

Loyola College (Autonomous)

Chennai – 600 034.

Department of Service Learning

Rural Camp Reflection

The Department of Service Learning (Outreach) organised a rural camp reflection on 28th September, 2016 at Bertram Hall. The session begun with prayer song and a video presented on rural camp, a recap of activities.



The second year post graduate students were formed into eight groups for group discussion.

The students shared their experience on personal learning and mentioned social issues in the villages. The details of their sharing are as follow:

Social realities/issues

- No proper transport facilities, sanitary facilities, drinking water or hospital facilities.
- Extremely poor education system. (One teacher for 5 classes)
- No street lights.
- Lot of people do not have ration cards or voter ID's.
- No help from the government, had to help themselves.
- Most of the men in the families are addicted to alcohol, which in turn proves very harmful to the other members.
- Education lacks, especially when it comes to girls.
- High caste discrimination and gender bias.
- Even though the government has come up with the '100 days Employment Scheme', the employed people are not paid enough.
- Most people, especially women are unaware of important issues such as birth control, family planning, widow pension, physically challenged pension, unmarried pension, etc.
- No steps are being taken by the government towards village development.
- Industries are destroying their land, which the inhabitants are unaware of.
- Media tries to focus solely on the city life and their issues, rather than documenting what's important.
- Lot of natural calamities, hence development gets hindered.
- Lack of resource centres.
- Lack of current savings.
- Loans being given only to landlords and politicians.

Suggestions to Improve

- Main areas to work on
 1. **Employment**
 2. **Agriculture**
 3. **Fishery**
 4. **Primary school strengthening**
- Need of guidance for agricultural development.
- More awareness on education and liberty for women.
- Better classroom infrastructure and teaching.
- Smart village schemes to be initiated.
- Jobs must be allotted to fishermen during their off seasons.

Personal Experiences

- Being exposed to a completely different atmosphere, which is helpful to adapt to any situation one faces in life.
- Free from personal responsibilities, staying with a relaxed mind.
- More knowledge about agriculture.
- Learned to be punctual.
- Adjusting and managing with limited facilities, contrary to the luxurious life usually led.
- Very fresh air.
- Learned from the affection and concern shown by the inhabitants.
- Better teamwork and spirit.
- Learned the value of money.
- Learned to interact with people regardless of their gender or caste, and ability to treat people with great hospitality.
- Manually working by coming back to nature and soil, while leaving phones and other gadgets behind.
- Learned that hard work pays off.
- Learned that family members must always support one another.



Overall, 'Rural Camp' was an important lifetime experience. It helped to learn a lot of life skills like critical thinking and personality development, which has improved my confidence.

It was a very peaceful experience, completely different from that of city life; living and socialising with different people without technology or any other kind of materialistic disturbance.