

CAMBODIAN CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN WESTERN
AID WORKERS' TEACHING PRACTICES

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Master of Arts
in
Education

by
Karen O'Grady
Spring 2017

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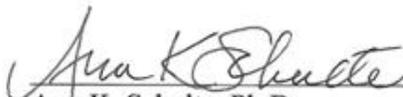
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Spring 2017

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to what I have long referred to as “my thirteen reasons for not quitting the Peace Corps.” They are my beloved 7th grade students who came out every evening (even in the rain) to play with me: Ling Ing, Monica, Man Nee, Man Net, Roo-on-say, Heng, Boo-rong, Mai Lai, Rut, Darong, Sra Dine, Say-ha, and Little Brother who I always just called “Ee-i-ee-i-oh.” Thank you all for singing B-I-N-G-O with me, and for our uproarious Hokey Pokey sessions. You brought me tremendous joy during two difficult years. I learned so much from all of you, and I will never forget you.

I hope with my heart and soul that your lives and your futures are brighter than your parents’ and certainly your grandparents’ lives. I am filled with such worry about what might happen to you, but also with tremendous hope for the changes you might bring to your country. That’s what it’s all about.

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ABSTRACT

CAMBODIAN CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN WESTERN AID

WORKERS' TEACHING PRACTICES

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The country of Cambodia, located in Southeast Asia, had a long history of oppressive governments and a deeply held Buddhist acceptance of oppression. Cambodian people believed very strongly in a strict hierarchical social order where they did not question those in power. Sadly, Cambodia was best known throughout the world because the country suffered a terrible genocide from 1975-1979. Led by the notorious Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge regime executed nearly all of its educated citizens and its teachers, severely crippling the country. The Cambodian people were deeply traumatized from the experience.

Since 1993, at least \$500 million of foreign aid from Western countries has poured in annually to help Cambodians rebuild their country. The general consensus among scholars was that the aid failed to improve the lives of Cambodians. Reasons for this failure included assumptions made by Western aid workers regarding the nature of Cambodians, their government, their values, their ideas surrounding education, and their meta-cognitive abilities. This study attempted to generate evidence that Westerners' lack of understanding of Cambodian

culture played a part in preventing their efforts to help Cambodians. This thesis reported the results of an online survey given to Westerners who lived and taught in Cambodia. The purpose of the survey was to question Westerners on their knowledge of the Cambodian mindset. Although the number of responses to the survey was small, some evidence suggested that Western efforts to educate Cambodians might have failed because Westerners were unaware of aspects of Cambodian cultural traits that stood in the way of true learning and comprehension.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Cambodia is a relatively small Southeast Asian country located near the Gulf of Thailand, between the countries of Thailand and Vietnam. Sadly, Cambodia was best known throughout the world for the atrocities that were committed there by the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979. Led by the notorious Pol Pot, it was estimated that the Khmer Rouge murdered over 2 million Cambodians during that 4 year period, specifically targeting educated people. The rest of the population was forced into hard labor camps and given very little food. Thousands died of starvation and disease. Disobedience of any kind resulted in execution.

In 1979, the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia and defeated the Khmer Rouge. For the next 10 years, communist Vietnam ruled Cambodia. Vietnam placed Hun Sen, Cambodia's Prime Minister, into power during that same year. He has ruled Cambodia consistently for nearly 40 years, and has murdered anyone who opposed him. While Cambodians were told they were living in a democracy, Cambodia was actually a thinly-veiled dictatorship. Cambodians were well aware that speaking out against their government could get them killed.

The Khmer Rouge reign of terror, the communist Vietnamese occupation, the decades of war and fighting, and a feared dictatorship significantly shaped Cambodians' national psyche. Cambodia continued to be a traumatized nation, and many aspects of Cambodian culture nearly 40 years after the Khmer Rouge period reflected the pain, trauma, and lack of loyalty Cambodians feel (Ayers, 2000; Knowles, 2008, Brinkley, 2011). This was the Cambodian mindset.

It was also well documented that Cambodians were capable of extreme violence, and virtually incapable of compromise. The two choices Cambodians felt they had when faced with conflict was either complete passivity or violence (Brinkley, 2011, p.223). Cambodia was a country of passive, mistrusting people who were primarily concerned with appearing agreeable for the sake of personal survival or monetary gain.

Democracy as a concept was completely foreign to Cambodians. Instead they believed very strongly in the complex social hierarchy that was dictated by their deeply held, centuries-old Buddhist teachings. Ninety percent of Cambodians were practicing Buddhists, and Buddhist concepts, such as learned helplessness and complete acceptance of hardships, were deeply engrained in the culture.

Since the sixth century, the concept of education for Cambodians had exclusively been the Buddhist ideal of learning one's place in the social hierarchy. No schools aside from Buddhist temples existed in Cambodia until the 1940s, and even as late as the 1960s, a large percentage of the rural population could neither read nor write. Cognitive skills and educational concepts that Westerners took for granted, such as asking questions, developing critical thinking skills, conceptualizing, and evaluating had simply never been part of Cambodian education or Cambodian life.

In 1993, in an effort to create peace and stability, the United Nations stepped into Cambodian politics and attempted to supervise democratic elections for the country. It was then in Cambodia's poverty-stricken history that significant financial aid from several Western countries began to pour in by the millions. Since 1993 aid came from countries in North America, Australia, and Europe in an effort to rebuild and develop Cambodia. In 2011, Brinkley claimed that donors gave at least \$500 million every year since 1993. Chanboreth & Sok further

estimated in 2008 that “Cambodia obtained, on average, development assistance of around US\$600 million a year during the last five years [2002-2007]...The main sector destinations included government and administration, health, transportation, education, and rural development” (p. 2). Verkoren (2005) reported that nearly 2,000 national and international NGOs supported Cambodia.

Many researchers who studied Cambodia have speculated upon what most agreed to be the general failure of the aid to meet its purpose of improving the lives of the Cambodian people, given the amount of money, the level of expertise, and the decades of time invested. The education, health, meta-cognitive capacity, and quality of life for Cambodians should have been much more improved than they were (Chanboreth & Hach, 2008; Berkvens, 2009, Ear, 2013, Brinkley, 2011). It was agreed that by 2015, with over \$500 million given to Cambodia each year for at least two decades, and as a result of great effort toward teaching Cambodians to run their own country, they should have been much less dependent on foreign aid. However, the lives of most rural Cambodians has changed very little.

Why did countries around the world with intentions to help Cambodians become more self-sufficient fail for so many years? One major reason for the failure of Western aid was the set of assumptions that Western foreign aid educators had about Cambodian people, Cambodian culture, Cambodian educational concepts, and Cambodians’ meta-cognitive abilities. Westerners projected an assumed expectation of a democratic mindset onto Cambodians that did not exist. Most Westerners also greatly overestimated the meta-cognitive skills of Cambodians because Westerners were unaware of Cambodian notions of “exclusively obedient education” and the focus on the social hierarchy.

This thesis attempted to generate evidence to examine one factor of the failure of foreign aid to improve the lives of the Cambodian citizenry. Well-meaning foreigners, who came to train, teach, or help Cambodians arrived with huge assumptions about the culture. Most foreign workers greatly underestimated the value Cambodians placed upon the social hierarchy. Westerners did not understand that they themselves were placed toward the top of the hierarchy by Cambodians, and therefore Cambodians outwardly appeared extremely agreeable to them. Likewise, foreign educators failed to understand the deep mistrust Cambodians felt. They misinterpreted Cambodians' passivity for acquiescence and comprehension of the concepts they came to teach. Foreigners' Western teaching methods assumed that Cambodians understood how to manage their own learning in traditionally democratic, Western ways (evaluating, questioning, analyzing) and that Cambodians asked questions and/or shared their opinions in a classroom environment. Furthermore, Westerners greatly overestimated the meta-cognitive capacity of Cambodians. The Khmer Rouge murdered all of the educated people and left only illiterate, traumatized people whose Buddhist traditions taught them only to obey and never to question.

Statement of the Problem

This thesis examined and analyzed Western aid workers' assumptions and misconceptions about Cambodians through an online survey using Survey Monkey. The survey was aimed at workers from Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Canada, and the United States (decidedly democratic societies) who taught or trained Cambodian adults as part of their aid work. The survey was in three parts. The first part gathered the demographics of Western aid workers who were living in Cambodia. It asked questions about the kind of work they did to aid

Cambodia. The second part tested them on their knowledge of Cambodian culture, history, and the Cambodian mindset. The third part asked them questions about the trainings and workshops they gave, and how they viewed their Cambodian students' comprehension and classroom behavior.

Purpose of the Study

This investigation was significant because it attempted to present precise evidence about some of the reasons behind the failure of Western aid. It helped to explain what did not happen for Cambodians when Westerners tried to help, and what did not happen for Westerners when Cambodians appeared to understand. This study was an attempt to improve methods of foreign aid and to educate foreigners about specific learning needs of Cambodians. No other studies had explored the Cambodian cultural knowledge or assumptions of Western aid workers in Cambodia.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation and delay in completing the study was convincing Western workers who lived and taught in Cambodia to take the 10 minute survey. The original goal was to have 100 participants, but after exhaustive efforts of months of reaching out to acquaintances, listserves, prominent aid workers, organizations, and authors of articles used to write this thesis, only 74 people took the survey, and the vast majority of them identified as being from North America, not from Europe or New Zealand or Australia. Furthermore several participants

skipped several of the questions. Therefore the evidence must be viewed as more anecdotal than conclusive.

The survey was anonymous, which made the results slightly more suspect as there was no way to prove that survey-takers were who they said they were. Another limitation was that many of the survey questions were worded in a way that only sought the participants' opinions about their teaching methods. The questions asked participants to agree or disagree with comments on their methods of assessment rather than objectively measuring them. This issue had already been identified as part of the original problem. The survey also needed far more participants from a variety of Western countries. It needed every participant to answer every question, and it needed a more concrete way to measure the effectiveness of the participants' teaching methods and assessment.

Definitions of Terms

Meta-cognitive skills – ability to exercise active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning. Activities such as planning an approach a given learning task, monitoring comprehension, and evaluation of completion of a task are examples of meta-cognitive skills.

Assessment – the systematic basis for making inferences about the learning and development of students. It is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using information to increase students' learning and development.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cambodia: Facts, History, Culture

Cambodia is a relatively small Southeast Asian country near the Gulf of Thailand. It has a land area of 181,035 square kilometers and is enclosed by Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. Cambodia had 15.4 million inhabitants in 2014. The majority of the population lived in the countryside, and an estimated 2.2 million lived in the capital, Phnom Penh. Cambodia's population existed mainly of ethnic Khmer (90%). The rest of the population was formed by the Cham (Khmer Muslim 4%), Chinese (1%), and Vietnamese (5%). Life expectancy was fairly low in the country, at 61 years for females and 66 for males. In 2015, 62% of the population was below 25 years of age, while those over 65 years of age were only 3.7% (Statistics from IndexMundi, 2015).

Sadly, Cambodia is best known throughout the world for the atrocities that occurred there from 1975 to 1979. These were the years that Cambodia was ruled by the brutal Khmer Rouge regime, led by the notorious Pol Pot. It was estimated that the Khmer Rouge murdered over 2 million Cambodian citizens in that 4 year period. Thousands more perished from disease and starvation. The Khmer Rouge was presented as a socialist force that was leading Cambodians in a revolution back toward its agrarian roots and away from the Western influence of education and intellectuals. Consequently, the Khmer Rouge murdered anyone who was educated. This included an estimated 75 percent of the country's teachers and 96 percent of all of its university students (Benveniste, Marshall, Araujo, 2008). The madness included anyone even suspected of being educated - people who merely wore glasses were executed.

Cambodian citizens who were not murdered were put into hard labor camps and given very little food. Disobedience of any kind resulted in execution. The highly valued Cambodian ideal of extended family and community were shattered because the Khmer Rouge had methods of requiring people to spy on and betray each other. Children were separated from their parents and strangers were forced to marry in huge public ceremonies. The Khmer Rouge thoroughly interrupted Cambodia's development as a nation. Schools and temples were destroyed, and all infrastructures that had been established came to a screeching halt (Knowles, 2008; Ly, 2010; Brinkley, 2011). In her 2008 doctoral dissertation, Jenny Knowles reported that the Khmer Rouge "profoundly influenced individuals' identities as they systematically destroyed all social and family structures over their four-year rule as part of their mass social reengineering project aimed at purifying Cambodia of all modern influences" (p. 7).

In describing the Cambodian character, many scholars described their tendency toward passivity. This is a direct result of the forced allegiance the Khmer Rouge insisted upon. People were forced to declare their loyalty to Pol Pot or they were executed. Survival also depended upon people remaining passive while soldiers killed anyone suspected of lack of loyalty or even minor offenses. Several studies have shown that over one third of the Cambodian population displayed clear signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (Knowles, 2008; Berkvens, 2009; Brinkley, 2011). All of this created a "deeply traumatized numb national psyche where people agreed with everything outwardly, but internally felt no allegiance, inclusion, or trust whatsoever" (Knowles, 2008, p.8). This was the Cambodian mindset. "Cambodians are a conflicted people, generally passive, quiet, nonthreatening—but also capable of extraordinary violence and brutality" (Brinkley, 2011, p. 222). Youk Chhang, a Cambodian citizen interviewed by Joel Brinkley, recalled:

I remember our whole village was called out to watch the execution of a couple by the Khmer Rouge. Nobody reacted. Everybody was passive. That is how you survived. You pretend to be deaf. Then after the war people were hiding their past behavior. To survive during the Khmer Rouge, you had to steal, cheat, lie, point fingers at others, even kill. And now you are ashamed...So we act passively, like we're deaf, to hide our past behavior. The problem is, now people don't see this as a problem. Today it has become the norm for us. That's what's scary (Brinkley, 2011, p.14).

The effect that the Khmer Rouge and the decades of violence that followed had on Cambodian society was incredibly devastating. Cambodia continued to be a traumatized nation, and many aspects of Cambodian culture nearly 40 years after the Khmer Rouge period reflected the pain, trauma, and distrust Cambodians felt (Ayers, 2000; Knowles, 2008, Brinkley, 2011). The way Cambodians related to each other and the entire nation's psyche changed dramatically because of the Khmer Rouge experience. Cambodians felt extreme distrust for anyone outside of their immediate family. This distrust included both people and institutions, and greatly deterred the general population from engaging in any community activities that extended beyond their family. "Research on the impact of war on coping mechanisms and culture in Cambodia reveals that mistrust, fear and the inability to retain social relationships are widely spread, together with learning problems, memory loss, disorientation in space and time, sleeping problems, depression, apathy, aggression and other violent behavior" (Berkvens, 2009, p.43).

Buddhism

Ninety percent of Cambodians identified as Buddhists. Cambodians' principles of Buddhism ruled every human interaction they had. Buddhist teachings about social order and the many Buddhist folk tales that have been told in Cambodia for centuries served and informed Cambodians about how to be happy in their simple village life. Buddhism defined for

Cambodians where they fit into the complex social order of their villages, and most importantly, what their roles were within their families. It dictated very specific behaviors for the way they treated teachers, elders, community members, and each other.

Buddhists teachings, Khmer folk tales, and the *Chbab Srey* (a highly valued ancient text that dictated in great detail how girls and women should act in society) exemplified what *education* actually meant in the Cambodian mindset: learning your place in the social hierarchy and not stepping out of line. The *Chbab Srey* repeatedly advised that a proper female must remain quiet, step lightly, be agreeable, show no feelings, and make no trouble. The *Chbab Srey* was taught in every Cambodian public school until 2007, and similar to the Bible for Christians, this important text continued to be a major reference for what Cambodians saw as correct behavior. Ayers described the collection of Khmer folk stories and how the gist of most stories demonstrated consequences of acting contrary to the prescribed hierarchy (Ayers, 2000). Buddhism also greatly encouraged people to passively accept hardships, and taught powerlessness and a learned helplessness that was seen in abundance when studying Cambodian behavior (Ayers, 2000).

The Cambodian Mindset

Cambodians referred to themselves, their language, their music, and their culture as being Khmer. The Khmer culture was ancient, and many Cambodians felt a strong attachment to the way their society was before the first French explorers arrived there in the 1860s. Khmer people lived in the jungle and on their rice fields. Their primitive life of peasantry went unchanged from about the sixth century until the nineteenth century when the French first appeared. Many rural

Cambodians continued to live a very primitive life that is virtually unchanged from life 1,000 years ago (Ayers, 2000; Brinkley, 2011).

Cambodians placed a high value upon the ways of their ancient Khmer culture. The culture was always ultra hierarchical. Highly valued behaviors included knowing one's place, bowing down to authority, being quiet and agreeable, and accepting hardships without question (Ayers, 2000; Brinkley, 2011). Joel Brinkley was the recipient of the 1980 Pulitzer Prize in journalism for his work about Cambodian refugees after the fall of the Khmer Rouge. In 2011, he authored one of the few books published about the rampant corruption of the Cambodian government and the citizens who stoically endured it. Through extensive research including hundreds of interviews with Cambodians, Brinkley first explained the hierarchical power dynamics of ancient Cambodia. He explained not only the lack of feeling of obligation held by rulers to serve the people, but the peasantry's complete acceptance of it. Long before the fear, trauma, and passivity that characterized modern Cambodian people, there was a dearly held core belief among them that dates back to the sixth century in the hierarchy of a culture.

Government

Cambodians' reverence for its social hierarchy applied not only to family life and village life, but to Cambodians' concept of how government worked. Leadership through most of Cambodia's long history was an all-ruling monarchy that fought bloody battles to gain and maintain power. In a society established centuries ago and very slow to change, the mindset about the relationship between the ruled and the rulers changed very little. A 2008 survey showed that Cambodians believed that 'people with power' had more rights than they themselves

had...and more than 97% of the subjects completely accepted that difference (Berkvens, 2009, p.47). Ayers (2000) wrote:

The notion of mutual obligation [between the king and the peasantry] did not exist. While those at the top governed, those at the bottom existed to be governed. The relationship between those with power and those over whom that power was exercised flowed in only one direction (p.11).

When the French stepped in as Protectorate of Cambodia from both Thai and Vietnamese invasions in 1867, they abolished slavery. The Cambodian people were very unhappy with this change. They existed quite functionally with slavery for centuries, as it served as an important part of their hierarchy. “Slave” in the Khmer language translated to *knjom*. *Knjom* meant “I” in the Khmer language. Ayers (2000) indicated this as just one example of the way that Cambodians “willingly accept the necessity of their subservience to individuals of higher social status” (p.18). Ayers further claimed that the time-honored beliefs about leadership, power, and the hierarchy dominated the country’s economic, political, and cultural life.

In 1979, Soviet-backed Vietnam invaded Cambodia and ended the Khmer Rouge regime, but only to set up a Vietnamese occupation of the country, which lasted for over 10 years. The collapse of communism eventually caused Vietnam to end its occupation of Cambodia. Fighting and skirmishes with small remaining factions of Khmer Rouge supporters continued around Cambodia through the 1990s. Hun Sen became Cambodia’s Prime Minister during the Vietnamese occupation. His political party, the Cambodian People’s Party, regularly murdered anyone who opposed them, including journalists who reported the truth about them. Hun Sen’s party kept Cambodian citizens in a perpetual state of fear of violence, and consequently Cambodians were perceived as very passive people. Brinkley (2011) described the dictatorship, “...no nation has suffered so much in the recent past. No other people lived through an era when their own leaders killed one-quarter of the population—only to find that when the offending

government fell, uncaring, avaricious leaders replaced it” (p. 353). Brinkley (2011) related this description of the attitudes of high-ranking Cambodian government workers:

The very idea of working on behalf of the people to improve their lot was a foreign concept. These officers looked out only for themselves; their sole occupation was accruing personal wealth. This state of affairs had continued uninterrupted for centuries, and there was no reason to question it (p. 24).

Pellini & Ayers (2007) concurred and added, “...the fundamental problem, in the Cambodian context, is that participation in governance had traditionally been discouraged, and citizens have been socialized to accept without question the decisions of their leaders” (p. 404).

Education

David Ayers (2000) authored a book describing the relationship between the Cambodian government and what he called the Cambodian educational crisis from the 1860s, when the French ruled Cambodia, through the year 2000 when the book was published. On page 6, Ayers identified his book as “a chronicle of the continued development and educational failures of every one of Cambodia’s post-independence ruling regimes.” Ayers argued that Western notions of modern development and the strict Cambodian hierarchy did not mix well: “pursuing development...is at odds with tradition and the cultural underpinnings of the state” (p. 3).

On page 3, Ayers wrote, “Put simply the [educational] crisis, was...a product of the disparity between the educational system and the economic, political, and cultural environments that it...intended to serve.” Ayers believed that the Cambodian government’s purpose for education in Cambodia had long been to educate its citizens into passivity and acceptance of exploitation and abuse. He maintained, “Traditional education reinforced the social hierarchy presided over by the king and legitimized by the country’s Buddhist monastic order...social regulation was the embodiment of the hierarchical political culture and was agreed to in

principle, and in conduct, by those it exploited” (p. 17). In other words, quite unlike Western education where power was respected yet questioned, Cambodian education served to keep its citizenry helpless, servile, and exploited, and more importantly, satisfied that this was the correct way for a society to function. The gist of Ayers’ book was that attempts at genuine Western education in Cambodia continued to fail because it served the oppressive hierarchical government to keep its peasants uneducated. It had been that way in Cambodia for centuries, and Cambodians accepted it as correct. On the other hand, foreign aid was essentially financing and heavily influencing the Cambodian Ministry of Education’s reform policies and the carrying out of those policies. Consequently, the situation in Cambodian education was a hollow effort made by the government to appear to be educating its people to keep the foreign aid donors happy. In reality, nothing was changing and students were no closer to being genuinely educated in the Western democratic sense.

Cambodians’ and Westerners’ notions of what constituted education were very different. From the Cambodian perspective, the first concept of traditional education was little more than learning one’s place in the social hierarchy. People learned intricate behaviors to show respect to those who were above them on the hierarchy, and likewise learned they could abuse or exploit whoever was below.

Furthermore, Cambodians traditionally learned all that they needed to know by watching and imitating the people around them. For centuries, they used their brains only to process what was visually right in front of them, and this served them well in their simple village life. Watching, learning, and imitating how everyone in the village treated each other was of extreme importance, as was watching and learning the household and farming skills required for contributing to the family. Most of the country remained not just illiterate, but wholly without

any value attached to asking questions. Acceptance of what was right in front of them, and seeking nothing higher than what they had was encouraged and valued.

Repeating the Khmer folk tales that reinforced knowing one's place was the extent of the meta-cognitive skills Cambodians utilized for thousands of years. Nothing in their "education" history required them to conceptualize, evaluate, or more importantly, question. They were directed from an early age never to question, only to be agreeable and respect the hierarchy. Outside of the capital city Phnom Penh, Cambodia had no schools at all until the 1940s (Brinkley, 2011, p. 4). Before the French came, they had virtually no books, and *until the 1960s* few Cambodians could read or write (Brinkley, 2011, p. 337). Ayers (2000) pointed out, "Cambodia's traditional educational system had always reinforced the concept of helplessness, the idea that a person was unable to determine their position within the social strata" (p. 28).

Some effort was made by the French to educate the elite Cambodians in Phnom Penh, but the goal was only to educate them enough to serve the French agenda. Interestingly, Ayers (2000) also explained that when the French first appeared in Cambodia and began providing a chosen few with a Western education, it was the first inkling that Cambodians had that education from Westerners could provide them with upward social mobility. Ayers indicated that the concept "proved a significant factor in undermining the solidarity of the traditional, cohesive social system. The provision of modern education to Cambodian peasants was akin to a subtle social revolution" (p. 28).

By sharp contrast, Western education, beginning with TV shows such as Sesame Street, asked much more of children regarding meta-cognitive skills. Questions such as "what do you think will happen next?" and "why do you think she did that?" and "what would you do?" were commonly found in books, games, and early childhood lessons. Through the use of guessing

games, puzzles, and other educational toys, Western students were taught to ask questions, and to think and develop their reasoning and critical thinking skills, while Cambodian students were taught to simply obey without considering why.

These very different concepts of education were at odds when well-meaning Westerners came to Cambodia to educate, train, and help Cambodians toward a better life. Westerners arrived with numerous assumptions and cultural biases, and they often greatly overestimated the meta-cognitive ability of Cambodians.

Power and one's place within the hierarchy dictated every daily interaction for Cambodians. This understanding of power coupled with Cambodia's extreme poverty and its long history of war and violence came together to create a culture of people who naturally seized any small amount of power they had and used it to exploit whomever they could. Junne & Verkoren (2005) reported that post-conflict societies like Cambodia tended to have rent-seeking economies, where some individuals sought to make money by manipulating economic and legal systems. Such societies were characterized by low levels of education, lack of emancipation, high population growth rates, questionable freedom of the press, bad health conditions and a weak civil society. This undeniably applied to Cambodia.

This hierarchical ideology began at the very top of Cambodian society – with both high-ranking government officials and Buddhist monks – and went all the way down to the way teachers treated their students. It was natural and well-established in the Cambodian mindset that no one at the top of the hierarchy would even consider being anything but exploitive to those at the bottom. Likewise, those at the bottom would never expect anything close to the Western ideals of charity, leadership, equality, or help from anyone at the top. These were essentially Christian concepts, and most Cambodians were Buddhist. The result was that power was an end

in itself: those with authority simply sought more power while feeling no obligation to better the lives of those under them. Ear (2013) confirmed, “Because of the way that power operates in the country, the government has created virtually no incentives for healthy economic development” (p. 54).

Democratic concepts that were second nature to Westerners’ views were absolutely foreign to Cambodians. For centuries, this culture functioned within this strict hierarchical belief system. Knowles (2008) identified the Cambodian mindset regarding their complete non-participation in government:

Citizen participation is far from a historical reality or an intuitive principle in the minds of Cambodians. Since 1950, the Cambodian people have lived through two monarchies; a series of military struggles for control of the national government; a secret bombing campaign by the United States; genocide and mass starvation at the hands of the Khmer Rouge; Communist Vietnamese occupation; a protracted civil war; displacement of hundreds of thousands of Cambodians (both abroad and internally); the destruction and rebuilding of the nation’s physical, social, educational, and political foundations; and in the past decade, a transition to a democratic system of governance. Each of these experiences has influenced Cambodian sense-making of citizen participation (p. 90).

Brinkley (2011) confirmed this attitude in discussing his interviews with Cambodians. They revealed their agreement in being void of feelings of Cambodian nationalism or indeed any sense of community at all. Their instinct was toward personal survival and their loyalty and assistance began and ended with their family (p. 340). “...most expect nothing more than what they have. They carry no ambitions. They hold no dreams. All they want is to be left alone” (Brinkley, 2011, p.353).

It was important to note that this ancient belief system and the specific cultural characteristics that resulted from it were established long before the intense damage the Khmer Rouge had on Cambodians’ psyche. All of these concepts – the strict hierarchy, the complete void of experience of democratic concepts, the 100% lack of expectation that government should

do anything with its power but abuse it, the satisfaction in a kind of slavery, the incorrectness of speaking up or standing up for oneself, or reaching out to help your neighbor – they were all in place and had been part of the Khmer psyche for centuries.

Researchers often named the atrocities of the four year reign of terror that was the Khmer Rouge as the single explanation for the behavior of this culture, but the Cambodian character was well in place before 1975 (Ayers, 2000; Brinley, 2011). Sophal Ear (2012) indicated this on page 8 of his book about the problem of foreign aid in Cambodia: “Until recently, it has been both fair and convenient to attribute all the country’s woes to the Khmer Rouge and call it a day.” Berkvens (2009) agreed with this idea, and pointed out that many scholars perceived the Khmer Rouge regime as the source of all problems the country had, but saying this was far too easy an explanation. More and more people who studied Cambodia acknowledged that many of the country’s problems were much older than that (Ayers, 2000; Verkoren, 2005; Berkvens, 2009).

Because Cambodians had almost no (formal) education or any authoritative written historical account of Cambodia before the Khmer Rouge regime, they were quick to agree that Cambodia was a great country well on its way to strong development before Pol Pot forced the country into ruins. Many spoke of Cambodia’s “golden era” - the time in the 1950s and 1960s before the starvation and mass executions of the 1970s. Ayers (2000) debunked this popular myth, reported that Cambodia’s “prerevolutionary past is no more a golden era than is its present...both are characterized by political oppression, state-sanctioned violence, factionalism, corruption, and absolute contempt by those with power for those over whom that power is exercised” (p. 6).

Other Cambodian Cultural Traits

Brinkley (2011) indicated another noteworthy trait specific to Cambodians' culture: their inability to compromise. Nothing in their highly prescribed, centuries-old hierarchical behavioral rule book acknowledged discussion or compromise. Whoever was at the top was the person who was right, regardless of whatever truths might have been obvious. Brinkley reported, "Experts have found that compromise is next to impossible in Cambodian culture." He emphasized that they had no cultural tradition to guide them in handling differing opinions. The two choices Cambodians felt they have when there was conflict is either complete passivity or violence (Brinkley, 2011, p.223).

Cambodians also showed a short-term orientation outlook on life and planning. Where neighboring countries had two or even three rice harvests a year, Cambodians had only one. Data from informal discussions showed that Cambodians themselves attributed this to short-term thinking. Many of them reported that it was unclear what tomorrow will bring, so people tended not to think too far ahead (Berkvens, 2009, p.51). Another Cambodian personality trait that Berkvens discovered in his research was high uncertainty avoidance. There was fear of unclear, unstructured and unpredictable situations. The majority of Cambodian people obeyed strict codes of behavior and believed in absolute truths (Berkvens, 2009, p. 49).

Also Cambodians had a very large power distance between individuals, and a fear of making mistakes. Cambodians' meta-cognitive skills were very weak, including planning, critical thinking, reflection, following plans and time management (Berkvens, Kalyanpur, Kuiper, & Van den Akker, 2012, p. 243). Finally, Cambodians tended to hide their true emotions, making them hard to read. All of these personality traits, and Westerners' lack of

perception of them, detracted from the effectiveness that foreign aid had on educating Cambodia toward self-sufficiency and their own development.

Foreign Aid

In 1993, the United Nations stepped into Cambodian politics to attempt to supervise democratic elections. It was an attempt to create peace in a country that had been experiencing civil war, violence, and suffering for decades. It was this point in Cambodia's brutal, unstable history that the long suffering citizenry first began receiving significant financial aid and attention from several Western countries. Some claimed "the embarrassment of inaction during the Khmer Rouge genocide" (Ear, 2013, p.41) caused donors to give particularly large amounts of aid and support to Cambodia because the country was largely ignored by the world when Pol Pot launched his reign of terror.

Since 1993, foreign aid poured in by the billions from countries in North America, Asia, and Europe in an effort to rebuild and develop Cambodia. In 2011, Brinkley claimed that donors gave at least \$500 million every year since 1993. Ear (2013) claimed that by 2010 donors had given at least \$18 billion. Chanboreth & Sok reported in 2008 that foreign aid amounted to about US\$5.5 billion from 1998 to 2008 (p. 2). Chanboreth & Sok further estimated in 2008 that "Cambodia obtained, on average, development assistance of around US\$600 million a year during the last five years [2002-2007] of which about 10 percent is provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The main sector destinations included government and administration, health, transportation, education, and rural development" (p. 2).

Many researchers who studied Cambodia have speculated upon what most agreed to be the general failure of the aid to meet its purpose of improving the lives of the Cambodian people, given the amount of money, the level of expertise, and the decades of time invested. The education, health, meta-cognitive capacity, and quality of life for Cambodians should have been much more improved (Chanboreth & Hach, 2008; Berkvens, 2009, Ear, 2013, Brinkley, 2011). It was agreed that by 2015, with over \$500 million given to Cambodia each year for at least the last two decades, and as a result of great effort toward teaching Cambodians to run their own country, they should have been much less dependent on foreign aid. However, none of these goals were reached.

Life expectancy in 2014 was still low at 63 (IndexMundi, 2015); and 42 percent of children still suffered from stunting due to gross malnutrition (Kluttz, 2015). The average per capita income was between \$500-\$600, and fewer than 20 percent of Cambodian families who lived outside of the cities [had] access to a toilet or clean water. At least one-third of the people lived on less than \$1 a day (Ear, 2013). Brinkley reported in 2011, “By 2010, 80 percent of Cambodia’s people remained desperately poor and barely educated. Cholera broke out nationwide soon after the dengue-fever epidemic abated, while malaria, tuberculosis, and dysentery remained commonplace. Almost 1 Cambodian of every 10 had diabetes, while World Health Organization figures showed that every year nearly 10,000 people, most of them children, died of diarrhea-related illnesses, all of them easily preventable. Maternal mortality had barely dropped since the end of the rule of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime (Ear, 2013), and five women [died] during childbirth every day” (Brinkley, 2011, p. 307). “Capacity building” -- a term describing efforts made to train Cambodians to cognitively process, analyze, evaluate, and therefore work and produce at a higher level -- met with very limited success.

Why have countries around the world with intentions to help Cambodians become more self-sufficient and successful, failed for so many years? Some answers were found in the points that were made in the previous section describing the nature of Cambodians. The Cambodian government frustratingly felt no obligation to provide its citizenry with the nutrition, education, housing, or healthcare that foreign donors have given for this purpose; and the Cambodian citizens frustratingly accepted this. Also the cultural conflict and huge assumptions of Westerners about Cambodian people that occurred in most Western/Cambodian interactions greatly detracted from the success of educating Cambodians toward a better life.

Joel's Brinkley's book, as one example, took aim at Hun Sen, Cambodia's official Prime Minister and unofficial ruthless dictator, who had been in power since Vietnam invaded Cambodia and put an end to the Khmer Rouge's reign of terror in 1979. Brinkley exposed Hun Sen for his unconscionable, unabashed pocketing of every foreign dollar donated to help his people. He became a fabulously wealthy man, and did nothing at all to improve the lives of Cambodian citizens for whom the aid was intended.

If Brinkley or the foreign donors he wrote about had truly understood Cambodian culture and the lack of obligation that leaders feel toward serving the citizens they rule, he would not have been surprised by Hun Sen's actions. Hun Sen's behavior was perfectly Cambodian. Cambodians were comfortable with their leaders being beyond reproach. They had no expectation that Hun Sen should use foreign aid money to help them. There was a huge assumption on Westerners' part that Cambodians naturally do what they themselves would do if they were the Prime Minister and their people were sick and starving. Western assumptions about Cambodians' motivations and behaviors have been a large reason for the failure of foreign aid to help Cambodia.

Both Sophal Ear (2013) and Joel Brinkley (2011) wrote books that draw conclusions about the billions of dollars of foreign aid that has poured into Cambodia since the 1990s. Ear, a Cambodian-American scholar, who escaped the Khmer Rouge when he was a child, made several points about the problems that aid dependence brought to the country, both socially and politically. He tended to strongly blame the motivations of foreign donors without much acknowledgement of the difficulties that Cambodian culture presented to Westerners. Brinkley, an American, agreed that foreign donors' agendas were a large part of the problem. However he also placed a good part of the blame on the Cambodian citizenry for their acceptance of the treatment they received from their government. He called the Cambodian tendency to remain passive and to do nothing community-minded a "refusal to come together as a nation" and predicted, "...in the twenty-first century...this shared personality trait, ensure[s] that Cambodians [will] remain hungry and illiterate. By and large they could not, would not, stand up and advocate for themselves" (p. 341). Both authors blamed Hun Sen and the ultra-corrupt Cambodian government for its unabashed refusal to serve its people. Ear strongly blamed donors for not standing up to the government. He wrote, "...modern Cambodia is a kleptocracy cum thugocracy, and the international community, led by the UN, is its enabler" (page 8). He claimed that foreign donors' "failure to mitigate corruption" has shown how hard it was to be tough on a country that was genuinely aid-dependent (p.48).

Ear and others further made a case that foreign aid had greatly weakened the Cambodian government, and claimed that the best and the brightest Cambodians continued to seek high-paying jobs with the ubiquitous foreign non-government organizations (NGOs) instead of earning a fraction of that salary working for their own government. Berkvens (2009) agreed that a further considerable barrier to Cambodia getting to its feet and ceasing to rely on foreigners

was the “brain drain” that was created by so many wealthy countries setting up non-government organizations (NGOs) in Cambodia. Berkvens (2009) named “predatory competitive recruiting practices of local [Cambodian] staff by donors and the emphasis on short-term programs” as major reasons for the lack of success of capacity building (p. 62). Chanhoreth & Hach (2008) concurred:

Over time, the [capacity building/government training] system has become trapped in a dysfunctional cycle brought about by brain drain as personnel in key middle levels, who are responsible for implementation, are lured away by attractive salaries to work for private sector or international organizations. As a consequence, progress has been made on capacity substitution at the expense of capacity development (p.13).

Although Ear did include the rampant government corruption as a reason for the continued inequality, his book made no comment about the nature of Cambodians, except to state very generally that Cambodia was damaged because it became so dependent on foreign aid. Ear argued, “There is an urgent need to focus aid on improving governance” (p. 35). Brinkley (2011) presented many of the same statistics as Ear’s did regarding the amount of foreign aid that poured into Cambodia. Brinkley, however, included several personal interviews he conducted with Cambodians. Brinkley reported the cruelty of Cambodia’s dictator, and he concluded with incredulity at the citizens’ patient acceptance of the choking injustice. Both books presented the system of foreign aid as somewhat careless and ineffectual, serving mainly to keep itself running and to stuff the pockets of those at the top of the hierarchy, and both concluded that foreign aid had continually failed to improve the lives of the peasantry.

Verkoren (2005) reported that nearly 2,000 national and international NGOs supported Cambodia. Berkvens (2009) suggested that such a large number of organizations with various and at times even opposing agendas actually hindered development efforts. He claimed they overloaded the Cambodian government organizations and often did not seem to work together.

Capacity Building

A major focus of foreign aid was in capacity building of Cambodian teachers and government workers. As Chanboreth & Hach (2008) commented, “developing national capacity remains a key challenge for Cambodia” (p. 11). Capacity building focused both on teaching Cambodians specific workflows and job skills, and also specifically on teaching them very basic cognitive skills such as reasoning and evaluation. Most Westerners greatly underestimated the meta-cognitive skills of Cambodians because Westerners were unaware of Cambodian notions of “exclusively obedient education” and the focus on the social hierarchy. Berkens (2009) indicated, “Response bias – providing desired answers to please the researcher – can almost be seen as a specific form of cultural bias within the Cambodian context...in Cambodia it is amplified by the cultural disposition to please other people on one hand and the fear of being seen as stupid on the other” (Berkvens, 2009, p.23). Berkvens et al (2012) warned of the problems that have arisen “given the cultural context of extremely limited local capacity and differences in approaches in adult learning...” (p. 241). Berkvens (2009) emphasized the importance of being aware of the skills that Cambodians simply did not have:

These cultural issues have important implications for capacity development in Cambodia, and are therefore important to understand. Many international experts involved in capacity development in Cambodia do not understand the context in which they work. This lack of understanding results in a gap between what organizations think they accomplish and what happens in reality (p.43).

Consider a fictional example of a training scenario where a Western educator showed a Cambodian person a chart and explained that the chart represented all of the children in Cambodia. The Cambodian saw the chart, saw its shapes and lines and colors, saw that the chart was in fact not a child, became confused, and was unable to process any further. The seemingly simple explanation given by the Westerner that the chart represented children made no sense to

the Cambodian. Nothing in Cambodian life was that complex; things were just what they were, exactly what was literally visible to the eye. The concept that something represented something else that was not in the room was too much for Cambodians' simple ways and rural life. The Cambodian was too afraid to ask for clarification, and spent the rest of the lesson appearing agreeable, faking comprehension, and trying to hide his complete lack of understanding. The Cambodian focused all energy on being polite and pleasing to the Westerner.

What Cambodians did during most attempts to educate them was *whatever the Westerners told them to because Westerners were placed very high on the hierarchy*. Cambodians did their best to agree, to follow instructions, to say whatever they believed would please the Westerners to hear. The Westerner believed he was teaching, the Cambodian only agreed to be pleasing in the moment. It could not be stated strongly enough that a Cambodian would never have upset or contradicted the rules of the hierarchy by asking a question or seeking clarification. Consequently Westerners believed they were making progress because there appeared to be agreement and comprehension. In fact, Cambodians actually took in very little and worked hard to hide their lack of understanding.

As Ayers (2000) put it, "...nothing in their history prepared them for Western complexities, concepts, lessons, [or] values" (p.104). Ayers further commented that Western notions of modern development and the strict Cambodian hierarchy did not mix well: "pursuing development...is at odds with tradition and the cultural underpinnings of the state" (p. 3). Brinkley (2011) added "...layering bits of the modern world into a society still living in the Middle Ages is causing disruption—not broader progress" (p.7).

Chanboreth & Hach (2008) reported that money aimed specifically at building capacity and providing training for Cambodians increased steadily from US\$225 in 1998 to US\$275 in

2002 and US\$295 million in 2006 (p. 13). The major complaint was that Cambodian government staff had been the recipients of extensive training activities over the years, but the transfer of new skills, knowledge and attitudes into their daily work has been limited or non-existent. (Berkvens, 2009). There was no evidence of learning because Cambodians were not learning. They only pretended to learn.

Jan Berkvens' 2009 doctoral dissertation reported on both the successes and the difficulties encountered for 15 years by foreigners who conducted professional development workshops and trainings for Cambodian government staff. He both observed several trainings, and conducted trainings of his own. Berkvens cited several assumptions made by well-meaning Western trainers that resulted in Cambodians learning very little. Berkvens' work was far and away the most progressive analysis of the disconnect in Western/Cambodian interactions. Berkvens respectfully acknowledged Cambodian culture and offered insightful suggestions on better ways to help Cambodians learn.

Berkvens made several strong points about foreign donors' assumptions. He said that Western agendas, based on Western values, determined professional development processes for Cambodia without acknowledging unique traditional forms of Cambodian society that were completely inconsistent with Western conceptions. One example he gave was the confusion caused by presenting contextually irrelevant material that is merely translated into the Khmer language without taking into account the vast cultural differences that exist in Cambodia. "Widespread contextually irrelevant" training materials for government workers that "merely translate documents from other contexts, as was often done by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donors, does not suffice" (Berkvens, 2009, p. 151).

In discussing the character and the culture of Cambodian government workers, Berkvens reported that they were highly unwilling to work together and that they displayed very low levels of trust in one another. Knowles (2008) pointed out, "...the Khmer Rouge period altered the mindset of Cambodian people in ways that run directly counter to the institution of participatory development programming" (p. 7).

Berkvens (2009) further identified the extreme inefficiency and plain lack of skill/cognitive ability displayed. He observed that government offices were run with extensive reliability on the ubiquitous international consultants that have poured in and left Cambodian workers in the dark about their own work processes (p. 171). Berkvens (2009) further wrote that "people are incapable of making decisions because of their fear of making mistakes. Fear is also a common factor in Cambodian society. People were often afraid to make decisions and usually left the decision-making to their managers or international advisors" (p.104). This was common Cambodian hierarchical behavior.

Berkvens et al (2012) also authored a later article where he reported on cultural conflicts during workshops that were provided for Cambodia's Ministry of Education employees. He reported that many foreigners trained Cambodians using a Western approach that ignored Cambodian cultural norms. An example was conducting the workshop assuming that people were comfortable to speak their minds and give their opinions. Most Cambodians were reluctant to do so. The extreme hierarchical framework of the workplace prevented all lower staff from saying anything that would even slightly contradict a higher staff member or prove him to be slightly wrong (Berkvens et al., 2012).

Berkvens et al. (2012) also pointed out the low levels of education of the Cambodian staff, and the resulting "false clarity" that was extremely common in Western training of

Cambodians. False clarity was the result of Western training facilitators oversimplifying concepts, theories, and paradigms in an effort to get the ideas across, coupled with Cambodians' culturally agreeable outer layer and their reluctance to ask questions or seek clarification. The workshops or training information was often too complex for most of the severely undereducated Cambodians to have absorbed, yet they were both too undereducated to understand that they actually did not understand, and too culturally conditioned not to ask any questions. Facilitators sometimes demanded answers from participants by addressing individuals directly. In all cases this led to nervous giggling and evasive answering by the participants because nothing in Cambodian classrooms or culture had prepared them for this (Berkvens, 2009, p.125).

Checks for understanding were rarely conducted by Western instructors, or were only done rhetorically. Berkvens observed that the participants seemed to be listening intently, and smiling and nodding. Western instructors read this as signs of comprehension, but in Cambodian culture, they were understood to be very subtle signals of lack of understanding. Also, even though foreign facilitators strongly encouraged questions during instruction, Berkvens noted that very few asked any questions while the lesson was in session. Berkvens et al. (2012) observed that "people seem to be listening in a quite concentrated fashion, but questions during such whole-class taught sessions are rarely asked" (p. 243). Several asked the instructor one-on-one questions after the lecture was over. Berkvens conducted interviews later with participants, and concluded that Cambodians were generally too shy or embarrassed to ask questions in a group setting. In short, Cambodians were not equipped to personally facilitate their own learning in the way Western instructors assumed they would. Consequently, new skills or knowledge were rarely transferred. In his doctoral dissertation, Berkvens (2009) also mentioned that the risk of false consensus was serious in a conformist society like Cambodia:

It is likely that at least some of the issues on the Cambodian government's agenda are based on false consensus with the international aid agenda. Much of the development agenda is donor-driven, either after convincing the Cambodian government that something is a priority, or by only financing interventions that are seen as important by the donor organizations (p.106).

Cambodian Schools

Benveniste Marshall & Araujo (2008) reported that “quality of education service delivery at both the primary and lower secondary levels has been traditionally poor, stemming from scarce resourcing, insufficiently trained teachers and principals, inadequate professional development opportunities, deficient school performance monitoring systems and weak local capacity to take responsibility for school improvement at the facility, district and provincial levels” (p.7).

Chansopeak (2009) explained that an examination of rural schools in Cambodia showed “improving the quality of education is not a simple resource issue. The quality of Cambodian primary education today remains appallingly low...the lack of capacity of individual implementers and the lack of institutional capacity as a whole...was a foremost constraint” (p. 149).

Several scholars mentioned that Cambodia has come a long way in the past 15 years regarding its public education. They cited the great effort that was made to increase school enrollment (Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo, 2008; Chansopheak, 2009; Marshall et al., 2009; Kim & Rouse, 2011; Kluttz, 2015). Kim & Rouse (2011) properly qualified this accomplishment by stating “much celebration has been made about increasing the enrollment of Cambodian students in schools, but that the dropout rate rather nullifies this accomplishment” (p.416). Indeed, the much celebrated high enrollment was a deceptive victory, and it fell right in line with

the Cambodian trait of only appearing to have improved on the surface in response to Western financial support.

Kluttz (2015) said, “Some would argue [increased enrollment] was the result of adopting the international agenda and accepting aid money” (p.3). Furthermore, Kluttz (2015) observed that student attendance was much more easily measured and reported, and that frequently international donors or national governments’ aid money is linked with participation goals, so enrollment numbers became key to receiving funds. Kluttz (2015) further pontificated about the Cambodian government’s intent in focusing on enrollment instead of quality of education: “[some] argue that the focus on access has been intentional, as the government, in efforts to look modern and for leaders to support their legitimacy, is eager to use education to show as much progress on paper as possible” (p. 3).

Much was observed and reported about the hollow victory of increased enrollment. All agreed that going through the motions of enrolling was only the beginning of what was needed. Chansopheak (2009) stated, “Getting children to enroll does not mean regular attendance; regular attendance does not mean learning; and even learning does not mean children receiving quality education necessary for effective functioning in the society.” Marshall et al (2009) added, “...skill formation is not simply a question of access and years of completed schooling” (p.395). Overall educational attainment in Cambodia remained low. There were still high dropout rates, and the primary completion rate, while improved, was still low (Ayers, 2000; Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo, 2008; Jeong, 2014). The secondary level’s total enrollment was at “54 percent for lower secondary and 24 percent for upper secondary. Of those enrolled, only 41 percent completed lower secondary school, and even fewer, 27 percent, completed upper secondary school” (Kluttz, 2015).

Actual learning – that is an increase of meta-cognitive ability, reasoning and evaluation skills, traits that were much harder to measure – have not occurred according to Western researchers’ reports about the meta-cognitive capacity of Cambodians. Similar to the Ministry of Education employees who politely sat through trainings they did not comprehend, Cambodian students received foreign aid to attend school and puzzle over Western-aid provided textbooks with no genuine comprehension of them. As Ayers (2000) put it: “The pursuit of form over substance was a principle feature of the education system pursued in Cambodia” (p.180).

Formal Western education is being imitated all over the country in great part because of the potential it has to bring a student (and therefore a student’s family) higher up on the social hierarchy. As was stated earlier, Cambodians feel that children have already learned all that they *really* need to know through studying Buddhist teachings and learning the social hierarchy. The act of having children attend formal school existed half because foreign donors pulled puppet strings to make it happen, and half because Cambodians genuinely believed that simply physically attending school was the same thing as becoming educated. It was sadly ironic that they didn’t have the cognitive or analytical skills to realize the difference. Learning to analyze and ask questions were not happening in Cambodian schools. Buddhist teachings, after all, taught students *not* to ask questions and not to analyze. “It is hardly surprising that critical thinking skills are difficult for many Cambodians. Quality of education has always been low and students have rarely been challenged to become critical learners” (Berkvens, 2009, p.41).

What actually occurred in a Cambodian classroom? Marshall et al (2009) reported, “Observations of Cambodian classrooms often reveal little in the way of student engagement or detailed explanation” (p.410). Cambodians used the skills they had, skills that served them well during thousands of years of simple village life: watching and learning by repeating and

imitating what they visually see in front of them without much processing, analysis, or questions. Consider what Marshall et al (2009) reported about Cambodian teacher-centered classroom lessons: “a reliance on students copying out of textbooks and questions from teachers that focus on memorization and other basic cognitive skills. Teachers spend little time effectively explaining content or making linkages with other aspects of the curriculum, and their lesson plans lack the sequencing of activities necessary for dynamic and interesting classes” (p. 397).

Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) presented several observations of class time activities in lower secondary school. They reported that only half of the teachers had lesson plans available on the day of an announced visit, that class time was mostly exclusively devoted to instruction or recitation. Time spent in group or individual work was low. Classes tended to be highly structured with limited opportunities for interaction or creative thinking. Teachers tended to dominate class time through frontal instruction or asking individual students questions. Few teachers asked questions that required students to use reasoning or analytic skills. Most questions demanded factual recall of basic information. Only 23 percent of students asked questions.

Overall, it was a teacher-centered classroom where students basically received information and prompting but were not active partners in the learning. In the average grade 7 Khmer and mathematics lessons, approximately 61 percent of a class period was spent receiving instruction in various forms, while another 20 percent was spent on recitation. Furthermore, students spent roughly one-third of the total time receiving instruction—or 21 percent of the total class time—in copying activities. This mainly involved copying problems, activities or instructions from the blackboard or the textbook. Overall, these findings suggested that classes are highly structured, with at best limited opportunities for open interaction, creative thinking or exploratory exchanges. There was little time devoted to problem solving activities. Moreover,

observers reported that approximately one quarter of students were “not engaged” when individual work was assigned. This was a large portion of the class, which provided further evidence of a less than dynamic learning environment (Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008).

What these Western scholars observed was the Buddhist hierarchical learning process at work, which consisted of very little of the Western concept of learning. The teacher was dictating facts and the students were passively accepting what the teacher said almost without question. No analysis or reasoning was happening because Cambodians did not value asking questions. They highly valued helplessness, acceptance of what the teacher told them, and passivity. This method of teaching and learning has served Cambodians well for centuries. For them, the Western concept of school was related to pleasing/imitating foreign donors, and for some potentially earning future money and therefore rising up in the hierarchy. Simply physically attending school moves one up. Classroom activity beyond the rituals of copying and repeating was almost completely irrelevant in the Cambodian mindset. Cambodian parents who were polled showed that Cambodians placed no intrinsic value on education for its own sake.

Kluttz (2015) claimed that nearly 18 percent of Cambodian families polled about why they didn’t send their children to school responded simply that they “didn’t want to” (p. 4). Kluttz further commented, “The fact that families are uninterested in [sending] their children to school speaks of the attractiveness of the educational system in Cambodia. Families are often unconvinced that the time and resources allotted to education are of value” (p. 4). For most Cambodians who were worried about staying fed and having shelter, formal Western schooling was simply an extraneous luxury. They were correct in believing that the activities in Cambodian classrooms were not related to, and wouldn’t have enhanced their family’s simple life of subsistence farming or fishing.

Furthermore, Westerners didn't realize the fear and trauma that Cambodians associated with receiving an education. They did not trust a government that claimed it wished to educate them; nor did they trust foreigners who claimed to bring enlightenment through education. Foreign donors and aid workers forget that Cambodians worked hard to appear completely agreeable, but that deep-seated mistrust and fear were at the true base of everything that they did.

Teacher Shortage/Unskilled Teachers

Any Westerner who studied Cambodian education immediately noted the desperate teacher shortage, and eventually noticed the very poor quality of teaching and the lack of trained teachers in Cambodian schools. These shortcomings were due to Khmer Rouge's damaging policy of murdering teachers as its first order of business when it came into power (Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo, 2008; Berkvens, 2009; Jeong, 2014). In the early stages after the Khmer Rouge regime ended, the Cambodian government appointed anyone who could read and write to become teachers. Many of these early teachers were still working without ever receiving any formal training. (Berkvens, 2009). Most had only a few years of primary education completed, and some received between two and six weeks of training to support them in their new job. The government decided [in 1979] that those with more education would teach the less educated ones (Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo, 2008).

On a side note, the murder of teachers and educated people was consistent with the Cambodian belief that people who sought education, and therefore social mobility, were upsetting the hierarchy, stepping out of line, and deserved punishment. Cambodians in power naturally attempted to prevent those below them on the hierarchy from getting any higher. This

reiterated the point that concepts of democracy were absolutely foreign to the Cambodian mindset.

Kim & Rouse (2011) pointed out, “One of the main characteristics ascribed to [Cambodian teachers] is their under-qualification. In fact, this under-qualification was not only true of teachers, but was also found among education officials in district, provincial, and central government departments” (p.419). Berkvens (2009) agreed, saying that the Cambodian Ministry of Education staff were appointed in the same desperate, haphazard way as the teachers were in 1979, and that many barely educated people held very important positions. This offered some explanation for the results of Berkvens’ research reported earlier about the difficulties in training staff with very low meta-cognitive capacity. They were not educated enough for the Khmer Rouge to murder; then they held high government positions and wrote the educational policies for their country.

This background information was an example of what Western aid donors were not aware of when they sent experts to train Ministry of Education employees. It was reasonable for Westerners to think employees of the Ministry of Education had at least a secondary level of education; yet many did not. It presented a much clearer picture of why Cambodian workers pretended to understand and hid their ignorance when highly educated foreigners sent by their governments came to train them. Educated Western experts were explaining impossible concepts to barely educated Cambodians. Berkvens (2009) says, “Without proper funding or sufficient background in education, and with a lack of support from their political leaders, the [Ministry of Education] staff tried its best [in 1979] to develop an operative education system offering education for students of all levels and grades” (page 6). The more that was understood

about the nature and the specifics of the history of Cambodian education, the more it is understood why so much foreign aid attempts failed.

Observations of teachers in Cambodia reflected the Cambodian government's desperate policies of 1979. Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) reported that student learning and achievement was clearly lower in classrooms with older teachers, and that teachers' lack of preparedness, poor performance, poor professional standing, and their lack of autonomy and responsibility posed huge barriers to educational quality. Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) further explained that approximately 15 percent of teachers were absent on the day of a surprise visit, and that only half of lower secondary school teachers had lesson plans readily available on the day of the unannounced classroom visits. Interestingly, another 10 percent reported they had a lesson plan for that day but were *unwilling to share it* with the foreign researcher. This appears to be another example of Cambodians' mistrust of foreigners and/or their efforts to hide their incompetence.

It was worth looking at the cultural conflict from the other side – from Cambodians who lived in America. Vichet Chhuon (2010) wrote about the low academic achievement of Cambodian-American students living in the United States. “Cambodian students are low achieving because of ethnic traditions that emphasize a passive disposition and a more fixed notion of ability” (p. 30).

Daisuke Akiba (2010) presented an enlightening article about Cambodian-American students. She reported that the American-born children of the Khmer Rouge refugees typically did not perform well in school and that they had a high drop-out rate. She claimed there were very few studies about this group, and that they were often lumped together with other Asian-Americans, and were therefore expected to be academically high-achieving like many Chinese-

American, Japanese-American, and Indian-American students. Akiba explained that Cambodian parents typically were not perceived as participating in their child's education, which Americans saw as mandatory for high achievement. Akiba cited a study from Choi, He, and Harachi (2008) which stated, "Cambodian American parents actually are highly involved with their children's education, but in non-Western, traditional Cambodian ways, such as by emphasizing moral and religious values through routine family practices" (p.87).

In further studying the parents and the culture, she discovered that Cambodian parents were very concerned with their children's education, but that Cambodian culture held teachers in a very high place on the cultural hierarchy. Cambodian parents therefore felt it was not their place to participate in their children's education. They felt it would be disrespectful to the highly regarded teachers. Akiba also cited Cambodians' Buddhist fatalism, meaning their acceptance of "whatever happens will happen, and nothing can be done about it." Akiba explained that Cambodians believed some children had academic ability, and some simply did not. Their passive Buddhist acceptance of all things, borne of a life of hopeless peasantry and oppression, overrode any notion that their children might have worked hard, hired a tutor, or otherwise exerted any will to rise above the hand they were dealt.

Recommendations from Western researchers and donors called for "the active mobilization and development of teachers as key agents to foster their active and conscious participation..." (Kim & Rouse, 2011, p. 416). Marshall et al (2009) recommend that "the overarching goal...should be to produce teachers who actively engage their students in learning and are effective at explaining content" (p. 410). Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) discussed the urgent need of the Cambodian government to "articulate more clearly and engage in a deeper teacher reform overhaul, inclusive of teaching service conditions, minimum

standards, and performance-based incentives within a sustainable budget framework,” and called for “a balanced teacher-student ratio allows teachers to dedicate sufficient attention to children’s individual needs” (p.102). Kim & Rouse (2011) further stated, “...in Cambodia education reforms and policies over the past 20 years, teachers have remained largely invisible...It could be argued that this is partly due to many teachers’ unreliable performance – caused many by their low levels of ability and motivation – which makes it difficult to conceive of them as active agents of reform...” (p.415). Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) stressed “Truly functional continuous monitoring and accountability systems—provided by school principals, [Ministry of Education] administrative inspectors, school support committees and parents—can then ensure that teacher standards are consistently applied and translate into visible improvements in education service delivery” (p. 112). Finally, Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo (2008) observed, “parent-teacher contact is rare...school support committees have little parental representation. Parents and communities need information on school finances and other aspects of school performance, including teacher performance...to use this information to voice their expectations or concerns” (p. 115).

Chansopeak (2009) explained, “Any incentive system must link the additional work teachers have to handle under the reform; until this is recognized, teachers are unlikely to do what is required of them by the reform” (p. 149). Kim & Rouse (2011) claimed “defensive and/or uncritical attitudes from schools may reflect the fact that their management and teaching staff do not actively contribute to reducing the number of children who drop out. An educational context that does not question poor completion rates may also be to blame” (page 419).

These conclusions and suggestions assumed several things about Cambodians. They assumed that teachers chose their professions and had both an understanding of the curriculum

and an ability and desire to teach it. They assumed that the Cambodian government actually wished for its citizenry to be educated, and that the Ministry of Education workers had the ability and capacity to implement and enforce radical new ideas and policies. They assumed that Cambodian parents and communities wanted to participate in students' formal schooling, and that other administrators and school principals were able to work functionally together, share ideas, and make big changes. Above all, these researchers assumed that Cambodians wanted what they wanted and valued what they valued. They assumed that Cambodians valued democratic ideals, and of course Cambodians appeared to completely agree with them, particularly if money was being donated. When considered in the light of what Cambodians actually valued – their immediate family, remaining where they are, asking no questions, being quiet, agreeable, and passive – it was clear why Cambodians merely pleasingly went through the motions when wealthy foreign donors came to offer their help and expertise.

This thesis was an attempt to show that there is a serious cultural disconnect between Westerners and Cambodians that affects the success of Western educational efforts in Cambodia. Westerners may not understand enough about Cambodian values or the Cambodian mindset to educate Cambodians effectively. The hope was that the survey results would illuminate the disconnect between the two cultures, and help explain why so much foreign aid has failed to help Cambodia improve as a country.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Investigation

An online survey (Appendix A) was created using Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com). The survey was aimed at Westerners (Australians, New Zealanders, Americans, Canadians, and Europeans) who were living in Cambodia and educating Cambodian adults in some capacity. The survey consisted of 39 questions and it was in three parts. The first part consisted of ten multiple choice questions that gathered data on the demographics of the Western educators. It asked questions about where they were from, in which Cambodian provinces they taught, how long they had been there, and what and whom they were teaching. Part two - questions 11 through 28 - were seven true or false questions and eleven five-point Likert-type scale questions that examined the participants on both their historical knowledge of Cambodia and the depth of their personal experience within the Cambodian culture. The final eleven questions in part three were five-point Likert-type scale questions that asked participants questions about their teaching and assessment methods.

The goal in designing the survey questions was to examine the respondents' awareness level of the Cambodian mindset and to measure the respondents' exposure to authentic Cambodian culture – that is the reasoning behind Cambodian behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. It was hoped that the survey would reveal how little Westerners understood about Cambodians. It was also hoped that the survey would show that most Westerners in Cambodia

reside and teach in the capital city of Phnom Penh, where only ten percent of the Cambodian population reside. Ninety percent of Cambodians live in rural areas, and it was hoped that the demographics responses might shed some hypothetical light on why little changes in the countryside despite the number of foreign aid workers and educators living in Cambodia.

Sample Population

Seventy-four people responded to the survey. The survey was anonymous, although it did allow only one response per IP address. It can therefore be fairly assumed that each of the 74 participants only took the survey once. The survey was emailed to participants and also posted on Facebook. It was available for response for 9 months – from March 2016 to November in 2016. The (American) author had returned from 2 years of living and teaching in Cambodia in 2015, so the survey was sent to American acquaintances still living there with an emphatic request to forward it to other Westerners. The directions on the survey requested that only Westerners teaching Cambodian adults ages 25 and older take the survey. The directions for the survey included a request to survey takers to please forward the survey to any Westerners teaching in Cambodia.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of the Findings

There were 74 responses to the survey (Appendix B). However, out of 74 participants taking a 39 question survey, 14 respondents skipped 21 of the questions and 13 skipped 9 questions. Only the first question of the survey was not skipped by anyone. One person skipped question 2, and from the third question onward, a minimum of 5 people skipped each question. Therefore it is more accurate to report that there was an average response of 61.76. The overwhelming majority of respondents (87.84%) were from North America (Table 1).

Table 1
Responses for: Choose the place that sent you to work in Cambodia

Answer Choices	Responses
– Australia/New Zealand	1.35% 1
– North America (United States/Canada)	87.84% 65
– Europe	4.05% 3
– Other	6.76% 5
Total	74

When asked how long the 67 respondents had lived in Cambodia, they were fairly evenly divided among 6 months, 6 months to 1 year, 1 to 2 years, and between 2 and 5 years. Very few respondents had lived in Cambodia for over 5 years (Table 2). A much smaller majority than was expected (19.35%) responded that they taught in Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital city (Table 3). It is curious that only 19% of the respondents (12 people) reported that they were living in the capital city while a whopping 16% taught in the remote province of Kampong Chhnang.

Table 2
Responses for “How long have you lived in Cambodia?”

Answer Choices	Responses
Six months or less	20.90% 14
Between 6 months and 1 year	22.39% 15
Between 1 year and 2 years	26.87% 18
Between 2 years and 5 years	23.88% 16
Five years or more	5.97% 4
Total	67

Table 3
Responses for “Where in Cambodia do you teach?”

Banteay Meanchey	0.00% 0
Battambang	1.61% 1
Kampong Cham	8.06% 5
Kampong Chhnang	16.13% 10
Kampong Speu	0.00% 0
Kampong Thom	4.84% 3
Kampot	8.06% 5
Kandal	0.00% 0
Koh Kong	3.23% 2
Kep	3.23% 2
Kratie	0.00% 0
Mondulkiri	0.00% 0
Odder Meanchey	1.61% 1
Pailin	0.00%

	0
Phnom Penh	19.35% 12
Sihanoukville	0.00% 0
Preah Vihear	0.00% 0
Pursat	3.23% 2
Prey Veng	3.23% 2
Ratanakiri	0.00% 0
Siem Reap	12.90% 8
Stung Treng	1.61% 1
Svay Rieng	1.61% 1
Takeo	6.45% 4
Tboung Khmum	0.00% 0
I travel around to different places in the country to teach	4.84% 3
Total	62

From the responses provided it seemed that roughly half of the survey takers had sufficient knowledge about Cambodia's history. Excluding the 93.44% who correctly chose "false" in response to the statement, "Throughout Cambodia all of the fighting/violence ended in 1979," respondents' overall knowledge about Cambodia was less than one might have expected. For example, 36.07% incorrectly chose "false" in response to "Cambodia had virtually no history of formal education until the 1940s excluding educating boys to become monks."

Meanwhile 44.26% incorrectly replied "true" to the statement, "Since foreign aid began arriving in the 1990s, the nutrition of Cambodians living outside of Phnom Penh has improved dramatically"; and 45.90% incorrectly answered "false" to the statement, "The Cambodian maternal mortality rate has barely decreased since the 1990s. Also 81.97% incorrectly answered "true" to the statement, "One in ten Cambodians today display signs of post-traumatic stress disorder." In fact the statistic was one in three. These responses suggested that respondents believed that life for Cambodians was better than it is actually was, and/or that it was improving when it was not.

Respondents' knowledge about the nature of Cambodians was not consistent. For example, 86.67% correctly chose "strongly agree" (36.67%) or "somewhat agree" (50%) when presented with the statement, "A Cambodian's place within the social hierarchy is of the utmost importance to Cambodians." However 70% incorrectly chose "strongly agree" (33.33%) or "somewhat agree" (36.67%) in response to the statement, "Most Cambodians value and participate in their communities."

Thirty eight percent incorrectly chose "strongly agree" in response to "Most Cambodians are trusting of foreigners." Twenty percent chose "undecided" in response that statement, 25% chose "somewhat disagree" and only 8.33% chose "strongly disagree." Foreigners who were

living and working among Cambodians for anywhere from 6 months to 5 years, appeared to be mostly unaware of the extreme distrust Cambodians felt toward them. More seemed aware of Cambodians' tendency to have appeared ever-agreeable and to hide their true feelings, responding with a combined 76.67% agreement (36.67% "strongly agree" and 40% "somewhat agree") to the statement, "Most Cambodians hide their true feelings."

In response to the statement, "Most Cambodians do not understand the concept of democracy," 25% chose "undecided" and 25% chose "somewhat disagree." Only 16.67% chose "strongly agree" and 30% chose "somewhat agree." This suggested that close to half of the respondents who came to Cambodia to educate Cambodians were unaware that the culture's long history was completely void of democratic concepts and principles.

Likewise, in response to the statement, "The Cambodian culture has traditionally valued seeking knowledge and asking questions," a combined 66.67% correctly disagreed (36.67% responded "somewhat disagree" and only 30% responded "strongly disagree"). The remaining respondents appeared to be unaware that Cambodians were encouraged from childhood never to question.

In regard to the third part of the survey that addressed foreign educators' teaching methods and student assessments, it was clear that the wording of many of the statements could only be answered with a responder's personal opinion. These responses failed to prove or disprove anything about the effectiveness of the instruction or the assessment. Responses to statements such as "My students voluntarily attend my class/workshops/training exclusively to gain knowledge"; "Most of my students thoroughly learn and understand the lessons/information that I teach," and "My students completely understand my English" were rather ineffectual questions in this survey. There was no way to prove Cambodians' motivations or comprehension

by asking respondents to agree or disagree with these statements. Likewise, other questions in part three asked respondents' opinions about whether they believed their students cheat or not. The responses to the questions neither proved nor disproved anything about Westerners' comprehension of Cambodian culture or teaching methods.

A clearer, more revealing statement was this one to which 55% of the respondents somewhat agreed and 21.67% strongly agreed: "I sometimes suspect my students of only pretending to understand my workshop/training/lessons." That nearly 80% of the respondents agreed to this statement correlated with the Cambodian culture's tendency to please Westerners instead of questioning them. The response to the final statement on the survey – "If my students do not understand a concept I am teaching, most of them will seek clarification" suggested that at least some educators realized that Cambodians did not ask questions. In response to that statement, 10% replied "undecided," 50% responded "somewhat disagree" and 21.67% responded "strongly disagree."

Discussion of the Findings

It is difficult to draw the expected conclusions from the survey results. Not only was the response rate disappointingly low, but the lack of variety in Westerners – that is respondents from Europe (less than 5%) or Australia/New Zealand (less than 2%) – make it likely that the conclusions represent the assumptions of North Americans. The 6.76% who chose "other" as the country they were representing does not help make any case either. The mostly non-striking statistics in the responses do not seem to make a strong case for showing that the respondents do

not understand the Cambodian mindset. The survey results only reveal that *some* North Americans who took the survey are not aware of *some* aspects of Cambodian culture.

It is clear that some people working with Cambodians to help them rebuild their country are either poor test-takers or have less knowledge of the Cambodian culture and mindset than one might hope. That only 16.67% of the respondents chose “strongly agree” and 25% chose “somewhat disagree” in response to whether Cambodians understand the concept of democracy is indicative that many respondents have not considered this very important cultural trait.

It seems disturbing that any responders at all chose “strongly agree,” (3.33%) “somewhat agree,” (18.33%) or even “undecided” (11.67%) in response to “The Cambodian culture has traditionally valued seeking knowledge and asking questions” and that anyone at all responded with “undecided” (11.76%) or “somewhat disagree” (6.67%) when responding to “Most Cambodians fear their government.” Still these survey responses come across as rather untrustworthy rather than revealing solid evidence that the majority of Westerners do not understand Cambodians, or that this lack of cultural comprehension is to be blamed for Cambodia’s failure to become more self-sufficient country.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in the world and continues to rely heavily on foreign aid. Despite decades of over \$500 million annually donated to Cambodia to help the country become more self-sufficient and recover from its devastating 1970s genocide, little has improved in the life of the average Cambodian. There are an estimated 2,000 national and international NGOs currently providing training and assistance to Cambodians. It is generally agreed that decades of money and effort have failed to make life better for Cambodians.

This thesis attempted to generate evidence that Western aid workers who are living in Cambodia and teaching there were doing so without a deep understanding of the Cambodian culture; and that they were therefore failing to transfer the skills or knowledge they came to share. This lack of cultural understanding was suspected to help explain why decades of foreign aid and efforts to educate Cambodia toward self-sufficiency has failed.

A 10 minute online survey was created using Survey Monkey and was aimed at Western aid workers (North Americans, Europeans, and Australians/New Zealanders). The survey was in three parts. Part one gathered survey takers' demographics, part two quizzed them on their knowledge of the Cambodian mindset, and part three asked them about their teaching methods. Only 74 people responded, but several responders skipped several questions, so the average response per question was only 61.76. Also nearly 90% of the survey takers were from North America. This greatly diminishes the goal of measuring "Westerners'" knowledge of Cambodia. Also the wording of some of the questions in part three was such that the responses only measure the opinion of the respondents rather than genuinely measuring their teaching practices or the

quality of their assessment methods. The lackluster responses made the survey results more anecdotal than concrete. Clear conclusions could not quite be drawn, but there was some evidence that *some* Western educators living and working in Cambodia were unaware of *some* aspects of the Cambodian mindset. Cambodians' deep distrust of foreigners and their lack of understanding of democratic concepts were two cultural traits that some Western educators did not seem aware of. The survey results were not efficient enough to clearly show that foreign aid was failing in Cambodia in part because Western educators did not comprehend the Cambodian culture. The survey results did bring about some clarity regarding potential ways to research these ideas more effectively in the future. By shifting approaches, future researchers could still target answers to questions about Western teaching methods, and they could measure Cambodians' learning from Westerners more effectively

One suggestion for future research that might better measure Western educators' teaching effectiveness is to study a group of Western educators and their Cambodian students over the course of their time in Cambodia. Observation of their teaching methods, observations and/or interviews of their Cambodian students (always bearing in mind the Cambodian cultural tendency to give pleasing answers over truthful ones) and pre and post tests to assess whether the students actually learned would better answer the questions sought by this survey.

Other potential studies are culturally comparative studies of Cambodia with other non-Western nations that have received Western aid and education after a traumatic war and thrived as a result. A comparative study of effective Western teaching methods for post-war Japan or Korea, for example, might reveal specific methods that would help Cambodia. The decades of aid and effort provided for Cambodia have barely helped that aid-dependent country. Greater

effort to understand the specifics of the culture and to effectively educate them is still desperately needed.

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APPENDIX A

Survey

*****Please forward this message to any Westerner you know who is living in Cambodia***
****Please forward before you take the survey******

Informed Consent

My name is Karen O'Grady. I am an American graduate student who lived and taught in Cambodia in 2013-2015. The narrow purpose of this survey is to collect data to complete my master's degree in education. The greater purpose is to help Cambodians become more self-sufficient in running their own country, and to help them depend less on foreign aid by providing them with authentic education.

If you are:

- Currently living in Cambodia
- Representing a European country, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, or the United States
- Educating Cambodian adults (not school children) on a regular basis

Then I would be very grateful if you would take my 10 minute survey and help me gather data for my research. This survey is anonymous and voluntary. There is no penalty for non-participation. All of the information that is gathered will be deleted after my research has been completed. Any questions or comments can be emailed to me at karenogradymilis@gmail.com.

I thank you very much for helping me, and for your work in helping Cambodia. Again, please forward this message before you start the survey. The more responses I receive, the stronger my research will be.

****Please forward this message to any Westerners living in Cambodia and then click on the link to begin the survey****

Survey of Western Aid Workers/Educators Living in Cambodia

*****Please only take this survey if you are educating Cambodian ADULTS (ages 25 years old or older).***
Educators of children or young university students should not take this survey.**

Part One: Demographics of Aid Workers

***1. Choose the place you are representing in your work in Cambodia / the place that sent you to work/teach/volunteer in Cambodia:**

- Australia/New Zealand
- North America (United States/Canada)
- Europe
- Other

Other (please specify)

***2. For which type of organization do you work? Choose the best answer.**

- Government
 - Non-government organization
 - I am a student earning school credit
 - I am a graduate student doing field work
 - Independent/self
 - Other
- Other (please specify)

3. As of today, how long have you lived in Cambodia, regardless of how long you have held your current position? If you periodically leave and return, add up all the time you have spent in Cambodia. Choose the best answer. You may use the "Other" box for any comments.

- Six months or less
 - Between 6 months and 1 year
 - Between 1 year and 2 years
 - Between 2 years and 5 years
 - Five years or more
- Other (please specify)

***4. In total, from the time you arrived, how long to you plan to live in Cambodia? Choose the best answer. You may use the "Other" box to clarify your answer or to write any comments on the question.**

- I don't know
 - Less than 1 year
 - Between 1 year and 2 years
 - Between 2 years and 5 years
 - More than 5 years
 - Cambodia is my permanent home
- Other (please specify)

***5. Did you choose to work in Cambodia or was it assigned to you? Choose the best answer. You may use the "Other" box to clarify your answer or to make any comment about the question.**

- I chose Cambodia.
 - Cambodia was one of a few choices I was offered.
 - Cambodia was one of many choices I was offered.
 - I was assigned to Cambodia with very little or no choice.
 - Cambodia is one of my stops as I work/travel in many countries.
- Other (please specify)

***6. Where in Cambodia do you live most of the time? Choose one.**
You may use the "Other" box to clarify your response or to comment on the question.

Other (please specify)

The dropdown menu lists the names of all 26 provinces in Cambodia. I have cut-and-pasted the list below. Questions 6 and 7 contain the same dropdown menu choices; except Question 7 includes "I travel around to different places in the country to teach" as one of the choices.

- Banteay Meanchey

- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kandal
- Koh Kong
- Kep
- Kratie
- Monduliri
- Oddar Meanchey

- Phnom Penh
- Preah Sihanouk / Sihanoukville
- Preah Vihear
- Pursat
- Prey Veng
- Ratanakiri
- Siem Reap
- Stung Treng
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo
- Tboung Khmum

***7. Where in Cambodia do you teach/instruct/give workshops/educate most of the time? Choose one.**
You may use the "Other" box to clarify your response or to comment on the question.

Other (please specify)

***8. What ONE subject area below best describes the education/training/workshops/classes you teach to Cambodian adults?**
You may use the "Other" box to clarify your response or to comment on the question.

- Business (management / accounting / finance)
- Development (city planning / land planning)
- Education (teaching teachers)
- Engineering

- English (or another language)
- Environmental
- Farming
- Personal or family health education / personal or family nutrition
- Human rights / empowerment / anti-corruption
- Nursing or medical
- Science
- Societal issues (family life / domestic abuse)
- Tourism
- None

Other (please specify)

***9. Which Cambodian groups/professions do you educate? Choose all that apply.**
Use the comment box to name a group not mentioned or to comment on the question.

- Anyone who wants to learn
- AIDS patients
- Doctors / nurses / midwives / medical professionals
- Entrepreneurs / business people
- Farmers
- Former or current prostitutes / sex workers
- Government employees
- Teachers
- University students (over the age of 25)
- Victims / prisoners
- Women /mothers

Other (please specify)

***10. In what ways have you socialized with Cambodians? Choose all that apply.**
You may use the "Other" box to further reply to the question or to comment on the question.

- I have dated at least one Cambodian.
- I have attended at least one Cambodian wedding.
- I have joined a Cambodian family in their home for at least one meal.
- I have accompanied Cambodians to a Buddhist temple for at least one ceremony/event/holiday/celebration.
- I have attended at least one Cambodian funeral.
- I have socialized with a Cambodian/Cambodians out in public (coffee/drinks/meal/performance/etc) without other Westerners.

I have had at least one enlightening discussion with a Cambodian about Cambodian culture.

None

Other (please specify)

Part Two: Cambodian History and Culture

Questions 11-17 ask you to test your knowledge about Cambodian history and culture. Please choose either true or false for these questions.

***11. Throughout Cambodia, all of the fighting/violence ended in 1979.**

- True
 False

***12. The definition of the Cambodian phrase "saving face" is the Buddhist principle of looking down when speaking.**

- True
 False

***13. Cambodia had virtually no history of formal education until the 1940s (excluding educating boys to become monks).**

- True
 False

***14. The average life expectancy in Cambodia is 70.**

- True
 False

***15. Since foreign aid began arriving in the 1990s, the nutrition of Cambodians living outside of Phnom Penh has improved dramatically.**

- True
 False

***16. One in ten Cambodians today display signs of post-traumatic stress disorder**

- True
 False

***17. The Cambodian maternal mortality rate (mothers who died during child birth) has barely decreased since the 1990s.**

- True
 False

Questions 18-28 continue to test you on your knowledge about Cambodians. These questions ask you to choose how much you agree or disagree with the statements.

Please choose one answer. Choose N/A if the question does not apply to your situation.

***18. My organization provided me with sufficient training about Cambodian culture.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***19. A Cambodian's place within the social hierarchy is of the utmost importance to Cambodians.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***20. Most Cambodians value and participate in their communities.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***21. Most Cambodians are trusting of foreigners.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***22. Most Cambodians do not understand the concept of democracy.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***23. Cambodians highly value being seen as being different from each other.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***24. Most Cambodians hide their true feelings.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

Choose one Strongly Agree Choose one Somewhat Agree Choose one Undecided Choose one Somewhat Disagree Choose one Strongly Disagree

***25. Most Cambodians do not trust other Cambodians.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***26. Most Cambodians fear their government.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***27. The Cambodian culture has traditionally valued seeking knowledge and asking questions.**

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Undecided Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

Choose one

***28. Cambodians value education for its intrinsic value (as opposed to the money or status education brings).**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>				

Part Three: Teaching Cambodians

Finally, questions 29-39 ask you how much you agree or disagree with the statements about your methods and experience in teaching Cambodian adults. Please choose one answer. Choose N/A if the statement cannot be applied to your situation.

***29. I test my students after I educate them to make sure they have learned what I have taught.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***30. My students completely understand my English.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***31. Cambodians realize that making mistakes is a good way to learn.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***32. My students voluntarily attend my class/workshop/training exclusively to gain knowledge.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***33. Most Cambodians value honor and honesty too highly to cheat on a test.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***34. I use methods during my instruction/training to check my students' understanding of what I am teaching.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***35. I sometimes suspect my students of only pretending to understand my workshop/training/lessons.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***36. I take strong measures in my testing methods to ensure that my students do not cheat/help each other.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***37. Most of my students thoroughly learn and understand the lessons/information that I teach.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***38. Financial incentives are offered to my students for taking my workshop/class/training.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

***39. If my students do not understand a concept I am teaching, most of them will seek clarification.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Choose one	<input type="radio"/>					

APPENDIX B

Responses to Survey

Q1

CHOOSE THE PLACE YOU ARE REPRESENTING IN YOUR WORK IN CAMBODIA / THE PLACE THAT SENT YOU TO WORK/TEACH/VOLUNTEER IN CAMBODIA:

• Answered: 74

• Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses
– Australia/New Zealand	1.35% 1
– North America (United States/Canada)	87.84% 65
– Europe	4.05% 3
– Other	6.76% 5
Total	74

Q2

FOR WHICH TYPE OF ORGANIZATION DO YOU WORK? CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER.

• Answered: 73

• Skipped: 1

Answer Choices	Responses
– Government	36.99% 27
– Non-government organization	23.29% 17
– I am a student earning school credit	5.48% 4
– I am a graduate student doing field work	5.48% 4
– Independent/self	24.66% 18
– Other	4.11% 3
Total	73

Q3

AS OF TODAY, HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN CAMBODIA, REGARDLESS OF HOW LONG YOU HAVE HELD YOUR CURRENT POSITION? IF YOU PERIODICALLY LEAVE AND RETURN, ADD UP ALL THE TIME YOU HAVE SPENT IN CAMBODIA. CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER.

• Answered: 67

• Skipped: 7

Answer Choices	Responses
– Six months or less	20.90% 14
– Between 6 months and 1 year	22.39% 15

Answer Choices	Responses
– Between 1 year and 2 years	26.87% 18
– Between 2 years and 5 years	23.88% 16
– Five years or more	5.97% 4
Total	67

Q4

IN TOTAL, FROM THE TIME YOU ARRIVED, HOW LONG TO YOU PLAN TO LIVE IN CAMBODIA? CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER.

• Answered: 69

• Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
– I don't know	28.99% 20
– Less than 1 year	10.14% 7
– Between 1 year and 2 years	24.64% 17
– Between 2 years and 5 years	30.43% 21
– More than 5 years	4.35% 3
– Cambodia is my permanent home	1.45% 1
Total	69

Q5

DID YOU CHOOSE TO WORK IN CAMBODIA OR WAS IT ASSIGNED TO YOU? CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER.

• Answered: 67

• Skipped: 7

Answer Choices	Responses
– I chose Cambodia.	28.36% 19
– Cambodia was one of a few choices I was offered.	16.42% 11
– Cambodia was one of many choices I was offered.	2.99% 2
– I was assigned to Cambodia with very little or no choice.	43.28% 29
– Cambodia is one of my stops as I work/travel in many countries.	8.96% 6
Total	67

Q6

WHERE IN CAMBODIA DO YOU LIVE MOST OF THE TIME? CHOOSE ONE.

● Answered: 64

● Skipped: 10

Answer Choices	Responses
– Banteay Meanchey	0.00% 0
– Battambang	3.13% 2
– Kampong Cham	9.38% 6
– Kampong Chhnang	15.63% 10
– Kampong Speu	0.00% 0
– Kampong Thom	4.69% 3
– Kampot	7.81% 5
– Kandal	0.00% 0
– Koh Kong	3.13% 2
– Kep	3.13% 2
– Kratie	1.56% 1
– Monduliri	0.00% 0
– Oddar Meanchey	1.56% 1
– Pailin	0.00% 0
– Phnom Penh	25.00% 16
– Preah Sihanouk / Sihanoukville	0.00% 0
– Preah Vihear	0.00% 0
– Pursat	3.13% 2
– Prey Veng	3.13% 2
– Ratanakiri	0.00% 0
– Siem Reap	7.81% 5
– Stung Treng	1.56% 1
–	1.56%

Answer Choices	Responses
Svay Rieng	1
–	7.81%
Takeo	5
–	0.00%
Tboung Khmum	0
Total	64

Q7 WHERE IN CAMBODIA DO YOU TEACH/INSTRUCT/GIVE WORKSHOPS/EDUCATE MOST OF THE TIME? CHOOSE ONE.

• Answered: 62
• Skipped: 12

Answer Choices	Responses
–	0.00%
Banteay Meanchey	0
–	1.61%
Battambang	1
–	8.06%
Kampong Cham	5
–	16.13%
Kampong Chhnang	10
–	0.00%
Kampong Speu	0
–	4.84%
Kampong Thom	3
–	8.06%
Kampot	5
–	0.00%
Kandal	0
–	3.23%
Koh Kong	2
–	3.23%
Kep	2
–	0.00%
Kratie	0
–	0.00%
Mondulkiri	0
–	1.61%
Odder Meanchey	1
–	0.00%
Pailin	0
–	19.35%
Phnom Penh	12
–	0.00%
Preah Sihanouk / Sihanoukville	0
–	0.00%
Preah Vihear	0
–	3.23%
Pursat	2
–	3.23%

Answer Choices	Responses
Prey Veng	2
–	0.00%
Ratanakiri	0
–	12.90%
Siem Reap	8
–	1.61%
Stung Treng	1
–	1.61%
Svay Rieng	1
–	6.45%
Takeo	4
–	0.00%
Tboung Khmum	0
–	4.84%
I travel around to different places in the country to teach	3
Total	62

Q8

WHAT ONE SUBJECT AREA BELOW BEST DESCRIBES THE EDUCATION/TRAINING/WORKSHOPS/CLASSES YOU TEACH TO CAMBODIAN ADULTS?

• Answered: 62

• Skipped: 12

Answer Choices	Responses
–	11.29%
Business (management / accounting / finance)	7
–	1.61%
Development (city planning / land planning)	1
–	25.81%
Education (teaching teachers)	16
–	1.61%
Engineering	1
–	35.48%
English (or another language)	22
–	0.00%
Environmental	0
–	3.23%
Farming	2
–	9.68%
Personal or family health education / personal or family nutrition	6
–	1.61%
Human rights / empowerment / anti-corruption	1
–	3.23%
Nursing or medical	2
–	1.61%
Science	1
–	3.23%
Societal issues (family life / domestic abuse)	2
–	0.00%

Answer Choices	Responses
Tourism	0
–	1.61%
None	1
Total	62

Q9 WHICH CAMBODIAN GROUPS/PROFESSIONS DO YOU EDUCATE? CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY.

● Answered: 62
● Skipped: 12

Answer Choices	Responses
–	51.61%
Anyone who wants to learn	32
–	1.61%
AIDS patients	1
–	11.29%
Doctors / nurses / midwives / medical professionals	7
–	12.90%
Entrepreneurs / business people	8
–	9.68%
Farmers	6
–	4.84%
Former or current prostitutes / sex workers	3
–	6.45%
Government employees	4
–	40.32%
Teachers	25
–	9.68%
University students (over the age of 25)	6
–	1.61%
Victims / prisoners	1
–	16.13%
Women /mothers	10
Total Respondents: 62	

Q10 IN WHAT WAYS HAVE YOU SOCIALIZED WITH CAMBODIANS? CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY.

● Answered: 61
● Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
–	8.20%
I have dated at least one Cambodian.	5
–	63.93%
I have attended at least one Cambodian wedding.	39
–	85.25%
I have joined a Cambodian family in their home for at least one meal.	52
–	63.93%
I have accompanied Cambodians to a Buddhist temple for at least one ceremony/event/holiday/celebration.	39

Answer Choices	Responses
– I have attended at least one Cambodian funeral.	40.98% 25
– I have socialized with a Cambodian/Cambodians out in public (coffee/drinks/meal/performance/etc) without other Westerners.	81.97% 50
– I have had at least one enlightening discussion with a Cambodian about Cambodian culture.	73.77% 45
– None	0.00% 0

Total Respondents: 61

Q11

THROUGHOUT CAMBODIA, ALL OF THE FIGHTING/VIOLENCE ENDED IN 1979.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	6.56% 4
– False	93.44% 57
Total	61

Q12

THE DEFINITION OF THE CAMBODIAN PHRASE "SAVING FACE" IS THE BUDDHIST PRINCIPLE OF LOOKING DOWN WHEN SPEAKING.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	14.75% 9
– False	85.25% 52
Total	61

Q13

CAMBODIA HAD VIRTUALLY NO HISTORY OF FORMAL EDUCATION UNTIL THE 1940S (EXCLUDING EDUCATING BOYS TO BECOME MONKS).

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	63.93% 39
– False	36.07% 22
Total	61

Q14

THE AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY IN CAMBODIA IS 70.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
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Answer Choices	Responses
– True	39.34% 24
– False	60.66% 37
Total	61

Q15 SINCE FOREIGN AID BEGAN ARRIVING IN THE 1990S, THE NUTRITION OF CAMBODIANS LIVING OUTSIDE OF PHNOM PENH HAS IMPROVED DRAMATICALLY.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	44.26% 27
– False	55.74% 34
Total	61

Q16 ONE IN TEN CAMBODIANS TODAY DISPLAY SIGNS OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	81.97% 50
– False	18.03% 11
Total	61

Q17 THE CAMBODIAN MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE (MOTHERS WHO DIED DURING CHILD BIRTH) HAS BARELY DECREASED SINCE THE 1990S.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

Answer Choices	Responses
– True	54.10% 33
– False	45.90% 28
Total	61

Q18 MY ORGANIZATION PROVIDED ME WITH SUFFICIENT TRAINING ABOUT CAMBODIAN CULTURE.

- Answered: 61
- Skipped: 13

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
– Choose one	19.67% 12	39.34% 24	11.48% 7	11.48% 7	4.92% 3	13.11% 8	61	2.34

Q19 A CAMBODIAN'S PLACE WITHIN THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO CAMBODIANS.

- Answered: 60
- Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
–							

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	36.67% 22	50.00% 30	8.33% 5	5.00% 3	0.00% 0	60	1.82

Q20

MOST CAMBODIANS VALUE AND PARTICIPATE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	33.33% 20	36.67% 22	6.67% 4	20.00% 12	3.33% 2	60	2.23

Q21

MOST CAMBODIANS ARE TRUSTING OF FOREIGNERS.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	8.33% 5	38.33% 23	20.00% 12	25.00% 15	8.33% 5	60	2.87

Q22

MOST CAMBODIANS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	16.67% 10	30.00% 18	25.00% 15	25.00% 15	3.33% 2	60	2.68

Q23

CAMBODIANS HIGHLY VALUE BEING SEEN AS BEING DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	0.00% 0	10.00% 6	16.67% 10	31.67% 19	41.67% 25	60	4.05

Q24

MOST CAMBODIANS HIDE THEIR TRUE FEELINGS.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	36.67% 22	40.00% 24	11.67% 7	11.67% 7	0.00% 0	60	1.98

Q25

MOST CAMBODIANS DO NOT TRUST OTHER CAMBODIANS.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one							

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	8.33% 5	38.33% 23	18.33% 11	33.33% 20	1.67% 1	60	2.82

Q26

MOST CAMBODIANS FEAR THEIR GOVERNMENT.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	41.67% 25	40.00% 24	11.67% 7	6.67% 4	0.00% 0	60	1.83

Q27

THE CAMBODIAN CULTURE HAS TRADITIONALLY VALUED SEEKING KNOWLEDGE AND ASKING QUESTIONS.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	3.33% 2	18.33% 11	11.67% 7	36.67% 22	30.00% 18	60	3.72

Q28

CAMBODIANS VALUE EDUCATION FOR ITS INTRINSIC VALUE (AS OPPOSED TO THE MONEY OR STATUS EDUCATION BRINGS).

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	5.00% 3	11.67% 7	15.00% 9	45.00% 27	23.33% 14	60	3.70

I TEST MY STUDENTS AFTER I EDUCATE THEM TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE LEARNED WHAT I HAVE TAUGHT.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	23.33% 14	60.00% 36	3.33% 2	5.00% 3	3.33% 2	5.00% 3	60	2.00

Q30

MY STUDENTS COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND MY ENGLISH.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	0.00% 0	16.67% 10	8.33% 5	45.00% 27	28.33% 17	1.67% 1	60	3.86

Q31

CAMBODIANS REALIZE THAT MAKING MISTAKES IS A GOOD WAY TO LEARN.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one								

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	1.67% 1	6.67% 4	15.00% 9	36.67% 22	36.67% 22	3.33% 2	60	4.03

Q32

MY STUDENTS VOLUNTARILY ATTEND MY CLASS/WORKSHOP/TRAINING EXCLUSIVELY TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	5.00% 3	46.67% 28	10.00% 6	26.67% 16	10.00% 6	1.67% 1	60	2.90

Q33

MOST CAMBODIANS VALUE HONOR AND HONESTY TOO HIGHLY TO CHEAT ON A TEST.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	3.33% 2	15.00% 9	18.33% 11	23.33% 14	36.67% 22	3.33% 2	60	3.78

Q34

I USE METHODS DURING MY INSTRUCTION/TRAINING TO CHECK MY STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT I AM TEACHING.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	28.33% 17	58.33% 35	8.33% 5	5.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	60	1.90

Q35

I SOMETIMES SUSPECT MY STUDENTS OF ONLY PRETENDING TO UNDERSTAND MY WORKSHOP/TRAINING/LESSONS.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	21.67% 13	55.00% 33	11.67% 7	11.67% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	60	2.13

Q36

I TAKE STRONG MEASURES IN MY TESTING METHODS TO ENSURE THAT MY STUDENTS DO NOT CHEAT/HELP EACH OTHER.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	18.33% 11	30.00% 18	13.33% 8	23.33% 14	8.33% 5	6.67% 4	60	2.71

Q37

MOST OF MY STUDENTS THOROUGHLY LEARN AND UNDERSTAND THE LESSONS/INFORMATION THAT I TEACH.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	0.00% 0	30.00% 18	31.67% 19	30.00% 18	8.33% 5	0.00% 0	60	3.17

Q38

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES ARE OFFERED TO MY STUDENTS FOR TAKING MY WORKSHOP/CLASS/TRAINING.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	6.67% 4	8.33% 5	16.67% 10	16.67% 10	33.33% 20	18.33% 11	60	3.76

Q39

IF MY STUDENTS DO NOT UNDERSTAND A CONCEPT I AM TEACHING, MOST OF THEM WILL SEEK CLARIFICATION.

• Answered: 60
• Skipped: 14

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Choose one	1.67% 1	16.67% 10	10.00% 6	50.00% 30	21.67% 13	0.00% 0	60	3.73