Academic

Transforming classroom learning to community needs with SULAM project at SMA Al-Attas

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PEKAN, 6 December 2025 - Imagine an academic setting that goes beyond classroom environment where our students are able to apply what they learn in the classroom to the community.

“EQ Connect: Express to Relate” was a one day event that allowed our students to apply theory into practice.

This is what SULAM embodies, academic learning that allow learners to be responsible, empathetic, and aware about the society.

SULAM, better known as Service Learning Malaysia-University for Society is an initiative by the Ministry of Higher Education to integrate community service beyond academic learning among university students.

With this focus and objective, 28 of our ULE3772 Interpersonal Effectiveness students taking this elective course offered by Centre for Modern Languages (CML), Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA) successfully conducted a SULAM event at Sekolah Menengah Agama Al-Attas (SMAA), Pekan, Pahang.

Although the SULAM project took several weeks to prepare with various stages that had to be achieved the final one-day event was successfully conducted at the school facilitated by our students comprising of 17 from Pekan campus and 11 from Gambang campus.



Together with SMA Al-Attas form 3 students as participants, the initiative aimed to foster collaboration, inclusivity, and understanding among students from diverse backgrounds while addressing real-world issues such as bullying through interactive learning and community engagement.

The project was led by the course coordinator and Project Director, Abdul Jalil Abdul Rahim with the help from another instructor teaching the course Dr. Ruhil Amal Azmuddin.

Each activity was carefully curated to ensure that the topic on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) was applied throughout the event.

One of the key activities was Emotion Compass, where students discussed bullying scenarios and explored appropriate responses using emotional reasoning.

This activity encouraged participants to reflect on empathy and respectful communication when facing conflicts. It also opened doors for students to be expressive in voicing themselves within groups.

Hackathon Challenge: 'Hack Bullying', was an activity which inspired students to collaborate creatively in developing practical solutions to reduce bullying in schools.

This was a two-part activity where the product was a 3-minute skit prepared by each group to act out creative ways or solutions to eradicate bullying.

Another highlight was the Tower Avengers activity, aimed at building teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Students worked in groups to construct tall, stable structures using marshmallows and satay sticks, testing their ability to cooperate effectively.

The aim of this task was communication, which was rather challenging with the limited time given.

Motivation Jar was conducted after lunch and prayers, where students anonymously shared their personal ‘why’ – a short motivational quote or goal.

Many expressed aspirations to succeed academically and make their families proud.

This reflective exercise strengthened student’s self-awareness and resilience.

It was followed by the *Reflection & EQ Pledge* session, where students articulated their key takeaways and made personal commitments to apply emotional intelligence in their daily interactions.

The student event director Muhammad Danish bin Mohd Nazli reflected on his experience as the team leader. He said “it was a unique and enriching opportunity that challenged me to manage a large team, but we successfully achieved the objectives of fostering empathy, teamwork, and emotional growth among participants.”

Facilitator We Xin Yi added, the event ran smoothly and emphasized the importance of teamwork across genders, which mirrors real-world collaboration.

“We also highlighted that victims of bullying are not weak, and bullies may be struggling too.

“Understanding both perspectives is crucial, and respectful communication should always be our priority,” she said.

The event concluded with the final presentations from the *Hackathon Challenge,* closing ceremony, and group photos to commemorate the day.

The SULAM event at SMAA not only strengthened students’ emotional and social competencies but also deepened the university’s engagement with the local community.

This event would not have a been a success without all those involved including Strategic and Academic Development from the Academic and International Affairs Department, UMPSA who funded the event.

Through initiatives like this, UMPSA continues to uphold the spirit of SULAM by Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), empowering students to serve society meaningfully while enhancing their own personal growth.

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