Convocation

Unlikely convocation dream - Sakinah

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PAYA BESAR, 5 November 2022 - Her unpretentious and always smiling style welcoming the guests present during her duties as a committee member of the Invitation and Welcome Committee at the recent Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) 17th Convocation Ceremony turned out to hide a profound sadness in Siti Sakinah Mohtar.

She was also a celebrated graduand at the convocation ceremony when she completed her Master of Business Management (MBA) study.

Siti Sakinah Mohtar, a Senior Executive in the Registry Department, is one of the students enrolling in the Management and Professional (Administration) Talent Enhancement Special Programme in collaboration with the Faculty of Industrial Management (FPI).

Sadness intertwined in her heart when realising the reality of life that the arrival of the eagerly awaited guests to celebrate this success was unlikely to come true.



Nevertheless, as advised by her late mother, she continued to move forward, making good for the greater benefit; the words that are dear to her heart and will be passed on to her children.

“Do good deeds and be the best. Allah SWT grant health for doing good deeds,” her late mother’s

words are still fresh in her memory.

“I still remember when I decided to take the opportunity to participate in the MBA programme under UMP sponsorship.

“The only aim is to make up for the frustration of past decision when not attending the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Convocation Ceremony for my Bachelor’s degree in 2013, so no pictures with my parents as memory,” she said.

She recalled the memories at the beginning of her MBA study; fear enveloped her when the first class attended was a class with the former UMP Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dato’ Sri Ts. Dr. Daing Nasir Ibrahim for the Managerial Accounting course.

“For students of Pure Science who have no knowledge, especially concerning account debit and credit, this first class overwhelmed me too much.

“After the three-hour class, I felt like I still have time to withdraw!” she said, and other friends also felt this feeling.

However, the desire to be with mom and dad during the convocation ceremony drove her to continue her study.

At the end of her study, huge ordeals tested her.

On 21 January 2022, her beloved father met with an accident that broke his femur, calf bones and toe.

Not only that, around March 2022, her mother complained of very severe abdominal pain and on 3 and 6 March 2022, her sister took her to Pantai Hospital, Batu Pahat, to do an examination and was again shocked by the news that she was confirmed to have intestinal cancer and had spread to the liver.

She said, at this point, a smile replaced an inexpressible cry so the submission MBA Project 1 report could be completed.

“Nevertheless, my emotions were everywhere in the report.

“The examiner commented that my Project 1 report was not academic and it was like reading Sakinah’s diary.

“The comments served as a guide for improvement because as an administrator, academic writing is a new thing to explore,” she said.

However, she was grateful that she still managed to improve and sent Project 1 before taking the turn to care for her parents in the hospital.

Her mother underwent surgery to remove the tumor in the intestines on 10 March 2022 and both of them were discharged on 12 March 2022.

However, she was tested again; the doctor informed her that her mother’s prognosis was

unsatisfactory – of less than six months.

She added that after the surgery, her mother's health status was not satisfactory until she received news that her mother was confirmed to have COVID-19 and left them on Friday, 20 May 2022 during her struggle to complete the remaining tasks for her Project 2.

"Losing my mother was like losing my way to continue my study.

"Nevertheless, my mother's advice and the support of family and close friends helped me to bounce back to complete Project 2 and present the project paper as the requirement to graduate.

"Alhamdulillah, all is well," she said.

Throughout her study, her personality who used to be famous as a student who always slept in class turned into an active student.

She added that asking questions and giving unsolicited reviews are tips for staying alert in class.

"The time in the class should be used best to understand the concept of each course since after class, the focus should be on the essential duties as a subleader at work, wife, mother of three and daughter-in-law—I live with my mother-in-law since my husband is the only child—and all that should be done to maintain the harmony of the whole house.

"I admit that I am not a good student when all the tasks given by the lecturer would only be started a few days before the deadline since priority needs to be given to my children between the ages of two and seven who need attention and love.

"However, big thanks to the lecturers who are experts in their respective fields, kind and tirelessly help regardless of time," she said.

She said in jest, most say that the wisdom genetic is inherited from the mother and if today's achievement is seen as one thing to be proud of, now she knows from whom that intelligence was acquired (with Allah's will).

The excitement of the convocation ceremony that she wished to be celebrated with her parents now remains a memory that cannot be realised.

"Still, I am proud to have you as my mother, ibu. Al-Fatihah, Allahyarhamah Mudah Marmoh," she said.

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