



INTERNSHIP REPORT



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BASIC OVERVIEW

I personally took up this internship to explore, learn new things and grow. It was also to be able to figure out and get clarity as to the things I want to do in the coming future. I also wanted to be able to go through situations that were new, uncertain and maybe not very much comfortable and to be able to grow from them, observe myself and introspect as to why this might have been happening.

I personally also wanted to learn to work with a new population in the society and facilitate divergence. This also provided me with space to design content for a specific population.

The importance of study in the context of this internship was to be able to work, understand and learn from children under the autistic spectrum through using the means of Arts Practices for Inclusion. Learning how to take one on one sessions, helping in facilitating the sessions, documentations and planning of sessions to help achieve the goal through various means of arts practices for the child, understanding the limitations of the child and groups and working around with it to enhance their sessions.

It was also to be able to just do what comes on my plate, new challenges, experience that might seem uncomfortable and daunting at first but to eventually learn and grow through it, even with the mistakes made during the course of my learnings.

WORK UNDERTAKEN DURING THE COURSE OF THE INTERSHIP

Co facilitation of one on one sessions on a daily basis -

Co facilitations of one on one sessions on a daily basis was one of the main nature of work that was done. The plans and goals had been already designed for the week that needed to be facilitated to help the child achieve his/her goals. These goals varied based on the child's needs such as working on fine and gross motor skills, impulse reflex, to increase the attention span of the child, to help the child be able to do basic chores on his/her own and various other goals focused on the child's need.

Co facilitation of group sessions on a daily basis -

Co facilitation of group sessions on a daily basis was another main nature of work that was undertaken here. The plans and goals had previously been designed for the week that needed to be facilitated to help the group achieve their goal alongside with the child also achieve the goal under his/her own capacity. These goals varied based of the needs of the group and there were a mix of activities to address the various goals such as group cohesion, how to behave in a social setting, impulse reflex, fine and gross motor skills, to work on the attention span of the child, to help with basic movement of the group through some basic movement exercises that each child can do under their own capacity.

Documentation of the sessions taken on a daily basis -

Documentation on a daily basis of each session assigned was an important task of the internship. Documentation mainly consisted of being a part of the session as a facilitator or a co facilitator and conducting the session. Post conducting the session, the notes of the session were to be taken as to what happened in the session, what the session was about and also individual observations of each child if it was a group session or a one on one session. The individual observation focused on how the session went for the child, how he was able to participate in the activity designed and a detailed note about the session.

Facilitating a baking session from start to end -

I got the opportunity to facilitate a complete baking session with the children where I was asked to create a lesson plan in detail as to what the session would look like, the aim of the session and how the session would be designed and skills achieved by the end of it. I was also later asked to document this session, what went well in the session, what were my learnings and what could have been improved for the further coming sessions.

This experience was just beautiful! To be able to plan a session, facilitate it and also figure out ways when at times things don't go as planned, it was a huge learning for me. One of the key learnings for me personally was that the end product does not matter as much as the journey that matters. The process of baking where in the group is involved and is taking part in whatever way they each can, them being able to learn new things and do it. That is what matters.

Kitchen management and cooking -

One of the things I cherished the most while staying at their residential campus was the freedom to be able to use their kitchen and assist them in cooking and meal planning for the children. Cooking and baking for me has always been something that I enjoy doing and this space provided me to experience this and just dwell in the joy of cooking after a very long time. From baking donuts with the children to making some amazing biryani, mushroom fry, hakka noodles, dal curry and various other dishes it was an experience in itself. I also learnt how to efficiently use ingredients and manage with what we have around. Another huge learning was also how to cook for around 15-20 people on the whole.

Creating a lesson plan and executing it for one of the children -

I also get the opportunity to facilitate a session and create a lesson plan for a child. The lesson plan is attached below.

Objective – To be able to help the child visualize and understand huge numbers, and also to be able to help the child break huge numbers into smaller parts.

Outcomes – The child will be able to add two-digit numbers by sorting the beads in groups and practically adding the numbers using the beads to get the answer of the questions.

Lesson Plan – We will take around 100 seeds or any countable small item. We will then firstly count it to see how many seeds are there in it. Then we will look at making groups of 10 seeds each to understand the aspect of division. Then we will also try to understand addition and subtraction through visual aid and the grouping of seeds.

Opening – We start the session by having small conversations and build rapport with the child.

Creation – - Firstly we will ask the child to count the total seeds, that will be 100. - Then we will ask the child to divide them in groups of 10, to help understand that 10 seeds in a group if multiplied by 10 makes a total of 100 seeds. - Then we will also try some basic addition of double-digit numbers with the seeds. If the time permits we will try basic subtraction also with single and double digit numbers.

Closure – We will end the session with rubbing palms and blowing.

Government school direct beneficiary work -

Snehadhara Foundation also aims at doing direct beneficiary work by closely working with the government schools under the rural Bangalore to look at the power of arts to create a learning space where everyone feels seen, heard, and included.

A very new experience was the Government school interactions that I got to be a part of and facilitate partially and also observe and learn various things. For me this was something that I instantly enjoyed, from mingling with the innocent children and just teaching them it felt so fulfilling. The children were so full of energy and absolutely adorable.

There was so much to learn from observing the session. There was so much to learn from the facilitators, the patience that they bring with them, the passion that they have from within and the way they were able to accumulate, communicate and bring the group together. There was a very distinctive way Geetanjali Maam was able to keep the light of the session, yet stay very firm at the session. There was an element of humor and yet she demanded complete attention and focus from the child. The way she placed herself I was able to observe that most of the kids were completely engaged in the session. I also felt that the more the teachers try to connect at a personal level and share a few of their ideas or take part in the session, the more the kids find it comfortable to share and express things.

Diya Foundation Outreach Session -

Another very interesting yet new experience was the outreach session at another foundation called Diya Foundation, that also specializes in teaching children with Autism. A team from Snehadhara had gone to Diya foundation and conducted some sessions for the various groups present there throughout the day. We played various games that helped build rapport with the children since it was our first time there. There were games to bring team work, help address the fine motor skills of the children and also to help the group work in a social setting on the whole.

Old Age Home Outreach Session -

Snehadhara Foundation is tied up with an old age home nearby their city office where they conduct sessions through-out the week for the elderly people at the old age home. This is mainly to engage them and provide them a sense of safe space to express and engage with people around them. They use various methods of art practices to engage with the group to address their needs and provide care, nurture and nourishment. I got to be a part of a few sessions that were conducted at the old age home, that was very wholesome and fulfilling. There is an innate sense of joy when you are able to give back to the society within your capability.

KEY LEARNINGS

I was able to facilitate sessions for the children, both group sessions and one on one sessions.

I was also able to objectively understand things and work with the children. I was able to observe and learn when to give the child their space and when to gently nudge the child into participating in a certain activity. I also learnt how to buddy each child since each child is different and the way you would assist them, and cue them would be very much different from the other child.

Another key learning that is still in process would be the aspect of learning and trying to work around if a session does not go as planned. I learned how to tweak a session, keeping the original goal of the child in mind and finding other ways and means to achieve the goal if the first plan did not work out. This is a key aspect since not every session goes as planned and having a couple other options on hand helps work around the session.

A major learning was working with a new set of population and facilitating divergence. For me personally this was a very much new experience of working with children under the autistic spectrum. I initially found it a little challenging, difficult and uncomfortable but eventually as time went by at the internship I started to get comfortable, to be able to read the cues of the children, understand them and also be comfortable in facilitating sessions on my own.

Another key aspect of learning was the impact Art Practices has on learning and healing in the lives of many people. Not just the children but also the facilitators. A simple act of music, dance, movement, free drawing, painting how it could be healing and how it could foster learning to the best for the children. I also realized that one does not have to be an artist, musician, singer, dancer or painter to facilitate art practices. It is more about the joy to facilitate and try out new things and bring it to the table.

I personally also had a lot of learnings emotional, being able to step out of my comfort zone, taking time and giving myself the space to adjust and just in general being kind to myself. To be able to do things that were very much new to me and although I did not have much confidence, I was able to build it in a do it. It was a huge sense of learning from various aspects, personally and professionally the internship has benefited me immensely and I am very much grateful and glad to have taken this up. :)

THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!

