



# The Poverty of Privilege

Grace Chen, Psychology, May 2022

Cultural Exploration

## SUMMARY

The Summer of 2019, working with the Overseas Helping Hands Foundation and the BoAi school located in the FengCun village in southwest Shanxi Province to affect the lives of the local populous by providing education, improving teaching standards in the region, and helping qualified students with no means to attend universities. As one of the senior members on my 6<sup>th</sup> year working with the school, I lead in collaborating with the teachers at the school as well as international teaching staff to help students from K-9<sup>th</sup> prepare for their national exams and teaching seminars on sexual health, personal hygiene, and mental health. Practicing respect for the local population as well as sensitivity to specific needs.



## SPICES

Through extensive preparations including language, lesson plan creation and cultural sensitivity lessons, team members teaching at BoAi are fully integrated into the lives of the students.

## HERBS

Practicing benevolence and resilience for ourselves and others by supporting academic endeavors for underprivileged youth in rural China.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Teaching at BoAi gave me the bravery to give my culture and language another try, and being bilingual and comfortable with the language has opened academic, practical, as well as personal doors for me and for connecting with others. Furthermore, adapting myself to be more aware of the circumstances that surround situations and approaching others with a listening ear first was the outcome of this experience for me across the 6 years of attending and leading.



## IMPACT

The surrounding FengCun community has developed into a place that is a comfortable place for children to go to school, largely due to the BoAi school and the affordable education they give students that need it as well as the various community leadership roles they play. On an individual level, students are given the academic attention and guidance that they need at the developmental stages they are in to empower growth beyond their circumstances.

## ADVICE

Be boldly ambitious and open to opportunities. Live with vivaciousness and joy, and choose to be optimistic when things are uncertain. Be teachable and you will learn, and don't forget those lessons, as they are applicable throughout your life.