

INTERNSHIP REPORT

Environmental Education for Youth: A Necessity



Submitted to- Prof Ashutosh Pandey

Submitted by- Jahanvi Arora

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SOCIAL INTERNSHIP REPORT



A report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Award of Degree of Bachelor of Commerce (Hons.)

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Duration: 4 weeks

Declaration by Student

I, Jahanvi Arora , hereby declare that the presented internship report titled “ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR YOUTH: A NECESSITY” is the result of my sincere and dedicated work at CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION. This report is uniquely prepared by me after the completion of four weeks’ work. I also confirm that the report is prepared purely for my academic requirement.

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Date: 25-07-2022

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This is to certify that the “Internship report” submitted by **Jahanvi Arora** (Roll No: IC211234) is work done by her and submitted during 2021 – 2022 academic year, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of BACHELOR OF COMMERCE (Hons.).

Prof. Ashutosh Pandey

Date:

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Acknowledgement

I have been fortunate enough to get an assignment on the Social Internship Report. This assignment has enriched me with all the basic ideas about NGOs and their way of working and has solidified the ideal and ethics of helping and giving back to society and our environment.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Dean, Prof. Udai Paliwal and Prof Ashutosh Pandey for his invaluable support and guidance throughout the making of this report. Being our supervisor, he has been a very valuable house of knowledge who guided us throughout the assignment and provided us with a valuable perception in making the report in detail and a great success. He has made us understand the importance of the assignment and the information associated with it.

I would also like to thank my wonderful team at CEE, Khushbu Shah, the Programme Coordinator for the Eco Schools and YRE Programme, Mansi Shah, Project Officer of the Eco Schools Programme and other valuable members of the YEN department for their constant guidance and support that helped me throughout my internship.

Abstract

The organisation selected for the social internship is Centre for Environment Education (CEE). It is working in the field of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development. CEE is registered as a Society under Societies Registration Act 1860. CEE's mandate is to promote environmental awareness nationwide. CEE develops innovative programmes and educational material and builds capacity in the field of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It is committed to ensure that Environmental Education (EE) leads to action for sustainable development. It undertakes field projects that demonstrate and validate the role education can play in sustainable development. The burning issue of Climate Change requires an in-depth and apt knowledge on the issue which CEE aims to provide through its various education programmes.

The main issue as an environmental NGO that CEE handles is creating an engaging discourse for environmental issues and its awareness. It also includes its main thrust areas of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for children and youth, programmes for generating awareness on climate change, empowerment initiatives for the rich cultural heritage of our country while lifting up rural communities of our regions. It also deals with issues in the areas of waste management, water management, health and sanitation while interlinking all of them with environment education. It also focuses on designing and organising programmes to explore the marvels of nature and explore it to the maximum.

The objective of this study was to ascertain the impact that education on environmental issues has on the youth of our generation. It talks about how sowing the seeds of being socially responsible from a young age gives birth to adults that are clear headed and strong minded in their purpose to not just care for environmental issues but also take action against preventing any harm to it. It is very essential that we learn the perils of mass industrialisation and its ill effects like consumerism and fast fashion and other such hyper consumerist activities that lead to our wants never being satisfied because our wants are unlimited but it is very important to remember that while our wants can be as excessive as we need it to be, our options are very less and to be frank they're as exhausted as the fuel we are using.

We don't really need a new phone every 8 months and nor do we need to buy that trending earphone that costs as much as our grocery expense for 3 months. So maybe it is time we reevaluate our needs and wants and think about how they can be adjusted according to our available resources. The climate is changing rapidly, more rapid than it used to be. As much as there is no denying that fact we also need to finally come to terms with that fact that we are the cause of such rapid change and not only the change but the effects that come along with it. Climate change has made our summers even hotter, our rains irregular and erratic, our winters chillier than ever. Not to forget the alarming number of floods and landslides every year that lead to so much loss of life and economy.

The economics of climate change is not often discussed in the mainstream and it is something that is a keen future interest of mine. It is imperative that the punitive damages of climate change have a great and loaded cost attached to it and the valuation of such cost can sometimes be undervalued due to less awareness and knowledge about the science of climate change. So understanding why these horrific climate events happen is an important source to ascertain why it is valued a certain amount and how so.

My experience at CEE taught me many things. Be it working in a work environment, handling pressures of tight deadlines, work friendships and the value of constructive feedback. It was really refreshing to see an open work culture where even though there is a distinction because of the levels of hierarchy, open communication is always valued and new and innovative ideas are more than appreciated. It was nice to feel like your opinion is valued when you have no prior work experience and have lived a comfortable life of not having to work a single day in your life.

I believe this report does justice in describing the experience of working for an NGO that is very vocal on environmental issues and isn't afraid to question things. This report is to highlight that to ever increase it is needed to be able to spread and emulate the teachings of environmental awareness among the youth of today. As young as we are, it is very easy to falter down the wrong path as our ancestors did during the onset of industrialisation. Nevertheless a careful and calculated approach towards a green future is only possible if our generation takes it upon themselves to carry the load of climate change and stop it. afterall , this planet is our only home and what is a home without people in it.

I hope that through this report I am able to come across my point of rigorous implementation of environmental education across all fronts and am able to assert the growing need of being socially responsible .

Introduction

CEE or the Centre for Environment Education Ahmedabad was established as a Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India, working in the field of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development. CEE is registered as a Society under Societies Registration Act 1860.

CEE works with local, state, national and international agencies, organisations and governments in India and in various other countries to help create a sustainable future. CEE works closely with Forest Departments and others in creating interpretation programmes and facilities. With an extensive network of over 2 Lakh schools it undertakes many school programmes in partnership with different agencies.

With partners including State Governments, Foundations and Corporates through CSR funding, CEE has undertaken projects in rural and urban development, waste management, biodiversity conservation, quality improvement in school education, marine conservation and others.

Working with the government, CEE has made significant contributions to international negotiations in the area of ESD. CEE has played a Nodal role in India for several UN programmes such as UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD – with UNESCO); Global Environmental Facility – Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP – with UNDP); Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programmes (with UNICEF); and many others. CEE is the Regional Coordinator for several regional initiatives like South Asia Youth Environment Network (SAYEN), and has worked with most countries in South and South East Asia on ESD.

Centre for Environment Education is a national institution engaged in strengthening environmental education and training initiatives by developing pioneering programs that promote environmentally ethical behaviour. Since its inception, the Centre's activities and programmes have been rooted in, and guided by, certain strategies for maximisation of quality, effectiveness and impact.

In the beginning of my internship I was actually assigned to work on their two major programmes. CEE is the national operator for these international programmes and is tied up with international organisations FEE and UNEP. A programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education, Eco-Schools aims to raise students' awareness of sustainable development issues through classroom study as well as school and community action.

The Eco-Schools International Programme was developed as a response to some of the needs identified at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. Presently being implemented in over 70 countries, the programme is now being initiated in India by the Centre for Environment Education who is its national operator. It is an international certification programme for schools. The objectives of this programme are to introduce the

concept of hands-on learning on sustainable practices in the school format of monotonous curriculum based learning. It moves away from the rigorous and boring pedagogy of theoretical learning and instead introduces activity based learning for the better understanding of children. Initiated in 2014-15, there are more than 130 Eco-Schools in the country as of May 2022, catering to the students of primary and upper primary classes.

The second programme I briefly worked on was the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. It is a challenge that is open to a much wider age group of 11-35. CEE and WWF have introduced this challenge in India in association with UNEP. This challenge, as the name suggests, is about plastic. Plastic is often regarded as a wonder material since its invention in the industrialisation era in the 1900s. As utilitarian it proves to be, plastic is very useful in our daily life. From the most basic use of a toothbrush to being of use in creating missiles, plastic is everywhere. After reading this, questions might arise about the questions raised against plastic. It is after all a useful and integral part of our life, something we can't do without. But it is important to note here that not all plastic is good. As only 9% of the total plastic globally can be recycled, it is pretty evident what is done with the rest of the plastic waste. It is either dumped in landfills or is incinerated.

Landfill dumping of plastic waste is very common and in most unfortunate cases this waste, if not dumped in proper places, ends up in rivers and oceans and as the figure above says, our plastic consumption isn't on the verge of stopping anytime soon. The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge aims to solve the problem of plastic and especially that of single use plastic. Single use plastic is the type of plastic which as the name suggests can be used only once. Single use plastic consists of polythene bags, disposable packaging like spoons, forks, containers, plastic bottles, nozzles of big containers etc.

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge aims to raise awareness on single use plastic and inspire action against it. The action part of the challenge requires an individual to raise awareness among a group of people and inspire them to take action. The action is mostly in the form of a cleanup like a beach cleanup or a patch of heavily polluted area. It is very important to note that this challenge is designed to make individuals understand the perilous nature of plastic and reduce its use. It also tries to solve the problem of littering of plastic, marine pollution.

The objective of my study is to be able to assert the importance and grave need to be able to mass implement environment education for youth in this country. It being the 21st century and the reins finally being in our hands, we have to take it upon ourselves as socially and morally ethical citizens to understand why our environment is changing and what we can do to stop it.

As sorry as it seems, the damage is done and a large extent of it is very irreversible and can't be forgotten about. But when it comes to driving change, our generation is the one to rely on. We are the generation that questions everything and likes to do it too. Much of it is because

the answers we get are not satisfactory. Our generation is the one that has finally taken a stand against age old societal practices that were discriminatory and stopped them to a great extent. Our generation prides itself on changing laws when they don't seem right for them and so our generation can definitely take a stand on the climate issue. Because we are part of the environment around us and it is our moral duty to care for it. This is my objective that I purport to garner through this report.

Internship Discussion

The internship was going to span over 4 weeks and I was pretty enthusiastic to work in an environmental NGO. A little background, I have been involved in caring for environmental causes since high school. My first brush with the concept of climate change was through an instagram post of a school strike done by greta thunberg who is a youth climate activist. That particular post intrigued me very much- the words School Strike for Climate written in Swedish, her signature poster for every climate strike by skipping school every friday. I thought it was clearly a very interesting concept of skipping school to protest for the climate, especially the part about skipping school. But on a more serious note I wanted to find out why she was protesting by skipping her school. She was the same age as me and so I took a keener interest in her activities. I started following all her activities and came across the term "Climate Change". Sure there are a lot of jokes and memes on the internet trying to lighten the intensity of a topic like this, but I wanted to learn more. Thankfully the internet was very useful and utilitarian and provided me fact checked sources on all there is to know about climate change.

We as humans often live under the idea that we are invincible and nothing too bad can happen to us. But we forget that we're living in an environment that is deeply affected by every activity we do. This brings us to the most major and unavoidable problem on the face of climate change- HUMANS. Statistically we are the major drivers of climate change as our human activities enhance the greenhouse effect. The climate does change naturally over the course of a period of time but this process is further enhanced by the view of excessive and exploitative human activities that burden the climate..

After learning such hard facts in a time where you've not been exposed to that degree of truth was an intimidating experience. The grave thought of having scientists calculate the exact amount of years that you have to fix the climate and a timeline of the destruction that is to come is a completely scary thought for a teenager. I think all those individuals who deny the changing climate must be living in such a bubble that their brush with these hard facts wasn't able to change their negative and survivalistic outlook on climate change. These are people who are often heads of state of powerful economies and have to their disposal an array of facts by experts to analyse the gravity of this issue. But they just choose to ignore it because any policy that helps the environment won't necessarily help their business interests. As much as this issue is, it isn't the focal point of my report. But i'd like to make it clear that my interest in the field of climate change stemmed from before and it has been ever growing since.

After learning about climate change, well the job isn't done yet. There are just so many progressive steps forward one needs to take in order to really make an impact. IMPACT- it is a very powerful word and for some people it might be a 6 letter word with little to no meaning, but when talking about climate change, the impact of everything we do has to be

analysed. It is kind of a scanner to keep a check on all human activities that have a detrimental impact on the climate. Impact also means individual impact as in what an individual tries to do as their part to generate awareness about climate change. Generating impact and having the ability to influence others to create an impact is a wondrous feeling and position that anyone would like to have and be in control of. I wanted to be able to feel that as well. So I started writing about climate change. I would make a series of blogs highlighting my experiences learning about climate change, news in that field, any new discoveries and just my opinion on the current situation of it. I began to associate with climate issues more and more and gained a deeper and rarer understanding of why it matters so much for us to take some action regarding it.

In the timeline of my blog, I came across the concept of zero waste and as the name suggests it's a concerted effort to try to create as little waste as possible. A new age concept that revolves around circular economy and creates such a sustainable system where the waste we generate doesn't end up in landfills and is either decomposed if biodegradable or its easily recyclable or best, can be reused for a prolonged period of time.

Zero waste as a concept does not have such strong footing in our country because of the lack of awareness around and just a normal bout of laziness to try anything new and deter from our normal lifestyle choices. Adopting a zero waste lifestyle takes a lot of work, it demands you to give up a lifestyle that creates a lot of waste and that waste in almost all cases lands up in a landfill. As sorry as this thought is, our society doesn't have awareness about what happens to our waste after it hits the bins. We rarely check the internet on what the waste management system is like in our cities, right?

After learning about zero waste a natural next step was to be able to have a platform to spread awareness about the same. In 2020 I came across an organisation called The Climate Reality which is a non-profit started by former US Vice President Al Gore in the fields of climate change advocacy and awareness. I joined their Climate Reality Leadership training programme that spanned over one month with one week of online training on all there is to know about climate change, how to communicate about climate change to people of different backgrounds, the different ways by which one can generate impact and inspire others for change. A very comprehensive training indeed, it taught about key communication measures that one needs to adopt in order to communicate climate change without being able to startle the listener and create a meaningful and logical discourse and conversation around it. It stressed on the importance of listening to the scientists and their observations from their own research on climate change. The observations can be daunting and very petrifying to come to terms with, but it is important to place trust on the science of climate change and listen to only the verified and researched facts of the scientists.

My key takeaways from that illuminating training was that it has become more than necessary that we as a society take it upon ourselves to openly communicate about climate change and work together in order to mitigate its effects. After meeting people from around the world, doing honest work in the field of climate change awareness gave me fresh

inspiration to kickstart my efforts and create change. It inspired me to start and give roots to a climate change awareness committee in my school and in that process communicate with different age groups about the issues of climate change and bring upon a meaningful conversation and shake things up from the boring and monotonous school pattern which we were accustomed to.

Moving over, encapsulating my zero waste journey with the journey of my understanding of climate change was a way to brief about my level of interest in this cause as the impetus of associating with an environmental NGO for my social internship at the end of first year.

My main objective for working in an environmental NGO was to gain a real time experience of what it's like to do the work that makes an impact in society. What are the programmes and techniques one has to use to reach a group of people and talk about the environment. What are the communication methods and ways one can use to create a useful and open discourse on environmental issues. Keeping the conversation ongoing is the most integral aspect of creating meaningful impact. I wanted to learn about the motivations with which programmes, resources are designed and marketed to reach a diverse group of our country's population, be it rural areas, urban crowds, children, the youth and the working population.

The multi dimensional approach when trying to talk about an issue that affects people of all backgrounds is something that is a very difficult balance that organisations like CEE are making efforts to do so. Climate change is not the main and only issue that needs the attention and focus as well. It is through interlinking different aspects of nature with climate change that we can involve people to care about nature as well. For example, in our country, our hindu culture considers the Ganga river as the holiest river on earth. But in stark reality, our holy river has been polluted beyond comparison. So by linking the religious sentiments about the river with the environmental issue of pollution, the problem can be solved by involving people who share the same faith in the Ganga river.

Through this example it is very evident that linking our heritage and culture with environmental issues can prove to be a powerful tool to bring about positive change. My title for this report was written because it is very important to instil environment education in the youth of today from a very young age so that they grow up to be socially responsible citizens who understand the issues stemming in our environment and try to come up with innovative solutions to solve these problems.

My internship at CEE was for a short span of 1 month but it was filled with learning experiences and gaining of extensive knowledge of this field. CEE or the Centre for Environment Education Ahmedabad was established as a Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India, working in the field of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development. CEE is registered as a Society under Societies Registration Act 1860.

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It aims to maximise the scope of EE with state-of-the-art thinking, developments, innovations and perspectives in the areas of Environment and Sustainable Development

It develops programmes that are adaptable to different geographic, cultural, social and economic contexts. It believes in partnering with a view to utilising the complementary strengths of other organisations, so as to avoid duplication of effort, and to network effectively towards the synergistic convergence of ideas and goals. It aims to also develop programmes and materials to build on the existing strategic opportunities and facilities for EE Encouraging and supporting other agencies in the field of EE and ESD to develop similar materials and programmes based on their specific needs and situations. Comprising over so many diverse yet interconnected thematic areas, I was selected to intern at CEE in the YEN department. YEN stands for Youth Environment Network. Under this department various programmes that cater to the youth and younger population are formulated and implemented. It includes campaigns and sustainable school programmes, reporting programmes for school students and youth. In a nutshell these programmes cater to the youth and towards mobilising them to generate environmental awareness and bring out positive impact in that area.

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inspire action against it. The action part of the challenge requires an individual to raise awareness among a group of people and inspire them to take action. The action is mostly in the form of a cleanup like a beach cleanup or a patch of heavily polluted area. It is very important to note that this challenge is designed to make individuals understand the perilous nature of plastic and reduce its use. It also tries to solve the problem of littering of plastic, marine pollution.

Moving on my time at CEE was mainly more focused towards the Eco Schools Programme. The most interesting part of my internship was probably the first day. As I was informed beforehand that my work would be a variety of things relating from marketing to presentations to making data entries and content writing work, I had to be prepared for anything and everything. To my surprise my first day was spent making a reel for the official page of The Eco Schools Programme. It was daunting at first because as much as I like to partake in activities on social media and communicate online, I was never as comfortable enough to make reels and communicate. But having had experience in public speaking because of debate competitions, MUNs, and hosting college events, I was assured that, though it would take time to get adjusted, I will get there. It was a very fun and new experience for me to be able to communicate details about an international programme to a wide audience in a video format.

The project officer for the Eco Schools Programme, Mansi Shah was my immediate superior and she really helped me overcome the nervousness in shooting the reel. As it was my first day, she told me to get comfortable with their work environment and then get to work. As I do have a keen interest in watching reels and content on social media, the observations I made while watching subconsciously really helped me formulate video ideas. Shooting the video was a hefty task filled with new challenges but with time it all started to subside and make sense. All in all, my first day was very interesting and I already came out of my comfort zone and did something new and unexpected.

Link to various reels posted

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CeyK4nlpYNO/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CflsLux3lj/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CfdcCTMuDAR/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

My first week at CEE was filled with getting accompanied with my superiors in the department, as I was the only intern in the department, all my superiors were obviously pretty older than me and it proved to be a very learning experience for me. The working environment at CEE is very friendly, open and enthusiastic. It is very common to see open

lines of communication and friendly atmosphere in the workplace. This really helps to boost morale and productivity in the workplace.

At the end of my first week, it being 5th of June, it was World Environment Day and our NGO was hosting it with this biggest of celebrations. This was their first offline celebration of World Environment Day after 2 years of stop by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The campus of the CEE main office is very vast and spans over quite a few big acres, with an urban forest, more than two gardens and beautiful ponds, the description itself speaks about the vast scale of the organisation.

The celebrations for World Environment Day were very grand and filled with Fun activities and seminars of the various departments of CEE. There were various workshops and activities to generate awareness on environmental issues And to keep things light and interactive a lot of interactive posters were used to communicate with the younger crowd.

The preparations for World Environment Day started in my first week of the internship. the preparations involved making interactive and educational posters about all types of pollution, plastic pollution, climate change and Marine biodiversity which was all a part of our session which was covering the tide turners plastic challenge and related information of that program. So our YEN Department I was in charge of conducting a seminar on the the tide turners plastic challenge. As mentioned before, this program was the one I briefly worked on and it is an international program coveted by the UNEP in order to handle the problem of single use plastic. The motive of our seminar was to generate awareness and interest about this challenge and garner a huge number of responses and registrations from the targeted age group.

For the celebration of World Environment Day at the CEE campus, a huge crowd of primary school students were brought in from underprivileged areas and government schools in order to make them aware and inform about the importance of this day and privy about our various programmes they can be a part of. It was truly a surreal experience, interacting with the students from different economic and social backgrounds. My superiors in the department took the first few sessions of our talk and for the latter part of the event they asked me to take over and conduct the sessions. I was a bit unsure about connecting with the younger audience because I often have a language barrier as I'm not a speaker of gujarati. But the whole session ended up going very smoothly as even though I took it in hindi and a bit of English, I tried to make sure that my audience understood what I was trying to communicate and get across the room. The motive of these seminars was to be able to attract a large number of registrations for our Tide Turners Plastic Challenge and it was very successful. The highlight of the event was when a group of school girls from an underprivileged area came up to me with loads of questions about plastic and at that point, language was no barrier among us. The look of eagerness and enthusiasm on their faces was very exciting and inspiring.

From not being confident in communicating with children to being able to connect with them really solidified my belief in the fact that with solid and open communication, we all can connect with anyone we want to and communicate our thoughts and express ourselves to the fullest. It stems from a very real place and having the facility of a platform to be able to do that is just immense and full of possibilities.



Appreciation certificate for moderating the annual felicitation ceremony of the Eco Schools and YRE programme.

One very important and interesting task I was assigned to do in my second week of internship was to compile and create case stories for the Eco Schools Programme.

So the objective of compiling the case stories was to find out and sort of discover some hidden and truly inspirational success stories that stemmed from the implementation of the Eco Schools programme. An important point to note here is that through the Eco-Schools Programme the schools have to follow a seven step methodology and implement action plans to adapt to the chosen themes for the sustainable school programme. The themes are biodiversity, waste, healthy living among others that Schools work in the field of and try to identify problems in each thematic area and through unique activity based approaches, they try to solve these issues and make their school campus more sustainable. My aim for this case story was to analyse the reports of numerous Eco-Schools partner schools and find out that one unique selling point or measure that set them apart from the normal implementation of such programmes. It was truly a wonderful experience as I learnt so much about how the management and children of these partner schools strived to implement the themes to make their school environment sustainable.

A deeper look into their stories made me realise how by working on environmental issues these schools ended up solving so many social and societal issues in their areas and cities and ended up maintaining the culture and heritage of the region. It further highlights my earlier linkage between the importance of connection between environment and our personal culture and heritage. It is very interesting to observe how small children in primary classes, whom the program is directed towards, found such unique and interesting ways to work on their themes.

It is very inspiring to see such unified actions by children from such a young age. It further solidifies the approach taken by this programme to imbibe the values of sustainable living and practices from a fresh age so that their education becomes more well rounded and holistic and proves to be an impetus for them in becoming a socially responsible citizen for the future generation.

One very exciting and moving success story was from a school in Hyderabad where the management and students made great efforts in the theme of biodiversity that helped them in bringing back sparrows in their school campus. The fact that such an amazing feat was achieved through implementing the programme is a true testament to the dedication and hardwork put in by the young minds of our generation. One may think that finding stories and telling them is a difficult task and that is a fact I'd agree with.

Creating these case stories and finding those unique points that make up for an inspiring experience is very hard because you need to have a keen eye for noticing the points where the schools have outperformed from the ordinary. It is just wonderful to see their dedication and that is motivation enough to keep digging and find stories in the long reports.

Many times it was very tiring to go through tons of reports to just find that one USP and it used to get hard at times. But the one thing that kept me going was the constant edits and suggestions of my superior Mansi Ma'am as she guided me well throughout the whole creative process.

One of the most turning points of my internship was when my ma'am suggested I co-author a booklet with a fellow intern. She was well aware of my history and experiences in handling issues like climate change and my writing experience in communicating issues around it. So she deemed it fit that I take on this new challenge of co-writing a climate change handbook like a booklet for school children. It was an insight into all there is to know about climate change and basically a tool for our youth to understand the issue. Now since I was working on the Eco Schools programme it was evident that this booklet won't be like any other booklet. This booklet was supposed to be out of the box and brimming with fun interactive and engaging activities for children to further our programme's main aim of activity based learning. Having never written a book before, this was definitely a step out of my comfort zone. But seeing the opportunity to share my personal side and opinion on the burning issue of climate change seemed like too good of an opportunity to pass on. So it began and the most important skill I learned from writing the book was definitely "how to research". My colleague and fellow co-author Arushi, who was then a masters student in sustainable development practice from the TERI school of Advanced Studies, glad that she finally completed her masters, was a huge help with the research process. She regularly stayed involved and showed me reliable and authentic resources to search and take content from.

Writing a book sometimes felt like writing an answer but the only difference being this answer is going to be read out to the entire class, so it was definitely a lot of pressure. We held regular meetings with my superior to discuss the progress of the booklet and it was always helpful in materialising the thought process i was working on, the meetings always felt like a safe space where i could openly share all my unconventional and sometimes crazy ideas on how to write a paragraph or let's say how to design a certain activity. I distinctly remember that one chapter of our booklet was about waste and it was the one I was working on for more than a week and I was struggling to decide on an activity that was perfect for the theme. I think the reason I struggled with it so much was because I wanted it to be perfect and free from any flaws. But in a much more realistic sense perfectionism doesn't help in achieving goals, it rather delays the process of reaching towards them. The reason why I think it doesn't help is because it holds us back from seeing the finish line when there's nothing really in essence to hold us back. So yes as hard as it was to sometimes think out of the box for truly inspired writing, it was also to be understood that not all moments are meant to be out of the ordinary and finding our own peace in that.

In the end we created a book that was worth all the efforts each of us put in. I am very thankful for this experience as it really taught me lifelong skills in writing and furthered my passion for expressing my thoughts on climate change. It was also a learning experience as I collaborated for the first time on such a large scale project that is soon to be published by CEE after all the required edits by my superiors in the organisation. I can't wait to see the final product after all the edits are made for it and it reaches the target audience we hoped to reach!

Having never worked an internship before it was very difficult to assume what each day was going to be like. As our organisation has spread over numerous states in the country, it was regular to hear about new and exciting initiatives and collaborations with schools and organisations across the country. Each day of my work was a new arena. It could be anything, from shooting reels for marketing our programme to working on content ideas for publishing reports. The importance of constructive feedback was something I learnt here a lot. As open as the conversation can be, there is always a need to have a safe space for constructive feedback, be it positive or negative but as long as that feedback helps you grow and do better, it is good feedback.

In our regular weekly meetings, our head always used to make sure that we as interns are involved in the conversation and are contributing to the discourse in some way or the other. They used to regularly ask for ideas as to how to make the title of this report more catchy or some integral website changes or how to make this reel more engaging and gain more traction. It was learning on the job for me since I had no experience or knowledge of social media marketing or any sort of digital marketing mechanics. Yet somehow it was always doable to learn things on the go like reel tricks, marketing strategies to use, even the most unexpected things like the type of hashtags to use in order to get more likes and views. At this point of time I have successfully made more than 6 reels on the official page of The Eco Schools Programme and it helped us gain over 15% new followers and likes which is something I never thought I'd be able to achieve with no experience in the field.

In my third week of the internship, our office was well into the preparations for hosting a partner school from the Eco Schools Programme for a day's visit. A reputed school from Surat who'd been part of our programme for a couple of years had decided to do a tour of our CEE campus and our very own Sundarvan Zoo which is a sub-part of CEE. Our department head pushed me and my fellow intern Anushree to be a part of the school's visit from the initial point and be with them at Sundarvan as well. The preparations for their arrival were very hectic and it was our motive to make their experience a memorable one. The day was planned beautifully. First would be a visit to the Sundarvan Zoo to help connect the students with nature and wildlife. They were greeted with the local variety of animals and birds of our

region. It was very special to be able to experience the flora and fauna myself having never been to the zoo myself, it felt like i was an explorer just like the children there. The time at sundarvan was encapsulated with the beautiful variety of land and sea animals, a mesmerising aquarium. The highlight of the whole visit was none other than the snake show. Sundarban is famous for housing the world's most rare and less found snakes, and the handler of the zoo very creatively explained every small details about snakes from their anatomy to lesser known facts about them, and being from a commerce background it was truly a learning experience knowing so much about snakes with zero prior knowledge about them. It was amazing to note how involved the children from the school were with their ever so prompt questions and answers to our host at sundarvan.

After sundarvan we departed for CEE's campus which was to be explored post lunch. Our department head applied various bonding exercises in order to engage with the students in order to gauge their attention for our day at CEE. We hosted very engaging and deep learning games about the web of life which asserts the importance of each and every element in nature and how removing them would be harmful for the whole chain of elements to survive.



The nature trail of the CEE campus.

This was soon followed by the attraction for the day, a nature trail in CEE's very own urban forest. It is very difficult to imagine a place of work that houses an urban forest adjacent to it but it is a reality thanks to the efforts of the people who began this organisation, the founder Mr Kartikeya Sarabhai Sir. It was such a surreal experience in the forest because it was no less than an actual forest with such a variety of flora and fauna, housing some rare migratory birds and completely unreal. It was so nice to observe the inquisitive nature of the schoolchildren and their never ending questions truly made it a learning experience for the both of us.

This was followed by an interactive quiz to test their knowledge on all that they learned during the day they spent with us. It was really fun to be designing this quiz with my peers

and coming up with questions and learning along the way. The best part- grading the quizzes and getting to decide and evaluate who the winning team was.



Winners of the quiz

Followed by the quiz was the session I conducted with my peer Anushree on our various programmes such as YRE and TTC and explained to the young minds about the urgency of the climate crisis and how our programmes address this urgency and help individuals take action. It was very gratifying to note that not only did the students pay attention but they actually understood something and were inspired for change. The highlight of the evening was when the school authorities mistook me and another intern for full time employees at the organisation. It was the result of our constant involvement and initiative that made them think we are employed here on a permanent basis.

My last few days at CEE were filled with preparations of yet another exciting event again, it was the felicitation ceremony for the winners of the YRE competition and the Eco Schools Programme green flag awardees who achieved feats due to their commendable efforts in implementation of our internationally recognised programmes. Due to my prior experience in anchoring college events I was given the prestigious responsibility of moderating the entire online event and interacting with our distinguished panel that day. The event fell on my last day of internship which pointed towards a very concerted and definite ending for my

internship duration. The preparation process was rigorous to say the least as it involved many rounds of rehearsals as it was a key event for our department. After a few technical difficulties as is usual for all normal webinars. I had the pleasure of interacting with the director and founder of the organisation Mr Kartikeya Sarabhai Sir, heads of departments of the biggest departments of CEE, a very distinguished panel from the Government of Gujarat from the department of climate change, and some marvellous achievers of our key programmes for the event. It is safe to say the event was a grand success with everything going right and the purpose of our annual grand event achieved. The result of the success of the event was realised when I received a wonderful certificate of appreciation for moderating the entire event.

It was an ecstatic moment indeed and yet the day was still not over. My department, basically all my superiors, took the entire department for a celebratory coffee which turned out to be a heartwarming farewell for me, the highlight being when they gifted me some useful and nostalgic goodies of our programmes as a keepsake of my time there. It was truly a full circle as I felt as if I was part of something bigger than myself, part of a system where I was striving to make true change everyday.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude my report by once again thanking our institution for providing me with this wonderful opportunity to intern with a social cause I am deeply connected to. Working at CEE has definitely expanded my career horizons and has given me a clear goal of my future ambitions in the field of environmental awareness. I feel like a work environment has made me better prepared for the job world that is yet to arrive after my graduation. As for this report i conducted this study because interacting with kids is not easy for everyone and making them understand hard topics like climate change is even harder but programmes like the ones i worked on make it easier for them to grasp such sensitive concepts and be able to take change and action from a very young age which is a commendable feat in itself. It is safe to say that the young minds today are definitely an inspiration to every adult around them to be able to do better everyday.

References

1. ceeindia.org
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3. Reference photos i had taken during the course of my internship
4. Link of the reels I posted during the internship