Youth-led Social Enterprises

Youth-led Social Enterprises in Malaysia examines the lived experiences of young social entrepreneurs and is a collaboration between the University of Sheffield, Monash University Malaysia and the Civil Society Organisation Social Innovation Movement. Combining formal interviews, case studies and co-design activities with young social entrepreneurs, the project aimed to amplify their voices and to bridge arts and humanities with the social sciences

During a co-designed research event social entrepreneurs were encouraged to reflect, share and learn from their lived experiences,using tools such as value mapping and storyboarding. Building on this,the team developed a series of co-design activities that engaged 89 young people interested in social change or social entrepreneurship to enhance their awareness, skills and self-efficacy for social entrepreneurship.

The participatory research broadened the narratives of young social entrepreneurs, showing young social entrepreneurs to be creative, reflective drivers of change and role models of how change can happen. The research highlighted the challenges social entrepreneurs encounter and how their journeys can be improved, while also celebrating young social entrepreneurs as imaginative and persistent actors who create new platforms to share their learning, implement growth opportunities and enable fair pay.

The research findings have laid the foundation for a follow-on participatory research project which will explore how to make social entrepreneurship more inclusive and accessible through the co-development of a toolkit for sustainable social entrepreneurship.

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Credit: Claudine Imelda