

UMS strengthens educational innovation through Training of Trainers programme

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KOTA KINABALU: The Early Childhood Education Programme (PAKK) under the Faculty of Education and Sports Studies (FPPS), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), recently conducted a Training of Trainers (ToT) session featuring three PAKK students as young facilitators to guide the development of an Interactive Board Game and a Storybook Innovation Project.

The PAKK programme was invited by the Social Work Programme of the Faculty of Psychology and Social Work (FPKS), UMS, to support a technology transfer initiative aimed at strengthening knowledge-based practice and promoting educational expertise sharing between faculties.

The initiative was implemented through the Social Work Practice III: Organisation and Community course, designed to equip students with the skills to deliver effective training to community groups.

FPPS Dean, Associate Professor Dr Soon Singh Bikar Singh, expressed his full support for the programme, describing it as in line with the faculty's mission and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2 to ensure quality education that empowers future preschool educators.

"Through initiatives like this, trainee teachers not only deepen their understanding of content but also develop the ability to convey



Group photo with senior lecturer of the PS30903 course (centre, front row) and Social Work Programme students.

that knowledge effectively to others," Dr Soon said.

Held at Seminar Room 3, FPKS UMS, the ToT session was facilitated by Dr Nur Suhaidah Sukor, a lecturer and content expert.

The ToT approach focused not only on theoretical aspects but also provided hands-on guidance to shape participants into effective facilitators.

As part of the programme, PAKK students mentored 65 FPKS students in developing educational innovations, which were later used as intervention materials for community-based projects in rural areas.

Senior lecturer for Social Work Practice III: Organisation and Community, Dr Wanda Kiyah George Albert, highlighted the significance of this knowledge-sharing initiative in preparing students for real-world social work challenges.

"We deeply appreciate the commitment of the invited panel members who generously shared their expertise.

"Each panel brought unique strengths and perspectives to the innovation development process," she said.

Among the participating student trainers were Muhamad Irfan Yusran and Nur Atirah Faridi, who shared their expertise in developing Kebun Pintar Petani Cilik (Little Farmer's Smart Garden), an innovative board game that integrates early science education with urban farming concepts.

"This innovation has won three gold medals at the 2025 Borneo International Innovation Creation (BIIC), the International Innovation Competition in Education (I-ICE), and the Entrepreneurial & Innovation Student (EIS) competitions," Dr Wanda added.

She further noted that the ToT

programme's strength lies in its practical, experience-based approach, allowing students to observe and engage in real demonstrations of innovation development for effective community interventions.

The programme, attended by third-year FPKS students, also served as an important preparation for their upcoming community projects across selected villages in Sabah.

Through this collaborative effort, students had the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills to design intervention materials tailored to the needs of local communities.

This initiative underscores UMS's continued commitment to nurturing holistic, highly competent graduates who can contribute to community development through innovative and creative educational approaches.