



Community Development Project
On
Child Rights and Education

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Introduction

This summer, I had the opportunity to join an NGO called "Strangers Friend Helping Hand" as part of university's community development project. The primary goal of this NGO is to support needy children by providing them with education, books, food, and moral education. As a first-year college student, I wanted to use my vacation in a meaningful way, and this NGO gave me the perfect chance to make a difference.

My role at the NGO was both challenging and rewarding. I worked as a teacher and resource provider, helping children with their studies and ensuring they had the necessary books and materials. Additionally, I assisted in distributing food and teaching them valuable life lessons.

Working with "Strangers Friend Helping Hand" has been a truly eye-opening experience. I saw firsthand how small efforts can bring about significant changes in the lives of these children. This project not only allowed me to contribute to my community but also taught me the importance of giving back and the impact of education in shaping a better future for all.

Also spending time with them make me realize and identify the cause of problems.

Problem Identification and the Cause of the Problem

Problems which I identified and cause for those problems were:

Lack of access to education: Poverty, lack of schools in remote areas, and inability to afford school fees and supplies

Limited Access to Books and Learning Materials: Financial constraints preventing the purchase of books and educational resources.

Low Self-Esteem and Motivation: Difficult life circumstances, lack of parental support, and negative societal influences.

Lack of Mental Health Support: Stigmatization of mental health issues, lack of awareness, and insufficient access to mental health services.

Inadequate Support for Children with Disabilities: Lack of specialized resources, training for educators, and inclusive policies prevent children with disabilities from receiving proper education and care.

Objective to be achieved

Increase Literacy Rates: Provide basic literacy classes to children who have missed out on education.

Enhance Academic Performance: Organize tutoring sessions and study groups to help children with their schoolwork.

Boost Self-Esteem and Confidence: Organizing extracurricular activities like sports, arts, and music to build confidence and social skills. Conduct workshops on life skills and emotional well-being.

Create Safe and Supportive Environments: Developing child-friendly spaces where children can learn and play safely.

Engage the Community: Foster community involvement by organizing events and meetings to discuss children's needs and how to address them.

Providing Free Education: Teaching every child who are in need of education without taking any fees.

Promote Mental Health: Offer counselling services and mental health support for children experiencing trauma or stress

Various Steps taken to achieve the objectives

It was an intriguing experience working for "Strangers Friend Helping Hand". The general mission of this NGO, like giving education, books, food, and moral guidance to underprivileged children, related to my purpose and goals in life, and I knew I had to invest my time in it to make a difference. Here's a detail of steps taken to achieve the various objectives set for our work.

Increased literacy rates

A big challenge that we took up was to improve the literacy rate because most of the children had their educational years skipped. I used to personally attend literacy classes from 5:30 to 7 in the evening throughout all of the week.

Step Taken: We designed a curriculum which would suit these children. The curriculum had to be both interactive and simple for them to understand.

Improve Academic Performance

Another main objective was academic improvement. Many children faced so much difficulty with their studies simply because they lacked proper guidance and support.

Step Taken: I organized tutoring and study groups for additional support on school subjects. I also helped them with their homework and broke down some complex issues into more understandable bits. In this manner, it allowed the children to develop better academic skills owing to the structured and yet flexible learning environment. There were periodical assessments to monitor their progress and adjust our teaching methodology.

Self-Esteem and Confidence

There was a dire need for inculcating self-esteem and confidence in the children for the whole development of a child. We identified the role that extracurricular activities played in this aspect.

Activities Organized: I scheduled games, arts, and music sessions. In this way, they could express themselves and unveil their talents. For example, I held drawing competitions, singing sessions, and sports tournaments. I also engaged in conducting life skills and emotional well-being workshops, teaching the children how to handle stress, communicate effectively, and have a positive image of self.

Create Safe and Supportive Environments

An important aspect was to create an environment that is safe and supportive so that children would feel safe and valued.

Step Taken: In the premises of the NGO, we created child-friendly spaces where the children could play and learn safely. These healing spaces were supported with education materials, toys, and recreation equipment. Being friendly and attentive, I made friends with children, encouraging them to talk about their concerns without fear. We implemented strict safety measures on protecting the children from any kind of harm or abuse.

Engage the Community

Community involvement is important for long-term sustainability and effectiveness in our work. Community involvement will help understand better the needs of the children and offer support for the various programmes lined up for them.

Step Taken: We organized community events and meetings to discuss the needs of the children and how best to address them. In attendance were parents, local leaders, and other stakeholders. I actively participated in these meetings, and I presented our progress, encouraging members of the community to participate in what we were doing. Awareness campaigns were also held to enlighten them on the importance of education and child welfare.

Provide Free Education

One of our basic principles was to make sure that the gift of free education would be available for any child who required it. This was absolutely non-negotiable, as most families couldn't even afford the basic school fees.

Step Taken: We made sure that all our education programs—literacy classes, tutoring sessions, and extracurricular activities—were completely free. I worked with the NGO to secure donations and funding for expenses incurred by books, supplies, and other educational materials. We also had contact with quite a number of schools locally to ensure the admission of our children in order to obtain formal education without a financial burden.

Promote Mental Health

The mental health component may be unconscious, yet very vital to the well-being of the children. Most of the children we were dealing with had some form of trauma or stress.

Action Taken: We created an atmosphere where children could openly talk about their feelings and problems. I also taught them how to relax and how important mental health is by holding interactive sessions and activities like yoga. We had a session where we practiced yoga together on Yoga Day and spoke of its benefits toward keeping good physical and mental health.

Impact and Reflection

While I don't boast about my having made a revolution of change, I am proud of the effect we were able to bring about. The children also had very improved rates of literacy and academic performances out of our joint efforts. They were more confident, involved, and driven. Our safe and supporting atmosphere gave them the room to grow, and community involvement in what we were doing seemed to undergird and magnify our efforts.

One of the most fulfilling experiences was when we encountered those children, either due to some ailment or another complication, who could not attend school and were still able to receive education through our programs. Their eagerness to learn and their progress reaffirmed the importance of our work. The most stimulating of these were the yoga sessions, for not only did they help in the physical well-being of health for the body, but brought serenity and tranquillity to focus their minds.

Thus, my involvement with "Strangers Friend Helping Hand" has been an invigorating exposure and experience. Setting clear objectives by addressing their diversified needs enabled us to bring about a tangible difference in the lives of these children. I learned that to bring about positive change, one requires dedication, empathy, and support from the community.