packages based on this model, contributing to both environmental education and community development.

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SULAM@MYLAWA: EMPOWERING RURAL COMMUNITIES AGAINST ZOONOTIC MALARIA FROM CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY

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Highlight: The core highlight was the successful implementation of a Monkey Malaria Awareness Program targeting a high-risk rural community in Ladang Tradewind, Sungai Relai, Gua Musang. Educational content was contextualised to the local environment, ensuring relevance and community engagement. The project featured engaging health education booths using flip charts, videos, original songs, bed net demonstrations, and wall spraying mock setups. These exhibits made complex vector control strategies easy to understand for participants of all ages. The project featured engaging health education booths using flip charts, videos, original songs, bed net demonstrations, and wall spraying mock setups. These exhibits made complex vector control strategies easy to understand for participants of all ages. Students applied their academic understanding of vector-borne diseases, parasitology, and zoonoses in a real-world setting, bridging theory with practice. It also reinforced their skills in communication, leadership, and empathy. The project demonstrated the power of intersectoral collaboration involving the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Kelantan State Health Department (JKNK), and the local community. This reflects the One Health principle—linking human, animal, and environmental health.

Keywords: Zoonotic Malaria, One Health, Community Engagement, Parasitology Education, Service Learning (SULAM)

Introduction

Zoonotic malaria, particularly *Plasmodium knowlesi* infection, has emerged as a major public health concern in Malaysia (WHO, 2023). Unlike traditional forms of malaria, *P. knowlesi* is a simian parasite transmitted from macaques to humans by *Anopheles* mosquitoes in the leucosphyrus group (Singh et al., 2004). Its sylvatic transmission cycle complicates elimination efforts, particularly in forest-fringe and rural areas where human-wildlife interactions are common due to agricultural activities and land-use changes (Yusof et al., 2020).

MYLAWA is the LAWA model of Malaysia Chapter. MYLAWA promotes interdisciplinary collaboration to address Zoonotic Malaria in Malaysia with a One Health approach. This program was funded by Chevron Corp. through Southeast Asia One Health University Network (SEAOHUN). The MYLAWA initiative was developed as a community based One Health program to promote education and risk reduction strategies for zoonotic malaria in endemic regions. Integrating

this national effort with academic service learning provides a unique opportunity to apply scientific knowledge in real-world settings.

Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) is a transformative educational approach that combines academic learning with meaningful community engagement. Anchored in experiential pedagogy, SULAM empowers students to apply subject knowledge to address societal challenges, thereby fostering civic responsibility, communication, and collaborative problem-solving skills (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2019).

This paper describes the implementation of a SULAM-integrated parasitology outreach under the MYLAWA program, where undergraduate students of Doctor Veterinary Medicine delivered awareness programs on monkey malaria to vulnerable rural communities. By bridging a part of classroom knowledge with field engagement, this initiative underscores the role of parasitology education in combating neglected zoonotic diseases while nurturing community-centric scientific literacy.

Background of the SULAM Project

On 19 February 2025, a community engagement project was conducted at Ladang Tradewind, Sungai Relai, Gua Musang, as part of the SULAM initiative. This project was organised under the subject of Veterinary Parasitology II with the aim of translating academic knowledge into a practical community benefit. Seven students were engaged with 200 oil-palm workers, who are mostly Bangladeshi and Indonesian. The program was made possible through strategic collaboration between Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Kelantan State Health Department (JKNK) and Gua Musang District Health Office (PKDGM) (Figure 1). The project targeted rural communities living near forest fringes, who are at higher risk of zoonotic diseases, including monkey malaria (Plasmodium knowlesi), due to their close interaction with natural ecosystems and wildlife. This engagement served as a platform for students to apply classroom learning in real-world scenarios, while simultaneously enhancing public health awareness through education, risk communication, and local capacity-building. The collaboration reflects the spirit of One Health and aligns with national efforts to address emerging zoonoses in vulnerable regions.

The Importance of the SULAM@MYLAWA project?

This project is important because it addresses a critical public health concern in rural and forest-fringe communities—the rising threat of zoonotic malaria, particularly *Plasmodium knowlesi*, which is transmitted from macaques to humans. Many community members lack awareness of the risk factors, prevention strategies, and early symptoms of the disease. By involving university students in this community-based initiative, the project not only enhances scientific knowledge transfer but also empowers students to develop communication, leadership, and civic responsibility. It supports national *One Health* goals, fosters university-community collaboration, and ensures that vulnerable populations receive culturally appropriate, accessible health education, ultimately contributing to disease prevention and improved community well-being.

Project Description

The SULAM project featured a Monkey Malaria Awareness Program that included pre- and post-questionnaire surveys, and health education exhibitions using flip charts, videos, songs, mosquito net demonstrations, and wall spraying techniques. Interactive components such as malaria-themed games and competitions, including "Dart Against Malaria," "Safe Clothing Parade," "Malaria Survival Race: Outrun the Mosquitoes!" (Figure 3), malaria quizzes, and colouring contests were also conducted to enhance engagement and learning.

The impacts/advantages of SULAM@MYLAWA towards the community and learning experience/ education.

This project empowered the local community, particularly those in forest-fringe areas, with vital knowledge on the prevention and risks of monkey malaria (*Plasmodium knowlesi)*, a rising zoonotic threat. Through interactive education, demonstrations, and games, the community gained practical skills in vector control (e.g., bed net use, wall spraying) and early disease recognition, contributing to better health awareness and behaviour change.

For students, the project offered a valuable experiential learning opportunity beyond the classroom. It enhanced their understanding of public health communication, zoonotic disease transmission, and One Health principles. We developed essential soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and community engagement, strengthening both our academic and civic growth in line with SULAM's objectives.

Table 1 shows that knowledge about malaria among the residents of Ladang Sungai Relai, Gua Musang has increased scores with significant differences in the symptom and prevention domains. The health education intervention was effective in increasing knowledge and understanding related to malaria signs/symptoms and prevention strategies.

Table 1: Knowledge about malaria among the residents of Ladang Sungai Relai, Gua Musang (n = 41)

Domain	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Mean diff. (95% CI)	t-stat (df)	p-value*
Symptom	5.07 (3.53)	7.80 (2.62)	2.73 (1.59, 3.87)	4.83 (40)	<0.001
Causes	2.61 (1.53)	3.05 (1.47)	0.44 (−0.18, 1.05)	1.44 (40)	0.079
Prevention	5.12 (2.85)	7.29 (1.40)	2.17 (1.30, 3.05)	5.01 (40)	<0.001
Action	2.78 (1.04)	2.73 (1.10)	−0.05 (−0.75, 0.30)	−2.45 (40)	0.384
Total	15.59 (6.07)	20.88 (3.90)	5.29 (3.43, 7.15)	5.76 (40)	<0.001

Commercial value in terms of marketability or profitability of the SULAM@MYLAWA

This project holds commercial and social enterprise potential, especially through the student-developed educational tools and media, such as Malaria-themed board games ("Malaria Survival Race: Outrun the Mosquitoes!") that can be adapted for other vector-borne diseases (Figure 2). Training modules and activity templates that can be offered to NGOs, schools, or district health offices for replication. These products are scalable, customizable, and culturally adaptable, making them attractive for health promotion campaigns, school health education, and NGO outreach. With proper branding and collaboration, they offer opportunities for social entrepreneurship, educational product licensing, or commercialization as awareness toolkits.

Future recommendations to expand the SULAM@MYLAWA

The program can be expanded to other forest-fringe and rural communities in Kelantan and neighbouring states with similar zoonotic malaria risk profiles. The students and lecturers' involvement from various faculties—public health, multimedia, education, and business to enrich the project's content, delivery, and scalability. This also opens pathways for innovation and entrepreneurship. Communication barriers between Bangladeshi communities can be improved through translating the pre- and post-surveys of Zoonotic Malaria.

Figure 1: SULAM@MYLAWA, a collaboration between Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Kelantan State Department of Health (JKN) and Gua Musang District Health Office (PKDGM).
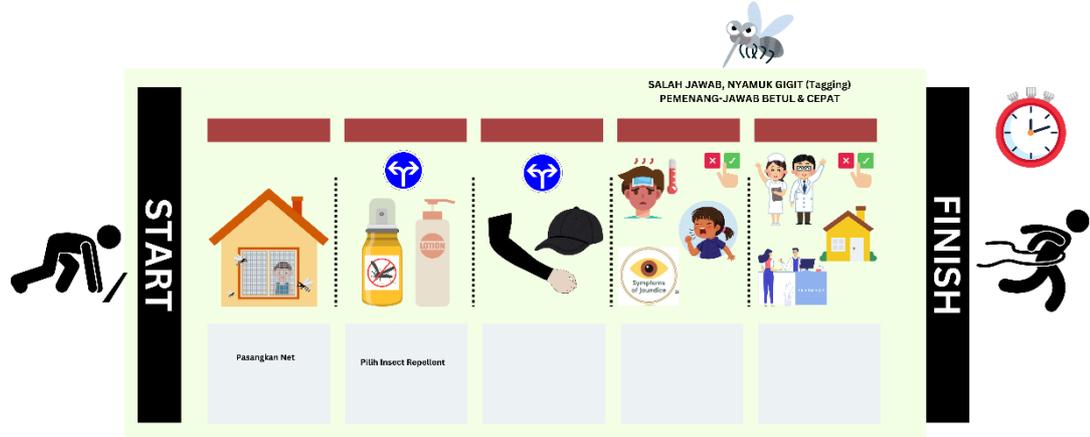

Figure 2: Malaria-themed board games: "Malaria Survival Race: Outrun the Mosquitoes!"

Figure 3: "Malaria Survival Race: Outrun the Mosquitoes!" game held in the field.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the SULAM project at Ladang Tradewind, Sungai Relai, Gua Musang successfully demonstrated the impact of integrating academic knowledge with community engagement to address a pressing public health issue—zoonotic malaria. Through a combination of interactive education, student-driven gamification, and culturally relevant outreach, the program effectively raised awareness among at-risk communities while empowering students with real-world experience in public health, communication, and civic responsibility. The collaboration between Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Kelantan Department of Health, and the local community exemplified the principles of One Health and service learning. This initiative not only contributed to disease prevention but also highlighted the potential for scalable, impactful, and innovative educational models that can be replicated and adapted across regions. Moving forward, the project offers significant opportunities for expansion, sustainability, and even commercialisation, positioning it as a model for impactful community-based education within the higher education framework.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the Ministry of Health Malaysia, Kelantan State Health Department (JKN), Gua Musang District Health Office (PKDGM), Chevron Corporation and Southeast Asia One Health University Network (SEAOHUN).

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WASTE TO COMMUNITY PRODUCTS

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Highlight: Waste to community products is a social innovation initiative aimed at transforming agricultural and organic waste into eco-friendly community-based products. Driven by sustainability and circular economy principles, this project repurposes biomass waste—such as coconut husks, oil palm fibers, and fruit peels—into biodegradable seedling pots, compostable packaging, and creative souvenirs. It is designed to empower vulnerable groups including single mothers, youth, and rural communities by providing skills training, income-generating opportunities, and entrepreneurship development. Through a structured framework involving material processing, product prototyping, and green branding, the project encourages community participation while promoting environmental stewardship. Collaborations with social enterprises, academic institutions, and local agencies further strengthen the initiative's capacity for outreach, commercialization, and education. Ultimately, this project contributes to reducing landfill waste, fostering eco-conscious behavior, and enhancing the socioeconomic well-being of marginalized populations. It also aligns with national sustainability goals and supports Malaysia's aspiration for a green and inclusive economy. The anticipated outcomes include a portfolio of marketable green products, strengthened community resilience, and the establishment of a replicable model for waste-to-product innovation that can be expanded to other regions and waste types.

Keywords: Community products, Seedling pots, Creative souveniers

Introduction

The waste to community products project is a social innovation initiative that aims to transform agricultural fiber waste into eco-friendly seedling pots and green-themed gifts. By leveraging biodegradable materials such as coconut husk or palm fiber, this project creates sustainable products while empowering local communities through skill development and income-generating opportunities. The core of the project lies in collecting discarded fiber waste from plantations or processing facilities and repurposing it into functional and decorative seedling pots. These pots are ideal for urban farming, school gardening projects, or as green corporate gifts. The manufacturing process is simple, cost-effective, and can be learned through short community workshops.

This initiative targets underserved communities—particularly B40 households, youth, women, and retirees—offering them access to training and micro-enterprise opportunities. The project also fosters environmental awareness by promoting waste reduction and encouraging home gardening practices. With a circular economic approach, "Hijau Dari Sisa" not only addresses environmental

concerns but also creates a replicable and scalable model for social entrepreneurship. The project can be expanded through partnerships with local councils, corporate CSR programs, NGOs, and educational institutions. Ultimately, this project envisions a greener, more inclusive future—where waste is turned into value, and communities grow together.

Main Topic

The "Waste to Community Products" project is a social innovation initiative focused on converting agricultural and organic waste into eco-friendly products. It targets communities that rely on sustainability, such as single mothers, rural youth, and vulnerable groups. By transforming materials like coconut husks and fruit peels into items such as biodegradable pots and green packaging, the project promotes a circular economy. It also provides training, income opportunities, and entrepreneurship support. Through partnerships with social enterprises and institutions, it fosters environmental awareness, reduces landfill waste, and enhances community resilience—aligning with Malaysia's national goals for a green and inclusive economy.

This SULAM project is important as it empowers marginalized communities by turning agricultural waste into valuable eco-products. It fosters environmental awareness, promotes green entrepreneurship, and supports sustainable livelihoods. The initiative also aligns with national green economy goals, creating social impact while reducing waste and encouraging community-driven innovation.

The Akademi Hayati Alam in contributing in sosial project Hijau which return the waste agricultural fibres into Green product which can useful to community and give economic value for target community. Here is the currect project that run from the Social enterprise under the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (KUSKOP) which is Akademi Hayati Alam. This project will be plan for 6 months project and communicate with the community on educations of recycle process where from agricultural waste to agricultural product.

This project plays a vital role in community empowerment through skills development, job creation, and social cohesion. It provides hands-on training in eco-product manufacturing and basic entrepreneurship, particularly benefiting women, youth, and marginalized individuals. Participants gain practical knowledge in areas such as waste processing, product design, and marketing. This not only enhances their employability but also enables them to earn a sustainable income through production, packaging, and sales activities. Furthermore, by collaborating in cooperatives or small working groups, community members build stronger local networks, foster mutual trust, and strengthen social bonds— contributing to a more resilient, self-reliant, and environmentally conscious society.

The project holds strong commercial value, as eco-friendly products like biodegradable pots and sustainable packaging are increasingly in demand. With proper branding and market access, these community-made items have significant profitability potential, catering to green-conscious consumers while providing a scalable, income-generating model for rural and urban community entrepreneurs.

To expand the community/SULAM project, several strategic actions are recommended. First, scaling up production through investment in small-scale machinery will enhance output and product quality. Diversifying eco-products—such as fertilizers, packaging, and décor—can meet wider market demands. Establishing digital marketing and e-commerce platforms will boost visibility and sales. Collaborations with NGOs, CSR programs, and government agencies can provide essential support and funding. Securing eco-label certifications and developing strong branding will enhance marketability. Ongoing training and mentorship will ensure sustainable skill development. Lastly, by documenting best practices and outcomes, the model can be replicated in other communities to broaden impact and outreach.

Table 1: The waste sources and variety of product to contribute for community

The waste (survey)	Sources	Potential of product to be done	Target community
Waste banana peel	The Banana	Packaging	Hayati Alam
Waste fish bone	Keropok Cap Kapal	Seedling pot	Hayati Alam
Waste eggshell	Akok industry	Seedling pot	Hayati Alam
Waste rice husk	Bernas Bhd	Seedling pot	Hayati Alam
Waste coir fibre	Small medium's industries	Seedling pot	Hayati Alam

Figure 1 (a): Thin films that were used in replacing the packaging for agricultural products from the community and (b) the agricultural product from the community that used the leaves to makes the packaging.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the "Waste to Community Products" project demonstrates a successful model of social innovation that transforms agricultural and organic waste into valuable, eco-friendly products. By equipping marginalized groups with practical skills, promoting income generation, and fostering strong community networks, the initiative contributes meaningfully to sustainable development. Its commercial potential through green product marketability further supports long-term economic viability. With strategic partnerships, continuous capacity building, and expansion through digital platforms, the project can be scaled and replicated in other regions. Ultimately, it aligns with national sustainability goals and serves as a catalyst for empowering communities while preserving the environment.

Acknowledgement

partnerships that bridge academic knowledge with real-world solutions for environmental and socioeconomic challenges.

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BRIDGING FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE GAPS: A SULAM-BASED FINANCIAL LITERACY PROJECT FOR SMES IN KELANTAN

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Highlight: The low level of financial literacy among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Kota Bharu, Kelantan prompted the implementation of a SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society) project through the Financial Management course (HFT20303) in the February 2024 semester. A total of 381 students from four classes were divided into groups of 8–10 students. Each group identified small enterprises that required support in improving their financial literacy. During the project, activities included planning, interviewing, knowledge sharing, and gathering feedback over a four-week period. The project's main objective was to disseminate financial knowledge and raise awareness of its importance in business operations. SMEs welcomed the initiative, while students developed confidence and practical communication skills. This project benefitted SMEs by equipping them with fundamental financial management knowledge and empowered students to become resilient and compassionate future professionals. It also enhanced the faculty's and university's visibility within the community.

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Financial Management, Knowledge Transfer, SMEs, SULAM

Introduction

SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society) is an experiential learning approach designed to cultivate 21st-century skills among university students, such as communication, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork (Junainah et al., 2024). It engages students in community-focused activities that offer structured opportunities for both academic and personal growth to the students. SULAM was adopted as an alternative assessment in the Financial Management course (HFT20303) during February 2023/2024 semester. The objective was to enhance SMEs' financial literacy by facilitating student-led knowledge transfer sessions. This Financial Literacy Project was aligned with the Course Learning Outcome 2 (CLO2), which focuses on the development of students' communication skills. Over four to five weeks, students engaged in community-based learning guided by a structured module.

Financial challenges remain a key concern among SMEs in Malaysia, where limited financial literacy and lack of structured financial management practices often hinder growth and sustainability (Ramzi et al., 2022). Through this project, 40 SMEs in Kelantan were reached using convenience sampling. The results indicated that the majority of these SMEs appreciated the knowledge-sharing sessions and benefitted from the financial insights gained. However, it was also observed that some SMEs already had established financial systems and systematic reporting in place, reflecting varying

levels of financial management maturity among local entrepreneurs. Over a period of four to five weeks, students participated in community-based learning activities guided by a structured financial literacy module.

Background of the SULAM Project

Recent studies confirmed the positive impact of financial literacy on SME performance and sustainability (Nur Izzati et al., 2025). Financial literacy encompasses the knowledge and ability to manage financial resources effectively. SME owners with a strong grasp of financial principles are better positioned to navigate budgeting, savings, takaful, insurance, and investment.

The Financial Education Network (FEN), an inter-agency platform established by Bank negara Malaysia that consist of several agencies and institutions mainly focuses on improving the financial literacy of Malaysians. FEN has reinforced the need of financial literacy through ongoing campaigns such as the Financial Literacy Month 2024 and the National Financial Literacy Symposium 2024, which highlighted the importance of empowering vulnerable communities through financial education (FEN, 2024a; FEN, 2024b).

Despite the recognized value, many SMEs continue to face limitations in financial understanding, a gap also highlighted during the initial interviews conducted by the student participants.

Importance of the SULAM Project

The project aimed to build financial capacity among SMEs while enhancing student learning through real-world engagement. This project allows students to use theories learned in the classroom into practices and exposed students to real community problems. Forty (40) small and medium enterprises gave consent and participated in this project. Participating SMEs, many with fewer than ten employees and without formal financial records, benefitted from personalized knowledge-sharing sessions.

The project provided foundational knowledge on cash flow, budgeting, recordkeeping, and financial planning. Sharing the importance of financial management and basic financial knowledge to these companies would help them increase their financial resilience.

Description of the Project

The SULAM project on enhancing financial literacy of SMEs at Kelantan area involved 381 students from Financial Management Course (HFT20303). They were organized into forty (40) groups of eight (8) to ten (10) members each. Throughout the project which took about four (4) to five (5) weeks, a structured learning activities begin with planning, selecting suitable companies, interviewing, analyzing the company's financial need, providing suitable financial knowledge to the company, writing reflections, writing reports and finally presenting their projects as in Table 1. Figure 1 illustrates the project workflow, including instructions, implementation, and reflection activities conducted by each group.
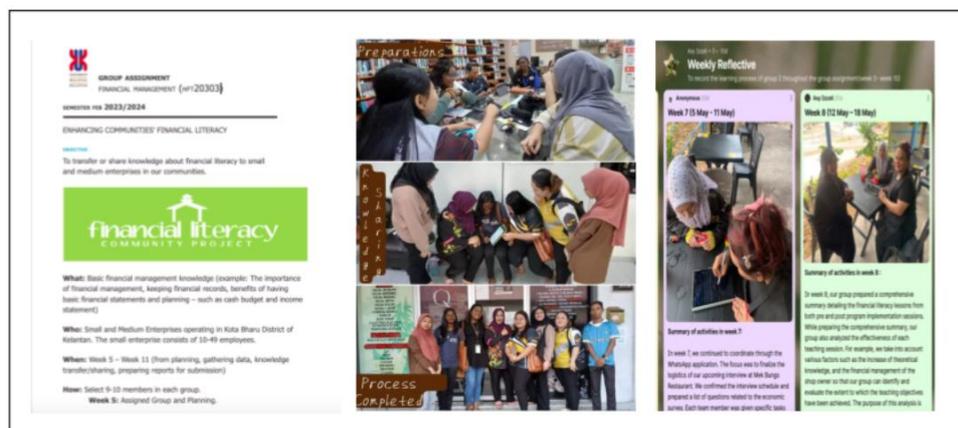

Figure 1: Project workflow

Table 1: 5-Weeks Activities for SULAM Project on Financial Literacy Among SMEs

Week	Activities
Week 5	Form group, planning, assigned task among group members
Week 6	Approach and select a small enterprise in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Get a consent from the selected company and help business owner fill the Pre-Financial Literacy Survey. From the survey, plan on what financial knowledge student can share to enhance the financial planning of the company.
Week 7	Conduct sessions to share/ transfer knowledge to the enterprise to enhance their financial literacy. Gather inputs from SMEs regarding the sharing/education session. Conduct a post-financial Literacy Survey at least 3 days after the sharing session.
Week 8	Analysis of the findings will be conducted during this week. The findings can be summarized in the Padlet
Week 9	Report, presentation and reflection submission

Impacts

The project generated multidimensional impacts:
1. Students: Gained real-world experience and developed soft skills including communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and empathy. The project fulfilled CLO2 and enhanced students' overall confidence.
2. SMEs: Benefitted from improved awareness of financial literacy practices. With exposure to budgeting tools, proper recordkeeping, and financial planning strategies, businesses improved their financial decision-making capabilities.
3. University: Reinforced its role as a community-engaged institution, improving visibility and fostering stronger university-industry collaborations.

Commercial Value

Following the project's success, the "Financial Literacy for SMEs (FL4SME) Kit" is proposed. This resource will include essential modules, templates, and guidelines to aid future financial literacy programs. It offers potential for institutional branding, academic collaboration, and public engagement.

Future Recommendation

SULAM project on financial literacy knowledge transfer with SMEs should be continued in the future since it brings benefits not only to students in enhancing their understanding towards the course and building soft skills, but also to the SMEs community by developing awareness on the importance of financial literacy towards sustainability of their business. SULAM projects like this should be continued and expanded to cover diverse industries and regions. With the support of the FL4SME Kit, future cohorts can achieve wider impact. Collaboration with local government and agencies can further institutionalize financial education for SMEs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this project underscores the effectiveness of experiential learning through SULAM. Students gained firsthand experience by engaging SMEs in financial education, fostering dual benefits: enhanced student learning and improved SME financial practices. Moving forward, such initiatives can become a cornerstone of university-community collaboration, especially when supported by structured toolkits like FL4SME.

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REVITALISING COMMUNITY-BASED ECONOMIC RESILIENCE THROUGH THE PENGKALAN CHEPA PRISON CREATIVE REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

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Highlight: This paper presents a transformative community-based rehabilitation initiative titled "Revitalising Community-based Economic Resilience through the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Creative Rehabilitation Programme". The project leverages vocational training and creative expression to empower inmates by equipping them with artisanal skills in batik making, furniture production, and traditional cuisine. Anchored in the values of Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM), the initiative engages university students in experiential learning while fostering empathy and social responsibility. Central to the project is a coffee table book that documents the stories, crafts, and voices of the incarcerated community, effectively reframing public perception and generating income for rehabilitation programmes. This paper discusses the project's impact on rehabilitation, community reintegration, and local economic development, and outlines future strategies including national expansion, digitalisation, and entrepreneurial training. The findings underscore the potential of education-driven prison programmes in shaping inclusive and empathetic societies.

Keywords: Prison Rehabilitation, Creative Industry, Social Reintegration, Community Empowerment, SULAM, Coffee Table Book

Introduction

Prison systems worldwide are increasingly transitioning from punitive approaches to rehabilitative and restorative models. In Malaysia, the emphasis on human capital development and social inclusion has opened avenues for prison-based rehabilitation programmes to become tools of transformation and empowerment. The Revitalising Community-based Economic Resilience through the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Creative Rehabilitation Programme project, represents a model of such transformation. This project aims to equip incarcerated individuals—referred to as "prospects"—with marketable vocational skills, social confidence, and cultural pride. By bridging creative expression with community development, the programme offers a platform for prisoners to reclaim their dignity and become active contributors to society. It also engages university students in meaningful service-learning projects that foster empathy, professional development, and civic engagement. The coffee table book created under this initiative serves as a powerful medium for storytelling, advocacy, and socio-economic integration.

Background of the SULAM Project

The Revitalising Community-based Economic Resilience through the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Creative Rehabilitation Programme is a meaningful community initiative highlighting the talents, creativity, and rehabilitation efforts of inmates at Pengkalan Chepa Prison in Kelantan. Located at Jalan Maktab, Taman Orkid, 16100 Pengkalan Chepa, this prison is a place of correction and a centre for transformation. Here, prisoners, known as prospects, can develop vocational skills by producing various handcrafted items such as kain batik, quality furniture, and traditional foods like karipap. These products are affordable and well-made compared to commercially available items and reflect the rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship of the individuals. Contemporary research on prison rehabilitation highlights the significant role of vocational and artistic programmes in fostering positive behavioural change and reducing recidivism. According to Clements (2004), skill-based training within prisons enhances inmates' employability and self-worth, which are critical to successful reintegration. Johnson (2010) found that structured art programmes contribute to emotional healing and identity reconstruction among incarcerated populations.

Art-based rehabilitation has also gained recognition for its capacity to challenge stereotypes and promote social acceptance. Williams (2013) argued that prison arts humanise the image of inmates, offering society a lens to view them as individuals with talent and potential. In the Malaysian context, initiatives like the Malaysian Prison Department's MyPRIDE programme aim to elevate inmate-made products to the commercial market, yet studies (Rahim et al., 2020; Aziz & Omar, 2022) note limited branding, public exposure, and educational partnerships. In response, integrating service-learning frameworks like SULAM into prison rehabilitation can enrich the social impact and educational value of such projects. SULAM promotes experiential learning and student engagement with real-world issues, thus aligning academic goals with national development agendas (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2020).

This coffee table book aims to share their stories and showcase their work to the public, helping to build a more positive image of the prison community. The book functions as a visual and emotional record that documents their artistic journey, expresses their creative spirit, and shows the possibility of transformation and reconnection through striking pictures and moving stories. It also shows how important it is for the community to promote restoration and second chances. This project encourages society to see individuals behind bars not solely through the lens of their past but by recognising their efforts, talents, and aspirations for a better future as demonstrated through their work. This initiative also responds to the need for more inclusive and sustainable social development, where every individual, regardless of their background, is allowed to contribute meaningfully to society. Each product featured in this book tells a deeper story of artistic skill, resilience, hope, and the human capacity for change. Through this project, we aim to inspire the public to appreciate and support prison-made products and to view reformation as a shared responsibility rather than a far-off idea. Ultimately, this book celebrates second chances, where creativity becomes a path to redemption and a bridge between confinement and community.

Importance of the SULAM Project

The Revitalising Community-based Economic Resilience through the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Creative Rehabilitation Programme initiative holds profound significance in reshaping public perception of inmates, shifting the focus from "punishment" to "potential" and from "shame" to "stories of rebirth and resilience". Without vocational skills, inmates often remain trapped in societal stereotypes. Still, the project provides a platform for them to acquire practical abilities, ranging from batik craftsmanship and local cuisine preparation to furniture making. These skills rebuild their self-worth and transform "rehabilitation through labour" into tangible artisanal products. However, these handcrafted works have long been invisible to the public. The project addresses this through a coffee table book showcasing each product's stories, breaking the stigma around "prison-made goods" and establishing market channels. The sales revenue generates new economic resources for the prison and restores dignity to inmates—when consumers recognise their creations, rehabilitation extends beyond prison walls to social value reconstruction.

For student volunteers, this is a practical exploration of applying academic theories, from communication theories for narrative design and marketing knowledge for product promotion to sociological perspectives on destigmatisation. This interdisciplinary practice enhances their project

management and communication skills while deepening their understanding of how "education empowerment" connects with "judicial rehabilitation". When knowledge and empathy serve as bridges, inmates' "second chance" evolves from a concept into a tangible social consensus—visible and touchable through their craftsmanship.

Description of the Project

The Pengkalan Chepa Prison Gallery, located in Kelantan, Malaysia, operates as both a correctional facility and a creative space. Through this programme, inmates receive structured training in various vocational fields, including batik and textile design, carpentry and ironwork, traditional Malay pastries and frozen food production, spa and salon services for muslimah clients and laundry and garment services. The products are showcased and marketed under the Malaysian Prison Department's MyPRIDE branding. Each item produced reflects cultural heritage, artisanal value, and the inmates' journey towards self-reliance. A central component of the project is the production of a coffee table book. This book documents not only the handcrafted products but also the stories behind them, the individuals who created them, and the social message they convey. It serves multiple purposes:

1. Educational Tool: Raising awareness on restorative justice, rehabilitation, and inclusive development.
2. Advocacy Medium: Countering public stigma by humanising prospects.
3. Marketing Instrument: Promoting MyPRIDE products to ethical and conscious consumers.

By involving students from diverse academic backgrounds—design, education, counselling, management, entrepreneurship—the project fosters an interdisciplinary learning environment while bridging campus and community.

Impacts/advantages of the project on the community and learning experience/education

The Pengkalan Chepa Prison Gallery Project is essential in opening up a space for understanding prison life and the roles of staff and prisoners within it. By transforming this closed institutional system into an open learning space, this project can provide the community with an opportunity to delve into the actual reality of how the prison system operates while also understanding the challenges faced by prisoners and staff, as well as appreciating the rehabilitation efforts and the process of reintegration of prisoners into society. In addition, this gallery also plays a role in humanising prisoners and prison staff. It opens up a space for the community to see them not just as elements in the prison system, but as individuals with their own experiences, stories, and contributions. This approach helps foster empathy and reduce the negative stigma often associated with former prisoners in the eyes of society.

From a community perspective, the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Gallery provides significant educational benefits. This gallery serves as an interactive learning space that opens up opportunities for students, researchers, and the general public to delve into various topics related to the legal system, principles of justice, the rehabilitation process, and human rights. Through the exhibitions and products presented, visitors have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the prison and legal systems and raise awareness of the importance of social justice and the concept of second chances in the reintegration of former prisoners into society.

From an economic perspective, this gallery also contributes to cultural tourism. This gallery has attracted tourists, researchers, and educational groups who can directly support local business development and thus raise the profile of the Pengkalan Chepa area at a wider level. In addition, this gallery serves as a significant platform for community engagement through the organisation of exhibitions and workshops and as a medium for public forums for constructive discussions regarding justice reform, the recovery process, and social change. Active community involvement in this space helps to shape a more inclusive, knowledgeable, and competitive society. Overall, the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Gallery has transformed a place once synonymous with isolation into a space full of education, reflection, and hope. It has now become a symbol of positive transformation that benefits the prison institution and the community as a whole.

Commercial value in terms of marketability or profitability of the project

The coffee table book initiative, which Galeri Penjara Pengkalan Chepa developed, demonstrates social influence and market viability. The program displays exceptional visuals and powerful narratives to present prospect-made artisan products for public and market audiences. The book improves product

appeal and public understanding of prison rehabilitation programs by focusing on human stories and artistic skills. People establish emotional bonds with brands through authentic storytelling about their products. To elevate the market presence of MyPRIDE products, a strategic marketing framework is essential. Ethical storytelling remains a powerful tool—by highlighting the narratives of transformation behind each product, emotional connections are built with consumers. Visual branding that incorporates cultural motifs and professional packaging enhances perceived value. Expanding distribution through online platforms, pop-up stores, and collaborations with social enterprises can increase visibility. Educational institutions and corporate partners can adopt MyPRIDE products as part of CSR programmes or as institutional gifts. Engaging influencers and media for awareness campaigns can also shift public perception positively. Moreover, the coffee table book serves as a lifestyle product that resonates with socially conscious buyers. It merges visual aesthetics with human stories—positioning prison-made goods not as charity items, but as meaningful, premium artisanal products.

Future recommendations for expanding the project

Several well-planned efforts have been recommended to ensure the project's long-term impact and sustainability. One of the essential efforts is to broaden the project's scope to include more rehabilitation facilities and correctional institutions around the country. This strategy will allow more people undergoing reintegration, known as prospects, to engage, giving them significant venues to share their creativity, develop self-confidence, and create a sense of purpose during their recovery. Furthermore, the physical coffee table book can be upgraded to a dynamic digital version, such as an interactive website or online gallery. It will significantly improve public access. This internet presence would promote the prospects' tales and handmade works and help increase public awareness and acceptance, promoting their reintegration into society. Strategic collaboration is another critical component. Establishing collaborations with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), relevant government bodies, and private companies through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs can provide vital resources such as financial assistance, sponsorship for printing and exhibitions and professional guidance. These connections will guarantee the project's continuity and expanded reach.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the "PRIDE TO PROND" initiative, several strategic actions are recommended. First, the model should be scaled to include more prisons across Malaysia, ensuring wider access to vocational training and entrepreneurial empowerment. These replications must consider local community contexts and cultural crafts specific to each region. Second, a robust digital infrastructure should be developed. An e-commerce portal, virtual gallery, and social media presence can amplify reach and attract global audiences. Digital storytelling can play a vital role in creating awareness and breaking down societal barriers. Third, institutional partnerships are crucial. Collaborations with NGOs, government agencies, universities, and private companies under CSR schemes can offer technical support, funding, and marketing channels. Regular exhibitions in accessible public venues, such as malls and campuses, will help normalize the presence of MyPRIDE products in mainstream society. Fourth, inmates should be offered modular courses in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, digital marketing, and personal branding. These modules will prepare them for economic independence upon release. Finally, the initiative should be maintained as an annual publication series that celebrates new stories and crafts, ensuring continuity and public engagement. Student involvement must also be institutionalized within university curriculum to embed SULAM as a long-term commitment.

The product and Service of Gallery Penjara

Table 1: List of Products

No.	Products	Photos
1.	Batik Fabric Set in Satin and Crepe *(Kain Pasang Batik Satin dan Crepe)*	
2.	Batik Shirt *(Kemeja Batik)*	
3.	Metal Products *(Produk Besi)*	

4. Rattan *(Rotan)*	
5. Vase *(Pasu)*	
6. Wooden Products *(Product Kayu)*	
7. Sardine Roll	

8. Sardine Curry Puff

9. Cake

The way forward for this product

Expand the model nationally, develop digital and e-commerce platforms, enhance institutional collaborations, host public exhibitions, and integrate entrepreneurship training for prospects. Maintain annual publication to feature new stories and crafts, ensuring continued public interest and community involvement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the "Revitalising Community-based Economic Resilience through the Pengkalan Chepa Prison Creative Rehabilitation Programme" shows how creativity and skills development can transform lives. It uses crafts made by prisoners to support rehabilitation. Our coffee table book records their journey, showing their efforts for the future. It challenges public prejudice by highlighting their skills and experiences. The project also generates economic benefits since sales benefit convicts and prison programs. Expanding this model to other prisons can increase its impact. Digital platforms increase accessibility, while partnerships with BGOs and businesses can stay sustainable. Public exhibition and training aid in reintegration. Involving students from different fields strengthens community participation. This project shows that second chances are significant. We promote an inclusive and empathetic society. The book is a step toward change, proving rehabilitation works when given the opportunity and support.

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HOSPITALITY KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENT THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: PROGRAMME EVALUATION AT SMK CHERANG RUKU, PASIR PUTEH, KELANTAN

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Highlight: We received an assignment to be volunteers in a community using a serving learning style for HPT30203 Volunteerism course. We selected Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Cherang Ruku, Pasir Puteh, Kelantan for our study. We decided to hold Unlocking Hospitality Excellent. This programme describes a successful one-day hospitality skills workshop for secondary school students. This programme also combining practical training with community engagement and service-learning principles. This programme has given us a deeper understanding about service learning in volunteerism.

Keywords: Hospitality skills, service learning, community engagement, practical training, volunteerism

Introduction

This assessment is designed to delve into community that need any added knowledge that have from the volunteer. Our focus is on empowering Hospitality Course, thereby contributing to the economics growth of our community. We have chosen to spotlight hospitality skills at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Cherang Ruku that have been 36 years developed seen 1989. The situated in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Cherang Ruku that have student from form 1 to form 5 and have form 6 student was a good location to share the hospitality skills. Using this Unlocking Hospitality Excellent programme that was developed and implemented by Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) L103 volunteer class, volunteer can share the skill. This programme addresses the lack of practical hospitality training in secondary education.

Background of the SULAM Project

The programme context stems from the growing importance of the hospitality industry and the need to equip young people with relevant skills. The lack of exposure to secondary school students results in them lacking knowledge about hospitality. This results in them not being interested in hospitality. There is also the opinion that hospitality knowledge is irrelevant and considered lower class. This programme is an effort to improve secondary school students' perspectives and encourage their goals. This programme also fulfils a service-learning requirement for the UMK volunteer class.

The importance of this project goes beyond simple activities; it plays a vital role in shaping the growth of young people and strengthening the community as a whole. For secondary school students, it offers the opportunity to learn practical skills related to hospitality. These skills include towel folding,

napkin folding and hotel simulation. Learning these skills can help guide students as they think about future careers, opening their eyes to options they may not have considered before. At the same time, the project encourages community engagement. It brings university and secondary school students together in a shared activity. This collaboration fosters teamwork, as students work together to complete tasks. It also teaches social responsibility as university students take on the role of mentors or coaches. They help younger students develop confidence and learn new skills. These relationships build stronger bonds within the community and create a sense of mutual support.

The program is carefully designed to include a series of hands-on activities that teach essential hospitality skills. These activities give students practical experience in tasks that they will use every day in the hospitality industry. For example, students learn how to fold napkins into professional-looking shapes, which are important details that create a welcoming atmosphere for guests. Student also participate in hotel simulation; this makes them more understand about hotel issues. To test their understanding of the skills taught, students take quizzes that cover the main points from each activity. These quizzes serve as a way to gauge their knowledge and ensure they understand best practices.

The program culminates in the best group achievement awards. During this event, students' achievements are presented in groups. They receive prizes and certificates as a reward for their progress. The ceremony not only celebrates their achievements but also motivates them to continue developing their skills. Overall, this structured approach combines education with practical work. It aims to prepare students to act confidently and professionally in real-world hospitality settings.

The program provides clear benefits to all involved, including both participants and volunteers. High school students get the opportunity to learn useful practical skills that go beyond the classroom. For example, they learn how to work in teams, and solve problems as these practical activities are conducted in groups. These skills will help them in their future classes and jobs. In turn, UMK volunteers gain valuable experience in leadership, communication, and mentoring. They learn how to guide younger students, explain concepts clearly, and motivate others to do their best. These skills are essential for their personal growth and will benefit them in many areas of life. The program encourages teamwork and cooperation, which helps create positive relationships between students and volunteers. These relationships build trust, increase confidence, and make the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

The program holds significant commercial potential even though it does not produce immediate profit. It acts as a proof of concept for creating marketable hospitality training programs that can be used in schools and various organizations. Its success shows that such training modules are practical and appealing. These programs can be customized to fit different needs, making them valuable for a range of clients. The model can be copied and changed to suit specific settings, promoting wider use. By doing so, the program opens doors for future revenue streams. It can be licensed to different institutions or sold as a product. This approach can create a new source of income and help establish a brand reputation in the training field.

Creating a comprehensive training manual should be a priority to support program sustainability. This manual would clearly document all aspects of the curriculum, lesson plans, and best practices. It would serve as a guide for future trainers and ensure consistency across different trainers and locations. A well-structured manual makes it easier to scale the program by standardizing content and delivery methods. Implementing a robust evaluation system will further improve the program's effectiveness. Regular assessments can measure participant progress and identify areas needing improvement. This might include skills tests, surveys, or feedback forms from both students and trainers. Analysing this data regularly allows for quick adjustments, ensuring the program stays relevant and impact.

Table 1: The sharing knowledge to the SMK Cherang Ruku student's

Topic	Explanation
Towel Folding	SMK Cherang Ruku students have been teach two types of towels folding that is goose and snail folding and have been done practically
Hotel Simulation	SMK Cherang Ruku students have known how to greet hotel's guest and issues in hotel management
Napkin Folding	SMK Cherang Ruku students have known how to fold professional-looking shapes napkin

Figure 1: Unlocking Hospitality with SMK Cherang Ruku Program

Conclusion

In conclusion the "Unlocking Hospitality Excellence" programme successfully achieved its objectives, providing valuable practical hospitality training to secondary school students while simultaneously fostering valuable skills in UMK volunteer students. The positive feedback and demonstrable skill development highlight the program's effectiveness as model for collaborative service-learning initiatives. Future iterations should focus on expanding the program's reach and incorporating more advanced hospitality modules to further enhance its impact on both participants and volunteers.

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CAKE AND CARE: CARING THROUGH CREATIVITY

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Highlight: Cake and Care is a volunteer initiative under the SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia: University for Society) program that aims to bring joy and meaningful engagement to orphaned children through a hands-on cake decorating activity. The project combines creativity, emotional support, and teamwork to benefit both the children and the participating volunteers.

Keywords: Community service, cake decorating, orphanage, SULAM, creativity

Introduction

Every child deserves the opportunity to experience joy and connection, especially those who are not nurtured by their own parents or close relatives. Cake and Care is a heartfelt volunteer initiative designed to spread happiness and spark creativity among children living in orphanages, highlighting the profound impact of small acts of kindness. Through a simple yet meaningful cake-decorating activity, the children can express themselves, connect with others, and delight in the satisfaction of creating something uniquely their own. For the volunteers, it is a transformative experience, an opportunity to cultivate leadership, embrace compassion, and appreciate the true value of serving others, proving that kindness, no matter how small, can light up lives and inspire meaningful connections.

Background of the SULAM Project

Cake and Care was created to provide emotional support for children, offering a platform that encourages creativity and boosts self-esteem. Cake decorating was chosen as the central activity because it is stimulating and expressive. It created a fun and engaging environment where children could freely explore their creativity while producing something tangible and beautiful.

Before the cake-decorating session, the children participated in a fun "Design the Logo" activity, where they designed logos for their imaginary cake businesses. These logos served as their brand identity and added continuity to the cakes they later created. This activity fostered a sense of ownership and made the cake-decorating session feel like a real-world business experience.

The children were divided into small groups, each guided by a volunteer mentor throughout the session. This approach encouraged teamwork, interaction, and personal expression. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience, which brought them joy and a sense of accomplishment as their creative efforts came to life in beautifully decorated cakes.

Cake and Care left a lasting impact by fostering appreciation, connection, and confidence among the children. At the same time, the program offered volunteers an opportunity to strengthen essential soft skills, which are the interpersonal traits and character qualities that define effective interaction with others (Kenton, 2024). These experiences supported both personal growth and academic development for everyone involved.

The sustainability of Cake and Care can be enhanced through impactful expansions. One possibility is to regularly invite children from the orphanage to the university's kitchen facilities, where they could learn basic baking and cooking skills. This hands-on experience would help them build confidence and discover new interests.

Additionally, the program could introduce cooking or baking competitions to encourage the children to develop their skills further, igniting a passion for culinary arts that could lead to potential career opportunities. Collaboration with local partners could also pave the way for simple fundraising projects where the children's creations are sold, supporting both the orphanage and the program's long-term sustainability.

Figure 1: Group photo of the children with their decorated cakes and logo design

Conclusion

Cake and Care demonstrated that even the smallest, heartfelt efforts can leave a profound and lasting impact. What started as a simple initiative transformed into a deeply meaningful and joyous experience for both the children and the volunteers. Through cake decorating and designing their own cake business logos, the children unleashed their creativity, expressed themselves, and took pride in their unique creations.

For the volunteers, this program was more than just an activity, it was an opportunity to connect on a human level, lead with empathy, and experience the profound value of giving back. The experience served as a beautiful reminder that kindness and creativity have the power to bring people together in extraordinary ways. Often, the most powerful lessons are not learned in a classroom but in moments of shared joy and connection with others.

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FOSTERING CULTURAL APPRECIATION AND LANGUAGE AWARENESS VIA COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM EDUCATION

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Highlight: The *Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa* community engagement project in Padang Tembak, Kelantan, aims to promote cultural appreciation and language awareness among children and teenagers through interactive activities like kuih-making, batik-style fabric coloring, and language games. This volunteer-driven initiative helps participants rediscover their cultural heritage, improve communication skills, and strengthen social identity. Tourism students gain practical skills and leadership experience, contributing to cultural preservation, youth empowerment, and national identity-building.

Keywords: Community-based learning, Cultural heritage, Experiential education

Introduction

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa program is a student-driven initiative that connects academic learning with real-world experiences in Padang Tembak, Kelantan. Developed by tourism students, the project aims to enhance communication skills, deepen cultural appreciation, and encourage social responsibility through interactive activities like kuih-making and language-based games. The project's selection was based on the culturally rich community, providing a conducive environment for meaningful interactions and mutual learning. The initiative translates classroom theories into practical applications, reinforcing the role of cultural literacy and effective communication in tourism. It also serves as a platform for civic engagement, skills development, and a stronger university-community relationship.

Background of the SULAM Project

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa program was conceived as a project to strengthen the relationship between the students and the community through culture and language-based activities. As students of tourism, we have learned so much about how important communication and cultural understanding are in theory. Through this project, we have the opportunity to put that into practice with the locals of Padang Tembak, Kelantan. This program is targeting the exchange of general tourism knowledge, traditional cultural practices such as traditional cake making and cloth dyeing, and recreational language classes. It not only provides space for students and the community to learn from each other but also ties in with SULAM's mission of conducting experiential learning and actively involving students in community development.

In addition to the cultural and language exchange objectives, *Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa* programme is designed to serve as a real-world platform for tourism students to apply classroom knowledge in a community setting. The choice of NADI Padang Tembak, Kelantan, as the location is based on its potential for meaningful engagement due to its close-knit community and cultural richness. This project allows students to directly interact with local residents while fostering an environment of mutual learning through interactive activities such as traditional kuih-making, batik-style colouring (kain belacu), and language games.

These activities were carefully selected to align with the core values of cultural appreciation and practical communication, two essential pillars in tourism education. Furthermore, the programme reinforces SULAM's philosophy of experiential learning and student involvement in community development. By understanding the cultural and linguistic landscape of the community, students are better equipped for future roles in the tourism industry where cultural literacy is key.

Importance of "Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa"

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa project is important because it takes students beyond the classroom and into the heart of the community, where theoretical knowledge can be applied in real life situations. As tourism students, we've learned that effective communication and cultural understanding are critical aspects of the industry. Through this project, we get to interact directly with the local community in Padang Tembak, Kelantan, and gain a deeper appreciation of their unique cultural heritage through activities like traditional kuih-making and batik-style fabric coloring. What makes this project truly meaningful is the two-way relationship built between students and the community. It's not just about conducting activities; it's an experience that opens our eyes and hearts to the real lives of local people, especially children and youth. While we teach them about language and tourism, we ourselves learn about life values, cultural identity, and the importance of preserving heritage. These are lessons we could never fully grasp from textbooks alone.

This project is also important from a social development perspective. It bridges the gap between university and community, fostering unity and shared responsibility in promoting and preserving local culture. At the same time, it aligns with SULAM's goal of producing not only academically excellent graduates but also socially responsible individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society. Moreover, the project gives us the opportunity to build essential soft skills such as leadership, communication, teamwork, and empathy, all of which are fundamental for success in the real world, especially in the tourism sector, which involves working with diverse communities and cultures.

Description of "Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa"

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa is a community-based experiential learning programme aimed at fostering cultural understanding and communication between tourism students and the local community of Padang Tembak, Kelantan. Rooted in the principles of SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society). This program is specifically designed to foster cultural appreciation, language awareness, and social values among youth, especially targeting children and teenagers in the area. Held on 23 May 2025, the half-day programme features a variety of interactive and educational activities including cultural and language puzzles, traditional food making, language games and travel tip sharing sessions. These engaging activities are designed to spark interest in Malaysia's cultural heritage while strengthening participants' communication and soft skills. This programme allows students to apply classroom knowledge in a culturally immersive environment while promoting mutual learning and respect.

It also highlights the role of cultural literacy and effective communication as fundamental skills in tourism education. By engaging in a culturally rich and close-knit community, students gain valuable insights into community dynamics and heritage preservation, thus enhancing their readiness for future roles in the tourism industry. This SULAM initiative is in line with the fundamental goals of promoting civic engagement and nurturing a sense of community among university students and the surrounding populace. By participating in this project, students both aid in community development and acquire practical skills in managing meaningful local programs that embody the university's commitment to cultivating well-rounded and socially responsible graduates.

Impacts of "Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa"

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa program was developed to encourage children and teenagers to appreciate language and culture. The community, particularly the younger generation, has benefited greatly from this program. Children and teenagers were taught to appreciate their ancestry and get a better command of the national language through entertaining and captivating activities including storytelling, pantun (rhymes), traditional games, and cultural performances. As they engaged with others in a constructive setting, this program also assisted participants in developing their communication and self-confidence. It promoted collaboration, creativity, and cultural pride while offering a healthy substitute for screen time. Personally, we felt that this curriculum really enhanced our educational experience. Along with learning how to organize and oversee programs for young audiences, we also acquired important knowledge about our customs and language. It helped us develop our leadership skills, patience, and ability to interact with people of all ages. Above all, we came to see that, even as students, we can positively impact on the community. This program helped me become a more responsible and socially conscious person in addition to helping others.

Commercial Value of "Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa"

Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa program possesses writable commercial potential with a creative slant toward art and culture for community-based language learning. At a time when the preservation of local identities and languages is attaining national importance, this program fills a critical void in an avenue that straddles education and cultural engagement: the fun, interactive engagement that actively makes learning enjoyable for the children and thus increases its credibility as a worthy educational resource. Hence, the program might be sold to schools, tuition centers, cultural organizations, and government agencies concerned with youth development, heritage conservation, and community development. From a marketability perspective, the flexible and modular structure of the program allows customization for diverse audiences and environments, such as rural schools, urban community centers, or even tourism-friendly educational camps. Its activities and materials could be converted into digital content, interactive e-learning applications, or even mobile applications, thereby broadening the scope of its operations and appeal.

This flexibility thus leaves room for partnership arrangements with educational publishers, ed-tech companies, NGOs, and CSR programs from corporate sponsorship. A branding opportunity tied to national identity, youth empowerment, and inclusive education is a great means to build further visibility and credibility in the public eye. Profit-wise, revenue streams should be paid for, workshops, licensing of the education modules, sale of cultural-linguistic learning kits, and consultancy services for institutions that would want to replicate the model. Its alignment with national education policy and socio-community development also makes it attractive enough for government grants and research funding. With the possibility of this being scaled regionally or even nationally, *Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa* fulfills the educational and social function while asserting itself as a commercially viable model with a long-term sustainability and growth prospect.

Future Recommendation to Expand the SULAM Project

The SULAM project serves as a dynamic platform that connects academic learning with the community. Future SULAM projects should incorporate skills-based workshops that have the potential for long-term impact. These workshops could include traditional food preparation, digital literacy for the elderly, creative arts therapy or craft sessions. These activities could be expanded to community-based social enterprises or online platforms. This approach not only empowers communities economically but also provides real-world entrepreneurial experience for students at the University level of entrepreneurship. We also propose deeper integration of the SULAM project with the academic curriculum. Students can apply theoretical knowledge in courses such as entrepreneurship, ICT, tourism planning, and hospitality by addressing real community challenges. For example, ICT students can create simple applications to improve communication for the elderly, while tourism students can document community stories for heritage preservation.

The SULAM project can be said to be a service-based learning approach that actively connects university students with the community. To expand the impact of this project, several future proposals have been identified such as expanding the target to diverse community groups, introducing long-term skills workshops, and integrating the project with the academic curriculum. In addition, strategic partnerships with local NGOs, government agencies, alumni and corporate sponsors (through CSR

initiatives) can support the sustainability of the project through financial or technical assistance. Sustainability is a core concern in any community project. To ensure lasting impact, we suggest developing a 'Community Ambassador Program' where selected local residents are trained to continue the activities after the student engagement ends.

In terms of reach and visibility, we recommend leveraging digital platforms. Project blogs, video documentation or microsites can help document community stories, recipes or tutorials. QR codes can be integrated into products to educate users about the background of the item or the individual who made it. These digital tools can expand community engagement and act as a learning resource for other institutions. To assess success and ensure quality, we suggest implementing pre- and post-project evaluations, community interviews and visual documentation. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as income generation, skill acquisition and increased well-being can be tracked. This data can be used for reporting, publishing and continuous improvement. In conclusion, scaling up the SULAM project can significantly enhance community development and student learning if approached strategically. By diversifying target groups, embedding skills development, aligning with academic goals, fostering sustainability, and embracing digital engagement, SULAM can grow into an impactful, inclusive, and future-proof service-learning model.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa* project has proven to be a meaningful, multifaceted initiative that benefits both students and the local community. For the community, especially children and youth, it offered a fun and educational exposure to language and cultural heritage. For the students, it was an eye-opening experience that developed our leadership, empathy, and soft skills while enhancing our understanding of community dynamics and tourism's social role.

The project not only met its immediate objectives but also laid the groundwork for future scalability and impact. By integrating culture, education, and social values, the initiative has demonstrated how academic institutions can play a transformative role in community development. Moving forward, with continued support and strategic expansion—including digital integration and long-term sustainability planning— *Celik Budaya, Ceria Bahasa* has the potential to become a national model for service learning that is inclusive, impactful, and commercially viable.

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AQUAPONIC RESTORATION WITH CHILDREN THROUGH THE SULAM PROJECT

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Highlight: Children helped to restore the aquaponic system at Rimba Organic Community, which is part of Min House Camp located in Kelantan's Kota Bharu. The project was designed to support a sustainable method for farming and connect the community's youth to learning about the environment. Volunteers teamed up to maintain, improve, and look after the system that grows food in an environmentally friendly way by practicing aquaponics and hydroponics. The project was also a way to educate youth about protecting their environment. Participating in gardening and art projects with an environmental theme taught the kids to care for nature, practice sustainable agriculture, and learn about organic farming. Participating in local activities together made people in the community and the volunteers responsible for their region. Thanks to the veterinarians, the aquaponic system recovered and became a useful place for everyone to learn about farming. "Revive and Thrive" not only brought new life to the Rimba Organic Community's Garden but also inspired a deeper appreciation for sustainable living among its youngest members.

Keywords: Volunteer, Hydroponics, Environmental education, Organic Farming, Aquaponic system

Introduction

In an era where environmental sustainability and community engagement are paramount, integrating aquaponics into educational initiatives presents an opportunity for ecological restoration and youth development. Aquaponics is a synergistic system combining aquaculture and hydroponics and also serves as a practical model for sustainable agriculture, enabling the simultaneous cultivation of fish and plants in a closed loop ecosystem. This method not only addresses food security concerns but also provides an interactive platform for experiential learning.

Min House Camp (MHC) stands as a testament to the transformative power of aquaponics in community engagement. This eco-tourism site has implemented aquaponic systems as effective learning tools for children, including those with Down Syndrome, facilitating hands-on experiences that promote environmental awareness and cognitive development. By involving children in the maintenance of aquaponic systems, MHC fosters a sense of responsibility and connection to nature, aligning with the broader objectives of the SULAM program. The meeting of aquaponic, educational outreach, and community involvement at Min House Camp illustrates a holistic approach to environmental restoration. Through the SULAM project, children are not only educated about sustainable practices but are also empowered to contribute actively to ecological preservation efforts.

This model serves as an inspiring blueprint for integrating environmentally conscious individuals committed to sustainable living.

Background of the SULAM Project

The Aquaponic Restoration Program is a community engagement initiative aimed at integrating children and young farmers into sustainable agricultural practices. By combining aquaponics (a system that merges aquaculture and hydroponics) with activities like guppy catching, observing stingless bees, and tree planting. This program seeks to provide therapeutic, educational, and environmental benefits. For example, initiatives have been shown to enhance learning and therapy for children with disabilities.

Importance of the SULAM Project

The SULAM project at Min House Camp, Kubang Kerian is a meaningful initiative that combines inclusive education, environmental conservation, and sustainable living. Located just 6 km from Kota Bharu, Min House Camp provides a peaceful riverside setting ideal for both educational and recreational activities. Managed by Cikgu Zanini and Kak Yah, the camp was inspired by their special needs son, Abdul Muhamin, and is named in his honour. It is fully OKU-friendly, featuring wheelchair-accessible facilities and attracting long-term patients from the nearby Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia.

The project allows university students to engage in hands-on learning through various nature-based and cultural activities. These include managing an organic aquaponic system, observing stingless bees and local wildlife, and participating in traditional games, handicraft-making, cooking classes, and cultural performances like *wayang kulit* and *dikir barat*. Students also participate in eco-tourism and environmental programs such as firefly watching, tree planting, clam-digging, and kayaking. The site is well-equipped with educational infrastructure, including chalets, multipurpose halls, a firefly garden, and a mini petting zoo, offering an immersive and inclusive learning experience.

Impacts of the SULAM Project

The SULAM project has created meaningful and lasting impacts on both the local community and participating university students. For the community, it has empowered the OKU (disabled) population by designing inclusive and accessible activities that allow them to take part in eco-tourism and community farming actively. This promotes social integration and provides a sense of purpose and contribution. The project also enhances eco-tourism in the area by positioning Min House Camp as a model for sustainable tourism, attracting both domestic and international visitors. This increased visitor traffic contributes to the local economy and raises the profile of the surrounding community.

Additionally, the project fosters environmental awareness among community members, particularly children and youth, by introducing them to organic farming, biodiversity conservation, and green living practices. Through cultural activities such as traditional games, crafts, and performances, the project plays a vital role in preserving and passing down Kelantanese heritage to future generations. For university students, the SULAM project provides rich experiential learning opportunities. It enables them to apply theoretical knowledge from the classroom in real-world contexts, such as setting up aquaponic systems, managing environmental initiatives, and organizing community events. Working closely with OKU participants cultivates empathy, social responsibility, and adaptability in students, helping them develop soft skills that are essential in both personal and professional life.

Moreover, the collaborative nature of the project encourages leadership, teamwork, and effective problem-solving. Exposure to community-based tourism and sustainable agriculture also nurtures entrepreneurial thinking and expands students' awareness of career possibilities in fields like eco-tourism, social entrepreneurship, and agribusiness. Overall, the SULAM project significantly contributes to both community empowerment and student development through its holistic and inclusive approach.

Figure 1: Aquaponic Plant Restoration Activity

Commercial Value and Marketability of the SULAM Project

1. *Diversified Revenue Streams*
   a. Accommodation: Staying in this area is easy, as there are low-cost options, especially for patients from Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia (HUSM).
   b. Eco-Tourism Activities: Nature activities such as firefly watching, kayaking, and clam digging are geared toward people who care about nature.
   c. Cultural Experiences: Traditional food preparation, handicraft-making, and performances like wayang kulit and dikir barat provide authentic cultural immersion for visitors.

2. *Recognition and Awards*
   Awards: Recipient of the ASEAN Green Hotel Standard (2018 & 2020) and ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard (2019 & 2021), highlighting its commitment to sustainable practices.

3. *Strategic Location*
   It is located not far from Kota Bharu city and shares a border with HUSM, allowing MHC access to a large number of both local and medical tourists, as well as university members, daily.

Profitability and Economic Impact

1. *Community-Based Ecotourism (CBE) Model*
   The CBE approach used by MHC means that local people receive benefits from its economy. As result of this model, both communities and the environment benefit, and people can generate income by being involved in ecotourism.

2. *Tourists' Willingness to Pay*
   Various studies suggest that MHC is attractive to tourists as they are interested in participating in cultural events and eco-tourism, making the site's profitability likely.

3. *Employment Opportunities*
   SULAM's involvement and MHC's daily activities supply jobs for local people, providing those with disabilities with opportunities and helping improve the local economy.

Future Recommendation

To expand the SULAM Project at Min House Camp (MHC), Kubang Kerian, ensuring sustainable growth, inclusivity, and community impact:

1. *Establish a SULAM Innovation & Training Hub*
   Install a hub at MHC for teaching, learning, and conducting projects related to areas such as aquaponics, eco-tourism, and inclusive education. The hub might be an example for the nation in how good experiential and service learning can be.

2. *Develop OKU-Friendly Digital Learning Tools*
   Include special features (for example, AR/VR tours, text-to-speech, and subtitles) in mobile apps or websites so that people with disabilities can learn more about sustainable travel and ecotourism.

3. *Expand Product Commercialization*
   Increase the amount of MHC's products sold by making them available in local markets, online stores (Shopee/Lazada), and souvenir shops. Labelling them as eco-social products might attract more buyers and raise their revenue.

4. *Form Strategic Partnerships with Agencies*
   Join with Tourism Malaysia, MaGIC, Yayasan Hasanah, and the local government to look into funding, improving facilities, and developing CSR programs. Working together, these organizations could benefit OKUs and encourage other states to follow the same path.

5. *Launch International Eco-Volunteer & Tourism Packages*
   Design short-term international eco-volunteer programs for students and tourists focused on sustainability, culture, and inclusive service. Combine activities like tree planting, aquaponics, and traditional Kelantanese workshops into immersive tourism packages.

Conclusion

SULAM Project at Min House Camp demonstrates a new and inclusive way of creating community-focused eco-tourism and learning about sustainability. When hands-on learning is added to aquaponics, the project both secures food and addresses environmental issues, while supporting the mental, social, and emotional growth of children of all abilities. Min House Camp demonstrates how environmental restoration, providing education for everyone, and preserving culture can complement each other for everyone's benefit.

Thanks to its location, broad activities, and efforts for a greener future, the camp has helped increase visitors, made the area's economy stronger, and supported local education. Soon such steps as creating a SULAM Innovation & Training Hub, making OKU-friendly digital tools, and supplying international volunteer packages have the possibility to make the project more inclusive, scalable and profitable. With the help of partners and greater commercial activities, these efforts may turn Min House Camp into a successful example of community transformation based on experiential learning and green tourism at a national and international level.

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EMPOWERING B40 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN SARAWAK THROUGH DIGITAL LITERACY: A SERVICE-LEARNING INITIATIVE

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Highlight: B40 women entrepreneurs practising Malay Traditional Medicine possess strong hands-on healing skills but remain digitally illiterate. Most of them lack essential digital competencies such as using a word processor to prepare and present professional reports and to promote their services and products through digital marketing. To bridge this gap, SULAM Faculty of Computer Science and IT, UNIMAS partnered with Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad to deliver a three-day "Bengkel Kemahiran Literasi Digital," equipping 20 practitioners from all over Sarawak with the digital skills needed for certification and business growth. As a direct outcome, each participant successfully completed hands on assignments, submitting professional reports, presentation slides, marketing posters, and promotional videos, demonstrating their newly acquired competencies.

Keywords: Digital literacy; B40 women entrepreneurs; Malay Traditional Medicine

Introduction

Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad empowers B40 women across Sarawak through Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) services, including postnatal care, massage therapy and wellness consultations, while providing comprehensive TCM certification and entrepreneurship training. Operating in Kuching, Samarahan, Sri Aman, Sibu, Bintulu and Miri, the cooperative not only enhances client well-being but also creates sustainable income opportunities and connects practitioners to broader markets and resources. Beyond its business functions, the cooperative represents a significant social initiative, connecting underprivileged women with essential resources and training programs in areas such as postnatal care and TCM certification. Despite their practical expertise, many of Koperasi Mamacare's practitioners remain digitally illiterate. Lacking formal qualifications like the Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia (SKM) and Diploma Kemahiran Malaysia (DKM), they are unable to register as certified TCM practitioners under the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM) and face critical operational challenges such as absence of professional report-writing skills required for DKM accreditation and limited capacity to create polished marketing materials to reach new clients. Geographical dispersion and caregiving responsibilities further constrain their access to conventional ICT training, perpetuating the digital divide.

To address these gaps, SULAM Faculty of Computer Science and IT, UNIMAS partnered with Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad to design and deliver a three-day "Bengkel Kemahiran Literasi Digital" from 13– 15 May 2025 at Institut Koperasi Malaysia, Kuching, Sarawak. Two main software

platforms, namely, Microsoft Word for professional report preparation and Canva for slide presentation design and digital marketing content creation been introduced to the participants. This intervention aimed to equip participants with the digital competencies necessary for DKM certification, improve their operational efficiency, and foster sustainable income growth and formal professional recognition.

Main Topic

In Sarawak, many women from the B40 income group rely on their traditional skills in Malay Traditional Medicine, particularly in postnatal care and massage therapy, as their primary source of income (Mohd Noor et al., 2024). While these women possess valuable practical knowledge, most lack formal qualifications such as the Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia (SKM) or Diploma Kemahiran Malaysia (DKM). Without these credentials, they are unable to officially register as TCM practitioners under the KKM, limiting their professional recognition and ability to expand their businesses (MySPIKE, 2024).

The rapid growth of digital technology in Malaysia further emphasizes the need for digital literacy, especially for women entrepreneurs (MCMM, 2021). Many of these women struggle with basic digital tasks, including preparing professional reports required for certification, creating presentations for accreditation purposes, and marketing their services digitally to potential clients. Their limited access to training due to geographical barriers and family responsibilities further complicates their efforts to obtain necessary qualifications and improve their livelihoods (Mohd Noor et al., 2024).

Recognizing these challenges, Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad plays an essential role in supporting and empowering these women by providing structured training and essential resources. The cooperative serves as a significant social initiative aimed at facilitating professional certification, market access, and sustainable economic improvement for these underserved entrepreneurs (Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad, 2024).

This SULAM project is important as it addresses the critical issue of digital illiteracy among B40 women entrepreneurs practising Malay Traditional Medicine in Sarawak. Despite possessing significant practical skills, these women face limitations in achieving formal recognition due to the absence of essential digital competencies. Without these digital skills, such as creating professional reports for certification, preparing presentations, and marketing their services digitally, these practitioners remain excluded from formal accreditation pathways, notably the DKM, required by the KKM.

By providing targeted digital literacy training through hands-on sessions using software such as Microsoft Word and Canva, this project helps participants overcome these barriers. The training empowers them to enhance their professional credibility, qualify for official TCM practitioner registration, and effectively expand their client base through improved digital marketing. Consequently, the project significantly contributes towards sustained economic growth and supports decent employment opportunities for underprivileged women, aligning closely with Malaysia's commitment to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8): Decent Work and Economic Growth (MCMM, 2021; Mohd Noor et al., 2024).

Description of the Project

The "Bengkel Kemahiran Literasi Digital," conducted from 13–15 May 2025 at Institut Koperasi Malaysia (IKMa) Kuching, Sarawak, is a structured three-day service-learning initiative organized by SULAM Faculty of Computer Science and IT, UNIMAS in collaboration with Koperasi Mamacare Sarawak Berhad. The workshop engaged 20 Malay Traditional Medicine practitioners from the B40 community, comprising 10 cooperative members and 10 external participants from across Sarawak. There are 42 SULAM students from UNIMAS, divided into four facilitation teams, conducted the sessions.

The workshop provided intensive, hands-on digital literacy training using two key software platforms: **Microsoft Word** and **Canva**. Participants learned essential skills for preparing professional reports and presentations required for obtaining DKM certification. They also acquired practical skills to promote their products and services through digital marketing, including poster design and promotional video creation. The training involved interactive sessions, individual mentoring, peer collaboration, and practical assignments, ensuring each participant successfully produced

professional reports, slide presentations, marketing posters, and promotional videos by the end of the workshop. Refer Figure 1.

Figure 1: A 3-day workshop with the B40 women entrepreneurs.

Prior to the workshop, a pre-survey was conducted to assess participants' digital literacy levels. As illustrated in Figure 2, the results showed that 38.1% of the participants rated their Microsoft Word skills as average, while 28.6% admitted having no knowledge at all, and another 28.6% identified themselves as having low proficiency. Only 4.8% considered themselves highly proficient. In terms of Canva usage, 66.7% of participants did not have an active Canva account, highlighting a significant gap in digital tool familiarity that the workshop aimed to address.

Figure 2: Significant results from the pre-survey prior to the workshop.

The pre-survey results clearly demonstrated a widespread lack of digital readiness among participants, reinforcing the importance and timeliness of the workshop in building foundational digital skills for professional development and certification.

As illustrated in Figure 3(a), additionally, responses collected on participants' expectations revealed their strong motivation to deepen their understanding of Microsoft Word, particularly in preparing structured, professional reports aligned with Laporan Pengalaman Keterampilan Terdahulu (LPKT) requirements. Several also hoped the workshop would support their journey toward obtaining DKM certification and becoming more confident in presenting their work in a consistent and professional manner.

Feedback gathered at the end of the workshop indicated that participants found the training useful and impactful. Refer to Figure 3(b). Many shared that they were now more confident using Canva and Microsoft Word, especially for preparing DKM-related presentations and materials. Some participants expressed a desire to further improve their skills in future sessions, while others

highlighted the practical application of what they had learned in their career and daily work. The majority of the responses were positive, with several requesting that similar workshops be conducted again in the future.
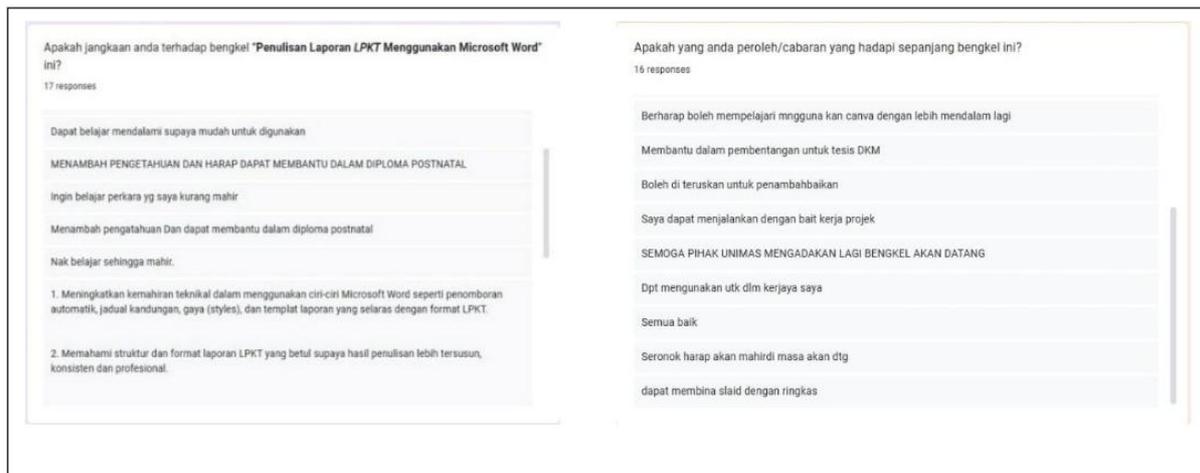

Figure 3 (a): Expectations from the participants from the pre-survey prior to the workshop; Figure 3(b): Feedback from the participants from the post-survey.

Impacts and Advantages

The project significantly empowered the B40 women entrepreneurs practising Malay Traditional Medicine by equipping them with essential digital skills, thus increasing their professional credibility and market visibility. As a direct result of the training, participants reported increased confidence and competence in preparing professional reports, presentations, and promotional materials, essential for obtaining formal DKM certification. Enhanced digital literacy also opened new avenues for promoting their services and products, improving their business sustainability and income potential. Ultimately, the project contributed to strengthening the socio-economic status of these practitioners, fostering greater inclusivity and economic participation within their communities.

For the service-learning students from UNIMAS, the project offered valuable real-world experiences beyond classroom learning. Students developed essential skills in instructional design, communication, project management, and problem-solving through hands-on facilitation and direct community engagement. This practical exposure allowed them to appreciate the relevance of digital literacy in entrepreneurial success and social empowerment. Additionally, students gained deeper insights into community-driven challenges and learned to collaboratively develop practical solutions, aligning their academic growth with meaningful community service.

Commercial Value and Marketability

This project holds notable commercial value, particularly through the development and potential commercialization of digital training materials. The digital resources and assets created during the workshop, such as professionally formatted Microsoft Word templates, Canva based presentation slides, marketing posters, and promotional video templates, can be packaged as a comprehensive "Digital Starter Kit" tailored specifically for TCM practitioners within the B40 communities.

The kit has strong marketability potential, as it directly addresses the common needs of similar cooperatives, social enterprises, and small scale entrepreneurs throughout Malaysia. It can be licensed, sold, or distributed as a ready to use educational package, providing a revenue stream to sustain and replicate this empowerment model across other underserved regions and communities. Furthermore, equipping entrepreneurs with these professional digital portfolios enhances their business credibility, enabling them to attract more customers, command better market pricing, and potentially partner with larger health and wellness businesses or institutions.

Conclusion

This SULAM project has successfully empowered B40 women practitioners in Malay Traditional Medicine by equipping them with essential digital skills for certification and business growth. Through targeted training in Microsoft Word and Canva, participants gained the confidence and competence needed to advance professionally. The project demonstrates the value of service learning in bridging digital gaps and creating meaningful community impact.

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VIRTUAL TRAVEL AND WORLD CULTURE

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Highlight: The program involved tahfiz students from Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al Amin and university student facilitators in cultural and educational activities. It blended learning with enjoyment, fostering empathy, communication, and mutual understanding. The program created a positive, respectful environment, enriching the students' learning experience.

Keywords: Community engagement, Volunteerism, Informal Education, Interaction

Introduction

Virtual Tourism and World Cultures Program with Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin is an initiative under the Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) program that integrates community-based learning with creative and engaging global cultural exploration. This project was conducted physically through the setup of four interactive booths, each themed around selected countries representing diverse cultures from around the world. Each booth was decorated according to the identity of the country it represented and offered exciting activities.

This approach allowed the students of Maahad Tahfiz to "travel" virtually in a physical and interactive environment. It provided them the opportunity to experience global tourism without having to leave the country. In addition, the university students involved were able to practice communication, event management, and creative skills through the planning and implementation of this program. Indirectly, the project helps build student character, encourages global thinking, and strengthens the relationship between higher education institutions and the local community.

Background of the Project

A project of the Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society (SULAM) program, which combines community service and practical learning, is the Virtual Tourism and World Cultures Program with Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin. The necessity to increase tahfiz students' exposure to the outside world and their knowledge of it, especially with regard to global geography, cultures, and lifestyles, led to the creation of this project. Religious school students frequently place a strong emphasis on memorising the Quran and studying Islam, with little opportunity for integrated learning that incorporates engagement with the outside world. As a result, this program acts as a link to enable people to investigate the variety of cultures around the world in an engaging, entertaining, and easily accessible manner.

This project's primary strategy was to create a tangible virtual tourism experience by erecting four interactive booths that represented various nations. China, Korea, and Thailand. With features like flags, traditional clothing, simple language expressions, traditional music and dance, and famous sites,

each booth was created to represent the cultural identity of its own nation. The interactive cultural activities at each booth were what added interest to the program. These included language-based riddles and puzzles that exposed pupils to fundamental terms in Thai, Korean, Japanese, and Mandarin, as well as cultural quizzes and emblematic origami crafts like the lotus flower in Thailand. Students had the chance to "travel" between booths, engaging in entertaining and instructive hands-on learning experiences.

The university students who participated in the conception and execution of this program gained value in addition to the tahfiz pupils. Soft skills like teamwork, communication, leadership, and event planning were strengthened for these pupils. In keeping with SULAM's mission of meaningful, service-oriented learning, they simultaneously put their academic knowledge to use in a genuine community setting. Additionally, this virtual tourism strategy is adaptable and inclusive, which aligns with 21st century learning standards that prioritise technology, interaction, and international travel. Through indirect cultural appreciation, tolerance, and open-mindedness, the program encourages learners to think more broadly and be curious about the world.

In conclusion, the Virtual Tourism and World Cultures Program aims to develop students' character via meaningful social interaction and cross-cultural exposure, not just by presenting them to other cultures. It is a high-impact educational strategy that merits continuation and expansion in the future since it also improves the relationship between local communities and higher education institutions.

Importance of the Project

Planned by university students, the SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society) project bridges community service and learning within the university. Under the theme "Virtual Travel and World Culture," at the Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin, our community project specializes in interactive and quality mainstream education, particularly for religious school students. This program is significant with regards to acquiring knowledge, social skills, and a sense of togetherness and appreciation of cultural diversity, even though the students do not belong to traditional schools.

The main purpose of this project is to equip students using a fun and participatory way of teaching. By learning how to say hello to different countries (Japanese, Korean, Thai, and Chinese), origami making, country-specific quiz learning, and learning other countries' traditional clothing and food, this program exposes a variety of international cultures. These activities promote an appreciation of cultural diversity worldwide and make the students tolerant. In addition to this, students learn while having fun through the integration of activities like "my travel passport," booth visits at the national level, and national culture quizzes. This reinforces their learning and retention and adds enjoyment and significance to learning. Participant interaction, communication ability, and confidence are all increased through such activities. In addition to this, students learn while having fun through the integration of activities like "my travel passport," booth visits at the national level, and national culture quizzes. This reinforces their learning and retention and adds enjoyment and significance to learning. Participant interaction, communication ability, and confidence are all increased through such activities.

Also, the students can learn and have fun through the use of activities like "my travel passport," visits to national booths, and quizzes on national cultures. This improves their comprehension and retention as well as brings enjoyment and significance to learning. Participant teamwork, communication skills, and self-confidence are all improved through such activities. This project is significant in terms of the development of university students as facilitators since it allows them to develop soft skills like teamwork, leadership, time management, and proper communication. Besides empathy and volunteer mindset development, they also learn how to manage and design activities entirely. Before students' step into the actual world of jobs, this is crucial preparation.

The schools involved also gain from this initiative. It strengthens the universities' role as catalysts of change in society and builds up a network of co-operation among schools and universities. This initiative makes some contribution towards the creation of human capital and general well-being of society, even if there is no short-term financial value.

In addition, this program indirectly encourages unity and harmony among the younger generation. Students who are exposed to different cultures become more tolerant, open-minded, and appreciative of differences. This is key to a united but diverse Malaysian society. This

community/SULAM initiative is pertinent because it not only benefits the university students and the general community but also exposes school children to new experiences and learning. It is a comprehensive education strategy that incorporates social values, knowledge, and skills for competitive and holistic human development.

Description of the Project

The goal of the community project as part of the SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia – University for Society) initiative was to achieve social integration and hands-on learning through a teaching program. This particular project was done on 17 May 2025 at Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Pubimas Al Amin, situated in Jalan Tok Guru, Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The "Virtual Tourism and World Cultures Program" sought to help students from the tahfiz school learn about foreign cultures, languages, and tourism in a fun and exciting easy way. Under the guidance of facilitators, a team of student from University Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) tailored the plan to meet the program objectives. It included teaching language through interaction, culture discovery booths, educational games, and art exhibitions. The specific aim was to widen the students' exposure to different cultures beyond the classroom whilst equipping them with the necessary soft skills to become global citizens.

The day started with participants registering and taking part in an ice-breaking activity. During the ice-breaking session, students and facilitators interacted and familiarized themselves with one another and divided into groups. Throughout this period, facilitators instructed students on how some greetings are said in different languages like Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Thai. This activity was aimed at fostering a sense of community within the group as well as arousing interest in other parts of the world. Furthermore, every participant was issued a 'travel passport, which they could customize as a symbolic certificate for entering the realms of virtual global adventure. Following that, the students were divided into groups and rotated through country-themed booths for the countries represented, which were Japan, South Korea, China, Thailand. At each one of the booths, students were presented with pictures, traditional outfits, snacks, and even brief phrases in the respective languages. Engaging activities like making origami at the Japan booth and traditional party games served as an additional fun component to the learning experience offered to the children.

With a small break for refreshments, students took part in the session called the "Amazing Race Tourism Quiz." The goal of this session was mapping different countries to their respective flags, in addition to telling the country's name in the group discussions. South Korea was highly regarded for its technology and entertainment, whereas Japan stood out for its advanced culture and society. This advanced public speaking and allowed students to build greater confidence towards voicing their opinions.The SULAM participants were provided with powerful testimonials during the tahfiz community on the students being highly eager and participative. With the culminating photograph it served as a ceremony with the purpose of achieving the experience culminating to the awarding of the certificate.

Impact and Advantages of the Project

"Virtual Travel and World Culture," which is a community outreach initiative at Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al Amin, has had a significant impact on the growth of both individual students and the tahfiz community. Using fun, engaging and developmentally appropriate exercises, the course is designed to expose tahfiz students to cultures from around the world. Event activities offer cross-cultural themes such as global geography, indigenous clothing, world languages and cultural practices. Several countries can be learned in a creative and interactive way through experiential and collaborative learning. The impact on Maahad Tahfiz students who are overly focused on religious studies is profound. They rarely get the opportunity to learn secular subjects such as world culture or geography, as they are more interested in religious studies. The program exposes them to alternative education systems and broadens their horizons about the world of life outside their daily lives. Activities such as greetings in other languages, passport construction, cultural games and travel quizzes allow them to learn informally but effectively. Not only is the process fun, but it also enhances their memory and interest in travel as a topic. The Amazing Race Travel Quiz especially encourages critical thinking and teamwork as students are required to complete their mini passports in groups.

In addition, the program offers social and emotional benefits. The idea of being involved and included in an event day with dynamic activities, as well as external facilitators, gives many young people a sense of excitement and joy. Their mental well-being benefits from this sense of caring and

inclusion creating a positive environment that stimulates participatory engagement. It also fosters genuine relationship-building moments between facilitators and students based on mutual respect and trust. In a broader sense, the project is able to foster a culture of volunteerism and social cohesion by connecting children and members of the local tahfiz community, with university students. From a community development perspective, it enhances the relationship between local tahfiz institutions and university students. Facilitators demonstrate pro-social behavior by engaging in civic duty, altruism and volunteerism through their planned events. The events serve as a platform to share information, to learn, to engage in participation, and all of these aspects will support the building of peace and community cohesion.

As far as learning is concerned, the program allows the team of facilitators to gain some experience in applying their theoretical learning to real-world scenarios. During planning and delivery, skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership, event management, and adaptability are all cultivated. Performers need to manage their time effectively, coordinate team roles, prepare materials, and stick to a schedule. Working with tahfiz children also improves interpersonal communication, which is essential for recognizing and leading activities or managing large groups of people, including being polite in your approach, clear with instructions, and the right tone. Recognizing the prospects for success in effectively conveying knowledge while considering the specific needs of diverse audiences highlights the importance of awareness and sensitivity to context led communication required for community engagement. It also stimulates reflective thinking and awareness of the range of learning contexts, and the differences in educational access for students in mainstream schools versus those in tahfiz institutions, encouraging greater participation in planning future outreach projects.

In short, the Virtual Tourism and World Cultures Program successfully achieved its goal of providing tahfiz students with authentic and enjoyable experiences outside of their regular curriculum. Furthermore, it had a significant impact on the development of critical skills of organizers. The program is a holistic endeavour that benefits the target population and the student volunteers who contribute to the program, as it encompasses the domains of education, cultural encounter, and emotional engagement.

Future Recommendations

The SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia-University for Society) initiative is a dynamic platform that bridges academic learning with meaningful community engagement. Our collaboration with Madrasah Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin, we witnessed the powerful impact of combining religious education with social responsibility. We have organized a virtual and World Cultural Tourism program together with the children of Hafiz and Hafizah. Through this collaboration, students not only deepen their understanding of the Quran but also cultivate values of leadership empathy and new knowledge about more countries.

As we look toward the future, it is essential to develop a strategic plan to expand the reach and impact of the SULAM project, both within and beyond the walls of the madrasah. The parties are responsible for making capacity building which can train teachers and student leaders on how to facilitate community engagement activities. Offers seminars and workshops on Community Development, Social Entrepreneurship, and civic responsibility. While the collaboration with Madrasah Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin has been highly successful, seeking out new collaborations with other educational institutions, NGOs, and even corporate entities will unlock new opportunities. This could involve partnering with conventional schools to introduce service-learning principles into their curriculum or collaborating with environmental organizations to initiate eco-friendly community projects. Engaging with corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives could also provide funding and resources, allowing for larger scale projects and increased impact.

Another critical area for future growth lies in leveraging technology more extensively. While the virtual World Cultural Tourism program was a success, there's potential to develop more sophisticated online platforms. This could include a centralized SULAM portal to showcase projects, connect volunteers with opportunities, and facilitate knowledge sharing among participating institutions. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) could offer immersive learning experiences, allowing students to "visit" and understand different communities and cultures remotely, further broadening their horizons. Online courses and webinars on service-learning methodologies could also extend training opportunities to a wider audience, transcending geographical limitations.

Furthermore, SULAM should focus on impact measurement and dissemination. To secure future funding and partnerships, it's essential to rigorously document the social, academic, and personal impacts of SULAM projects. This involves developing clear metrics, collecting data, and producing compelling reports and case studies. Sharing these successes through academic publications, conferences, and public presentations will not only raise SULAM's profile but also inspire others to adopt similar approaches. Establishing a mentorship program where experienced SULAM participants guide newcomers could also foster a stronger, more cohesive community.

In conclusion, the SULAM project has already demonstrated its immense potential to bridge academic learning with meaningful community engagement. By strategically investing in capacity building, diversifying partnerships, leveraging technology, and prioritizing impact measurement, SULAM can significantly expand its reach and influence. The goal is to cultivate a generation of socially conscious and engaged citizens who are not only academically proficient but also deeply committed to making a positive difference in their communities and the world at large.

Conclusion

Under World Culture and Virtual Tourism theme, the SULAM project has been a valuable activity that has made great impact on the community and students at the university. The project, being carried out in Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin, seeks to close the gap between tahfiz students by exposing them to different cultures through creative and dynamic learning exercises. Through activities like language learning, games, quizzes, and trips to country booths, children learn new learning processes that foster self-worth, teamwork, and cultural awareness. Besides helping participating students enhance social and intellectual abilities, this program enhances the facilitators' communication skills, leadership, and event management skills. This program enhances curiosity and tolerance to diversity among tahfiz children through exposure to the outside world beyond their usual syllabus. Learning concepts can also be applied in real life by university students, preparing them for their career as well as self-enrichment. Furthermore, by promoting communication between tahfiz schools and higher education institutions and stimulating a sense of empathy and voluntarism among young people, this project also helps to strengthen community cohesion, highlighting the significance of inclusive education and intercultural understanding in developing holistic human capital. In general, the SULAM project is an embodiment of the theories of experiential learning and communal involvement. It promotes values such as empathy, respect, and solidarity in addition to learning. The project is a strong platform for an inclusive and more peaceful society by unifying polarized groups in a meaningful way. One good example of an effective learning and social formation tool is the Virtual Tourism and World Culture Program.

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KASIH DAN LAYANAN: MENYANTUNI WARGA EMAS AT PUSAT AKTIVTI WARGA EMAS RANTAU PANJANG (PAWERP)

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Highlight: Pertubuhan Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas Rantau Panjang's (PAWERP) "Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas" volunteer program is a cookery contest aimed at encouraging cordial and meaningful interactions between undergraduates and older citizens. This program prioritizes the emotional and mental health of senior citizens in addition to providing opportunities for happy contact. The initiative seeks to encourage participants' self-worth, increase their social confidence, rekindle their life goals, and promote a more compassionate and inclusive society through shared experiences and focused volunteer work. This program is part of the SULAM project. A total of 10 volunteer students and 15 elderly people participated in this program.

Keywords: cookery contest, senior citizens, volunteering, emotional health, self-worth, social confidence, shared experiences

Introduction

The *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* volunteer program, organized by the Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas Rantau Panjang (PAWERP), is a community-based initiative that brings together youth and seniors through a friendly cooking competition. More than just a cooking competition, this program is a sincere effort to foster respect, compassion, and meaningful engagement between generations. At its core, this initiative also aims to support the emotional and mental well-being of senior participants by creating highly enjoyable interactive experiences that can foster a collaborative spirit within each other. Through shared moments in the kitchen, this program has fostered a sense of belonging and purpose for seniors and allowed them to feel seen, valued, connected, and loved. At the same time, student volunteers benefit by developing critical soft skills such as empathy, communication, and collaboration in a real-world community setting. Ultimately, *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* aspires to inspire positive social values, strengthen bonds between generations, and promote an inclusive, caring society where no one is left behind, regardless of age or background.

Background of the SULAM Project

Pertubuhan Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas (PAWE) Rantau Panjang is a government-supported senior activity center aimed at improving the quality of life for elderly individuals in the Rantau Panjang area. Located in a semi-rural region, this center provides a safe and engaging space for senior citizens to participate in social, spiritual, educational, and recreational programs. Many of the elderly in this community face challenges such as limited mobility, lack of digital literacy, and social isolation.

As part of the SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia- University for Society) initiative, students from University Malaysia Kelantan carried out a community-based project at PAWE. This project focused on addressing the needs of the elderly through providing a safe, inclusive, and compassionate space for senior citizens to interact, helping them to build self-confidence, strengthen social relationships, and enjoy meaningful experiences in a well-planned and friendly environment. Last but not least, to raise public awareness about the importance of appreciating the roles and contributions of senior citizens, as well as to promote acceptance and social inclusion for them. The project provided mutual benefits-enhancing the well-being of the elderly while allowing students to apply academic knowledge in real-life settings and cultivate empathy, leadership, and civic responsibility.

Importance of the SULAM Project

This community/ SULAM project is important because it addresses a critical social need, which is supporting the well-being and dignity of senior citizens, especially those living in semi-rural areas like Rantau Panjang. Many elderly individuals in this area face challenges such as loneliness, a lack of structured social engagement, and so on. By collaborating with PAWE Rantau Panjang, this project provides them with a safe, inclusive, and caring environment to interact, learn, and stay active.

The SULAM Project not only benefits the elderly community but also offers meaningful, real-life learning experiences for UMK students. It allows students to apply the values and skills from their academic programs, particularly in hospitality, such as professional service, empathy, effective communication, and sensitivity to the needs of different individuals. Students are also involved in managing activities that reflect courtesy, respect, and social harmony.

Moreover, it raises public awareness of the importance of appreciating and including older generations in our social fabric. It promotes a culture of respect, intergenerational connection, and compassion- values that are essential for building a caring and progressive society.

In summary, this project is important because it supports the elderly, develops students into socially responsible individuals, and strengthens the relationship between the university and the community through shared goals and mutual respect.

Description of the SULAM Project

The context of our community project this time is related to the Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas (PAWE) of Rantau Panjang, which becomes the focal point for the implementation of various activities involving the elderly in the area. This community project is conducted to understand the level of well-being, mental and physical health, and quality of life of the elderly, who often receive less attention in society. Through interactive activities with them, data is collected to assess the level of welfare and identify the best approaches to improve the well-being of the elderly.

The primary goal of this initiative is to educate the elderly about the benefits of traditional foods; moreover, this activity is being carried out to strengthen links between the youth and the elderly. Communication obstacles are one of the challenges faced, as there are older people with hearing impairments and other conditions. We employ a more elderly-friendly strategy to address these issues, including the use of simple language, direct demonstrations, and more intimate face-to-face techniques. One of the events is a cooking session of traditional meals from the state, which is done in groups, generating a pleasant environment as people participate in the activities planned. Additionally, there are sessions for mutual introductions between students and the elderly. Storytelling sessions are also held, allowing them to relate their life experiences while establishing positive social interactions. We also interviewed a PAWE officer, who claimed that most of the elderly here have a favourable attitude when participating in social and physical activities. According to him, educational techniques that involve such calming activities are more effective in instilling a sense of community and improving their emotional well-being.

Impacts and Advantages of the SULAM Project

Community/SULAM programs like this are critical because they connect academic learning with community service while also fostering a better knowledge of real-world social challenges. In this setting, students not only apply knowledge realistically, but they also acquire soft skills such as

empathy, teamwork, and communication abilities. This is an example of experiential learning, which may make education more meaningful and have a significant impact on all involved.

1. To the student
For participants, it can enhance students' understanding of traditional food from the state and expand their knowledge through the integration of theory with real-world practice. Additionally, it provides students with opportunities to assist the local community with what they have learned in class, while enabling them to interact with the community at school.

2. To the elderly
This project has a tremendous influence on the elderly by promoting knowledge about the relevance of traditional food in the community. The activities are not only pleasant, but they also help people stay physically active and mentally alert. They also get to socialize with one another, which indirectly lessens feelings of loneliness and improves emotional well-being.

3. To the University
This initiative demonstrates the university's commitment to community-based learning and social engagement. It allows students to apply their knowledge in real-world situations, increasing their social awareness and project management skills. The tight relationships formed between students, teachers, and the surrounding community, such as PAWE, illustrate the university's position as a catalyst for change and community development.

4. To the community
This project assists the Rantau Panjang population, namely the elderly, who are the primary target demographic. They not only have free access to educational programs and hospitality, but they also feel valued and involved in university students' learning processes. This can help to close the gap between higher education institutions and the local community, as well as create chances for future collaboration.

Commercial Value in Terms of Marketability or Profitability of the Project

Although the biggest goal of the *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* project is to improve the connection between the younger and older generations, the efforts present the chance for its commercialization, which supports its ongoing success in society. If marketability and profit are considered, this initiative may move from helping the community to building a strong model that helps the senior citizens and the broader community.

An important commercial opportunity comes from designing and labeling trusted cooking products based on what was cooked during the program. A lot of senior citizens have historical recipes and cooking tips they've picked up over time. They can be improved and put onto the market using their own recognized brand name, like "Warisan Dapur" or "Legacy Recipe." Faculty help students participate in every part of the process, covering development, design, branding, and marketing online. You can sell these foods at your local market, at cultural fairs, during university events, and on Shopee, Lazada, or on Instagram shops. Not only does it supply more income for the seniors and the PAWE center, but it also keeps alive and promotes local food traditions profitably.

Apart from products, the project has chances in promoting digital content. Cooking competitions, personal stories about the elderly, what goes on behind the scenes, and comprehensive cooking lessons can all be videotaped and shared online. Making money from ads, sponsorships, and donations, these videos teach valuable lessons to seniors. You can create a cookbook and benefit from selling it to raise money or save your culture. In the field of multimedia, marketing, and business, students can use these duties to put theories from class into practice and help their communities.

Also, this program can help boost local tourism. Because Rantau Panjang is a semi-rural area full of culture, it has the potential to offer visitors experiential tourism. People visiting here might learn to cook, listen to local folktales, or enjoy cultural tours planned by the older population. They enable visitors to meet real culture by providing a worthy way for older people to offer help and contribute to the community's income.

Aligned with good management, effective marketing, and correct ethical steps, *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* has the chance to develop from a series of volunteer providers to a successful social business caring about both social and financial growth. It allows everyone to benefit, since community wellness rises, learning for students is increased, and business success is used for a better society.

Future Recommendation to Expand the Pusat Ativiti Warga Emas Rantau Panjang (PAWERP)

To keep the *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* project successful and spreading its influence, it will help to implement some key recommendations. In the first place, creating more partnerships between the private, public, and non-profit sectors would ensure help in the form of finances, arrangements, and expert care. The project is strengthened both by its outreach and its sustainability through these partnerships.

It is also crucial to set up basic digital skill classes for retirees here in Rantau Panjang. Simple workshops in ICT help senior adults use smartphones, view information online, and become involved in digital gatherings which support their social connection and personal independence. Increasing the types of activities for generations can strengthen the relationship between the young and the old. Attending storytelling, art and craft, gardening, and language exchange programs offers seniors a chance for regular engagement, emotional support, and to learn about their heritage.

We also advise establishing a social enterprise within the local community. Converting traditional snacks and culture tours from the project into money-generating activities will make the initiative sustainable and useful for both PAWE and the local residents. A standardized form of this module, created using this project, could then be applied to other areas through the SULAM framework. It would deepen the effect on schools everywhere and help both students and communities live by the values of compassion, respect, and social responsibility.

Conclusion

In the conclusion, the *"Kasih dan Layanan: Menyantuni Warga Emas"* program represents more than just one event in a day. It is a meaningful journey of connection, empathy, and mutual respect between generations. By combining volunteerism with fun and practical activities such as a cooking competition, the initiative has succeeded in creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere where seniors will feel valued, cared for, and emotionally supported.

At the same time, student volunteers have been given an invaluable opportunity to grow personally and socially by stepping out of their comfort zones and engaging directly with the senior community. Through these simple acts of kindness and collaboration, both parties are reminded of the importance of human connection and community care.

Finally, it is our hope that the impact of this program will extend beyond the day itself as it plants seeds of compassion, lifelong learning, and social responsibility that will continue to grow among participants and the wider community. With initiatives like this, we move one step closer to building a society that values every individual, regardless of age, and celebrates the beauty of shared experiences.

Acknowledgement

whether directly or indirectly. May we all be motivated to keep fostering compassion, generosity, and harmony in our communities by this common experience.

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KOLABORASI PROJEK SULAM BERSAMA PELAJAR SEKOLAH RENDAH DAN MENENGAH MELALUI PEMBUDAYAAN STEM DAN INOVASI KOMUNITI

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Penegasan: Isu minat yang semakin kurang terhadap bidang STEM dan penurunan jumlah pelajar pengajian tinggi dalam bidang berkaitan STEM memerlukan kepada usaha di peringkat awal. Pembudayaan STEM bagi meningkatkan minat dan kesedaran dapat dilakukan sewaktu pelajar di peringkat pengajian rendah dan menengah. Salah satu inisiatif yang dapat dilakukan adalah melalui penglibatan pelajar veterinar Universiti Malaysia Kelantan dalam menjayakan projek SULAM yang memfokuskan kepada pembudayaan STEM dalam kalangan pelajar sekolah. Kolaborasi bersama badan bukan kerajaan (NGO) dan juga kementerian membolehkan projek SULAM dijalankan di Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Perancangan dan pelaksanaan projek SULAM ini bawah kursus Kenegaraan dan Pembangunan Malaysia pada semester September 2024/2025. Melalui projek SULAM tersebut didapati memberi kesan kepada elemen afektif pelajar, kolaborasi dengan pihak luar termasuk NGO dan kementerian serta manfaat kepada komuniti pelajar dalam pembudayaan STEM.

Kata Kunci: STEM, Kolaborasi, Pembudayaan, Komuniti

Pengenalan

Kemerosotan minat pelajar terhadap bidang STEM memberi kesan besar kepada pembangunan negara, dengan penurunan ketara dalam pemilihan jurusan berkaitan di sekolah dan institusi pengajian tinggi. Situasi ini boleh mengakibatkan kekurangan tenaga mahir dalam bidang kritikal seperti kejuruteraan, sains dan teknologi, sekali gus menjejaskan kesiapsiagaan negara menghadapi Revolusi Industri 4.0. Pelbagai strategi dicadangkan bagi meningkatkan minat pelajar sekolah dalam STEM, antaranya pembelajaran berasaskan inkuiri dan penyelesaian masalah (Mohd Zaid et al., 2021), pendekatan kontekstual yang mengaitkan kandungan dengan situasi sebenar dan kerelevanan ilmu STEM (Rahman & Jalil, 2020), serta penggunaan teknologi seperti simulasi, perisian interaktif dan robotik dalam bilik darjah (Yusof et al., 2019).

Penglibatan komuniti, institusi luar dan sektor industri turut dikenal pasti sebagai strategi berkesan dalam usaha pembudayaan STEM (KPM, 2017). Dalam hal ini, penglibatan universiti melalui projek Service-Learning Malaysia–University for Society (SULAM) memainkan peranan penting dengan melibatkan mahasiswa dalam pelaksanaan projek komuniti berkaitan STEM bersama pelajar sekolah. Interaksi ini bukan sahaja mendedahkan pelajar kepada aplikasi ilmu secara praktikal (Ismail et al.,

2022), malah menyediakan platform kolaboratif dan bimbingan yang mampu memupuk minat pelajar terhadap STEM sebagai laluan pendidikan dan kerjaya masa depan (Rahman & Wahab, 2021).

Latar Belakang Projek SULAM

Kursus Kenegaraan dan Pembangunan Malaysia (kod USK1032) telah dipilih untuk pelaksanaan projek SULAM bagi semester September 2024/2025. Projek ini dirangka khusus untuk mencapai dua Hasil Pembelajaran Kursus (CLO). Pertama, menghubungkait isu kenegaraan dan pembangunan dengan peranan sebagai warganegara Malaysia (A2, PLO8). Kedua, melaksanakan projek khidmat komuniti berkaitan isu kenegaraan dan pembangunan (A4, PLO4).

Seramai 56 pelajar tahun dua dari Fakulti Perubatan Veterinar yang mengikuti kursus ini terlibat secara aktif dalam pelaksanaan projek ini sepanjang satu semester. Komuniti sasaran projek SULAM adalah Yayasan Kebajikan Anak-Anak Yatim (YAATIM) Kelantan yang terletak di Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Seramai 91 orang pelajar YAATIM, berusia antara 10 tahun hingga 16 tahun, telah terlibat dalam aktiviti bersama mahasiswa Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). Selain itu, projek ini turut mendapat sokongan kolaborasi daripada Kementerian Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi (MOSTI) melalui bantuan dana bawah geran projek SciTech4U MOSTI bagi tahun 2024.

Signifikan Projek SULAM

Kepentingan projek SULAM dapat diteliti berdasarkan pihak yang terlibatsama iaitu UMK, Komuniti (YAATIM) dan organisasi kerajaan (MOSTI). Bagi UMK, penglibatan mahasiswa dalam projek SULAM ini membolehkan pelajar memainkan peranan sebagai anggota masyarakat terutamanya terhadap komuniti setempat. Perolehan ilmu dapat disalurkan kepada pelajar bawah YAATIM melalui interaksi sepanjang projek. Bagi YAATIM pula, kolaborasi bersama pihak luar menjadi suntikan kepada usaha dalam membangunkan kemenjadian pelajar terutamanya bagi minat dalam STEM. Bagi MOSTI pula, pembudayaan STEM secara jangka panjang dapat dilakukan melalui bentuk kerjasama antara komuniti dan universiti sekaligus menjayakan hasrat kerajaan dalam melahirkan lebih banyak modal insan terutamanya dalam bidang berkaitan STEM.

Metodologi dan Deskripsi Projek SULAM

Kerangka kerja dihasilkan dan dipatenkan bagi memandu perancangan dan pelaksanaan projek SULAM bawah kursus USK1032. Pelajar mempunyai 3 tugasan yang berkaitan dengan elemen SULAM iaitu projek, e-portfolio dan refleksi. Bagi projek, pelajar dibahagikan kepada lapan kumpulan mengikut tema yang telah ditetapkan iaitu Veterinar, Fizik, Kimia, Robotik, Matematik, Pengurusan Acara, Kemahiran Insaniah dan Kejuruteraan Pembinaan. Setiap kumpulan bertanggungjawab menyediakan bahan atau replika berkaitan tema masing-masing untuk demonstrasi kepada pelajar sekolah (YAATIM) yang terlibat.

Selepas program, proses perancangan dan pelaksanaan setiap kumpulan didokumentasikan dalam bentuk e-portfolio sebagai bukti pembelajaran dan pencapaian. Selain itu, pelajar turut melengkapkan refleksi individu bagi menilai keberkesanan projek SULAM dalam konteks pembelajaran kursus USK1032. Bagi komuniti yang terlibat, iaitu pelajar YAATIM, soal selidik telah diedarkan untuk mendapatkan maklum balas. Pelajar YAATIM turut dibahagikan kepada beberapa kumpulan mengikut tahap pengajian semasa sesi projek berlangsung.
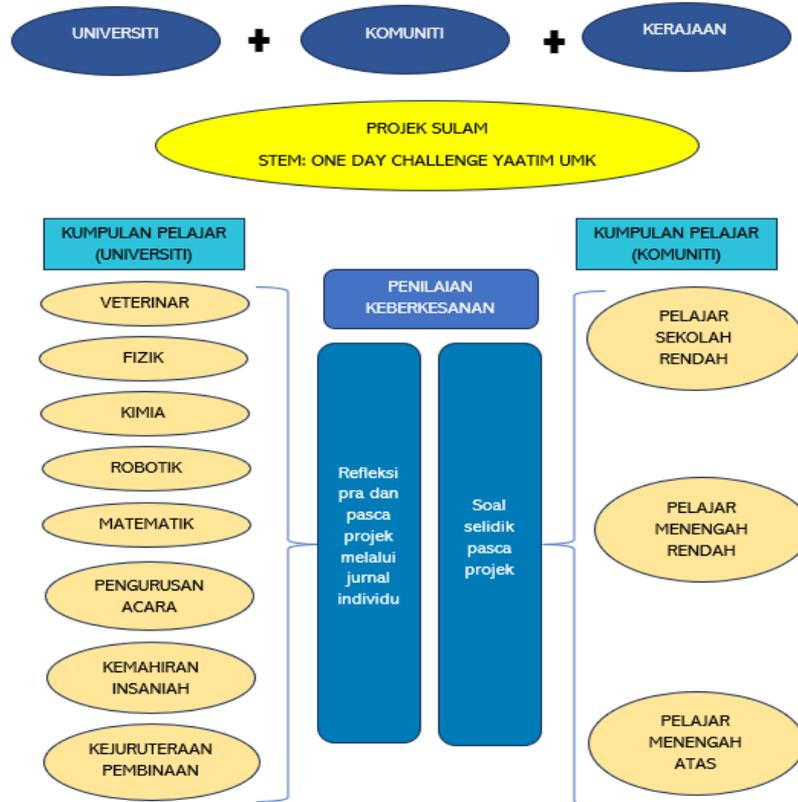
Rajah 1: Kerangka bagi Projek SULAM

Gambar 1: Sesi bergambar selepas program

Gambar 2: Sesi aktiviti kumpulan fizik

Kesimpulan

Kesimpulannya, projek SULAM yang dijalankan memberi peluang kepada pelajar untuk mengaplikasikan ilmu dan teori yang dipelajari sambil menjalankan peranan sebagai ahli komuniti yang cakna terhadap isu kenegaraan dan pembangunan negara. Projek ini bukan sahaja memperkukuh kemahiran insaniah, komunikasi dan kepimpinan pelajar, malah turut memberi manfaat kepada komuniti melalui pendedahan kepada ilmu pengetahuan, khususnya dalam bidang STEM, serta mengeratkan hubungan antara universiti dan masyarakat.

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REIPVOLUTION: EDUTAMAN INSPIRASI

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Highlight: Projek ReIPvolution: EduTaman Inspirasi ialah satu inisiatif inovatif SULAM (Service-Learning Malaysia-University for Society) yang bertujuan mengurangkan ketaksamaan sosial (SDG 10), khususnya berkaitan ketaksamaan wilayah antara bandar dan luar bandar. Dalam konteks ini, aspek pendidikan menjadi fokus utama dengan memberi sokongan kepada sekolah luar bandar yang kekurangan kemudahan asas seperti perpustakaan, demi meningkatkan kualiti pendidikan (SDG 4). Projek ini mengadaptasi model Hexa-Helix dalam kolaborasi, dengan melibatkan agensi Kerajaan, industry, NGO, komuniti setempat, institusi pengajian tinggi, dan orang awam (filantropi menerusi aktiviti crowd funding), selari dengan matlamat kerjasama pelbagai pihak (SDG17). Seramai 86 pelajar Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Fakulti Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan (FSSK) yang mengikuti kursus Ketaksamaan Sosial (AA20703) sesi 2024-2025 melaksanakan projek ini. Projek ini sejajar dengan hasil pembelajaran kursus, PLO9 (Kemahiran Personal), iaitu keupayaan pelajar melaksanakan projek SULAM berkaitan isu ketaksamaan sosial secara komited, berdedikasi dan bertanggjawab. ReIPvolution merupakan evolusi projek SULAM terdahulu, ReIP (Reading In Paradise) yang bermula sejak sesi 2021-2022.

Keywords: SULAM, Ketaksamaan Wilayah, Kualiti Pendidikan (SDG4), Hexa-Helix, Kerjasama Demi Matlamat (SDG17)

Pengenalan

Ketaksamaan dari segi infrastruktur pendidikan merupakan isu utama di Sabah. Menurut laporan Sabah Media (2025), sebanyak RM412.12 juta telah diperuntukan dalam Belanjawan 2025 bagi membina semula 181 bangunan sekolah daif. Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Kokol merupakan salah sebuah sekolah luar bandar yang terkesan akibat pertambahan murid pasca pandemic COVID-19, yang memaksa pihak sekolah mengubahsuai perpustakaan menjadi bilik darjah. Ketiadaan ruang pembelajaran kondusif menjejaskan pengalaman akademik dan kokurikulum murid.

Sehubungan dengan itu, projek yang bermula dengan membina sudut bacaan luar bagi menyediakan ruang membaca kepada para murid sekolah, kini berkembang kepada satu bentuk inovasi pendidikan yang lebih holistik dan berimpak tinggi dengan penambahan bahagian bangunan baharu, penambahbaikan struktur bangunan sedia ada serta pengenalan kepada EduTaman Inspirasi yang bukan sahaja merangkumi sudut bacaan luar, tetapi gazebo, kolam ikan, taman herba dan taman permainan mini turut diwujudkan. Pada sesi kali ini, pelajar berjaya memperoleh dana sebanyak RM3,000.00 daripada Kerajaan Negeri Sabah (KNS) dan tambahan RM10,173.01 melalui pelbagai

sumber, dengan RM5873.01 hasil daripada aktiviti Crowdfunding. Penambahbaikan ini adalah hasil maklum balas daripada para murid dan guru SK Kokol terhadap bangunan sedia ada. Hal ini bagi memastikan kelestarian projek dan manfaatnya boleh dinikmati secara berterusan oleh warga sekolah. Inisiatif ini bersesuai dengan kajian Sia et al. (2023) yang mendapati bahawa aktiviti pembelajaran luar bilik darjah memberi impak positif ke atas kesediaan masuk sekolah dan prestasi akademik kanak-kanak di Lembah Klang. Shaari & Ahmad (2016) pula menunjukkan bahawa persekitaran fizikal yang kondusif di tadika Malaysia berkait rapat dengan peningkatan kesediaan murid untuk ke sekolah rendah.

Konteks / Topik Utama

Projek ini amat penting dalam mengurangkan jurang ketaksamaan (SDG10), yang dalam konteks ini adalah ketaksamaan wilayah, dengan menyediakan ruang pembelajaran yang kondusif dan menarik bagi meningkatkan kualiti pendidikan (SDG4) di sekolah luar bandar. Kejayaan pelaksanaan projek ini juga bergantung kepada kolaborasi melalui pendekatan Hexa-Helix.

Projek ini dilaksanakan melalui pendekatan SULAM secara langsung (direct SULAM), melibatkan 86 orang pelajar Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) yang mengambil kursus Ketaksamaan Sosial (AA20703) sesi akademik 2024-2025. Projek ini adalah kesinambungan daripada projek Reading In Paradise (ReIP) yang bermula sejak 2021-2022 denagn memfokuskan kepada pencarian dana dan geran, kemudian pada dua sesi seterusnya, iaitu pada 2022-2023 dan 2023-2024 adalah fasa membina bangunan. Projek ini kemudiannya diteruskan oleh 86 orang pelajar UMS, dengan membahagikan bidang tugas kepada 6 kumpulan kecil. Hal ini bagi memastikan gerak kerja berjalan dengan lebih efisyen dan sistematik. Kumpulan-kumpulan kecil ini terdiri daripada kumpulan dokumentari, kumpulan pencari dana (fundraiser), kumpulan pembinaan, kumpulan dekorasi, kumpulan kaji selidik bagi komuniti dan kumpulan kaji selidik bagi pelajar UMS. Kesemua kumpulan-kumpulan ini saling bergantung dan mempunyai peranan masing-masing. Keadaan ini seperti yang diibaratkan oleh tokoh Sosiologi, Emile Durkheim sebagai satu solidariti organik, iaitu apabila terdapat bahagian yang tidak berfungsi dengan baik, maka akan menggugat keseluruhan sistem (Durkheim, 1893), atau projek dalam konteks ini.

Bagi memastikan projek ini diurus dengan baik, para pelajar dalam kumpulan masing-masing akan mengadakan perbincangan interaktif setiap minggu. Seperti yang telah dijalankan pada sesi-sesi sebelum ini, perbincangan interaktif sistem *scout* digunakan. Setiap kumpulan akan membentangkan kemajuan tugas masing-masing sementara kumpulan lain menerusi wakilnya, iaitu *scout* akan mendengar, memberi maklum balas, bertanyakan soalan, mencatat nota dan akhir sekali berkongsi nota tersebut dengan memuat naik di *platform* padlet yang disediakan, Cara ini membolehkan keseluruhan pelajar sentiasa mengetahui perkembangan rakan-rakan yang lain (Ramlah et al., 2024). Sistem ini diadaptasi daripada teknik fishbowl yang sering digunakan dalam pembelajaran berasaskan kolaboratif.
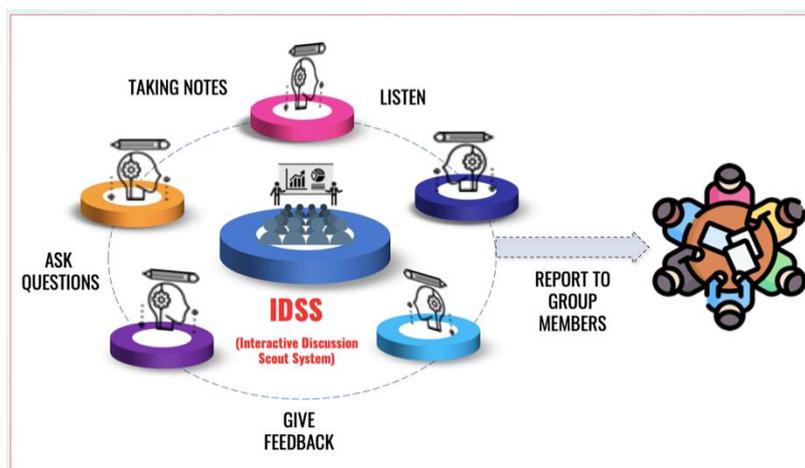
Gambar Rajah 1: Ilustrasi Perbincangan Interaktif Sistem *Scout* (IDSS)

Hasil kaji selidik terhadap 30 orang murid SK Kokol mendapati bahawa projek ini telah memberi impak yang sangat positif kepada murid-murid SK Kokol. Kesemua murid (100%) sangat bersetuju bahawa projek ini berjaya meningkatkan minat mereka terhadap membaca. Selain itu,

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majoriti murid bersetuju projek ini menyediakan suasana yang kondusif untuk belajar (57%), meningkatkan motivasi (57%), serta mewujudkan persekitaran pembelajaran yang ceria, masing-masing setuju dan sangat setuju sebanyak (50%).

Jadual 1: Impak Projek kepada Murid SK Kokol.

Item Kajian	Sangat Setuju (%)	Setuju (%)	Tidak Pasti (%)	Tidak Setuju (%)	Sangat Tidak Setuju (%)
Peningkatan minat membaca	100	0	0	0	0
Kondusif untuk belajar	43	57	0	0	0
Meningkatkan motivasi murid	43	57	0	0	0
Persekitaran pembelajaran yang ceria	50	50	0	0	0

Impak ke atas Pengalaman Pembelajaran

Pendekatan SULAM menekankan pembelajaran berasaskan pengalaman, iaitu ilmu yang dipelajari di bilik darjah dipraktikan dengan cara memberikan perkhidmatan kepada komuniti memerlukan (Norhafezah et al., 2020). Melalui pendekatan ini, pelajar berpeluang untuk mencapai hasil pembelajaran yang ditetapkan sambil memberi manfaat kepada masyarakat (Wan Nur Arina et al., 2024).

Jadual 2: Impak Projek ke atas Pengalaman Pembelajaran Pelajar

Item Kajian	Sangat Setuju (%)	Setuju (%)	Tidak Pasti (%)	Tidak Setuju (%)	Sangat Tidak Setuju (%)
Kemahiran Insaniah meningkat	56.4	30.5	0	0	0
Kemahiran digital meningkat	49.4	36.4	0	0	0
Memupuk nilai-nilai murni	62.3	25.8	0	0	0

Berdasarkan kaji selidik yang dilakukan ke atas 86 orang pelajar SULAM dalam projek ini menunjukkan impak positif projek terhadap pengalaman pembelajaran pelajar. Sebahagian besar pelajar sangat bersetuju bahawa projek ini berjaya memupuk nilai-nilai murni (62.3%), meningkatkan kemahiran insaniah (56.4%) serta kemahiran digital (49.4%). Peratusan pelajar yang bersetuju juga tinggi dalam ketiga-tiga item tersebut (antara 25.8% hingga 36.4%), dengan tiada pelajar yang menyatakan tidak pasti, tidak setuju atau sangat tidak setuju. Ini jelas menggambarkan bahawa projek tersebut memberi kesan signifikan dalam memperkasa pelajar secara holistic khususnya dari segi nilai,kemahiran sosial, dan penguasaan digital.

Berdasarkan perspektif komersial, projek yang telah ditambahbaik boleh diinovasikan menjadi lokasi tarikan pelancongan pendidikan berasaskan komuniti. Lokasi yang strategic serta persekitaran semulajadi yang indah menawarkan potensi besar sebagai destinasi pembelajaran yang unik di Sabah.

Bagi memastikan impak jangka masa panjang diperolehi oleh kedua-dua pihak, komuniti sekolah dan pelajar UMS, program literasi secara berterusan boleh dianjurkan seperti sesi membaca buku bersama sukarelawan, pertandingan bercerita, atau bengkel penulisan kreatif. Selain itu, kerjasama dengan NGO, pelajar UMS dan institusi pendidikan luar dan dalam negara perlu diteruskan. Sistem penyelenggaraan berkala dan penglibatan komuniti sekolah harus diberi penekanan agar bangunan dan persekitarannya terpelihara. Oleh yang demikian, konsep ReIPvolution berpotensi untuk direplikasikan di kawasan lain, khususnya di di Kawasan luar bandar.

Gambar Rajah 2: Ahli dekorasi sedang melukis mural di dinding dalaman sudut bacaan luar

Kesimpulan

Secara keseluruhannya, projek ini berjaya menyediakan persekitaran pembelajaran kondusif yang meningkatkan minat murid sekolah terhadap pendidikan serta dalam masa yang sama kompetensi pelajar universiti turut meningkat. Dari aspek kebaharuan, projek ini memperkenalkan gabungan pendekatan IDSS dan SULAM yang sistematik, serta menawarkan model pendidikan inklusif yang boleh direlikasi ke kawasan luar bandar lain, selari dengan matlamat pembangunan mapan.

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APPENDICES

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Special thanks and appreciation to:

Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism, and Wellness (FHPK)

with collaboration

Centre for Academic Excellence and Development (CAED)

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK)