

ONG JING MIN

Roles were reversed when Miss Jenine Koh attended the graduation ceremony of her mother, Ms Jaslyn Teo, at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) yesterday.

Traditionally held every October, the SUSS convocation, for the class of 2020, was postponed to this year because of the pandemic and will take place till May 6.

Ms Teo, 52, received a Master of Early Childhood Education (ECE) with a leadership specialisation track, after earning her bachelor's in ECE with management from SUSS too.

Miss Koh, 23, followed in her mother's footsteps and is graduating in the next convocation in October with a bachelor's in ECE with entrepreneurship.

Formerly an interior designer, Ms Teo made her career switch to the ECE sector when she was 38, when she enrolled in the advanced diploma in early childhood leadership course in Seed Institute.

She had to juggle the responsibilities of a wife, mother, part-time student and childcare centre principal.

She told The New Paper: "It was really difficult, but I had the support of my family, my lectur-

Role reversal as daughter goes to mum's graduation ceremony

They attend the same university and share passion in early childhood education

ers who replied to my e-mails promptly, and my coursemates, who went through this process with me. We enjoyed learning and I always looked forward to the next module."

She got to stay abreast with changing demographics, curriculum approach and directives, and she believes it is important to upgrade her professional skills and knowledge.

MENTOR

Ms Teo left her job in February and is now seeking opportunities to be a mentor to support early childhood teachers with problems they face in childcare centres.

As for Miss Koh, she is doing her Master of Education in digital learning at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

She also started helping out at the childcare centre her mum ran when she was 16.



Miss Jenine Koh with her mum Jaslyn Teo, who got her master's degree yesterday. Miss Koh will be graduating in the next convocation in October. TNP PHOTO: TIMOTHY DAVID

She told TNP: "I was partially influenced by my mum.

"Going to after-school care at her centre when I was young helped me to see behind the scenes of how a centre is run and also identify problems to be

resolved when (I later taught there)."

Going to SUSS together strengthened their relationship, and they learnt valuable lessons from each other as they bonded over studies.

Miss Koh said: "Being young, I might not think of the macro (overview). As my mother is more experienced, she helped me see things from various stakeholders' perspectives, think bigger and be more empathetic."

Ms Teo added: "My daughter helped me broaden my perspectives too and learn how to adjust and adapt to the changing landscape in the ECE sector, like more digitalisation."

Although Ms Teo has gone through a convocation before, it is even more special this time round.

She said: "I feel proud to graduate with my daughter and I am glad my journey has created a positive impact on her career development."

Miss Koh added: "Not many parents study at this age, so I definitely feel proud of her as well."