

Hands That Work, Minds That Learn: An Experience Teaching Plantation Workers' Children

Recently, I had the opportunity to work with **children of plantation workers** in the nearby area. These children often face significant barriers to education, primarily because they accompany their parents to work, leaving little time for school. During my time with them, I focused on teaching basic literacy and numeracy. We started with something simple—learning to write their names in different languages, such as Hindi and English. The children were fascinated by the idea of seeing their names in different scripts, and it became an enjoyable way for them to engage with language.

In addition to literacy, I introduced them to basic mathematical concepts. We explored simple addition and subtraction using everyday objects like sticks and stones, making the learning process interactive and relatable. One of the children, around 9 years old, struggled with counting but showed remarkable progress after just a few sessions. It was heartwarming to witness the pride in their faces as they grasped concepts that seemed out of reach before.

Through this experience, I was exposed to the harsh reality that many children in India—over 10 million of the 260 million children—have to work as marginal or side workers. The constant struggle between their need to contribute to their family's income and their desire to learn was evident in their stories. Some would rush to our sessions after a morning spent in the fields, their hands still carrying traces of the work they had done.

This experience has profoundly impacted me. It reminded me how fortunate I am to have access to resources, guidance, and a supportive learning environment. In reflecting on my role in society, I realize the importance of giving back—whether through education, mentorship, or simply being present to uplift others. These small efforts can ripple outward, creating lasting change in the lives of those who need it most. Through such actions, I hope to continue contributing meaningfully toward the betterment of society.

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