

UMS students have experiential learning in rural communities

KOTA KINABALU: One of the progressive teaching strategies that works well and provides students with a thorough comprehension of a subject taught outside of a lecture hall is experiential learning.

It is put into practice when students are brought to the field to handle problems related to the course material to develop a deeper understanding of the subject. Additionally, there are interactions between students and the community or stakeholders.

To make sure that the learning objectives based on this experience are met, the lecturers simultaneously keep an eye on the field sessions.

Students enrolled in Human Resource Management courses at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah's Faculty of Business, Economics, and Accountancy are regularly exposed to experiential learning opportunities in communities that align with the course topic.

As part of the course's "Managing Human Resources in Small Firms and Entrepreneurship" topic, Dr Jakaria Dasan, the course instructor, has given the students the task of engaging with a community of entrepreneurs who engage in entrepreneurial activities while investigating human resources-related problems that can be solved and then disseminated back to the



The students at Kampung Sayap, Kota Belud.

community.

This experience-based learning exercise is intriguing because as the English proverb puts it, "You can kill two birds with one stone" by addressing two problems at once.

Put differently, this proverb indicates that an individual can accomplish two primary goals that are frequently in the background of the problem or issue that has to be fixed with just one action.

As a result, the students have a deeper understanding of the subject matter, and the conclusions drawn from their

experiences may also serve to enhance the socioeconomic conditions of the local community.

What's even more intriguing is that the majority of these MBA students are professionals, whether they work for the government or private companies. Some of them are even successful business owners.

They impart their knowledge and experience to the community members while they are there.

This is what transpired on April 27 and 28, when 38 of Dr Dasan's students in his Human Resource Management course

when they visited Kampung Sayap, Kota Belud for the two-day experiential learning.

The student's assignment is to assess the competitiveness of the human resources that run the Edu-Tourism Aura Montoria's jungle trekking, and the Sayap village community's production of various local foods and goods. Apart from fulfilling the assignments assigned by the instructor, the students have effectively engaged in community-based activities which saw the support of the village head, chairman of JPKK, chairman of KRT, leader of SK

Sayap PIBG, and local leaders as well as Sayap villagers.

The programme culminated in the distribution of food baskets to the widows.

Numerous events were held on the first day, and the village community operated with a warm greeting and a strong sense of oneness.

Traditional cake baking, bead-based craft creation, magic management as a makeshift village museum, traditional school administration, homestay management, and many other activities are included in the programme.

A seven-kilometer trail of the Edu-Tourism Aura Montoria climbing exercise on the second day was a jungle trekking to remember. This is because, along the way, the students were surprised to see a lot of beautiful flora and fauna while generating suggestions for improving the attraction and practical information that may be produced to provide visitors who engage in recreational climbing activities with diversity and enjoyment.

Earlier this year, UMS Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Kasim Hj Mansor stated that community should be viewed as an important component that led to the establishment of UMS in Sabah.

Thus, Kasim believes that with the setup of more UMS Living-

Labs especially in the rural parts of Sabah is in tandem with the slogan, "Leading towards Innovative Societies".

The ingenuity of interdisciplinary scholars in different rural Sabah communities can initiate this process, enabling UMS's full presence in the state.

For the record, one of the UMS Living Laboratories with a focus on education-based tourism is Kg Sayap, Kota Belud (Edu-Tourism Based). Each year, the community, which is located next to the Sub-Station Sayap in Kinabalu National Park, hosts a variety of research and educational projects involving faculty members and students from the Faculty of Business, Economics, and Accountancy.

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