

2022 AAS-in-Asia Symposium  
Cultivating the Humanities and Social Sciences:  
Addressing the Multiple Marginalities of South and Southeast Asia  
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Panel

**“An “Invitation” to Understanding Cambodia through  
Grounded Theory Methodology”**

Organized by

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,  
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Cambodia’s social sciences lack a distinct national tradition and focus when it comes to methodologies and long-standing social concerns occupying Cambodian researchers. Local scholarship in “pre-war” Cambodia was mainly focused on documenting everyday social lives through ethnological works as well as through historical and cultural stories to support the state in defining a “modern” national identity. But the development was short-lived and shattered by warfare in the 1970s–80s. Current social scientific works by Cambodian researchers have been driven mainly by development agenda. As a result, they lack rigorous philosophical and methodological underpinnings, and fall short of sustaining lasting interests that generate rigorous knowledge about the country’s social realities and transformations. This panel demonstrates an example of how a group of emerging local researchers from various backgrounds and disciplines take on their respective issues of interest using a grounded theory methodology approach to analyze Cambodia’s social realities at present, which include public health, knowledge production, social movements, and migration.

**Ms. KEO Priyanith**

**Rural-Urban Migration: A Study of Self-Perceptions and Identities among Rural Migrants in Cambodia**

Rapid urbanization and transformation have taken place across Cambodia over the last three decades. Both urban centers and rural spaces have felt the influence of these transformations. Rural livelihoods, especially, witnessed a change that is marked by the departure of its population to the city in search of opportunities. Migration to the city by Cambodia’s rural population is a process marked with heightened emotions and expectations. As part of this relocation, migrants will inevitably become exposed to new experiences and people that challenge their current models of perceiving the world and themselves. How do migrants then navigate through these new experiences? How will the ‘city life’ alter these migrants’ perceptions of themselves? Will life in the city offer a contrast to life in their place of origin thereby leading to a conflict in self-identities and perceptions?

Utilizing in-depth interviews with a biographical focus, this paper explores the process migrants adopt in order to navigate through new experiences in the city. In particular, it aims to understand how life in the city alters these migrants' perceptions of themselves as they craft and rewrite their personal narratives and identities and their aspirations for the future. The paper also seeks to understand how the contrasts between the city and the migrant's place of origin can lead to shifts in perceptions among migrants.

**Ms. CHEA Muykim**

### **Understanding Knowledge Production in Cambodia's Higher Education Institutions (HIEs)**

The research study analyzes how knowledge is being produced in Cambodia by investigating the current practice of Higher Education Institution (HIEs) by looking at the process of curriculum design and the course syllabus, taking into account the rationale and guidelines for the design. To comprehend a deeper understanding of knowledge production in Cambodia's higher education, the study also looks into the shifting nature of knowledge in Cambodia, specially from traditional knowledge to scientific knowledge and currently, to scientific and commercialized knowledge. The shifting nature of knowledge in Cambodia – including the medium of instruction and the source of knowledge – marks the different phases of transformation of knowledge in Cambodia since the independence period to civil war, peace restoration and now to the contemporary Cambodian context of regional and international integration. For this, the study analyzes the literatures related to the different nature of knowledge in Cambodia, accompanied by discourse analysis from the conversations with people involved in the development and preparation of curriculum design for university students. The results from this study offer an interesting point of entry for understanding how knowledge has been and is being produced, and from this point, the results also help us foresee the future trend of knowledge production in Cambodia as well.

**Mr. UY Sareth**

### **Understanding Structural Violence in Higher Education: Grounded theory approach on female students' experience**

Structural violence happens when students are marginalized unintentionally by policies or social customs within the university. This grounded theory study illustrates how female students in higher education experience structural violence in the context of learning. This gender-engaged study focuses on three essential themes: curriculum, pedagogy, and social ecologies of education. It is discussed how these concerns significantly affect the educational experiences of female students in higher education in Cambodia. Deploying the grounded theory approach, the data collection through in-depth interviews with female students from the social science and humanity faculty attending years three and four and ever attended gender and violence classes. The results of this study suggest that significant educational changes are required to ensure that every student is represented in the curriculum and given the support they need to succeed in an educational transition while respecting female rights, identities, values, and traditions.

**Ms. KET Chanracksmey**

*Abstract: The concern of health checkups of Health care professionals from national and provincial staff*

All civil servants were covered by a health care scheme run by the national social security fund (NSSF). The part of occupational health is the work injury scheme is known in general and used, but health prevention which is the way to detect and screen for risk factors is not included in the annual package. Both national and provincial healthcare workers know that health checkups can help them to service and/or impairment/diseases (not necessarily chronic diseases) at their early stage. The concern of healthcare workers to find health check service is a process to promote their health through educating staff.

How the health care worker checks up on their health? How do the organization and NSSF give them the benefit? How to include an annual health checkup package for health care staff based on their perception.

Semi-structured interviews of national and provincial healthcare staff described the process to check up on their health when they fell ill. The way that staff gets the benefit from the organization and NSSF through internal and external services. *It is acceptable for NFFS service but has been complaints in delay service, long waiting times, the quality-of-service provider, and not enough medicine.* The perception of including a health checkup package will describe by both groups.