

Reflection on Project Mingde Summer Camp 2017 (11th – 15th June, 2017)

**CHAN Hang Yin Bianca
3035378470
MBBS, Year 1**

Together with multiple HKU students from different disciplines to share and make use of our humble knowledge with children and locals at Daping Village, Guangxi, the PMSA Summer Voluntary Teaching Camp 2017 organised by the Project Mingde Committee was a remarkable and thought-provoking start of my summer.

To commence with, the Camp was a very delightful gesture of kindness of university students with certain merits brought about. It was very heartwarming to see that our fellow students, through educating the students on various topics including arts and science and working on the measurements of construction site, genuinely care for the children at Daping Primary School, thereby igniting a compassionate ambience in the companionship. Indeed, I was much inspired by the genuine care and love shown by some participants through their interactions with the schoolchildren.

On the other hand, the Camp has left me dwelling upon the dependent factors of the effectiveness of health education. As a part of the health education team, we were to teach the schoolchildren the correct steps of performing hand hygiene and teeth-brushing which are deemed the most fundamental to personal hygiene. Yet, with the inadequacy of basic utilities such as sufficient supply of clean running water, it was devastating to see that despite the children's willingness to follow the proper routine of hand-washing, the water supply went on and off owing to the increased demand for clean water. While the basic knowledge of maintaining personal hygiene is passed to the children, it should also be noted that proper infrastructure, in accordance with vision of the Project Mingde, is essential to improving the living standard of the people in the impoverished localities in China.

Moreover, the regretfully low effectiveness in our anti-smoking element of our objectives at the Camp has reflected the importance of proper health promotion and health education in the public. Whereas we were doing a drama to instill the message of the detrimental effects of smoking to the little minds of the children, the frustrating sights of teachers smoking in the corridors at the school peeking through the windows of the classroom to observe our interactions with the children were nothing but sheer ironic poison to the proper mindsets of the growing children, with the secondhand and thirdhand smoke directly doing physical harm to the young. Albeit attempts were made to advise the teachers against smoking as well as to the villagers during our health-check session, their blatant refusal marked the significance of proper health-related knowledge and mindset among the public, which again, depends highly on the flow of information from credible sources enabled by facilitated telecommunications with the outside.

All in all, the PMSA Voluntary Teaching Camp 2017 has been a meaningful and memorable experience. It has clearly illustrated the importance of well-designed infrastructure projects as a foundation to enable parties from different disciplines to transmit the knowledge for the physical and mental health of the locals in improving their living standard. The journey might be bumpy but was not without fulfillment and credits must be given to the two very

responsible committee members, Vicky and Andy, for taking care of all the details that enabled the success of the Camp. I am happy to say that I enjoyed the Camp and am looking forward to joining activities of similar nature in the future!